DRAFT

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project

APRIL 2025

Prepared for:

CITY OF SANTA CLARITA
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
AB	Assembly Bill
AQMP	air quality management plan
BMP	best management practice
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
City	City of Santa Clarita
CMP	Congestion Management Program
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CO_2e	carbon dioxide equivalent
County	County of Los Angeles
dBA	A-weighted decibel
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
GHG	greenhouse gas
HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
I	interstate
IS	initial study
LACFD	Los Angeles County Fire Department
LACM	Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
LACSD	Los Angeles County Sanitation District
L_{eq}	energy equivalent level
LID	low impact development
LOS	level of service
LST	localized significance threshold
mgd	million gallons per day
MM	Mitigation Measure
MND	mitigated negative declaration
MRZ	mineral resource zone
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
MT	metric ton
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NO_x	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
O_3	ozone
PM_{10}	particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter
project	Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
SB	Senate Bill
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SCE	Southern California Edison
SCMC	Santa Clarita Municipal Code
SCV Water	Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency
SoCalGas	Southern California Gas Company
SR	State Route
SSC	California Species of Special Concern
SWPPP	stormwater pollution prevention plan
TAC	toxic air contaminant
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
WRP	water reclamation plant

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

The proposed Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project (project) would involve the construction of mixed-use residential and retail development distributed throughout a 9.7-acre property at 23755 Newhall Avenue in the City of Santa Clarita (City) (Figure 1-1, Project Location). The project site would be subdivided into three lots (ranging in size from approximately 1.16 to 5.16 acres) to accommodate the redevelopment of 106 multifamily residential units (70 apartments and 36 townhome-style units), 4,000 square feet of commercial space, and recreation amenities, including a swimming pool and outdoor trail (Figure 1-2, Conceptual Site Plan, and Figure 1-3, Landscape Plan).

1.2 California Environmental Quality Act Compliance

The City is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency responsible for the review and approval of the proposed project. Based on the findings of the initial study (IS) for the project, the City determined that a mitigated negative declaration (MND) is the appropriate environmental document to prepare in compliance with CEQA (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.). As stated in CEQA Section 21064.5, an MND may be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when an IS identified no potentially significant effects on the environment.

This MND was prepared for the City and complies with Section 15070(a) of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.). The purpose of the MND and the Initial Study Checklist (see Section 3 of this MND) is to determine any potentially significant impacts associated with the proposed project and to incorporate mitigation measures into the project design as necessary to reduce or eliminate the significant or potentially significant effects of the project.

1.3 Public Review Process

In accordance with CEQA, a good-faith effort was made during the preparation of this MND to contact affected agencies, organizations, and persons who may have an interest in this project. In reviewing the MND, public agencies and the interested public should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the project's possible impacts on the environment. A copy of the Draft MND and related documents are available for review at the City Clerk's Office (see address below) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Comments on the MND may be made in writing before the end of the public review period. and the public review comment period is from April 29, 2025, to May 20, 2025. Following the close of the public comment period, the City will consider this MND and comments in determining whether to approve the proposed project.

Written comments on the MND should be received at the following address by 12 p.m., May 20, 2025.

Mailing Address:
City of Santa Clarita
23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 302
Santa Clarita, California 91355
Contact: Erika Iverson
Telephone: 661.255.4330
Email: eiverson@santa-clarita.com

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2 Project Description

2.1 Project Location

The proposed project site is located in Santa Clarita, in the northwestern portion of Los Angeles County (County) (Figure 1-1). The City is approximately 30 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles. The proposed project site comprises approximately 9.7 acres and is in the southwestern portion of the City.

2.2 Environmental Setting

The proposed project site is located at 23755 Newhall Avenue on County Assessor's Parcel Numbers 2827-003-016, 2827-003-017, 2827-003-018, 2827-003-019, 2827-003-020, and 2827-003-021. The project site is on the southern side of Newhall Avenue, approximately 0.76 miles northwest of California State Route (SR) 14. Vehicular access is provided via Newhall Avenue.

The project site is in a developed urban area of the City. The project site is bound by a convalescent home facility to the northwest, commercial/retail uses to the north, multifamily residential uses and commercial/retail uses to the east, and undeveloped land planned for development of the Needham Ranch business park development and single-family residences to the south.

The project site is zoned as MX-C (Mixed Use–Corridor) and has a General Plan land use designation of Mixed Use –Corridor (MX-C) (City of Santa Clarita 2011, 2023). The northwestern portion of the project site, adjacent to Newhall Avenue, is currently developed with an 8,578-square-foot commercial structure and paved areas. Recent uses on the site have included an automotive service/oil change facility and a used car sales lot. Two temporary modular/trailer-mounted offices associated with the used car lot are also located on the site. The remainder of the project site is currently generally vacant. The project site contains native vegetation, including oak trees, throughout the project site, with canopy size ranging from less than 10 feet to 100 feet.

2.3 Project Characteristics

The project applicant, Community Multihousing Inc., proposes developing 106 multifamily units, including 70 apartments and 36 townhome-style units, and 4,000 square feet of commercial space on an approximately 9.7-acre property (Figure 1-2). The project site would be subdivided into three lots. Lot 1 is approximately 3.35 acres to be improved with a four-story, 70-unit apartment building and a 4,000-square-foot four-story commercial/retail building with a 500-square-feet outdoor seating area. Lot 2 is approximately 5.16 acres to be improved with 36 townhomes within seven three-story buildings. Lot 3 is approximately 1.16 acres that will be improved to provide an outdoor trail for resident use and remain otherwise unimproved with building structures.

A total of 262 parking spaces would also be provided within the project site, including private garages within each of the townhome units (72 spaces total), a parking garage level beneath the residential levels of the apartment building (110 spaces), and uncovered parking lot spaces for guests and customers of the commercial uses (80 spaces). The townhome structures would cover approximately 69,470 square feet of floor area, including private garages; the apartments would cover approximately 78,084 square feet of floor area; the underground parking garage would cover approximately 34,895 square feet of floor area; the retail suite would cover approxmiately

4,000 square feet of floor area; and the leasing office, amenities, and resident storage area would cover approximately 7,075 square feet of floor area. Recreation amenities include a swimming pool and spa, a kids' play area, a tot lot, a picnic area, and a clubhouse with a community room, yoga/kids' classrooms, and gym. Additionally, an outdoor trail and open space areas would be provided on site. Access would be provided by two driveways from Newhall Avenue. A summary of the project components is provided in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1. Project Summary

Building Number	Type-Description	Number of Units	Floor Area (Square Feet)	Parking Spaces
Lot 1				
B1	Multifamily (Apartments)	70	78,084	110
B1	Leasing Office and Amenities	N/A	3,745	N/A
B1	Resident Storage	N/A	3,330	N/A
B2	Commercial/Residential Guest	N/A	4,000	38
	Total	**70**	**89,159[a]**	**148**
Lot 2				
A1–A7	Townhomes	36	69,470	72
	Guest Parking	N/A	N/A	42
	Total	**36**	**69,470**	**114**
Lot 3				
—	Recreation (Outdoor trail/unimproved area)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Notes: N/A = not applicable.
[a] Total does not include the proposed underground parking garage's approximately 34,895 square feet of floor area.

2.4 Project Construction and Phasing

Construction of the project would include concrete removal/demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. Construction phasing is anticipated as follows:

- Demolition (25 days)
- Site preparation (20 days)
- Grading (45 days)
- Building construction (320 days)
- Paving (35 days)
- Architectural coating (35 days)

Demolition would involve the removal of existing concrete throughout the site. Additional site clearing and rough grading would occur during the site preparation phase. Grading activities during construction would consist of 78,700 cubic yards of cut and 12,500 cubic yards of fill with an anticipated export of 63,100 cubic yards.

A summary of the anticipated construction equipment, quantity of equipment, , and duration per phase is included in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2. Anticipated Construction Scenarios

Construction Phase	Duration (Working Days)	Equipment Type (Quantity)[1]
Demolition	25	1 dozer
		1 concrete/industrial saw
		3 excavators
		1 loader
Site preparation (grubbing and stump removal)	20	1 dozer
		1 tractor/loader/backhoe
Grading (including soil import)	45	1 dozer
		3 tractors/loaders/backhoes
		1 excavator
		1 grader
		1 loader
		1 off-highway truck
Building construction	320	1 generator set
		3 forklifts
		3 tractors/loaders/backhoes
		1 welder
Paving	35	1 paver
		2 cement and mortar mixers
		2 rollers
		1 tractor/loader/backhoe
		2 paving equipment
Architectural coating (painting)	35	1 air compressor

Source: Appendix A.
Notes:
[1] The construction equipment list is estimated based on Appendix A.

2.5 Project Approvals

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15050, the City is the lead agency for this project, taking primary responsibility for conducting environmental review and approving or denying the project. There are no known responsible or trustee agencies with any approval authority for the project. The entitlements, reviews, permits, and approvals required to implement the project are as follows:

- Architectural Design Review (ADR) for all new development projects
- Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for building height in excess of 50 feet in the MX-C zone
- Development Review (DR) for all new development projects
- Minor Use Permit (MUP) for a commercial floor area ratio that is less than the minimum required for the MX-C zone
- Hillside Development Review (HDR) (Class IV) Permit for an average cross-slope of greater than 15% and for cut and fill of more than 10,000 cubic yards of earth on a natural slope greater than 10%
- Tentative Map (TM) to subdivide the project site

- Landscape Plan Review (LPR) to make a determination that all proposed landscaping is consistent with the standards established within the Unified Development Code
- Oak Tree Permit (OTP) for the removal and/or encroachment of any protected oak tree on site
- Other discretionary and ministerial permits and approvals that may be deemed necessary to construct and operate the project including, but not limited to, building and grading permits.

3 Initial Study Checklist

1. **Project title:**

   Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Project

2. **Lead agency name and address:**

   City of Santa Clarita
   23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 302
   Santa Clarita, California 91355

3. **Contact person and phone number:**

   Erika Iverson
   661.255.4330

4. **Project location:**

   23755 Newhall Avenue
   Santa Clarita, California 91321

5. **Project sponsor's name and address:**

   Chandler Partners
   4116 West Magnolia Boulevard, Suite 203
   Burbank, California 91505

6. **General plan designation:**

   Mixed Use–Corridor (MX-C)

7. **Zoning:**

   MX-C (Mixed Use–Corridor)

8. **Description of project. (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary):**

   See Section 2, Project Description.

9. **Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:**

   The project site is bound by a convalescent home facility to the northwest, commercial/retail uses to the north, multifamily residential uses and commercial/retail uses to the east, and the Needham Ranch industrial development and single-family residences to the south.

10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):**

    See Section 2.5, Project Approvals.

11. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?**

    See Section 3.18, Tribal Cultural Resources.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

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

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

Determination (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

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

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

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

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

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

E C

Signature

4/29/2025

Date

Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project would 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 there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an 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.
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. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
    a. the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
    b. the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

3.1 Aesthetics

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I.	**AESTHETICS** – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e)	Result in changes to the topography of a Primary or Secondary Ridgeline?	☐	☐	☐	☒

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. The City of Santa Clarita lies within Southern California's Santa Clarita Valley, which is bounded by the San Gabriel Mountains to the south and east, the Santa Susana Mountains to the southwest, the Sierra Pelona to the north, and the mountains of the Angeles National Forest to the northeast. These surrounding natural mountains and ridgelines provide a visual backdrop for the City. Other scenic resources in the City include the Santa Clara River corridor, forested/vegetated land, and a variety of canyons and natural drainages throughout the City.

There is no widely accepted definition of a scenic vista; a scenic vista is often defined as a publicly accessible, prominent vantage point that provides expansive views of highly valued landscapes or prominent visual elements. As stated in the City's General Plan, a scenic vista may include views of scenic resources such as mountains and canyons, woodlands, water bodies, and/or specific resources (e.g., Vasquez Rocks County Park). Further, the City's General Plan states that urban development can "impact the quantity, quality, and variety of scenic vistas…through light pollution, development on prominent ridgelines and hillsides, obstruction of scenic views along various roadways, signage and streetscape clutter, and aesthetically deficient development" (City of Santa Clarita 2011).

The project site is currently developed in the northwestern portion as an automotive service/oil change facility and a used car sales lot consisting of an 8,578-square-foot commercial structure, two temporary modular/trailer-mounted offices, and paved areas. The remainder of the project site is generally vacant. The City's General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element Exhibit CO-1 does not identify any ridgelines or open space within the project site. There is no open space identified adjacent to the project site. The nearest ridgeline is identified 130 feet southwest of the project site in the southern and southwestern adjacent properties. This ridgeline has been disturbed under a Ridgeline Alteration Permit approved as part of the adjacent Needham Ranch business park development (Ridgeline Alteration Permit MC99-264). In addition, there are no designated scenic vistas within the City or within view of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not impact a scenic vista or this ridgeline nor impede views provided by the ridgeline. Further, the proposed project would be visually consistent with the surrounding development because there would be similar uses surrounding the proposed project. As such, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on scenic vistas.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. The City's General Plan identifies existing scenic resources throughout the City, including the Santa Clara River corridor, forested/vegetated land, undeveloped hillsides and ridgelines, and a variety of canyons and natural drainages. Whitney Canyon and Elsmere Canyon are designated as scenic resources in the City's General Plan and are in the vicinity of the project site (City of Santa Clarita 2011). Due to intervening development and distance, the project site is not visible from Whitney Canyon or Elsmere Canyon. There are no officially designated state scenic highways within the project site's vicinity. A segment of the Interstate (I) 5 freeway between SR-125 and I-210 (approximately 2 miles southwest of the project site) is considered eligible for scenic highway designation (Caltrans 2018). The project site's visibility from the freeway is obstructed by hillsides, intervening urban development, aboveground utility infrastructure, and roadways. Moreover, scenic resources such as rock outcroppings or historic buildings do not exist on or adjacent to the site. The City's General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element Exhibit CO-1 does not identify any ridgelines or open space within the project site. While the project site does contain potentially scenic resources such as oak trees, the potential project-related impacts specific to these resources are analyzed throughout this IS/MND. Impacts to scenic resources would be less than significant.

c) In non-urbanized areas, would the project 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. An urbanized area means "an incorporated city that meets either of the following criteria: (1) [h]as a population of at least 100,000 persons; (2) [h]as a population of less than 100,000 persons if the population of that city and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons" (California Public Resources Code, Section 21071 [a]). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the estimated population of Santa Clarita as of July 1, 2023, was 224,028 persons (U.S. Census Bureau 2024). Because the project site is in an incorporated city that has a population exceeding 100,000 persons, the proposed project site would be considered an "urbanized area."

The northeastern portion of the project site is currently developed with an automotive service/oil change facility and a used car sales lot consisting of an 8,578-square-foot commercial structure, two temporary modular/trailer-mounted offices, and paved areas. The southwestern portion of the project site is generally vacant. The project would include the construction of the mixed-use development and would be adjacent to similar land uses, primarily the existing and planned residential and commercial uses surrounding the project site (Figure 3.1-1, Visual Simulations, View A, and Figure 3.1-2, Visual Simulations, View B). Therefore, upon completion of construction, views of the proposed project site and surrounding area would be similar to existing conditions.

Finally, implementation of the project would not conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts 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. Given the urbanized nature of the project site and proximity to Newhall Avenue, lights and associated glare contribute to the night lighting environment. Existing light sources on the proposed project site include those typical of commercial uses in the northwestern developed portion of the project site. In addition, street lighting is provided along Newhall Avenue. The proposed project would introduce nighttime lighting that would be typical of commercial and residential uses, such as the surrounding development. Light associated with additional vehicle trips generated by the project would be similar in character to what is currently generated by vehicles traveling along the existing roadway network after dark.

Design considerations, such as walls and fences, within the project site would reduce light trespass to the adjacent light-sensitive receptors. The project proposes an 8-foot-high and 7-foot-high wall at the southern and eastern boundary of the project site, respectively. Additionally, the project proposes a 7-foot-high wall at the southwestern boundary and 12- and 13-foot-high walls at the western boundary. The project would also be required to comply with all applicable development standards related to light. For example, Santa Clarita Municipal Code (SCMC) Section 17.51.050, Outdoor Lighting Standards, allows for outdoor lighting for nighttime safety, utility, security, productivity, enjoyment, and commerce. Existing regulations such as these are intended to minimize off-site light trespass through design via light shielding and downward directions to ensure light trespass is not visible from a public right-of-way. Further, new developments, including the proposed project, are required to submit a lighting plan that specifies the location, fixture type, fixture height, and photometric information of all outdoor lighting and information about shut-off timers and hours of operation for outdoor lighting, all of which are subject to approval by the Community Development Director.

Glare is typically associated with daytime impacts and is often associated with buildings that are constructed with a significant proportion of reflective materials, such as glass and metal. As shown in the proposed building elevations in Figure 3.1-3, Conceptual Elevations, the proposed project would incorporate glass windows and some metal finishes, which are potentially reflective materials. However, daytime glare produced as a result of project implementation is not anticipated to adversely affect nearby sensitive receptors due to the architectural elements incorporated in the project's design. In addition, although some reflective materials (glass and metal) would be used, the proposed project would primarily

be constructed of non-reflective, neutral-colored materials such as beige stucco, clay tiles, and other non-reflective accent details and paving.

Given the above, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to light, glare, and nighttime views.

e) Would the project result in changes to the topography of a Primary or Secondary Ridgeline?

No Impact. The project site is not within an identified primary or secondary ridgeline as shown in the City's General Plan (City of Santa Clarita 2011). Consequently, the project would not result in changes to the topography of this resource. No impact would occur.

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES – In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. 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:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

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 not in an area of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Local Importance, Farmland of Local Potential, or Grazing Land as identified by the California Department of Conservation's California Important Farmland Finder (DOC 2022a). Therefore, the project would not convert any Farmland to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.

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

No Impact The project site is designated in the Santa Clarita General Plan Land Use Element and on the official Zoning Map as MX-C (Mixed Use–Corridor) and does not contain agricultural land (City of Santa Clarita 2011, 2023). The City does not have any Williamson Act contract land within the project site (DOC 2022b). Therefore, the project would not conflict with zoning for agricultural use or any Williamson Act contracts. No impact 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. Forestland and timberland areas in Santa Clarita are zoned as Open Space-National Forest (OS-NF). The project site is currently zoned MX-C (Mixed Use–Corridor). Accordingly, the project site is not within an area zoned for timberland production or farming. Therefore, the project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland or timberland. No impact 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 proposed project site does not contain any forest or timberland as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526 or Government Code Section 51104(g). Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact 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 conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. There are no agricultural or forest land uses within the proposed project site or surrounding areas. Therefore, the project would not result in the conversion of farmland or forest land to a non-agriculture use. No impact would occur.

3.3 Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. 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:				
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The analysis of the project impacts on air quality is primarily based on information contained in the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis prepared for the project in January 2024 by Envicom Corporation and included as Appendix A of this IS/MND.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. Santa Clarita is located within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), which is bounded by the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto Mountains to the north and east and by the Pacific Ocean to the south and west. The air quality in the SCAB is managed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). In general, the SCAB encompasses a metropolitan area with a high level of human activity. The climate characteristics of the SCAB, such as low temperature inversions, light winds, shallow vertical mixing, and extensive sunlight, in combination with topographical features, such as mountain ranges, inhibit the vertical and horizontal dispersion of air pollutants, which can result in degraded air quality within the SCAB (Appendix A).

While the California Air Resources Board (CARB) is responsible for the regulation of mobile emissions sources within the state, local air quality management districts and air pollution control districts are responsible for enforcing standards and regulating stationary sources. SCAQMD is the regional agency responsible for the regulation and enforcement of federal, state, and local air pollution control regulations in the SCAB, where the project is located. SCAQMD operates monitoring stations in the SCAB, develops rules and regulations for stationary sources and equipment, prepares emissions inventory and air quality management planning documents, and conducts source testing and inspections. SCAQMD's air quality management plans (AQMPs) include control measures and strategies to be implemented to attain the California and National Ambient Air Quality Standards in the SCAB. SCAQMD then implements these control measures as regulations to control or reduce criteria pollutant emissions from stationary sources or equipment (Appendix A).

The 2022 AQMP was adopted on December 2, 2022, and was developed to address the 2015 national ozone (O_3) standard. The 2022 AQMP provides the regional path toward improving air quality and meeting federal standards for air pollutants. The 2022 AQMP builds upon measures already in place from previous AQMPs. It also includes a variety of additional strategies such as regulation, accelerated deployment of available cleaner technologies (e.g., zero-emission technologies, when cost-effective and feasible, and low nitrogen oxides [NO_X] technologies in other applications), best management practices (BMPs), benefits from existing programs (e.g., climate and energy efficiency), incentives, and other Clean Air Act measures to achieve the 2015 federal O_3 standard (SCAQMD 2022).

SCAQMD has established criteria for determining consistency with the AQMP. The criteria are as follows (SCAQMD 2022):

- Consistency Criterion No. 1: The project will not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards of the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.
- Consistency Criterion No. 2: The project will not exceed the assumptions in the AQMP or increments based on the year of project buildout and phase.

The project's potential impacts with respect to these criteria are discussed to assess the consistency with SCAQMD's 2022 AQMP and the applicable City General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element plans and policies.

Consistency Criterion No. 1

With respect to the first criterion, localized concentrations of nitrogen dioxide as well as NO_X, carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter that is 10 microns or less in diameter (PM_{10}), and particulate matter that is 2.5 microns or less in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$) have been analyzed for the project. Sulfur dioxide emissions would be negligible during construction and long-term operations and, therefore, would not have the potential to cause or effect a violation of the sulfur dioxide ambient air quality standard. Since reactive organic gases are not a criteria pollutant, there is no ambient standard or localized threshold for reactive organic gases. However, due to the role reactive organic gases play in O_3 formation, it is classified as a precursor pollutant, and only a regional emissions threshold has been established.

As shown in Table 3.3-1 and Table 3.3-2, the air pollutant emissions generated by the project's construction activities and operation would be below the SCAQMD significance thresholds. Accordingly, the project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations. Therefore, the project would not conflict with Consistency Criterion No. 1.

Consistency Criterion No. 2

While striving for the SCAB to achieve the attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for O_3 and $PM_{2.5}$ and the California Ambient Air Quality Standards for O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ through a variety of air quality control measures, the 2022 AQMP also accommodates planned growth in the SCAB. The second criterion regarding a project's potential to exceed the assumptions in the AQMP is primarily assessed by determining consistency between a project's land use designations and its potential to generate population growth. In general, projects would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the AQMP if the growth in socioeconomic factors is consistent with the underlying regional plans used to develop the AQMP. SCAQMD primarily uses demographic growth forecasts for various socioeconomic categories (e.g., population, housing, employment by industry) developed by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) for its 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The 2024–2050 RTP/SCS is based on general plans for cities and counties in the SCAB for the development of the AQMP emissions inventory (SCAG 2024). The 2024–2050 RTP/SCS and associated regional growth forecasts are generally consistent with the local plans; therefore, the 2022 AQMP is generally consistent with local government plans.

Since the zoning and the General Plan land use designation for the project site are MX-C (Mixed-Use Corridor), the project is consistent with the allowed uses in this zoning and land use designation. The project's growth would also be consistent with the growth projections contained in the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS. Based on these considerations, the planned development for the project site were assumed to have been anticipated in the SCAG growth projections, and implementation of the project would not result in a conflict with the 2022 AQMP.

Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to its potential to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the 2022 AQMP. It is also noted that the project's construction and operational air emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD regional thresholds, and localized emissions during construction would not exceed the SCAQMD localized significance thresholds (LSTs) (see impact analysis for Thresholds 3.3[b] and 3.3[c]). Accordingly, the project would not conflict with Consistency Criterion No. 2. As such, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact.

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 project would contribute to local and regional air pollutant emissions during construction (short-term or temporary) and operation (long-term).

Construction

Construction of the project would generate temporary regional criteria pollutant emissions through the use of heavy-duty construction equipment, such as excavators and cranes, through vehicle trips generated by

workers and haul trucks traveling to and from the project site, and through building activities such as the application of paint and other surface coatings. In addition, fugitive dust emissions would result from demolition and various soil-handling activities. Dust is typically the primary concern during the construction of projects that would involve land clearing and grading. Emission rates vary as a function of many parameters (including soil silt, soil moisture, wind speed, area disturbed, number of vehicles, and depth of disturbance or excavation). Mobile source emissions, primarily NO_X would result from the use of construction equipment such as dozers and loaders. Construction emissions can vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity, the specific type of construction activity, and prevailing weather conditions (Appendix A).

The maximum daily construction emissions for the project were modeled based on lot acreage, amount of debris to be removed during demolition, volume of soil exported, size of proposed structures, use of each structure, number of dwelling units, and amount of surface parking and associated paving. A conceptual construction equipment fleet list and approximate duration of each construction phase on which this analysis was conducted is shown in Table 2-2. The proposed project's estimated construction emissions were modeled using California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2022.1.1.21 to identify maximum daily emissions for each pollutant during project construction. Detailed emissions calculations are provided in Appendix A of this IS/MND.

The results of the criteria pollutant calculations are presented in Table 3.3-1 and include dust control measures required to be implemented by SCAQMD Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust). As shown in Table 3.3-1, construction-related daily emissions are estimated to be below the SCAQMD thresholds of significance. Therefore, construction of the project would have a less-than-significant impact on air quality.

Table 3.3-1. Estimated Maximum Daily Construction Emissions

	ROG	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	Pounds Per Day					
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	29.4	51.1	43.4	0.1	10.8	5.3
Threshold	*75*	*100*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Appendix A.
Notes: ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_x = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_x = sulfur oxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 2.5 microns.

Operation

Operation of the project would result in emissions of criteria pollutants from area sources (e.g., consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment), energy sources (electricity and natural gas usage), and mobile sources (vehicle use) (Appendix A). Table 3.3-2 presents the maximum daily area, energy, and mobile source emissions associated with project operation. As shown in the table, maximum daily operational emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD significance thresholds during project operation. Therefore, operation of the project would have a less-than-significant impact on air quality.

Table 3.3-2. Estimated Maximum Daily Operations Emissions

	ROG	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	Pounds Per Day					
Mobile	3.0	2.8	30.5	0.1	7.0	1.8
Area	4.5	<0.1	7.7	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	<0.1	0.4	0.2	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	7.6	3.3	38.4	0.1	7.0	1.8
Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Appendix A.
Notes: ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_x = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_x = sulfur oxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 2.5 microns.
The Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis (Appendix A) cites an earlier trip estimate of 644 trips per day; however, emission estimates are based upon the conservative California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) default trip estimate of 842 trips per day.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. The impact of air quality emissions is analyzed for those persons with the greatest sensitivity to air pollution exposure. Such persons are called "sensitive receptors." Sensitive receptors include old adults, young children, individuals who are acutely or chronically ill (e.g., those with cardio-respiratory disease, including asthma), and persons engaged in strenuous work or exercise. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are the residents of a convalescent home facility adjacent to the western project site boundary.

Localized Significance Threshold Analysis

Construction activities associated with the project would result in temporary sources of on-site fugitive dust and construction equipment emissions. SCAQMD has developed analysis parameters to evaluate ambient air quality on a local level in addition to the more regional emissions-based thresholds of significance. These analysis elements are called localized significance thresholds (LSTs). An LST analysis has been prepared to determine potential impacts to nearby sensitive receptors during construction of the project. According to the SCAQMD Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology, "off-site mobile emissions from the project should NOT be included in the emissions compared to the LSTs" (SCAQMD 2008). Accordingly, LSTs are only applicable to the following criteria pollutants: NO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that are not expected to cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard, and they are developed based on the ambient concentrations of that pollutant for each source-receptor area and distance to the nearest sensitive receptor (SCAQMD 2008).

As discussed above, the nearest sensitive receptor to the project site is a convalescent home facility adjacent to the western project site boundary. LST pollutant screening level concentration data is currently published for 1-, 2-, and 5-acre sites. According to SCAQMD guidance, "projects with boundaries located closer than 25 meters to the nearest receptor should use the LSTs for receptors located at 25 meters"

(SCAQMD 2008). Therefore, this analysis will be conservatively based on the LST screening levels for a 2-acre site, with a source-receptor distance of 25 meters. This evaluation is based on estimated maximum daily on-site emissions for the construction phase representing the highest daily emissions. Daily averages would be lower than the reported maximum amounts. Table 3.3-3 shows the relevant thresholds and the estimated peak daily on-site emissions during the construction phases that would generate the highest level of on-site emissions for each pollutant evaluated for LST impacts. As previously described, the project would be required to implement adequate watering of exposed surfaces during grading to reduce dust emissions to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403, Fugitive Dust. As seen in Table 3.3-3, the peak on-site emissions during construction would not exceed the applicable SCAQMD LSTs, and as such, potential LST impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3.3-3. LST and Peak Daily On-Site Emissions

LST 2.0 acres/ 25 meters	NO_x	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Santa Clarita Valley	Pounds Per Day			
Peak On-Site Daily Emissions	23.2	25.0	3.8	2.3
Threshold	*163*	*877*	*6*	*4*
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No

Source: Appendix A.
Notes: LST = localized significance threshold; NO_x = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 2.5 microns.

Carbon Monoxide Hot Spots

A localized CO concentration from induced traffic at an intersection that exceeds the 1-hour concentration standard is referred to as a "CO hot spot." A project could potentially add to or result in a CO hot spot if traffic generated by the project resulted in especially severe congestion at an intersection. The project would not result in the production of a CO hot spot as this phenomenon is generally only produced when an intersection's traffic exceeds 400,000 vehicles per day. In the 2003 AQMP, SCAQMD provided analysis of CO attainment in the SCAB. CO modeling was conducted for the four worst-case intersections within the SCAB: (a) Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue; (b) Sunset Boulevard and Highland Avenue; (c) La Cienega Boulevard and Century Boulevard; and (d) Long Beach Boulevard and Imperial Highway. SCAQMD noted that the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue was the most congested intersection in the County, with an average daily traffic volume of about 100,000 vehicles per day. The emission data provided in Table 4-10 of Appendix V of the 2003 AQMP showed the peak modeled 1-hour CO concentration at this intersection was 4.6 parts per million, which demonstrated that the 1-hour CO standard of 20.0 parts per million would likely not be exceeded unless traffic at the intersection exceeded 400,000 vehicles per day (SCAQMD 2003). Therefore, if a project intersection is not anticipated to approach or exceed 400,000 vehicles per day, it can be reasonably concluded that the project would not generate a significant CO hot spot, and no further CO screening is warranted. There are no intersections in the City approaching this volume; therefore, the project's traffic contribution of approximately 790 net trips per day per the revised traffic study trip generation calculations from Hirsch/Green Transportation Consulting Inc. (Appendix H) would not result in a CO hot spot.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Toxic air contaminants (TACs) are airborne pollutants identified by CARB that may cause or contribute to an increase in deaths or in serious illness or that may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. TACs are not criteria pollutants and are regulated separately. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulates TACs through technology-based requirements, which are implemented by state and local agencies. California regulates TACs through the air toxics program (Health and Safety Code Section 39660 et seq.) and the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Information and Assessment Act (Health and Safety Code Section 44300 et seq.). Sources of TACs include some industrial and commercial activities and mobile emissions from cars and trucks, particularly diesel particulate matter. The "Hot Spots" Act applies to stationary sources and requires operators of specified facilities (those that produce TACs) to submit emission inventories to the air quality management district. Those deemed as high priority must prepare a health risk assessment, which may result in notification to the surrounding population and development of a risk reduction plan. There are also "industry-wide" inventories and assessed risks for small business facilities with emissions that are easily characterized, such as gas stations, small auto body shops, small dry cleaners, plating shops, and fiberglass product manufacturers. This information can be used when considering siting such a facility near a sensitive receptor, or vice versa. As residential projects do not generate a substantial quantity of diesel truck trips during operations, measurable diesel TAC emissions from the proposed project would occur for only a brief period during construction activities that would require the on-site use of heavy-duty equipment. The toxicity of diesel exhaust is evaluated relative to an exposure of 24 hours per day, 365 days per year for a 70-year lifetime. SCAQMD does not generally require the analysis of construction-related diesel emissions relative to health risk, due to the short period for which the majority of diesel exhaust would occur. Health risk analyses are typically assessed over a 9-, 30-, or 70-year timeframe, rather than for a relatively brief construction period, due to the lack of health risk associated with such a brief exposure (Appendix A). As such, potential impacts of the proposed project due to TAC emissions would be less than significant.

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. A significant impact may occur if a project would result in other emissions, such as those leading to odors that would adversely affect a substantial number of people. However, objectionable odors are typically associated with manufacturing, industrial, or sewage treatment processes and typically are not associated with residential development and small-scale general commercial uses. Nevertheless, SCAQMD's rules for odor compliance are mandated under Health and Safety Code Section 41700 and also governed in SCAQMD Rule 402, Nuisance. This rule, "A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property. The provisions of this rule shall not apply to odors emanating from agricultural operations necessary for the growing of crops or the raising of fowl or animals" (Appendix A). During construction and operation of the project, trash receptacles would be provided, covered, and properly maintained in order to control odors, as required by law. For operations, enclosed trash storage areas are proposed at various locations throughout the site. Therefore, odor impacts of the project during construction and operation would be less than significant.

3.4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Would the project affect a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) or Significant Natural Area (SNA) as identified on the City of Santa Clarita ESA Delineation Map?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The analysis of project impacts on biological resources is primarily based on information contained in the Biological Resources Assessment and Impact Analysis prepared by Envicom Corporation for the project in November 2022

and the Protected Oak Tree Report prepared for the project in December 2022 by Arbor Essence; both reports are included in Appendix B of this IS/MND.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The Biological Resources Assessment and Impact Analysis (Appendix B) evaluated the project site as part of a large "study area." The study area consists of approximately 1.59 acres of developed areas and approximately 8.42 acres of undeveloped areas. The developed areas are directly adjacent to Newhall Avenue and are currently used for automotive services and sales. From the northwestern portion of the developed area, an existing dirt road consisting of sparsely vegetated and barren areas extends approximately 280 feet in the southeastern direction. In addition, an existing dirt trail traverses through the eastern portion of the site. No additional structures or existing dirt roads/trails were observed on the property (Appendix B).

According to the Biological Resources Assessment and Impact Analysis, vegetation within the study area generally consists of non-native grasslands and patches of coast live oak woodlands immediately adjacent to the developed areas and a mix of scrub oak chaparral, chamise chaparral, and coast live oak woodlands. It was noted that a swath of vegetation growing near the southwestern edge of the project site was recently removed during grading activities associated with the property southwest of the site. However, no additional evidence of recent disturbance to the existing vegetation was observed. Eight vegetation types or landcovers were mapped within the study area. None of these mapped communities are considered sensitive by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. A general biological reconnaissance survey of the study area was conducted in October 2021. No special-status plant and wildlife species were observed within the project site during the October 2021 survey (Appendix B).

Most special-status plant species known to occur in the region are precluded from occurring at the site due to lack of suitable habitat or because the site is outside of the known range of the species. Other species, particularly shrubs and many perennial herbs, could be confirmed as absent as they were not found during the survey. Although two special-status plant species, slender mariposa-lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*) and San Fernando Valley spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*), have a moderate to high potential to occur within the grasslands mapped within the limits of project development and potential fuel modification zones (Appendix B). Adherence to the following Mitigation Measure (MM) BIO-1 would reduce impacts to potentially occurring rare plants to a less-than-significant level.

Although no rare, threatened, or endangered wildlife species were observed during the October 2021 survey, several special-status wildlife species may potentially occur at the site. A total of 10 special-status wildlife species, including Crotch's bumblebee (State candidate for listing as endangered [CE]; *Bombus crotchii*), coastal whiptail (California Species of Special Concern [SSC]; *Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), coast horned lizard (SSC; *Phrynosoma blainvillii*), burrowing owl (SSC; *Athene cunicularia*), Swainson's hawk (State candidate for listing as threatened [CT]; *Buteo swainsoni*), white-tailed kite (California Fully Protected [CFP]; *Elanus leucurus*), pallid bat (SSC; *Antrozous pallidus*), San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (SSC; *Lepus californicus bennettii*), Townsend's big-eared bat (SSC; *Corynorhinus townsendii*), and western mastiff bat (SSC; *Eumops perotis californicus*), have a moderate to very low potential to occur in the project area (Appendix B).

Based on the lack of suitable sites for nests and shelters/dens within the study area, Swainson's hawk, white-tailed kite, and the three species of bats would only temporarily travel, forage over, or hunt through the site as transients and would not reproduce at the site, and the potential for occurrence of these species is low, at best (Appendix B). Therefore, project development would be a less-than-significant impact to these species.

Several land dwelling special-status wildlife species that may potentially occur at the site are capable of escaping harm during project development, including grading and construction, landscaping, or fuel modification; these species include Crotch's bumble bee, coastal whiptail, coast horned lizard, burrowing owl, and San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit. Habitat loss associated with the project is not expected to significantly impact a population of a potentially occurring special-status wildlife species, given the amount of habitat that would be lost and the amount of remaining suitable habitat in the surrounding area (Appendix B). Direct loss or injury to a special-status wildlife species would be a potentially significant but mitigable impact. With implementation of MM-BIO-2, potentially significant impacts to special-status wildlife species would be less than significant.

With implementation of MM-BIO-1 and MM-BIO-2, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts on special-status plant or wildlife species with mitigation.

MM-BIO-1 Pre-Project Botanical Survey. A biologist shall conduct a botanical survey within the project limits and an adjacent buffer area for potentially occurring special-status plant species. The survey shall be conducted at the appropriate time of year based on the combined blooming period for the target species, typically spring or summer, to detect and identify potentially occurring special-status plants, including San Fernando Valley spineflower (State candidate for listing as endangered [CE], California Rare Plant Rank [CRPR] 1B.1; *Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*) and slender mariposa-lily (CRPR 1B.2; *Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*) [CRPR 1B.2].

If special-status plants are not detected during the survey, no additional mitigation is required, and the results of the survey shall be submitted to the Community Development Director or designee (collectively, the "Director"). If a special-status plant(s) is present at or adjacent to the project site, the extent of the population shall be mapped, and the number of individual plants and the acreage of occupied habitat that would be impacted by the project shall be determined. The Director shall be notified. If required, the permittee shall consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) before conducting ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities, and the following actions shall be taken:

Avoid disturbing special-status plants if feasible. If infeasible, the permittee shall offset the proposed loss of individual plants at a minimum 2:1 ratio by on-site restoration (salvage and replanting) or a ratio and method acceptable to the Director, CDFW, and USFWS (if applicable). At the discretion of the Director, CDFW, and USFWS (if applicable), compensation for impacts to these species may be accomplished by restoration or

preservation of on-site or off-site populations in the vicinity of the site, if present. Further, impacts to the San Fernando Valley spineflower require an Incidental Take Permit issued by CDFW.

A Mitigation and Monitoring Plan that provides for the replacement of the species impacted by the project shall be developed by a restoration specialist and approved by the Director, CDFW, and USFWS (if applicable). The plan shall include the following:

- A summary of impacts
- The location of the mitigation site
- Methods for harvesting seeds or salvaging and transplanting individuals to be impacted
- Measures for propagating plants or transferring living plants from the salvage site to the mitigation site
- Site preparation procedures for the mitigation site
- A schedule and action plan to maintain and monitor the mitigation area
- Criteria and performance standards by which to measure the success of the mitigation, including replacement of impacted plants at a minimum 2:1 ratio
- Measures to exclude unauthorized entry into the mitigation areas
- Contingency measures, such as replanting or weeding, in the event that mitigation efforts are not successful

The performance standards for the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan shall be, at a minimum, the following:

- Within 5 years after introducing the plants to the mitigation site, the number of established, reproductive plants shall be no less than two times the number of those lost to project construction.
- Non-native species in the treated area may be less than 15% cover by the end of the third year of treatment and less than 5% by the end of the fifth year of treatment.
- Restoration shall be considered successful after the success criteria have been met for a period of at least 2 years without any maintenance or remediation activities other than invasive species control.

Before the City Engineer issues a grading permit, the permittee shall secure a bond for an amount equal to the cost of the restoration effort. The bond may be released by the Director upon satisfaction of the approved performance criteria. The mitigation project shall be initiated before ground disturbance for the project and shall be implemented over a 5-year period or until performance standards are met, whichever period is longer. The mitigation project shall incorporate an iterative process of annual monitoring and evaluation of progress and shall allow for adjustments to the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, as necessary, to achieve desired outcomes and meet the performance standards described above. Annual reports discussing the implementation, monitoring, and management of the mitigation project shall be submitted to the Director, CDFW (if applicable), and USFWS (if applicable). A final report shall be submitted to the Director, CDFW (if applicable), and

USFWS (if applicable) 5 years after the start of the mitigation project. That report shall (at least) discuss the implementation, monitoring, and management of the mitigation project over the 5-year period and shall conclude whether the mitigation project was successful based on established performance standards. The annual reports and the final report shall include as-built site plans submitted as an appendix to the report. The mitigation project may be extended if performance standards have not been met to the satisfaction of the Director, CDFW (if applicable), and USFWS (if applicable) at the end of the 5-year period.

MM-BIO-2 Special-Status Wildlife Species Survey. Before commencing ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities, including, without limitation, grading and fuel modification, two pre-project surveys for special-status wildlife species, including Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*), coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), and San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennettii*), shall be conducted by a biologist(s) to determine the presence/absence of these species at the site. The first survey shall be conducted within 14 days of the start of ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities, and the second survey shall be conducted within 3 days before commencement of ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities. The pre-construction surveys shall incorporate appropriate methods and timing as detailed in the approved survey protocol for each target species, to detect these species, including individuals that could be concealed in burrows, beneath leaf litter, in trees, or in loose soil. If a special-status species is found, avoidance is the preferred mitigation option. If avoidance is infeasible, a relocation plan including, at a minimum, the timing and methods for capturing and releasing the animals as well as locations for their release shall be prepared and submitted to the Community Development Director or designee (collectively, the "Director") and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for review and approval before the City Engineer issues the first grading permit for the project. The species shall then be captured and transferred to appropriate habitat and location where they would not be harmed by project activities, preferably to open space habitats in the vicinity of the project site. If a federally listed species is found, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Survey shall also be notified. The permittee shall submit a letter report summarizing the methods and results of the surveys and relocation efforts to the Director and CDFW before commencement of project activities. Further, impacts to the Crotch's bumble bee, or any other species listed under the California Endangered Species Act, would require an Incidental Take Permit issued by CDFW.

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, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. Based on review of the existing and surrounding site conditions, no riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community are present on or adjacent to the project site (Appendix B). Therefore, the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community. No impact would occur.

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?

No Impact. Based on review of the existing and surrounding site conditions, no wetlands are present on or adjacent to the project site (Appendix B). Therefore, the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on any wetlands. No impact would occur.

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 sites?

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The project site is not within an area that has been identified as important to wildlife movement, such as a regional-scale habitat linkage or a wildlife movement corridor or a Significant Ecological Area. Although the perimeter of the study area provides habitats with suitable vegetative cover for the movement of a diversity of species, it is not of particular importance to wildlife for movement. For example, the site is not within a bottleneck of habitat between larger areas of core suitable habitat, and it is not necessary for wildlife to pass through the site to access essential resources for water, foraging, breeding, or cover. Further, the project site is situated among existing commercial development and residences; therefore, development of the site would not fragment natural habitats and would not impede wildlife movement or reduce wildlife access to the undeveloped natural habitats to the southwest of the study area (Appendix B).

Ground- and vegetation-disturbing activities, if conducted during the nesting bird season (typically February 1 to August 31), would have the potential to result in removal or disturbance to trees and shrubs that could contain active bird nests. In addition, these activities would also affect herbaceous vegetation that could support and conceal ground-nesting species. Project activities that result in the loss of bird nests, eggs, and young would violate one or more of California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503 (any bird nest), 3503.5 (birds-of-prey), or 3511 (Fully Protected birds). In addition, removal or destruction of one or more active nests of any other birds listed by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, whether nest damage was due to vegetation removal or to other construction activities, would be considered a violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code Section 3511. The loss of protected bird nests, eggs, or young due to project activities would be a significant but mitigable impact. MM-BIO-3 would reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, impacts to wildlife movement would be less than significant.

MM-BIO-3 Nesting Bird Surveys. Project activities including, without limitation, site preparation, construction, or fuel modification activities with potential to disturb suitable bird-nesting habitat shall be avoided within the breeding/nesting season for native bird species (typically February 1 through August 31), if possible. If the breeding/nesting season cannot be avoided, then no earlier than 7 days before ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities that would occur during the nesting/breeding season of native bird species potentially nesting on the site (typically February 1 through August 31), a biologist shall perform two field surveys to determine if active nests of any bird species protected by the state or federal Endangered Species Acts, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and/or the California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, or 3511 are present in the disturbance zone or within

200 feet of the disturbance zone for songbirds or within 500 feet of the disturbance zone for raptors and special-status bird species. The second nesting bird survey shall be conducted within 3 days of the start of ground- or vegetation-disturbing activities. The permittee shall submit a letter report summarizing the methods and results of the surveys to the Director of Community Development and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) before commencement of project activities. In the event an active nest is found within the surveyed area, site preparation, construction, and fuel modification activities shall stop until the biologist can establish an appropriate setback buffer around the nest. Buffer size shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by a biologist based on site conditions, the species' life history and disturbance tolerance, the nest's distance to construction activities, and the type of construction ongoing in the vicinity of the nest. Buffers shall be clearly identified (e.g., using rope, flagging, signage) by natural or human-made features that are deemed sufficient to prohibit access (e.g., tree rows, fences). Project activities within the buffer shall be postponed or halted, at the discretion of the biologist, until the nest is vacated and juveniles have fledged, as determined by the biologist, and there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. Oak trees with a trunk circumference greater than 6 inches meeting certain size requirements are protected by the City's Oak Tree Preservation regulations. A total of 122 protected trees are included in the Oak Tree Report and are identified as coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*). A total of 48 oak trees (23 coast live oak and 25 scrub oaks) are proposed for removal, and based on the definition of "encroachment" by the City, there are 17 encroachments. The site contains four heritage trees. All trees inventoried are on or within 200 feet of the project's proposed development area (Appendix B).

The guidelines for tree protection identified in the Oak Tree Report (provided in Appendix B) would be incorporated into the conditions of the Oak Tree Permit. These conditions would include, at a minimum, the establishment of a tree protection zone with protective fencing and signage; no operation of heavy equipment, storage of construction materials, grade changes, or trenching within the fenced tree protection zone; provisions regarding root pruning and irrigation; and monitoring by a qualified International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist to ensure that project construction is complying with the conditions of the oak tree encroachment permit. Additionally, planting of mitigation trees shall be done in compliance with City mandate.

Accordingly, if compliant with a valid Oak Tree Permit, the project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts with respect to local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

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

No Impact. The project site is not located within an area covered by a habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Accordingly, the project would not conflict with such plans. No impact would occur.

g) ***Would the project affect a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) or Significant Natural Area (SNA) as identified on the City of Santa Clarita ESA Delineation Map?***

No Impact. The project site is not located within a City-designated Significant Ecological Area or Significant Natural Area. As such, the project would not affect such areas. Therefore, no impact would occur.

3.5 Cultural Resources

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

The analysis of the project impacts on cultural resources is primarily based on information contained in the Cultural Resources Phase I Assessment prepared for the project in November 2021 by Envicom Corporation and included as Appendix C of this IS/MND.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. As defined by the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000, et seq.), a "historical resource" is a resource that is listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historical Resources, has been identified as significant in a historical resource survey, or is listed on a local register of historical resources. Under CEQA, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it may cause "a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource" (Public Resources Code Section, 21084.1; 14 CCR 15064.5[b]). If a site is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, included in a local register of historic resources, or identified as significant in a historical resources survey (meeting the requirements of Public Resources Code, Section 5024.1[q]), it is a historical resource and is presumed to be historically or culturally

significant for the purposes of CEQA (Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1; 14 CCR 15064.5[a]). Historic-age structures are those that are built more than 45 years ago and, therefore, have the potential to be considered historical resources pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. While some historical resources are also considered archaeological resources, such resources are addressed in Threshold 3.5(b), as part of the discussion of archaeological resources.

No historical resources as defined by CEQA were identified within the project site as a result of either the California Historical Resources Information System records search or as a result of the cultural resources survey. However, an existing structure within the project site meets the age thresholds for consideration as a historical resource under CEQA (Appendix C).

As detailed in the Cultural Resources Phase I Assessment (Appendix C), examination of the historic maps, satellite images, and aerial photographs was positive for older historic resources being located within the project property, as well as the project being within a region that was sensitive for older historic material or features. The field survey conducted as part of the Cultural Resources Phase I Assessment on March 19, 2021, was also positive for older historical cultural resources with a single built environment cultural resource identified that had been incorporated into the main building found on the property. No older historic artifacts were observed on the surface. The majority of the project site was subject to continuous grading, which removed all material and foundation elements that once were located above the current terrain grade (Appendix C). Moreover, this cultural resource is not recommended as being eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under any criteria due to the impacted nature of the resource, the integration of the 1920s built environment residence into the current larger commercial building, the removal of most of the intact original architectural features of the 1920s building and the merging of the building with later additions, and the lack of older historic artifacts present on the surface. Further, this resource has no known association to events important to the State of California nor to Santa Clarita history, and due to a limited chance for additional information being discovered with further work at the site, no additional assessment of the project site was recommended before construction (Appendix C). Accordingly, the project would not cause any adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

On March 5, 2021, Envicom Corporation conducted a records search of the California Historical Resources Information System database at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), located on the campus of California State University, Fullerton, in Fullerton, California. The records search found no previously identified cultural resources located within the project property but identified one cultural resource within the 0.25-mile surrounding study area. This small, prehistoric cultural resource has been destroyed since recordation due to modern construction and should not have any impact on the project property. SCCIC further identified that no cultural resource reports involved the project property. Six cultural resources reports were identified as involving parts of the 0.25-mile study area; however, examination of these reports did not indicate any cultural resource issues of relevance to the project (Appendix C). As no resources were identified in the records search, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a known historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Therefore, the project would have a less-than-significant impact on historical resources.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As detailed in the Cultural Resources Phase I Assessment (Appendix C) and described above, the results of the SCCIC database record searches were negative for cultural resources within and adjacent to the project site. Most of the project site has been subject to continuous grading, which removed all material and foundation elements that once were located above the current terrain grade. Furthermore, based on the results of the Cultural Resources Phase I Assessment, the potential for unknown prehistoric and historic cultural resources to exist on the project site is considered unlikely.

Envicom Corporation contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on March 5, 2021, and requested a review of their Sacred Lands File for the proposed project site. The Sacred Lands File consists of a database of known Native American cultural resources. These resources may not be included in the SCCIC database and depicted in the records search results. NAHC replied stating that the Sacred Lands File search was completed with negative results (Appendix C).

Accordingly, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. However, it is possible that unknown archaeological resources could be encountered during ground disturbance activities associated with project construction from surface to older alluvial material or bedrock. Thus, mitigation is required to address impacts related to the inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources, as outlined in MM-CUL-1. MM-CUL-1 would require archaeological monitoring during construction from surface to older alluvial material or bedrock and provide protocols and procedures for the inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources. With implementation of MM-CUL-1, significant impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

MM-CUL-1 Archaeological Monitoring. Before the Public Works Director, or designee, issues a grading permit and before starting any ground-disturbing activity, the applicant shall retain a qualified archaeologist, defined as one meeting the Secretary of the Interior's 1983 Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology to be on site during grading of the project site. The qualified archaeologist, in coordination with the Community Development Director (the "Director"), may reduce or discontinue monitoring if it is determined that the possibility of encountering buried archaeological deposits is low based on observations of soil stratigraphy or other factors. Should potential prehistoric or historic-era archaeological resources (sites, features, or artifacts) be exposed during construction activities for the project, all construction work occurring within 30 feet of the find shall immediately stop, and the Principal Investigator/Archaeologist shall be immediately notified to assess the discovery and determine whether additional study is warranted. Depending on the nature of the discovery, the Principal Investigator/Archaeologist may simply record the find and allow work to continue. Discovery situations that do not lead to further assessment, survey, evaluation, or data recovery can be described in the monitor's daily monitoring report. If the discovery is determined significant under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and avoidance is not feasible, data recovery is required. If it is determined by the qualified archaeological monitor that the discovered archaeological resource constitutes a historical resource or unique archaeological resource under CEQA, avoidance and

preservation in place is the preferred manner of mitigation. Preservation in place maintains the important relationship between artifacts and their archaeological context and also serves to avoid conflict with traditional and religious values of groups who may ascribe meaning to the resource. Preservation in place may be accomplished by, without limitation, avoidance, incorporating the resource into open space, capping, or deeding the site into a permanent conservation easement. Should preservation in place be infeasible and data recovery through excavation is the only feasible mitigation available, an Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan that provides for the adequate recovery of the scientifically consequential information contained in the archaeological resource shall be prepared and implemented by the qualified archaeologist in consultation with the Director. The qualified archaeologist and Director shall consult with appropriate Native American representatives in determining treatment for prehistoric or Native American resources to ensure cultural values ascribed to the resource, beyond those that are scientifically important, are considered. All artifacts recovered that are important, with diagnostic or location information that may be of importance to California history, shall be cleaned, analyzed, and described within the monitoring report. A final monitoring report shall be produced that discusses all monitoring activities and all artifacts recovered and features identified through monitoring of the project site.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. If human remains are uncovered during ground-disturbing activities, there are regulatory provisions to address the handling of human remains in Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e). Pursuant to these codes, in the event that human remains are discovered during construction, construction activity must be halted and the area must be protected until the County coroner conducts an investigation into the circumstances, manner, and cause of death and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains are made to the person responsible for the excavation or to their authorized representative, in the manner provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County coroner is required to make a determination within 2 working days of notification of the discovery of the human remains. If the County coroner determines that the remains are not subject to their authority, and if they recognize or have reason to believe the human remains to be those of a Native American, the coroner shall consult with NAHC by telephone within 24 hours to designate a Most Likely Descendant who will recommend appropriate measures to the landowner regarding the treatment of the remains. If the owner does not accept the Most Likely Descendant's recommendations, the owner or the Most Likely Descendant may request mediation by NAHC. Therefore, with compliance with this existing California law, impacts associated with human remains would be less than significant.

3.6 Energy

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

The analysis of the project impacts on energy is primarily based on information contained in the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis prepared for the project in January 2024 by Envicom Corporation and included as Appendix A of this IS/MND.

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. Implementation of the project would increase the demand for electricity and natural gas at the project site and petroleum consumption in the region during construction and operation.

Electricity

Southern California Edison (SCE) provides electricity to the project area. Electricity is currently used by the existing commercial structures on the project site. The project site is expected to continue to be served by the existing SCE electrical facilities. Total electricity demand in SCE's service area is forecast to increase by approximately 12,000 gigawatt-hours—or 12 billion kilowatt-hours—between 2015 and 2026 (CEC 2018).

Construction

Electricity is not expected to be consumed in large quantities during project construction as construction equipment and vehicles would not be electric but diesel- or gas-powered. Although electrical service would be established to serve construction, the amount of electricity that would be used to power as-necessary lighting and electronic equipment, such as computers inside temporary construction trailers, would be small. The electricity used for such activities would be temporary, would be substantially less than that required for project operation, and would, therefore, have a negligible contribution to the project's overall energy consumption.

Operation

Default electricity generation rates in CalEEMod were used (based on the proposed land use and climate zone) based on compliance with 2022 Title 24 standards. According to these estimations, the project would consume approximately 643,446 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, not accounting for mitigation measures such as Energy Star lighting (Appendix A). The project's anticipated electricity demand would be nominal compared to the overall increase in demand in SCE's service area. Therefore, the projected electrical demand would not significantly impact SCE's level of service.

As described above, the electricity demand calculation for the project assumes compliance with Title 24 standards. The project would be required to meet the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (24 CCR, Part 6), which improve the energy efficiency of nonresidential buildings.

Although electricity consumption would increase due to the implementation of the project, the building envelope; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC); lighting; and other systems, such as electric motor equipment, shall be designed to maximize energy performance. The project is subject to statewide mandatory energy requirements as outlined in 24 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Part 6. Title 24 CCR Part 11 contains voluntary energy measures that are applicable to the project under the California Green Building Standards (also known as CALGreen). The project would meet Title 24 requirements applicable at that time, as required by state regulations as enforced through the plan review process. For these reasons, the electricity consumption of the project would not be considered inefficient or wasteful, and impacts would be less than significant.

Natural Gas

The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) provides Los Angeles County with natural gas service. SoCalGas' service territory encompasses approximately 24,000 square miles and more than 500 communities (SoCalGas 2025). In the California Energy Demand mid-energy demand scenario, natural gas demand is projected to have an annual growth rate of 0.03% in the SoCalGas service territory (CEC 2014). In the year 2022, approximately 5,026 millions of therms were used in the SoCalGas service area (CEC 2025).

Construction

Natural gas is not anticipated to be required during construction of the project. Fuels used for construction would primarily consist of diesel and gasoline, which are discussed below under the Petroleum subsection. Any minor amounts of natural gas that may be consumed as a result of project construction would be substantially less than that required for project operation and would have a negligible contribution to the project's overall energy consumption. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Natural gas consumption during operation would be required for various purposes, including, but not limited to, building heating and cooling.

Default natural gas generation rates in CalEEMod for the proposed land use and climate zone were used (Appendix A). According to these estimations, the project would consume approximately 1.7 million kilo British thermal units per year.

As with electricity demand, natural gas demand calculations for the project assumes compliance with Title 24 standards. Although natural gas consumption would increase due to implementation of the project, the building envelope, HVAC, lighting, and other systems must be designed to maximize energy performance. The project is subject to statewide mandatory energy requirements as outlined in 24 CCR Part 6. The California Green Building Standards (24 CCR Part 11) contain voluntary energy measures that are applicable to the project. The project would meet Title 24 requirements applicable at that time, as required by state regulations as enforced through the plan review process. Project-consumed natural gas is also subject to the cap-and-trade regulation. For these reasons, the natural gas consumption of the project would not be considered inefficient or wasteful, and impacts would be less than significant.

Petroleum

Construction

Petroleum would be consumed throughout construction of the project. Fuel consumed by construction equipment would be the primary energy resource expended over the course of construction, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) associated with the transportation of construction materials and construction worker commutes would also result in petroleum consumption. Heavy-duty construction equipment associated with construction activities and haul trucks involved in relocating dirt around the project site would rely on diesel fuel. Construction workers would travel to and from the project site throughout the duration of construction. It is assumed that construction workers would travel to and from the project site in gasoline-powered vehicles.

Heavy-duty construction equipment of several types would be used during project construction. CalEEMod was used to estimate construction equipment usage; results are included in Appendix A. Fuel consumption from construction equipment was estimated by converting the total carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions from each construction phase to gallons using conversion factors for CO_2 to gallons of gasoline or diesel. The conversion factor for gasoline is 8.78 kilograms per metric ton (MT) of CO_2 per gallon, and the conversion factor for diesel is 10.21 kilograms per MT of CO_2 per gallon (The Climate Registry 2022). The estimated diesel fuel usage from construction equipment, haul trucks, and vendor trucks is estimated at 87,649 gallons of diesel fuel. The total fuel usage associated with worker vehicles is estimated at 22,913 gallons of gasoline (Appendix A). Project construction would represent a “single-event” petroleum demand and would not require ongoing or permanent commitment of petroleum resources for this purpose. Therefore, the impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Most fuel consumption resulting from the project’s operational phase would be attributable to residents and visitors traveling to and from the mixed-use project site.

Petroleum fuel consumption associated with motor vehicles traveling to and from the project site during operation is a function of VMT. As shown in Appendix A, the annual VMT attributable to the project is

expected to be 3,297,925 VMT per year. Similar to construction worker and vendor trips, fuel consumption for operation was estimated by converting the total CO_2 emissions from each land use type to gallons using the conversion factors for CO_2 to gallons of gasoline or diesel. Mobile sources from the project would result in approximately 102,360 gallons of gasoline per year and 22,133 gallons of diesel consumed per year beginning in 2026 (Appendix A).

Over the lifetime of the project, the fuel efficiency of vehicles is expected to increase. Accordingly, the amount of petroleum consumed as a result of vehicular trips to and from the project site during operation would decrease over time. There are numerous regulations in place that require and encourage increased fuel efficiency and reduce the reliance on petroleum fuel for transportation over time. For example, CARB has adopted an approach to passenger vehicles by combining the control of smog-causing pollutants and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into a single, coordinated package of standards. The approach also includes efforts to support and accelerate the number of plug-in hybrids and zero-emission vehicles in California (CARB 2023). Additionally, in response to Senate Bill (SB) 375, CARB adopted the goal of reducing per-capita GHG emissions from 2005 levels by 8% by 2020 and 18% by 2035 for light-duty passenger vehicles in the planning area for SCAG. Operation of the project is expected to use decreasing amounts of petroleum over time due to advances in fuel economy. In addition, Executive Order N-79-20 (2020) sets the goal for the state that 100% of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero emission by 2035. Executive Order N-79-20 also sets goals for transition to 100% zero emission for all medium- and heavy-duty vehicles by 2045, drayage trucks by 2035, and off-road vehicles and equipment by 2035, where feasible. Among other directives to further this executive order, for passenger cars and trucks, the Governor directed CARB to develop and propose regulations requiring increasing volumes of new zero-emission vehicles sold in the state toward the target of 100% of in-state sales by 2035.

In summary, although the project would increase petroleum use during operation as a result of mixed-use operational commuting to the project, the use would be a small fraction of the statewide use and, due to efficiency increases, would diminish over time. Enhanced fuel economies realized pursuant to federal and state regulatory actions, and related transition of vehicles to alternative energy sources (e.g., electricity, natural gas, biofuels, hydrogen cells) would likely decrease future gasoline fuel demands per VMT. Trip generation and VMT associated with the project are consistent with other mixed uses of similar scale and configuration. That is, the project does not involve uses or operations that would inherently result in excessive and wasteful activities, nor associated excess and wasteful vehicle energy consumption. Given these considerations, petroleum consumption associated with the project would not be considered inefficient or wasteful and would result in a less-than-significant impact.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. Construction and operation of the project would result in increased energy consumption when compared to existing conditions. The project would be subject to and would comply with, at a minimum, the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (24 CCR Part 6). Part 6 of Title 24 establishes energy efficiency standards for nonresidential buildings constructed in California with the goal of reducing energy demand and consumption.

Part 11 of Title 24 sets forth voluntary and mandatory energy measures that are applicable to the project under the California Green Building Standards, which institutes mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up, new construction of commercial, low-rise residential, high-rise

residential, and state-owned buildings; schools; and hospitals, as well as certain residential and nonresidential additions and alterations. In addition, energy consumed by project operation is calculated to be comparable to energy consumed by other land uses of similar scale and intensity that are constructed and operating in California. Accordingly, the project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

3.7 Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS – Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐
g) Result in the movement or grading of earth exceeding 100,000 cubic yards?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The analysis of the project impacts on geology and soils is primarily based on information contained in the Geotechnical Engineering Investigation prepared for the project in February 2022 by Geotechnologies Inc. and included as Appendix D of this IS/MND. The analysis of the project impacts on paleontological resources is primarily based on information contained in the Cultural Resources Phase I Assessment prepared for the project in November 2021 by Envicom Corporation and the Paleontological Resource Assessment prepared for the project in April 2021 by PaleoWest; both reports are included in Appendix C of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project 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.

No Impact. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazards of surface faulting and fault rupture by establishing regulatory zones around active faults. These zones extend from 200 feet to 500 feet on each side of the known fault and identify areas where a potential surface rupture could be hazardous for buildings used for human occupancy. Development projects within these zones are required to prepare special geotechnical studies to characterize the effects from any potential surface ruptures (Appendix D). The project site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. In addition, there are no known active or potentially active faults on the project site (DOC 2025). Accordingly, the project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to fault rupture.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less-than-Significant Impact. As the project site is in the seismically active region of Southern California, the project site and, consequently, the project itself could be subject to strong ground shaking during seismic events. However, the type and magnitude of seismic hazards that may affect the project site are dependent on both the distance to causative faults and the intensity and duration of the seismic event. Ground-shaking hazards posed by earthquakes occurring along regional active faults exist and would be considered in the design and construction of the proposed buildings on the project site. The project in itself would not exacerbate potential ground shaking. The origin of potential seismic ground shaking would be located off site at one of several regional faults. In addition, project development would have no effect on regional faults or the intensity of seismic ground shaking that could occur during the

lifetime of the project. The nearest major fault, the Sierra Madre Fault, is approximately 2 miles south of the project site (DOC 2025).

The project would be required to adhere to the 2022 California Building Standards Code, which provides procedures for earthquake-resistant structural design that include considerations for on-site soil conditions, occupancy, and the configuration of the structure, including the structural system and height. Design standards specific to the project (e.g., grading amounts, foundation bearing materials, building pad design, footing design, structure fill compaction, depth and makeup of fill materials) have also been provided in the Geotechnical Engineering Investigation provided in Appendix D of this IS/MND. The project's Grading Plan would be required to be consistent with the recommendations provided in the Geotechnical Engineering Investigation, which would be verified by the City in its plan check and grading permit process. In addition, the project would be subject to building inspection by the City during and after construction to ensure compliance with the 2022 California Building Standards. Accordingly, compliance with these required standards would ensure that the project would not directly or indirectly cause potential adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death, related to strong seismic ground shaking. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to seismic ground shaking.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Soil liquefaction most commonly occurs when ground shaking from an earthquake causes a sediment layer saturated with groundwater to lose strength and take on the characteristics of a fluid, thus becoming similar to quicksand. Liquefaction may also occur in the absence of a seismic event when unconsolidated soil above hardpan becomes saturated with water (USGS 2025). Based on conclusions in a site-specific liquefaction analysis prepared for the project site, the potential for liquefaction to occur is negligible. Groundwater was not encountered during exploration conducted to a maximum depth of 50 feet below existing ground level. Additionally, the historically highest level of groundwater for the project site ranged between 40 and 60 feet below the existing grade observed along Newhall Avenue (Appendix D). Based on the depth of the historically highest and current levels of groundwater, the analysis determined that neither liquefaction nor any related phenomena would pose a significant risk to site development. Accordingly, the project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to liquefaction.

iv) Landslides?

Less-than-Significant Impact. According to the Geotechnical Engineering Investigation prepared for the project (Appendix D), a small portion of the ridge located southwest on the adjacent site is mapped within an "Earthquake Induced Landslide" zone. However, as mentioned in Appendix D, this ridge was graded and trimmed down to an approximate elevation of 1,380 feet for the creation of a level terrace at the neighboring site. Furthermore, the remaining 1.5:1 slope will be redefined as part of the proposed project and will be cut at a maximum 2:1 slop gradient. Furthermore, as concluded in the Geotechnical Engineering Investigation, the potential for earthquake-induced landslides in the project site is considered remote (Appendix D). Accordingly, the project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to landslides.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. Grading activities during construction would consist of 78,700 cubic yards of cut and 12,500 cubic yards of fill with an anticipated export of 63,100 cubic yards. Soils within the 9.7-acre project site may become exposed and, thus, subject to erosion from wind and water. Erosion could allow for soil particles to be carried off site, where they can affect water quality, cause sedimentation (buildup of soil in waterways), and reduce the soil stability on site.

To reduce wind and water erosion during earth-moving activities, the project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 regarding fugitive dust, which, as described in Section 3.3, Air Quality, would reduce the potential for wind-driven erosion/loss of topsoil. Similarly, water erosion during construction would be reduced through compliance with the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit, which is mandatory for construction sites that disturb more than 1 acre of land. The Construction General Permit requires construction sites to implement stormwater controls and develop a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), which controls the amount of sediment and other pollutants discharged from the construction site (EPA 2025). The details of the Construction General Permit are discussed further in Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality. Therefore, the potential loss of topsoil resulting from the increase in erosion during any construction activity would be substantially reduced through required compliance with existing regulations.

The project would result in the creation of more impervious surfaces from the proposed buildings, driveways, and other paved surfaces compared to existing conditions. These impervious surfaces would stabilize underlying soils, thereby providing protection from rain- or wind-driven loss of topsoil. In addition, pervious surfaces on the project site, including landscaped areas, would reduce the amount of bare soil and, thus, would anchor the topsoil. Operation of the proposed project would not cause wind or water erosion or the loss of topsoil. Because the developed project site would reduce erosion potential compared to existing conditions, the project would not result in substantial soil erosion, or the loss of topsoil. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to erosion.

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 discussed above, the potential for liquefaction is considered remote on the project site. Potential impacts from unstable geologic units or soils would be reduced through regulatory compliance and incorporating recommended design features in the geotechnical report prepared for the project (Appendix D). After construction, the project would not create site conditions that could exacerbate liquefaction or settlement hazards on the project site. Additionally, the project would include a comprehensive storm drainage system throughout the developed areas to capture and treat surface water runoff within a series of catch basins and infiltration basins, as discussed further in Section 3.10. Therefore, the project would not be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or would become unstable as a result of project that would potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. As such, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to unstable soils.

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 clay-based and tend to increase in volume due to water absorption and decrease in water volume due to drying. Expansive soils can cause structural damage, cracked driveways and sidewalks, heaving of roads and highway structures, and disruption of pipelines and other utilities (Appendix D). The project site's soils were identified as having a very low to low expansion potential (Appendix D). Accordingly, the project would not be located on expansive soil to create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to expansive soils.

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

No Impact. The project site is within a community served by existing public sewer systems. As such, the project would not require the use of septic tanks or an alternative wastewater disposal system, and soil suitability for septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems is not applicable to the project. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to soils incapable of supporting septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Paleontological resources are the remains or traces of plants and animals that are preserved in the earth's crust and, per the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology guidelines (SVP 2010), are older than written history or older than approximately 5,000 years, which approximates the middle Holocene. They are limited, nonrenewable resources of scientific and educational value, which are afforded protection under state laws and regulations.

According to published geologic maps, the project site is immediately underlain by Holocene age surficial alluvium (Qa) and Tertiary Saugus Formation (QTs) (Dibblee and Ehrenspeck 1992). The Saugus Formation is mapped at the surface throughout much of the project site. This formation is mostly nonmarine and was deposited during the Pliocene (5.3 to 2.6 million years ago) and Pleistocene. Locally, it is composed of a light gray, slightly indurated pebble conglomerate, sandstone, and claystone (Dibblee and Ehrenspeck 1992). The Saugus Formation is underlain by, and in part contemporaneous with, the marine Pico Formation. It was first described from exposures in Soledad Canyon not far from the town of Saugus and is composed of interfingering shallow-water marine, brackish water, and nonmarine deposits that grade upward into exclusively nonmarine deposits. The formation contains a lower member also referred to as the Sunshine Range member and an unnamed upper member, separated by an unconformity. Its total thickness is unknown, but oil well data indicate that it can be as much as 12,000 feet thick (Winterer and Durham 1962).

Envicom Corporation submitted a paleontological records search request to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (LACM) of the proposed project site and the surrounding vicinity on March 5, 2021, and the results were received on March 8, 2021. The LACM reported no vertebrate fossil localities from within the proposed project site; however, they did report Pleistocene to Holocene age localities within the vicinity

of the project site. These localities include LACM Vertebrate Paleontology (VP) 6145–6146 and LACM Invertebrate Paleontology (IP) 15719–15721 and 15727, which produced an eagle ray (*Myliobatis* spp.), shovelnose ray (*Rhinobatos* spp.), requiem shark (*Carcharhinus* spp.), basking shark (*Cetorhinis* spp.), and wrasse (*Semicossyphus* spp.) from the Saugus or Pico Formations. Locality LACM VP 3397 produced a bison (*Bison* spp.) from older alluvium, locality LACM VP 7988–7989 yielded numerous specimens of rodent from a paleosol layer within the Saugus Formation, and locality LACM VP 5745 yielded a mastodon (*Mammut* spp.) and a horse (*Equus* spp.) from an unknown formation of Pleistocene age (Appendix C).

Due to both the age and paleontological sensitivity of the sedimentary deposits underlying the project site, specifically high-sensitivity Saugus Formation anticipated at depth, as well as proposed excavation depths, and previous fossil localities recorded from the surrounding area, impacts to paleontological resources are considered potentially significant. MM-GEO-1 details the appropriate steps should paleontological resources be encountered during ground-disturbing activities. Following compliance with MM-GEO-1, the project's potential impacts to a paleontological resource/site feature would be reduced to less than significant.

MM-GEO-1 Paleontological Resource Monitoring. Before commencing any grading activity on site, the applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist per the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) 2010 Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources. The qualified paleontological monitor shall be on site during ground disturbances in undisturbed Saugus Formation or Pleistocene alluvium. Before the permittee initiates ground-disturbing activities, field personnel shall be alerted to the possibility of buried paleontological resources. The paleontological monitor shall collect any fossil material that is uncovered through grading that is found within a disturbed context and can halt construction within 30 feet of a potentially significant fossil resource if necessary. Fossils collected from a disturbed context or that do not warrant additional assessment can be collected, without the need to halt grading. If fossils are not present within the older alluvial or bedrock material, and the project conditions warrant reduced monitoring, then a weekly spot-check system of monitoring can be arranged by the compliance team with the construction manager. However, if fossils that cannot be removed during grading and that the monitor believes will need further assessment are encountered, then the project discovery protocol shall be followed. Discovery situations that do not lead to further assessment, survey, evaluation, or data recovery can be described in the monitor's daily monitoring report.

Documentation and treatment of the discovery shall occur in accordance with SVP standards. All fossils recovered that may be of importance to California paleontology shall be cleaned, analyzed, and described within a final project monitoring report. All materials shall be curated at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County or placed on public display by the owner. The significance of the find shall be evaluated pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. If important fossils are found during monitoring, a curation plan shall be prepared and reviewed by the Lead Agency prior to the publication of the monitoring report. The costs of the monitoring report, the curation plan, the processing, analysis, and curation of all fossils shall be the responsibility of the applicant. If the discovery proves to be significant, before construction activities resume at

the location of the find, additional work such as data recovery excavation may be warranted, as deemed necessary by the paleontologist.

g) Would the project result in the movement or grading of earth exceeding 100,000 cubic yards?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Project construction would include substantial grading, including up to 78,700 cubic yards of cut and 12,500 cubic yards of fill. In addition, approximately 63,100 cubic yards of soil would be exported off site. Grading would be followed by construction of foundations, vertical building construction, paving/concrete, and landscape installation. Each of these project-related activities would result in exposing soils to potential erosion.

However, as discussed above in Threshold 3.7(b), the project applicant would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403, Fugitive Dust, to minimize wind and water erosion at the site, as well as prepare and implement a SWPPP in accordance with the NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharge from Construction Activities. The site-specific SWPPP would be prepared before earthwork activities and would be implemented during project construction. The SWPPP would include BMPs and erosion control measures to prevent pollution in stormwater discharge.

Typical BMPs that could be used during construction include erosion/sediment control measures such as silt fences, fiber rolls, gravel bags, stormwater inlet protection, soil stabilization measures, and street sweeping. The SWPPP would be subject to review and approval by the City for compliance with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual (LACDPW 2010). Additionally, all project construction activities are required to comply with the City grading permit, which requires implementation of grading and dust control measures, including a wet weather erosion control plan if construction occurs during the rainy season, as well as inspections to ensure that sedimentation and erosion is minimized.

Through compliance with these existing regulations, the project would not result in any significant impacts related to soil erosion during the construction phase. Additionally, during operations, most of the project site would be developed with impervious surfaces and landscaping, and all stormwater flows would be directed to storm drain features, resulting in no contact with bare soil surfaces. Therefore, project impacts related to soil erosion or the loss of topsoil are considered less than significant.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The analysis of the project GHG emissions impacts is primarily based on information contained in the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis prepared for the project in January 2024 by Envicom Corporation and included as Appendix A of this IS/MND.

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.

Construction

Construction of the project would result in GHG emissions, which are primarily associated with the use of off-road construction equipment, haul trucks, on-road vendor trucks, and worker vehicles.

Project construction activities would generate a total of 1,096.3 MT CO_2 equivalent (CO_2e) emissions (Appendix A). SCAQMD's GHG emissions evaluation guidance is to amortize construction emissions over a 30-year lifetime, which results in a project amortized annual emissions of approximately 36.5 MT CO_2e emissions.

Operation

Operation of the project would generate GHG emissions through vehicle trips by residents, employees, customers, and visitors to and from the project site; landscape maintenance equipment operation; energy use (natural gas and generation of electricity consumed by the project); solid waste disposal; and generation of electricity associated with water supply, treatment, and distribution, and wastewater treatment. The project's annual operational GHG emissions from a combination of area sources, energy use, mobile, water use, and waste disposal would be 1,382.6 MT CO_2e (Appendix A). With the addition of the amortized construction GHG emissions discussed above, the project would result in annual emissions of approximately 1,419.1 MT CO_2e, which is below the SCAQMD proposed threshold of 3,000 MT CO_2e. Additionally, the project would provide bicycle racks and commercial bicycle storage lockers to encourage use of alternate transportation options, as well as electric vehicle charging spaces per current code requirements. Reductions that would result from implementation of these proposed features were not included in the total project GHG emissions.

Total project GHG emissions would be substantially below the proposed significance threshold of 3,000 MT CO_2e suggested by SCAQMD even without taking credit for the removal of on-site existing uses; after

deducting emissions associated with the existing uses, the net increase in GHG emissions would be even less. Based on this analysis, the project's quantified construction and operational period GHG emissions would be less than significant.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. Applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions that are relevant to the project include the City's General Plan, the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP), the SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, and the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan. Consistency with each of these plans is discussed below.

City of Santa Clarita's General Plan

The City's General Plan (City of Santa Clarita 2011) serves as a foundation for making land use decisions based on goals and policies related to land use, transportation, population growth and distribution, development, open space, resource preservation and utilization, air and water quality, noise impacts, public safety, infrastructure, and other related physical, social, and economic factors over the next 20 years. The City has identified goals and policies in the City's General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element that address GHG emissions reductions. Table 3.8-1 contains a list of GHG reduction strategies that are applicable to the project. The analysis describes the consistency of the project with the General Plan. As shown in Table 3.8-1, the project is consistent with the City's General Plan. Consequently, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3.8-1. Consistency with City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Actions and Strategies	Compliance/Consistency Analysis
Goal CO 8: Development designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.	**No Conflict/Not Applicable.** The project would comply with the state and City of Santa Clarita (City) requirements to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through Assembly Bill (AB) 32 and Senate Bill (SB) 375. The project would adhere to the statewide and City regulations related to the Climate Change Scoping Plan listed as discussed below in Table 3.8-2. The project would meet or exceed the applicable requirements of Title 24, Part 6, as well as the California Green Building Standards in Title 24, Part 11. As such, the project would not conflict with this goal.
Objective CO 8.1: Comply with the requirements of State law, including AB 32, SB 375 and implementing regulations, to reach targeted reductions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.	**No Conflict/Not Applicable.** Policy CO 8.1.1 is a City requirement and does not pertain to the project. The project would not conflict with the goals of the Climate Action Plan.
Policy CO 8.1.1: Create and adopt a Climate Action Plan within 18 months of the OVOV [One Valley One Vision] adoption date of the City's General Plan Update that meets State requirements and includes the following components.	The project would not conflict with the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy regional GHG emissions reduction targets required by SB 375 and therefore would not conflict with Policy CO 8.1.2.

Table 3.8-1. Consistency with City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Actions and Strategies	Compliance/Consistency Analysis
a. Plans and programs to reduce GHG emissions to State-mandated targets, including enforceable reduction measures; i. The CAP may establish goals beyond 2020, which are consistent with the applicable laws and regulations referenced in this paragraph and based on current science; ii. The CAP shall include specific and general tools and strategies to reduce the City's current and projected 2020 inventory and to meet the CAPs target for GHG reductions by 2020; iii. The CAP shall consider, among other GHG reduction strategies, the feasibility of development fees; incentive and rebate programs; and, voluntary and mandatory reduction strategies in areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation and efficiency, solid waste, land use and transportation. b. Mechanisms to ensure regular review of progress towards the emission reduction targets established by the Climate Action Plan; c. Procedures for reporting on progress to officials and the public; d. Procedures for revising the plan as needed to meet GHG emissions reduction targets; and, e. Allocation of funding and staffing for Plan implementation; After adoption of the Climate Action Plan, amend this General Plan if necessary to ensure consistency with the adopted Climate Action Plan. Policy CO 8.1.2: Participate in the preparation of a regional Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Plan to meet regional targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions, as required by SB 375. Policy CO 8.1.3: Revise codes and ordinances as needed to address energy conservation, including but not limited to the following: a. Strengthen building codes for new construction and renovation to achieve a higher level of energy efficiency, with a goal of exceeding energy efficiency beyond that required by Title 24; b. Adopt a Green Building Program to encourage green building practices and materials, along with appropriate ordinances and incentives; c. Require orientation of buildings to maximize passive solar heating during cool seasons, avoid	Policy CO 8.1.3 is a City action; however, the project supports energy conservation as the project would meet or exceed the applicable requirements of Title 24, Part 6, as well as the California Green Building Standards in Title 24, Part 11. Thus, the project would not conflict with this policy. Policies CO 8.1.4 and CO 8.1.5 are City requirements and do not pertain to the project. The project would not conflict with these policies.

Table 3.8-1. Consistency with City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Actions and Strategies	Compliance/Consistency Analysis
solar heat gain during hot periods, enhance natural ventilation, promote effective use of daylight, and optimize opportunities for on-site solar generation; d. Encourage mitigation of the "heat island" effect through use of cool roofs, light-colored paving, and shading to reduce energy consumption for air conditioning. Policy CO 8.1.4: Provide information and education to the public about energy conservation and local strategies to address climate change. Policy CO 8.1.5: Coordinate various activities within the community and appropriate agencies related to GHG emissions reduction activities.	
Objective CO 8.2: Reduce energy and materials consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in public uses and facilities. Policy CO 8.2.1: Ensure that all new City buildings, and all major renovations and additions, meet adopted green building standards, with a goal of achieving the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver rating or above, or equivalent where appropriate. Policy CO 8.2.2: Ensure energy efficiency of existing public buildings through energy audits and repairs, and retrofit buildings with energy efficient heating and air conditioning systems and lighting fixtures, with a goal of completing energy repairs in City facilities by 2012. Policy CO 8.2.3: Support purchase of renewable energy for public buildings, which may include installing solar photovoltaic systems to generate electricity for city buildings and operations and other methods as deemed appropriate and feasible, in concert with significant energy conservation efforts. Policy CO 8.2.4: Establish maximum lighting levels for public facilities, and encourage reduction of lighting levels to the level needed for security purposes after business hours, in addition to use of downward-directed lighting and use of low-reflective paving surfaces. Policy CO 8.2.5: Support installation of photovoltaic and other renewable energy equipment on public facilities, in concert with significant energy conservation efforts. Policy CO 8.2.6: Promote use of solar lighting in parks and along paseos and trails, where practical. Policy CO 8.2.7: Support the use of sustainable alternative fuel vehicles for machinery and fleets, where	**No Conflict/Not Applicable.** Although these policies pertain primarily to City-owned buildings or public buildings and do not pertain to the project, the project would not conflict with these policies. The project would meet or exceed the applicable requirements of Title 24, Part 6, as well as the California Green Building Standards in Title 24, Part 11 to reduce energy usage and GHG emissions. The project would adhere to City requirements regarding maximum lighting levels and may utilize downward-directed lighting and low-reflective paving surfaces where appropriate and feasible. The project would reduce heat island effects by planting trees and maintaining existing open spaces. The project would implement recycling. As such, the project would not conflict with these policies.

Table 3.8-1. Consistency with City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Actions and Strategies	Compliance/Consistency Analysis
practical, by evaluating fuel sources, manufacturing processes, maintenance costs and vehicle lifetime use. Policy CO 8.2.8: Promote the purchase of energy-efficient and recycled products, and vendors and contractors who use energy-efficient vehicles and products, consistent with adopted purchasing policies. Policy CO 8.2.9: Reduce heat islands through installation of trees to shade parking lots and hardscapes, and use of light-colored reflective paving and roofing surfaces. Policy CO 8.2.10: Support installation of energy-efficient traffic control devices, street lights, and parking lot lights. Policy CO 8.2.11: Implement recycling in all public buildings, parks, and public facilities, including for special events. Policy CO 8.2.12: Provide ongoing training to appropriate City employees on sustainable planning, building, and engineering practices. Policy CO 8.2.13: Support trip reduction strategies for employees as described in the Circulation Element. Policy CO 8.2.14: Reduce extensive heat gain from paved surfaces through development standards wherever feasible.	
Objective CO 8.3: Encourage the following green building and sustainable development practices on private development projects, to the extent reasonable and feasible. Policy CO 8.3.1: Evaluate site plans proposed for new development based on energy efficiency pursuant to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards for New Construction and Neighborhood Development, including the following: a) location efficiency; b) environmental preservation; c) compact, complete, and connected neighborhoods; and d) resource efficiency, including use of recycled materials and water. Policy CO 8.3.2: Promote construction of energy efficient buildings through requirements for LEED certification or through comparable alternative requirements as adopted by local ordinance. Policy CO 8.3.3: Promote energy efficiency and water conservation upgrades to existing non-residential buildings at the time of major remodel or additions.	**No Conflict.** The project would meet or exceed the applicable requirements of Title 24, Part 6, as well as the California Green Building Standards in Title 24, Part 11 to reduce energy usage and GHG emissions. The project would retain approximately 1.16 acres as open space out of 9.7 acres. The project is a mixed-use development incorporating residential, commercial, and open space elements to connect it to the community. The project would provide water efficiency features for indoor water usage. The project would adhere to City requirements regarding passive solar heating and cooling techniques. Trees would be utilized throughout the project site to reduce heating and cooling energy loads and to provide shade for buildings, parking lots, and open space areas. The project would adhere to City requirements regarding maximum lighting levels and may utilize downward-directed lighting and low-reflective paving surfaces where appropriate and feasible. The project would reduce heat island effects by planting trees and using hardscapes in and around parking lots and

Table 3.8-1. Consistency with City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Actions and Strategies	Compliance/Consistency Analysis
Policy CO 8.3.4: Encourage new residential development to include on-site solar photovoltaic systems, or pre-wiring, in at least 50% of the residential units, in concert with other significant energy conservation efforts. Policy CO 8.3.5: Encourage on-site solar generation of electricity in new retail and office commercial buildings and associated parking lots, carports, and garages, in concert with other significant energy conservation efforts. Policy CO 8.3.6: Require new development to use passive solar heating and cooling techniques in building design and construction, which may include but are not be [sic] limited to building orientation, clerestory windows, skylights, placement and type of windows, overhangs to shade doors and windows, and use of light colored roofs, shade trees, and paving materials. Policy CO 8.3.7: Encourage the use of trees and landscaping to reduce heating and cooling energy loads, through shading of buildings and parking lots. Policy CO 8.3.8: Encourage energy-conserving heating and cooling systems and appliances, and energy-efficiency in windows and insulation, in all new construction. Policy CO 8.3.9: Limit excessive lighting levels, and encourage a reduction of lighting when businesses are closed to a level required for security. Policy CO 8.3.10: Provide incentives and technical assistance for installation of energy-efficient improvements in existing and new buildings. Policy CO 8.3.11: Consider allowing carbon off-sets for large development projects, if appropriate, which may include funding off-site projects or purchase of credits for other forms of mitigation, provided that any such mitigation shall be measurable and enforceable. Policy CO 8.3.12: Reduce extensive heat gain from paved surfaces through development standards wherever feasible.	possibly through the use of light-colored reflective paving and roofing systems. As such, the project would not conflict with these policies.
Objective CO 8.4: Reduce energy consumption for processing raw materials by promoting recycling and materials recovery by all residents and businesses throughout the community.	**No Conflict/Not Applicable.** Although these policies pertain primarily to the City, the project would not conflict with these policies. The project would provide mandatory recycling containers to its residents in proper enclosures and would provide proper recycling containers in public spaces. Additionally, the project would recycle at least 65%

Table 3.8-1. Consistency with City of Santa Clarita General Plan

Actions and Strategies	Compliance/Consistency Analysis
Policy CO 8.4.1: Encourage and promote the location of enclosed materials recovery facilities (MRF) within the Santa Clarita Valley. Policy CO 8.4.2: Adopt mandatory residential recycling programs for all residential units, including single-family and multi-family dwellings. Policy CO 8.4.3: Allow and encourage composting of greenwaste, where appropriate. Policy CO 8.4.4: Promote commercial and industrial recycling, including recycling of construction and demolition debris. Policy CO 8.4.5: Develop and implement standards for refuse and recycling receptacles and enclosures to accommodate recycling in all development. Policy CO 8.4.6: Introduce and assist with the placement of receptacles for recyclable products in public places, including at special events. Policy CO 8.4.7: Provide information to the public on recycling opportunities and facilities, and support various locations and events to promote public participation in recycling. Policy CO 8.4.8: Take an active role in promoting, incubating, and encouraging businesses that would qualify under the Recycling Market Development Zone program or equivalent, including those that manufacture products made from recycled products, salvage, and resource recovery business parks.	of its construction and demolition debris in accordance with City requirements. As such, the project would not conflict with these policies.

Source: City of Santa Clarita 2011.

City of Santa Clarita Climate Action Plan

The City's adopted CAP provides a local threshold of significance for GHG emissions that would constitute a significant impact under CEQA (City of Santa Clarita 2012). Because the CAP was only certified through 2020 and the project would be anticipated to become operational in 2026, the CAP is not applicable for a consistency analysis. However, the goals, objectives, and policies approved under the General Plan are forecast to meet the GHG emissions reduction targets mandated by Assembly Bill (AB) 32 and SB 32, for which the CAP GHG significance threshold is based upon. Therefore, development projects that can demonstrate consistency with the General Plan would by association demonstrate consistency with the CAP and AB 32. Table 3.8-1 illustrates that the project would not conflict with applicable policies in the City's General Plan and by association the CAP. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Southern California Association of Governments' 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

On April 4, 2024, the Regional Council of SCAG formally adopted the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS as a regional growth management strategy, which targets per-capita GHG reduction from passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks in the Southern California region pursuant SB 375. In addition to demonstrating the region's ability to attain the GHG emission-reduction targets set forth by CARB, the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS outlines a series of actions and strategies for integrating the transportation network with an overall land use pattern that responds to projected growth, housing needs, changing demographics, and transportation demands (SCAG 2024). Thus, successful implementation of the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS would result in more complete communities with various transportation and housing choices while reducing automobile use.

The primary objective of the RTP/SCS is to provide guidance for future regional growth (i.e., the location of new residential and nonresidential land uses) and transportation patterns throughout the region, as stipulated under SB 375. The project site is not identified by SCAG as a Priority Growth Area, meaning development according to the existing land use designation and zoning would achieve GHG reduction goals. As the project's land use aligns with the patterns established by SCAG in the RTP/SCS and would construct 106 units toward the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment requirements on an underutilized infill property, the project is consistent with the 2024–2045 RTP/SCS; as such, impacts would be less than significant.

California Air Resources Board's 2022 Scoping Plan Update

California adopted the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) to provide initial direction to limit California's GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and initiate the state's long-range climate objectives. Since the passage of AB 32, the state has adopted GHG emissions reduction targets for future years beyond the initial 2020 horizon year. For the proposed project, the relevant GHG emission-reduction targets include those established by SB 32 and AB 1279, which require GHG emissions be reduced to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, and 85% below 1990 levels by 2045, respectively. In addition, AB 1279 requires the state achieve net zero GHG emissions by no later than 2045 and achieve and maintain net negative GHG emissions thereafter.

As defined by AB 32, CARB is required to develop the Scoping Plan, which provides the framework for actions to achieve the state's GHG emission targets. The Scoping Plan is required to be updated every 5 years and requires CARB and other state agencies to adopt regulations and initiatives that will reduce GHG emissions statewide. The first Scoping Plan (Climate Change Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change) was adopted in 2008 and was updated in 2014, 2017, and most recently in 2022. The Scoping Plan is not directly applicable to specific projects, nor is it intended to be used for project-level evaluations.[1] However, given that the Scoping Plan establishes the official framework for the measures and regulations that will be implemented to reduce California's GHG emissions in alignment with the adopted targets, a project would be found to not conflict with the statutes if it would meet the general policies in reducing GHG

[1] The Final Statement of Reasons for the amendments to the CEQA Guidelines reiterates the statement in the Initial Statement of Reasons that the Scoping Plan "may not be appropriate for use in determining the significance of individual projects…because it is conceptual at this stage and relies on the future development of regulations to implement the strategies identified in the Scoping Plan" (CNRA 2009).

emissions in order to facilitate the achievement of the state's goals and would not impede attainment of those goals.

The 2017 Scoping Plan included measures to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency (including the mandates of SB 350), increase stringency of the low-carbon fuel standard, reduce transportation emissions through implementation of the Mobile Source Strategy and Freight Action Plan, approve and implement the proposed Short-Lived Climate Pollutants plan, and increase stringency of SB 375 targets. The 2022 Scoping Plan builds upon and accelerates programs currently in place, including moving to zero-emission transportation; phasing out use of fossil gas use for heating homes and buildings; reducing chemical and refrigerants with high global warming potential; providing communities with sustainable options for walking, biking, and public transit; and displacing fossil-fuel fired electrical generation through use of renewable energy alternatives (e.g., solar arrays and wind turbines) (CARB 2022).

Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan provides attributes for local development projects that can be used to assess a project's alignment with state climate goals on an informational basis. Table 3 in Appendix D is titled "Key Residential and Mixed-Use Project Attributes that Reduce GHGs." This table provides a list of project-level attributes that have been determined to "reduce operational GHG emissions while simultaneously advancing fair housing" (CARB 2022). As shown in Table 3.8-2 below, the project would not conflict with the 2022 Scoping Plan; as such, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3.8-2. Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan

Priority Areas	Key Project Attribute	Potential for Conflict
Transportation Electrification	Provides EV charging infrastructure that, at minimum, meets the most ambitious voluntary standard in the California Green Building Standards Code at the time of project approval	**No Conflict.** The project is subject to the current California Green Building Standards (Part 11, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) and would be required to provide electric vehicle (EV) capable spaces and EV charging stations as per the code.
VMT Reduction	Is located on infill sites that are surrounded by existing urban uses and reuses or redevelops previously undeveloped or underutilized land that is presently served by existing utilities and essential public services (e.g., transit, streets, water, sewer)	**No Conflict.** The project would construct a mixed-use residential development on an infill site in an urbanized area that is increasing its density. It is replacing an underutilized low-density commercial use. The site is served by all utilities and near multiple transit options.
	Does not result in the loss or conversion of natural and working lands	**No Conflict.** The project site is an urban infill location. There are no natural or working lands within the confines of the project site.
	Consists of transit-supportive densities (minimum of 20 residential dwelling units per acre), or Is in proximity to existing transit stops (within a half mile), or Satisfies more detailed and stringent criteria specified in the region's SCS	**No Conflict.** Of the 4.5 utilized acres of the project, the density is 23.5 dwelling units per acre (du/acre). Considering the total 9.7-acre site, the project density is 10.9 du/acre. The project abuts a vegetated ridge, and the entirety of the site would likely not be considered buildable; therefore, the project is taking advantage of maximum or nearly maximum density of the site. Additionally, there are bus stops on either side of

Table 3.8-2. Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan

Priority Areas	Key Project Attribute	Potential for Conflict
		Newhall Avenue within 0.5 miles of the project site.
	Reduces parking requirements by: Eliminating parking requirements or including maximum allowable parking ratios (i.e., the ratio of parking spaces to residential units or square feet); or Providing residential parking supply at a ratio of less than one parking space per dwelling unit; or For multifamily residential development, requiring parking costs to be unbundled from costs to rent or own a residential unit.	**No Conflict.** The project would provide the number of parking spaces as required by City code, plus seven additional spaces.
	At least 20 percent of units included are affordable to lower-income residents	**No Conflict.** The project will provide 100 market rate units. The City of Santa Clarita (City) does not have an inclusionary housing requirement. The City distributes Community Development Block Grants monies for the purposes of maintaining existing affordable housing stock and assisting low-income individuals. As such, the majority of new housing constructed within the City is market rate.
	Results in no net loss of existing affordable units	**No Conflict.** No residential units are being removed for the development of the project.
Building Decarbonization	Uses all-electric appliances without any natural gas connections and does not use propane or other fossil fuels for space heating, water heating, or indoor cooking	**No Conflict.** The project buildings would be supplied with a gas connection.

Source: Appendix A; CARB 2022.

In summary, the consistency analysis presented above demonstrates that the project is consistent with or would not conflict with the plans, policies, regulations, and GHG reduction action/strategies outlined in the General Plan, SCAG's 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, and CARB's 2022 Scoping Plan. Therefore, impacts related to inconsistency with the applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted to reduce GHG emissions would be less than significant.

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – Would the project:				
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 that 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 two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The analysis of the project impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials is primarily based on information contained in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and Phase II ESA prepared for the project in March 2021 and May 2021, respectively, by Alpha Environmental; both reports are included in Appendix E of this IS/MND.

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. During demolition and construction, small quantities of potentially hazardous substances, such as gasoline, diesel fuel, lubricants for machines, and other petroleum-based products, would be used on site. Once operational, limited quantities of hazardous materials, such as solvents, fertilizers, pesticides, and other materials used for regular household maintenance of buildings and landscaping, would be utilized by homeowners within the project. However, quantities of these materials would not be significant enough to pose a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Compliance with the established regulatory framework, including the California Department of Transportation provisions regulating the transport of hazardous materials, would minimize risks to the maximum extent practicable. Therefore, impacts concerning the project's potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials 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 with Mitigation Incorporated.

Construction

The project site is improved with one single-story multi-tenant commercial building, two used car sale lots with associated trailer offices, and a contractor storage yard. Asphalt paved parking/storage areas are located throughout the project site; however, the remaining majority of the land is generally vacant. The site is currently occupied by multiple tenants including "A/A-ATM Auto Sales," "Burr Roofing," "Dip Stik Oil," and "Mountain Motors." Due to the existing auto repair and oil change operations on the project site and the previous potential gas station on the project site, there is potential for release of hazardous materials into the environment during project construction.

The Phase I ESA indicated that the project site has the potential for vapor intrusion due to various factors. As detailed in the Phase I ESA, a review of historical uses on the project site indicated a portion of the existing commercial building was constructed in 1928 with additions between 1947 through 1989. The potential impact to sub-surface soil from the auto repair/service operations, including, without limitation, use of mechanics pit, abandoned in-ground hoists, and various aboveground petroleum storage tanks/drums storage areas, represent a recognized environmental condition. Additionally, the project site may have previously served as a gas station during the late 1930s and early 1940s. The lack of records to demonstrate absence of underground storage tanks and related contamination represents a recognized environmental condition (Appendix E). Given the abovementioned property characteristics and historical uses, the Phase I ESA recommended that a soil vapor survey be performed to characterize possible soil vapor impacts.

In response to the Phase I ESA's recommendations, a Phase II ESA soil vapor survey was prepared in May 2021. Based on the findings of the Phase II ESA, vapor samples collected in the area of the existing commercial building on the northwestern corner of the project site (where the former gasoline station was located) were found to have slightly elevated, but relatively low concentration of total petroleum

hydrocarbons – gasoline fraction and/or volatile organic compounds (ethylbenzene and xylenes) that exceed applicable regulatory screening levels (Appendix E). Implementation of MM-HAZ-1, which would require vapor mitigation design features be implemented for all future buildings and enclosed structures prior to issuance of a grading permit, to prevent both potential encroachment and/or intrusion of volatile organic compound soil vapor and/or potential methane seepage from historical oil/gas wells in the vicinity of the project site, would be required. Further, considering various historical on-site uses, if stained/impacted soil is encountered during redevelopment activities, the soils should be sampled and disposed of per regulatory guidelines that the project is required to be consistent with.

Additionally, due to the age of the existing commercial building (portions constructed in 1941), it is possible that asbestos-containing building materials or lead-based paint could be found at the project site (Appendix E). Implementation of MM-HAZ-2 and MM-HAZ-3 would reduce impacts involving asbestos-containing building materials and lead-based paint to a level of less than significant. Implementation of MM-HAZ-2 would require an asbestos-containing building materials survey be done before any demolition activities. Implementation of MM-HAZ-3 would require a lead-based paint survey be done before demolition permits are issued.

Further, construction of the proposed project would involve hazardous materials, such as fuels and lubricants, which would be transported to and used on site in construction vehicles and equipment. However, the potential for use of these materials to result in significant hazards to the public or the environment would be low, for the reasons described below.

The project contractor and construction crews are required to comply with all applicable regulations governing the storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials and waste. The City requires preparation of a SWPPP. The SWPPP would identify potential pollutant sources that may be associated with construction activity, identify non-stormwater discharges, and recommend means and methods to effectively prohibit the entry of pollutants into the public storm drain system during construction. In addition, the SWPPP would include BMPs, including proper handling of petroleum products, such as proper petroleum product storage and spill response practices, to prevent pollution in stormwater discharge. The BMPs must be implemented during demolition or at the start of new construction. These BMPs would be required to remain in place until a Certificate of Occupancy for the project has been issued.

These BMPs would help control the use of hazardous substances during construction and would minimize the potential for such substances to leave the site, thus reducing the potential for the public to be exposed to construction-related chemicals and materials and reducing the potential for such substances to be released into the environment. With implementation of applicable construction BMPs, implementation of MM-HAZ-1, MM-HAZ-2, and MM-HAZ-3, and adherence to applicable hazardous materials and waste regulations, impacts involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment due to upset and accident conditions during project demolition and construction would be less than significant.

Operation

During project operation, use of commercial cleaners, lubricants, or paints associated with janitorial, maintenance, and repair activities during resort operations as well as household cleaning supplies, would be relatively limited and would be subject to federal, state, and local health and safety requirements. As required by the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD), any business that would store hazardous

materials and/or waste at its site would be required to submit business information and hazardous materials inventory forms contained in a hazardous materials management plan and hazardous materials business plan. In addition, all hazardous materials handlers are subject to inspection every 3 years. LACFD, as the Certified Unified Program Agency, requires all new commercial and other users to follow applicable regulations and guidelines regarding storage and handling of hazardous waste. All hazardous materials are required to be stored and handled according to manufacturer's directions and local, state, and federal regulations including the Hazardous Waste Control Act (Health and Safety Code Section 25100 et seq.), which is implemented by regulations described in CCR Title 22. Impacts associated with reasonably foreseeable upset and accidental conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be less than significant.

MM-HAZ-1 Vapor Intrusion Mitigation. Before the City Engineer issues a grading permit, vapor mitigation design features shall be implemented in accordance with the 2011 Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Vapor Intrusion Mitigation Advisory for all future buildings and enclosed structures. The construction contractor shall incorporate vapor mitigation design features into building plans that reduce potential vapor intrusion in buildings and enclosed structures on the project site below DTSC screening levels. Vapor mitigation systems may be passive or active in nature, so long as they are designed to prevent vapor contamination on the project site in accordance with applicable DTSC regulations at the time the systems are designed, and they allow for upgrades, or modifications as needed, if post-installation monitoring shows an unacceptable level of vapor intrusion. Vapor mitigation systems must be reviewed and approved by the permitting agency (City of Santa Clarita) or their designated third-party consultant/engineering firm prior to construction and prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy to verify the adequacy of design to (1) eliminate the potential for vapor intrusion into buildings and (2) meet current regulatory guidance and standards. Operation of the project shall maintain functionality of these features as required to continue protection from vapor intrusion. An operations and maintenance plan shall be developed as part of the design that includes ongoing monitoring requirements and schedules to verify adequacy and operation of the system. All monitoring schedules shall meet local requirements, including those of the permitting agency, as applicable. Monitoring results shall be submitted to the permitting agency (or their designated third party consultant/engineering firm) for confirmation of the adequacy of the designed systems. If future monitoring reveals vapor intrusion occurring at increasing levels, levels above applicable DTSC screening levels, or failures in the system, modifications shall be made, as necessary, to the designed system to improve the efficacy in reducing vapor intrusion to below applicable screening levels.

MM-HAZ-2 Asbestos-Containing Materials Survey. Before any demolition activities, a licensed asbestos inspector must be retained by the permittee to determine the presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) within existing buildings, as required by South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rule 1403, as well as all other applicable laws. If ACMs are found to be present, it shall be abated in compliance with SCAQMD Rule 1403 and other applicable laws.

MM-HAZ-3 Lead-Based Paint Survey. Before the City Engineer issues demolition permits, the project applicant must submit verification to the Community Development Director (the "Director") of a lead-based paint survey that has been conducted at all existing buildings on the project site. If lead-based paint is found, the project applicant must follow all procedural requirements and regulations for proper removal and disposal of the lead-based paint, in accordance with 8 California Code of Regulation 1532.1, which specifies exposure limits, exposure monitoring, and respiratory protection and mandates good worker practices by workers exposed to lead. Contractors performing lead-based paint removal must provide evidence of abatement activities to the Director.

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 with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project involves the construction and operation of a new mixed-use development. There is one preschool, Grand Central Preschool, located 0.13 miles northeast of the project site across Newhall Avenue. While the project would be within 0.25 miles of an existing school and could involve the use of small quantities of potentially hazardous materials, such as fuels, solvents, degreasers, and paints during construction and small amounts of commercially available janitorial and landscaping supplies during operation, such materials would not be used in quantities sufficient to cause a potential hazard to nearby schools. Additionally, any potentially hazardous conditions on the project site would be remediated pursuant to MM-HAZ-1, MM-HAZ-2, and MM-HAZ-3. Therefore, impacts related to emitting hazardous emissions or handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 miles of existing or proposed schools would be less than significant with mitigation.

d) Would the project be located on a site that 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. Government Code Section 65962.5 combines several regulatory lists of sites that have the potential to pose a hazard related to known hazardous materials or substances. The Department of Toxic Substances Control's EnviroStor database identifies sites that have known contamination or sites for which there may be reasons to investigate further. A search of selected government databases was conducted as part of the Phase I ESA (Appendix E). The project site itself is not included on the list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. The project site was also not included on any of these databases, and no cases within close proximity to the site were identified.

In addition, the project would operate in compliance with existing regulations regarding handling of hazardous materials. As such, based on review of the Phase I ESA findings and current database review, as well as compliance with existing regulations, 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 two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The nearest public airport to the project site (Van Nuys Airport) is approximately 10 miles from the project site. The nearest private airstrip (Whiteman Airport) is approximately 9.2 miles from the project site. The project site is not identified in any airport land use plans. As such, construction and operation of the proposed project would not pose a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. No impacts 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. The City has identified that the terrain and layout of the Santa Clarita Valley can affect evacuation during a wildfire event, earthquake, landslide/mudslide, human-made hazard, or other emergency. The City's Emergency Operations Plan (City of Santa Clarita 2020a) addresses the City's planned response and recovery to emergencies associated with natural disasters and technological incidents, provides an overview of organizational concepts, identifies components of the City's emergency management organization within the Standardized Emergency Management System and the National Incident Management System, and describes the overall responsibilities of the federal, State, and County entities and the City of protecting life and property and assuring the well-being of the population. The City's Hazard Mitigation Plan (City of Santa Clarita 2021) outlines several mitigation actions intended to facilitate emergency evacuation, including working with LACFD and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office to coordinate the Public Alert and Warning Notification System, coordinating with LACFD to enhance emergency services to increase the efficiency of wildfire response and recovery activities, and incorporating mass notification procedures (e.g., text, social media) into evacuation notification efforts. The Hazard Mitigation Plan also includes a goal of identifying safe evacuation routes in high-risk natural disaster areas and coordinating with the County to identify emergency transportation routes (City of Santa Clarita 2021). The City's General Plan Circulation Element, policies, including Policy C 2.5.2, require that new development ensure adequate emergency and evacuation access is incorporated into design plans (City of Santa Clarita 2011). The County has identified disaster routes for the City, which include I-5 and Newhall Avenue as primary disaster routes (County of Los Angeles 2012).

The project would include emergency access via Newhall Avenue near the center and eastern end of the project site's frontage. The project's planned interior road network and the existing regional road system that it interconnects with provide multi-directional primary and secondary emergency evacuation routes consistent with most developments in this area. Consistent with the County evacuation approach, major ground transportation corridors in the area would be used as primary evacuation routes during an evacuation effort. The primary roadways that would be used for evacuation from the project site are Newhall Avenue and SR-14. Newhall Avenue connects to the SR-14's ramp about 0.75 miles to the east. These roads provide access to urbanized areas and major traffic corridors, including I-5.

During an emergency evacuation from the project, the primary and secondary roadways may provide citizen egress while responding emergency vehicles are inbound. Because the roadways are all designed to meet or exceed County requirements, unobstructed travel lane widths, shoulders, vehicle turnouts, adequate parking,

turning radius, grade maximums, signals at intersections, and roadside fuel modification zones, potential conflicts that could reduce the roadway efficiency are minimized, allowing for smoother evacuations.

All in all, the project site is in an existing developed area with access to major roadways that would allow for emergency evacuation. Therefore, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with emergency response, and 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 project involves a mixed-use development including a total of 106 multifamily residential units, 4,000 square feet of commercial retail space, and recreational and open space areas. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer, the project site is considered a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone within a Local Responsibility Area (CAL FIRE 2024). The site currently has varied vegetation but mostly consists of non-native vegetation that was established after human disturbance and a mix of scrub oak chaparral, chamise chaparral, and coast live oak woodlands. Existing potential ignition sources include vehicle storage, powerlines, off-site commercial uses and residential neighborhoods, arson, and vehicle-related ignitions from SR-14 or I-5.

While the project would add more residents to the area, research indicates that the type of dense developments like the proposed project are not associated with increased vegetation ignitions. Housing density directly influences susceptibility to fire because in higher density developments, there is one interface (the community perimeter) with the wildlands, whereas lower density development creates more structural exposure to wildlands, less or no ongoing maintained landscapes (an intermix rather than interface), and consequently more difficulty for fire resources to protect structures. The intermix includes structures among the unmaintained fuels, whereas the proposed project would convert all fuels within the footprint and provide a wide, managed fuel modification zone separating homes from unmaintained fuel and creating a condition that makes defense easier. A study by Syphard and Keeley (2015) states that "[t]he WUI [wildland–urban interface], where housing density is low to intermediate is an apparent influence in most ignition maps," further enforcing the conclusion that lower density housing poses a higher ignition risk than higher density communities. It also states that "[d]evelopment of low-density, exurban housing may also lead to more homes being destroyed by fire" (Syphard and Keeley 2015). A vast wildland–urban interface already exists in the areas adjacent to the development site, with some older, more fire-vulnerable structures constructed before stringent fire code requirements were imposed on residential development, with varying levels of maintained fuel modification buffers in the area.

Given the anticipated growing population of the County's wildland–urban interface areas, including in Santa Clarita, and the region's fire history, it can be anticipated that periodic wildfires would occur in the open space areas of the County, with the natural open spaces south of the project site being no exception. Given the climatic, vegetative, and topographic characteristics and local fire history of the area, once developed, the project site could be subject to periodic wildfires that may start on, burn onto, or spot into the site.

The proposed project would introduce potential ignition sources to the site; however, all new structures would be constructed to the County and City Fire Codes, 2022 California Building Standards Code Chapter 7A, and 2022 California Fire Code standards. As discussed, the ignition-resistant construction standards

required for development in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone address roofs, eaves, exterior walls, vents, appendages, windows, and doors and result in hardened structures. The project would implement a fire-hardened landscape, highly ignition-resistant residential dwelling units, and conversion of flashy fuels (non-native grasslands) to developed areas, with designated review of all landscaping and maintenance of fuel modification areas. Fires from off site would not have continuous fuels across this site and would therefore be expected to burn around and/or over the site via spotting. The project is not expected to result in the heightened fire hazard typically associated with the wildland–urban interface, since the entirety of the project is being converted to high-density ignition-resistant structures and landscaping. The fire hazard of wildland–urban interface areas is more closely correlated to lower density residential areas that have combustible vegetation between homes that allow for fire spread. The ignition-resistant features of the project would form a redundant system of protection to minimize the likelihood of exposing residents and visitors, as well as structures, to the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. This same fire protection system would provide protections from an on-site fire spreading to off-site vegetation. Consequently, accidental fires within the maintained landscape or structures in the project area would have limited ability to spread. It should be noted that while these standards would provide a high level of protection to structures for the project, there is no guarantee that compliance with these standards would prevent damage or destruction of structures by fire in all cases. The proposed project would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY – Would the project:				
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;	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The analysis of the project impacts related to hydrology and water quality is primarily based on information contained in the Drainage Concept/Hydrology report and Urban Stormwater Management Plan, both prepared for the project in December 2023 by Alliance Land Planning and Engineering Inc., and the Water Quality Effects Summary Memorandum prepared in January 2023 by Envicom Corporation; all three reports are included in Appendix F of this IS/MND.

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. The project does not propose commercial or industrial uses that would typically use or manufacture products in substantial quantities that could significantly affect water quality. The project would be connected to the City's municipal wastewater sewer line that would convey wastewater generated by the project to the City's wastewater treatment facilities (Appendix F). The proposed project would replace the existing commercial development and parking lots with new residential and retail structures and associated paved driveways and parking spaces, which would increase the overall imperviousness of the site. Approximately 3 acres of the undeveloped hillside portion of the site would be retained in its existing condition, thus minimizing the increase in the imperviousness of the site. As reported in the project's Drainage Concept/Hydrology report (Appendix F), although the project would increase the total imperviousness of the site, peak flowrates for the developed condition would be less than the existing condition for both the 25-year and 50-year storm events. This is a result of the meandering and flatter path that runoff takes in the developed condition as compared to the existing condition despite the developed condition having a higher level of imperviousness.

Pollutants of concern that could be present in runoff from the proposed mixed-use development and parking areas include sediment, metals, organic compounds, nutrients, bacteria, pesticides, trash and debris, and petroleum hydrocarbons (i.e., fuels). The project would install an underground stormwater infiltration system to meet applicable Low Impact Development (LID) standards per the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works LID Standards Manual (LACDPW 2014). The proposed stormwater infiltration system would consist of 72-inch perforated corrugated metal pipes to be buried beneath portions of the parking lot and driveway near the northeastern boundary of the property. All runoff from the developed areas of the project site would be routed to the infiltration system, where it would then percolate down into the ground below for treatment by infiltration.

The project would be required to provide water quality treatment for a stormwater quality design volume of 13,312 cubic feet as prescribed per the County's LID Standards Manual. The project's proposed water quality infiltration system has been designed to accommodate a total volume of 13,483 cubic feet, which would exceed the required volume to sufficiently provide water quality treatment of stormwater runoff to meet applicable requirements and standards (Appendix F).

The project would be required to comply with the City's stormwater regulations, the countywide Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, and the NPDES Construction General Permit and is required to implement a SWPPP. Compliance with these requirements would ensure the project would not significantly impact stormwater management. In addition, the project has been designed with appropriate BMPs to ensure compliance. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any significant effects relating to water quality. All areas of development will be treated per methods outlined by the City, and the proposed underground infiltration chamber will treat the project's required water quality runoff volume. As a result, with adherence to drainage control requirements, water quality 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 project site is within the Santa Clara River Valley East Subbasin of the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin, which is replenished by the Santa Clara River and its tributaries and by stormwater percolation. The project would not install any groundwater wells and would not directly withdraw any groundwater. In addition, there are no known aquifer conditions on the project site or in the surrounding area that could be affected by project development. Accordingly, the project would not physically interfere with any groundwater supplies.

The Santa Clara River and its tributaries are the primary groundwater recharge areas for the Santa Clarita Valley. Development of the project site, which is currently partially undeveloped, would increase the amount of impervious surface area. The reduction in pervious surface area could reduce the percolation of rainwater that may potentially affect groundwater recharge. In addition, the project would alter the existing drainage pattern of the project site by adding impervious surfaces and collecting/conveying on-site stormwater to a storm drain. However, the proposed project's landscaped areas and open space would continue to allow stormwater to percolate into the substrate, and stormwater in the development area would be conveyed to desilting/detention basins, which would allow the stormwater to percolate into the substrate. The project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with

groundwater recharge. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to groundwater supplies.

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. Existing runoff spills down into the gutter and flows to one of two curb opening catch basins in Newhall Avenue. Flow is then routed to an existing underground MS4 public storm drain system that flows west toward Pine Street. The MS4 system discharges beneath Newhall Avenue into a box culvert underpass, which then flows into Newhall Creek and ultimately into the Santa Clara River. During project operations, on-site water would be treated in an underground water quality chamber and would not be mixed with off-site flow in order to minimize the required size of any water quality facilities. Developed condition flow patterns remain mostly unchanged when compared to those of the existing condition (Appendix F).

The project would be required to comply with the City's stormwater regulations, the countywide MS4 permit, and the NPDES Construction General Permit and is required to implement a SWPPP. Compliance with these requirements would ensure the project would not significantly impact stormwater management. The project's construction and operational activities would be typical of those conducted for residential and commercial developments and would include areas for materials storage, vehicle or equipment fueling or maintenance, waste handling, hazardous materials handling or storage, delivery area, loading docks, and other outdoor work areas. During operation, stormwater flows would be directed to storm drainage features and would not come into contact with bare soil or create an opportunity for erosion or siltation on or off site. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. Developed condition flow patterns remain mostly unchanged when compared to those of the existing condition. The project would direct stormwater flows to an existing drainage system that would comply with the MS4 permit (Appendix F). Accordingly, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to flooding.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. Developed condition flow patterns remain mostly unchanged when compared to those of the existing condition. The existing storm drain system within Newhall Avenue would not be negatively affected. The project would be required to comply with the City's stormwater regulations, the countywide MS4 permit, and the NPDES Construction General Permit and is required to implement a

SWPPP. Compliance with these requirements would ensure the project would not significantly impact stormwater management. Accordingly, the project would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to stormwater drainage systems or sources of polluted runoff.

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Developed condition flow patterns remain mostly unchanged when compared to those of the existing condition. Based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the project site, a portion of the project site fronting Newhall Avenue is in an area mapped as Zone X, Other Areas of Flood Hazard (with 0.2% annual chance flood hazard, areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than 1 foot or with drainage areas of less than 1 square mile) (FEMA 2024). The project would direct stormwater flows to an existing drainage system that would comply with the MS4 permit. Accordingly, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact because the project would not alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner that would significantly impede or redirect flood flows.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

No Impact. According to the City's General Plan Safety Element, "within the Santa Clarita Valley dams are located at the Castaic Reservoir and the Bouquet Reservoir. If the Castaic Reservoir Dam were to rupture from a seismic event, potential flooding could occur in Castaic, Val Verde, and Valencia. Failure of the two dams at the Bouquet Reservoir could result in flooding downstream in Saugus and Valencia" (City of Santa Clarita 2011). However, the project site is over 14 miles from the Bouquet Reservoir and separated from the reservoir by ridges and valleys. Accordingly, the project site is not in a potential dam inundation area of the Bouquet Reservoir. In addition, there are no levees in the vicinity of the project site. The project site is located inland and not susceptible to tsunami hazards, nor is there an enclosed or semi-enclosed body of water such that there would be any risk of seiche hazards. The project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to flooding.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact.

Water Quality Control Plan

In addition to surface water quality impacts, as previously described, groundwater quality could be potentially affected by infiltration of urban runoff from the project site. Identification of the groundwater pollutants of concern for the project was based on consideration of proposed land uses, as well as pollutants that have the potential to impair beneficial uses of groundwater beneath the site. The Basin Plan for the Coastal Watershed of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties (RWQCB 2014) contains numerical objectives for designated groundwater basins, such as the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin, for bacteria, mineral quality, nitrogen, and various toxic chemical compounds and contains

qualitative objectives for taste and odor. Beneficial uses of groundwater downstream of the project site include municipal and domestic water supply, industrial service and process supply, and agricultural supply.

Proposed LID water quality/retention basins, in combination with required drainage control requirements, would be protective of water quality that is consistent with Basin Plan policies and water quality objectives. Therefore, potential pollutants in stormwater runoff during construction and operation would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

Groundwater Management Plan

Passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in 2014 requires replacing the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (SCV Water) Groundwater Management Plan with a requirement to implement a Groundwater Sustainability Plan that provides a pathway to sustainability (SWRCB 2024). Based on the SCV Water 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) (SCV Water 2021), the groundwater component of overall water supply in the Upper Santa Clara River Valley was derived from the SCV Water Groundwater Management Plan (Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency 2022). This plan was developed and analyzed to meet water requirements (municipal, agricultural, small domestic) while maintaining the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin in a sustainable condition (i.e., no long-term depletion of groundwater or interrelated surface water).

In terms of adequacy and availability, the combined active alluvial aquifer groundwater source capacity of municipal wells (approximately 67,000 acre-feet per year) is more than sufficient to meet the current and potential future (i.e., through 2050) municipal, or urban, component of groundwater supply from the alluvium, while remaining within the 30,000 to 40,000 acre-feet per year basin yield. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of a sustainable groundwater management plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

3.11 Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING – Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

No Impact. A significant impact could occur if a project would be sufficiently large or configured in such a way so as to create a physical barrier within an established community. A physical division of an established community can be caused by a street vacation that blocks through travel or a physical barrier, such as a new freeway. The project would not involve any street vacation or closure, and it would not result in development of new thoroughfares or highways. The proposed development would occur within the boundaries of the project site. Furthermore, the project would not result in any changes to the surrounding areas. The project would not divide an established community in terms of use. The project site is within a fully urbanized area with a complete street and utility network, sidewalks, and bus stops and has previously been utilized as an auto repair shop. The project site, which has a General Plan land use and zoning designation of Mixed-Use Corridor (MX-C), is surrounded by a convalescent home facility to the northwest, commercial/retail uses to the north, multifamily residential uses and commercial/retail uses to the northeast and east, and undeveloped land planned for development of a business park and single-family residences to the south. Immediately adjacent properties surrounding the project site have General Plan land use and zoning designations of Urban Residential 3 (UR3) and Community Commercial (CC) to the north and northeast across Newhall Avenue; Mixed-Use Corridor (MX-C) to the to the east; Mixed-Use Corridor (MX-C) and Urban Residential 3 (UR3) to the south and southeast; and Mixed-Use Corridor (MX-C) to the west.

Therefore, developing the project site with a mixed-use development is consistent with zoning, past uses on site, and surrounding uses. As such, the project would not physically divide an established community. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to the physical division of an established community.

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?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Oak trees are present on the project site. Before initiation of ground-disturbing activities in proximity to oak trees, the permittee would be required to obtain an Oak Tree Permit from the City. The guidelines for tree protection identified in the Oak Tree Report (Appendix B) would be incorporated into the conditions of the Oak Tree Permit and compliance with the City's Oak Tree Preservation regulations would be required. Accordingly, complying with a valid Oak Tree Permit would result in the project adhering to local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

Accordingly, the project would be consistent with the project site's General Plan and zoning designation and would not 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. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant land use impacts.

3.12 Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. MINERAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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?

Less-than-Significant Impact. According to the California Department of Conservation, the project site is designated as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) 3, which is defined as areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data (DOC 2021). The project site does not contain existing mineral resource extraction activities under existing conditions. Although the presence of mineral resources cannot be evaluated, the project site's existing and future operations would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources.

In addition, the California Geologic Energy Management Division's Well Finder database indicates that one oil/gas well (Jack L. Watkins Legion Well #1) is located in the south-central portion of the project site. A Well Summary Report indicated that drilling for this well was completed in November 1952 and operations have been inactive since January 1953 as no oil and gas was found. The well was reportedly abandoned using a cement plug, which was witnessed and approved by the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM 2024; Appendix E). Given this, the well has been categorized as a dry well; project construction and operations would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource as this well is an abandoned dry well. Moreover, based on the proper abandonment of this well with no oil or gas found and the lack of oil sumps in the vicinity of the project site, this former well in the area surrounding the project site is not expected to result in a significant environmental concern for the project site (see more discussion in Section 3.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials).

Therefore, due to the lack of any known significant mineral resources that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource, and less-than-significant impacts 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?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The Santa Clarita Valley contains mineral resources that have been extracted historically, including gold, natural gas, and oil. Many older mines and oil wells have been abandoned, although several oil and natural gas wells are still in production. As detailed above, the project site is on land designated as MRZ-3, which is defined as areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data (DOC 2021). As shown in Exhibit CO-2 of the City's General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element, the project site is not within an existing mineral extraction area nor an MRZ. However, the project site is within the vicinity of existing mineral extraction areas in the form of estimated oil and gas fields to the north, northeast, and south of the site (City of Santa Clarita 2011). Policies are included in the City's General Plan to ensure that wells are properly capped and mines are sealed and that any pollutants associated with extraction activities are remediated to ensure public safety after these operations are completed. Moreover, the project site is not within an existing mineral/oil conservation area overlay zone as defined in SCMC Section 17.38.030. Mineral extraction activities are not permitted on site under existing conditions.

Given the lack of designations, availability of known resources, and existing and proposed conditions, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts.

3.13 Noise

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

The analysis of the project impacts related to noise and vibration is primarily based on information contained in the Noise and Vibration Impact Analysis prepared for the project in April 2022 and revised in November 2022 and December 2023 by Envicom Corporation and included as Appendix G of this IS/MND.

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. Temporary increases in ambient noise levels would be due to the use of equipment during construction of the proposed project. Permanent increases in ambient noise levels would be due to operation of project components such as HVAC units and vehicle trips generated on local roadways.

Construction

Based on the Federal Highway Administration Construction Noise Handbook's (FHWA 2006) national database of construction equipment noise levels, the piece of construction equipment that could generate the highest (L_{max}) noise level is a concrete saw, which would generate a maximum noise level of 90 A-weighted decibels (dBA) L_{max} at a 50-foot distance and an average noise level of 83 dBA energy equivalent level (L_{eq}) at a 50-foot distance during the demolition phase (Appendix G). Construction would proceed in phases, such as demolition, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating (painting). Each phase involves the use of different types of construction equipment. Therefore, at any particular phase of construction, contractors would use only the types of equipment needed, rather than using all the equipment throughout all phases. Demolition activity would be limited to the locations of the existing buildings and pavement on the site, near Newhall Avenue. Grading activity could occur throughout the limits of disturbance.

The distances between the project site boundary and the nearest existing sensitive receptors are listed in Table 3.13-1.

Table 3.13-1. Sensitive Receptors Near the Project Site

Street Address	Direction	Land Use	Distance to Limit of Construction (feet)
23801 Newhall Avenue	Northwest	Santa Clarita Post-Acute Care Center	45
23700 Valle del Oro	Northeast	The Village Apartments	130
23649 Newhall Avenue	Southeast	Single Family Residence	310

Source: Appendix G.
Notes: Distance to Limit of Construction is the distance from the property line of the receptor to the nearest project construction boundary (in feet).

As required by the City's noise regulations (SCMC Section 11.44.080, Special Noise Sources–Construction and Building), no person may engage in any construction work that requires a building permit from the City on sites within 300 feet of a residentially zoned property except between the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday. Further, no work shall be performed on the following public holidays: New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Memorial Day, and Labor Day. As shown in Table 3.13-1, there is a residentially zoned property within 300 feet of the boundary of construction. The nearest residentially zoned property, the Village Apartments, is located at 23700 Valle del Oro and is

zoned Urban Residential (UR3). Therefore, the project would be subject to the allowable hours for construction specified in SCMC Section 11.44.080. Other sensitive receptors in the area include the single-family residences to the southeast, the nearest of which is at 23649 Newhall Avenue and is zoned as UR3,and the Santa Clarita Post-Acute Care Center, a convalescent home zoned as MX-C (Appendix G).

According to Appendix G, typical construction noise levels would be 63.4 dBA L_{eq} at the exterior of the adjacent convalescent home to the northwest of the project during the demolition phase and 59.2 dBA L_{eq} during the grading phase. At the Village Apartments to the northeast, the second-closest sensitive receptor location, typical exterior noise levels would be 62.2 dBA L_{eq} during the demolition phase and 57.6 dBA L_{eq} during the grading phase. At the single-family residences to the southeast, the third-closest receptor location, typical exterior noise levels would be 54.4 dBA L_{eq} during the demolition phase and 56.0 dBA L_{eq} during the grading phase. All other sensitive receptors would experience lower construction noise levels because they are further away from the noise source, as more distance attenuation would further reduce the noise. The City does not have a numerical threshold for construction noise but regulates construction noise by setting the allowable hours for construction in the vicinity of residential land uses (Appendix G). Therefore, compliance with the SCMC would ensure the project would not exceed the hours specified, thereby reducing construction noise impacts to a less-than-significant level.

The typical construction noise levels would result in a temporary noise increase of approximately 1.1 dBA above existing daytime ambient noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptor, the adjacent convalescent home to the northwest of the project. This temporary daytime noise level increase that would occur during the demolition phase (approximately 25 days) is less than 3 dBA, and as such average noise levels would not typically be perceptibly louder than existing noise levels. At the second-closest sensitive receptor, the apartments to the northeast, the typical construction noise levels would result in a temporary noise increase of approximately 0.8 dBA above existing daytime ambient noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptor. This increase that would occur during the demolition phase (approximately 25 days) of less than 3 dBA would not typically be perceptibly louder than existing noise levels. At the third-closest sensitive receptor, the single-family residences to the southeast, the construction noise levels would result in a temporary ambient noise level of 56.4 dBA L_{eq}, which would be a temporary noise increase of approximately 11.0 dBA above existing daytime ambient noise levels at that receptor. This temporary daytime noise level increase would occur during the grading phase (approximately 45 days), and the temporary daytime ambient noise level of 56.4 dBA L_{eq} at this receptor due to project construction activities would be within the 50–60 dBA Community Noise Equivalent Level “normally acceptable” land use compatibility guidelines for residential uses and below the 65 dBA L_{eq} daytime residential noise standard from the SCMC (Appendix G). Although construction noise is not regulated by these standards, temporary noise levels that do not exceed the standards would not be excessive. These temporary noise increases would only be experienced within daytime hours during the phases of construction with the loudest noise effects (demolition and grading), which would occur for a combined duration of 70 days. Temporary noise increases at these nearest sensitive receptors would be lower for the remainder of the 410-day total duration of project construction activities. Temporary noise increases at all other sensitive receptors in the vicinity would be even lower due to additional distance attenuation that would reduce the noise levels at those locations because they are farther from the project site. Therefore, project construction would not result in substantial temporary noise levels at sensitive receptors (Appendix G).

Operation

The project would introduce stationary noise sources such as HVAC units, which are required to comply with SCMC noise standards limiting the level of noise received on property occupied by another person. Although actual HVAC use would depend on weather conditions and tenant occupancy, this analysis considers potential noise impacts from simultaneous operation of all roof-mounted HVAC units at the nearest buildings to each of the off-site sensitive receptors (Appendix G).

The estimated noise level from the HVAC units at the nearest building to the property line of the nearest sensitive receptor, the Santa Clarita Post-Acute Care Center, would be 43.9 dBA L_{eq}. The noise level from these HVAC units of 43.9 dBA L_{eq} would not exceed the daytime noise standard of 65 dBA and nighttime noise standard of 55 dBA for residential zones specified by SCMC Section 11.44.040. In addition, this noise level would not increase the ambient noise level above the measured noise level of 68.7 dBA L_{eq} at the northwestern property boundary. Additionally, noise levels from the project's HVAC units at the property line of the multifamily residences to the northeast would be 36.2 dBA L_{eq}, which would not exceed the daytime noise standard of 65 dBA and nighttime noise standard of 55 dBA for residential zones. This noise level would not increase the ambient noise level above the measured noise level of 69.4 dBA L_{eq} at these residences. Finally, noise levels from the project's HVAC units at the property line of the nearest of the single-family residences to the southeast would be 29.6 dBA L_{eq}, which would not exceed the daytime noise standard of 65 dBA and nighttime noise standard of 55 dBA for residential zones. This noise level would not increase the ambient noise level above the measured noise level of 45.4 dBA L_{eq} near these residences (Appendix G). Therefore, noise impacts from the project's HVAC would be less than significant.

The project transportation consultant, Hirsch/Green Transportation Consulting Inc., produced a Traffic Impact Analysis Report (Appendix H), which provided AM and PM peak-hour volumes for intersections in the project vicinity for the Existing (2021) and Future (2023) baseline scenarios. The PM peak-hour volumes were selected for the calculation of average daily traffic because they were generally greater than the AM peak-hour volumes. The number of proposed units has slightly increased since the preparation of the project traffic report; thus, the project traffic volumes on nearby roadway segments were calculated based on revised trip generation calculations and the trip distribution percentages from the original project traffic report. The addition of 790 daily trips[2] by the project in the Existing (2021) and Future (2023) baseline scenarios on Newhall Avenue would result in a change of 0.1 dBA Community Noise Equivalent Level or less in traffic noise levels. The cumulative increase in traffic noise levels (Future Year 2023 With Project compared to Existing Without Project) would be 0.3 dBA Community Noise Equivalent Level or less (Appendix G). Therefore, the project would not substantially increase traffic noise levels.

As such, construction and operational noise impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

[2] The Noise and Vibration Impact Analysis was based upon slightly different trip generation numbers as the analysis included a total of 758 daily trips. The addition of 32 trips per day would not substantially change the calculated amounts of increased traffic noise. It would not be possible for the addition of 32 trips to result in the project increasing noise by even 1 decibel, let alone 3 decibels, which is the minimum threshold necessary to be detectable.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. Construction activities that might expose persons to excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise could cause a potentially significant impact. Groundborne vibration from construction activities is typically attenuated over short distances. The heavier pieces of construction equipment used at a construction site could include graders, tractors, loaders, cranes, rubber-tired bulldozers, generators, and paving equipment.

Vibration levels at the nearest off-site structure, the Santa Clarita Post-Acute Care Center convalescent home, would be far below the applicable structural damage criteria for modern industrial/commercial buildings of 0.5 peak particle velocity inches per second, and therefore no vibration damage impact would occur (Appendix G). All other structures would experience lower vibration levels as they are further away. In addition, vibration levels would be far below those that would be strongly perceptible (0.1 peak particle velocity inches per second), and vibration annoyance would therefore not occur. All other sensitive land uses would experience lower vibration levels as they are further away. Therefore, project construction would result in groundborne vibration levels below the applicable thresholds of significance for construction vibration. After construction is complete, and the proposed buildings are occupied, project operations would be similar to surrounding uses and would not include any sources of substantial groundborne vibration (Appendix G). Therefore, groundborne vibration from project construction and operations would result in a less-than-significant 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?

No Impact. A project located within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport may result in a significant impact if a project would expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels. The project site is not located within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest airport to the project site is Whiteman Airport (approximately 9.2 miles to the southeast). The project site does not fall within the airport's land use plan area, Influence Areas, or 65 dBA Community Noise Equivalent Level contours (Appendix G). Therefore, the project would not result in the exposure of residents or those working in the project area to excessive noise levels. No impact would occur.

3.14 Population and Housing

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

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. Based on the data presented from the U.S. Census Bureau, Santa Clarita has an average persons per household of 3.05 as of 2022 (U.S. Census Bureau 2024). Therefore, the population generated by the 106-unit housing development proposed by the project would be approximately 335 new residents. The City's population as of July 1, 2023, was 224,028 persons. The likely increase of 335 new residents associated with project implementation would result in an increase of approximately 0.15% of the City's population. Therefore, the project would result in a nominal contribution to the existing population for the City. Furthermore, this projected population growth would represent a nominal contribution (0.07%) to the projected population of 485,000 as projected for the Santa Clarita Valley in 2030.

Additionally, due to SCAG's 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment, the City is planning for the construction of 10,031 additional housing units within the planning period between 2021 and 2029. Therefore, the project would help the City achieve its regional housing needs as the project's housing units are anticipated to be occupied within the timeframe of the 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

The proposed project would generate employment opportunities through the development of commercial space. Since the project is in the densely populated Los Angeles metropolitan area, it is anticipated that the jobs at the project site would be filled by City residents or by residents of neighboring cities or communities. In the unlikely event that new employees were to relocate to the City or County upon obtaining a job at the project site, the potential population growth would not be substantial.

The project would not result in substantial, unplanned population growth, and impacts 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. There are no housing units on the project site; therefore, the project would not displace existing housing or require construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact would occur.

3.15 Public Services

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

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:

Fire protection?

Less-than-Significant Impact. LACFD Fire Station 73 is the primary fire protection service provider to the project site. Fire Station 73 is located at 24875 Railroad Avenue, which is approximately 1.6 miles northwest of the project site.

Construction activities associated with the project may temporarily increase demand for fire protection and emergency medical services. Construction activities may involve the operation of construction equipment and machinery, storage, handling, and disposal of combustible materials, and the use of flammable and toxic materials. The project, however, would be constructed in accordance with all applicable construction standards, including those established by the California Fire Code, Health and Safety Code, California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and Los Angeles County Fire Code (as adopted by the SCMC). This would require that construction managers and personnel be trained in fire prevention and emergency response, as well as require that fire suppression equipment specific to construction activities be maintained on site. The project would also comply with all state and local codes and ordinances related to the maintenance of mechanical equipment, handling and storage of flammable materials, and cleanup

of spills of flammable materials. Compliance with the applicable regulatory requirements would reduce the risk of hazards occurring that would require fire and emergency medical services. Additionally, the project site is in close proximity to the existing LACFD fire station that would service the project in the event that fire protection or emergency medical services are needed during project construction.

The project would introduce new employees and residents within the station's service area, which would increase demand for fire protection and emergency medical services (refer to Section 3.14, Population and Housing, for further discussion on general impacts associated with the project's future population). To offset the costs of the additional resources needed to serve the growing city and the project itself, the applicant would be required to pay development fees established by LACFD.

The proposed project would also be designed and constructed in accordance with all applicable provisions of the applicable fire code, which includes requirements for adequate fire flows, width of emergency access routes, turning radii, automatic sprinkler systems, fire alarms, and floor-to-sky height limits along emergency access routes.

The project site is in a suburban area that is already serviced by LACFD. While the proposed project may result in an increase in fire protection and emergency medical services, the project would not require LACFD to increase its service area in order to service the project site. Additionally, LACFD participates in mutual aid agreements, meaning that if an emergency were to occur on the project site that would require resources beyond what the fire stations in closer proximity to the site would be able to supply, other resources would be supplied from other jurisdictions. This would ensure that acceptable service ratios for fire protection and medical emergency services are maintained under project conditions.

For the reasons described above, the project would not require the construction of new, or expansion of existing, fire stations, thereby resulting in substantial adverse physical impacts in order to maintain acceptable service ratios and response times. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Police protection?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The project site is in the Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff Station service area. This station is located at 26201 Golden Valley Road in Santa Clarita, which is approximately 2.5 miles northeast of the project site.

During construction, there is the potential for construction activities to create an increase in demand for police protection services, as construction sites can be sources of attractive nuisances, can provide hazards, and can invite theft and vandalism when not properly secured. During construction, the project applicant, or its construction contractor, would implement temporary security features including security fencing, lighting, and locked entry in order to secure the project site. These features would reduce the need for police protection services during the project's construction phase. Potential short-term construction impacts to police services would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities.

The project would introduce new employees and residents within the station's service area, which would increase demand for law enforcement services. Pursuant to SCMC Section 17.51.01B, the project's developer would be required to pay a law enforcement facilities fee, which would allow the station to acquire

additional law enforcement service personnel and equipment to ensure that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office is able to maintain an adequate level of service to the area. The project would also generate tax revenues from the property taxes, a portion of which would be allocated to maintain adequate sheriff station staffing and equipment levels. Furthermore, the project would comply with state and local regulations by providing adequate lighting for recreational amenities, improved open space areas, pedestrian pathways, circulation ways, paths of egress, and parking lots. These design elements would increase safety and decrease the likelihood of crime occurring.

For the reasons described above, impacts to police services would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.

Schools?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Implementation of the project would result in a direct increase in the number of students within the service areas of the Newhall School District and William S. Hart Union High School District. Both school districts would make appropriate decisions based on existing resources and facilities if enrollment pressures rise. In addition, both school districts assess development impact fees to help finance new and expanded facilities needed to accommodate population growth and increasing enrollments. The fees change over time and are collected by the City at the time of issuance of building permit. The project would be required to pay fees in accordance with Government Code Section 65995. Payment of such fees is intended for the general purpose of addressing the construction of new school facilities, whether schools serving the project area are at capacity or not. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65995(h), payment of such fees is deemed full mitigation of a project's development impacts. Accordingly, the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives for schools. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts on schools.

Parks?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Once operational and occupied, the project would introduce new residents and employees, at least a portion of which are anticipated to patronize the various public parks and recreation facilities located in proximity to the project site. Included in the project are several open space and recreational features, including a 1.16-acre lot on the project site that would provide an outdoor trail for resident use and remain otherwise unimproved under the proposed project. Additionally, the project's proposed apartment complex would also include a pool and spa, gym, kids' playing area, tot lot, community room, yoga/kids' classroom, and picnic area.

The standard minimum parkland-to-population ratio developed by the City is 3 acres per 1,000 residents, and the City's General Plan standard is 5 acres per 1,000 residents. According to the General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element, based on current park facilities in the City, there are approximately 1.5 to 2 of acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is below both the City's minimum standard and the General Plan standard (City of Santa Clarita 2011).

While the proposed project would not improve upon the existing residents to parkland ratios, the impact of the project upon the existing ratio would be modest. In addition, as discussed above, the project itself provides a variety of recreational amenities for the residential units. This would help to decrease the demand upon the existing public recreational facilities given that recreational features would be immediately available for future project residents. Furthermore, the project developer/applicant would be required to pay an in-lieu fee, which would be used for the purpose of acquiring local park land, developing new parks, or rehabilitating existing parks. Therefore, potential impacts to park services would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered park facilities, and impacts would be less than significant.

Other public facilities?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Other public facilities provided within the City include library services. Library services are provided by the Santa Clarita Public Library System. The public library nearest to the project site is Old Town Newhall Library, located approximately 1 mile northwest of the project site.

The City annually reviews the budget and need for capital improvement projects. The Capital Improvement Program ensures that the City has adequate funding for public facility improvements, such as the public library system. The City also conducts a comprehensive needs assessment and facility study for the library through the Capital Improvement Program. The project would generate tax revenues from the property taxes that would continue to support current and future needs for the public library and associated infrastructure. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts on libraries and other public facilities.

3.16 Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. RECREATION				
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

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. Once operational and occupied, the project would introduce new residents and employees, at least a portion of which are anticipated to patronize the various public parks and recreation facilities located in proximity to the project site. Included in the project are several open space and recreational features, including a 1.16-acre lot (Lot 3) on the project site that would provide an outdoor trail for resident use and remain otherwise unimproved under the proposed project. Additionally, the project's proposed apartment complex would also include a pool and spa, gym, kids' playing area, tot lot, community room, yoga/kids' classroom, and picnic area. This would help to decrease the demand upon the existing public recreational facilities given that recreational features would be immediately available for future project residents. Furthermore, the project developer/applicant would be required to pay an in-lieu fee, which would be used for the purpose of acquiring local park land, developing new parks, or rehabilitating existing parks. This would allow the City to continue to provide adequate park and recreational services.

Growth on the project site is anticipated and would not lead to the substantial deterioration of existing parks and recreational facilities.

Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. Impacts 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 with Mitigation. Construction activities related to the proposed recreational components of the project would involve introducing heavy machinery to the project site for grading, excavation, and development. Impacts associated with project construction would be temporary and short in duration. As discussed throughout this IS/MND, impacts associated with the proposed project, including the project's recreational amenities, would result in either no impact or less-than-significant impacts, either with or without mitigation. As such, impacts have been determined to be less than significant with mitigation.

3.17 Transportation

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The analysis of the project's impacts related to transportation is primarily based on information contained in the Traffic Impact Analysis Report prepared for the project in April 2021 by Hirsch/Green Transportation Consulting Inc. and included in Appendix H. The number of proposed units slightly increased since the preparation of the April 2021 project traffic report; thus, the project traffic volumes referenced in this section are based on revised trip generation calculations in the Revised Traffic Study Trip Generation Calculations, prepared in November 2023 by Hirsch/Green Transportation Consulting Inc. and included in Appendix H of this IS/MND.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 describes specific considerations for evaluating a project's transportation impacts. Generally, VMT is identified as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts, replacing level of service (LOS) and referring to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. Accordingly, the VMT analysis for the project is presented in the response to Threshold 3.17(b) below.

However, in addition to a VMT analysis required under CEQA, a local agency may require a transportation impact assessment to include an LOS analysis to identify infrastructure improvements required to provide acceptable operations, consistent with the acceptable LOS in the local agency's general plan. The City requires an LOS consistency with its General Plan by identifying traffic levels at intersections. LOS is commonly used as a qualitative description of intersection operations and roadway segments and is based on the design capacity of the intersection configuration and roadway facility, compared to the volume of traffic using the facility. The LOS for five study area intersections were analyzed for the project. These intersections are Newhall Avenue at Railroad Avenue, Newhall Avenue at Pine Street/Arch Street, Newhall Avenue at Carl Court, Newhall Avenue at Valle del Oro, and Newhall Avenue and Sierra Highway. Accordingly, the LOS analysis for these intersections is presented in the response to Threshold 3.17(a) below for information purposes only.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. The 9.7-acre project site is partially developed and occupied with various commercial uses, including a used car sales lot, an oil change business, and a roofing material storage facility. The project involves demolishing these existing uses and replacing them with a mixed-use development consisting of 106 multifamily units, including 70 apartments and 36 townhome-style units, and 4,000 square feet of commercial space.

Compliance criteria identified in the City's General Plan Circulation Element (City of Santa Clarita 2011) and the City's Transportation Impact Assessment Guidelines (City of Santa Clarita 2020b) were used to

evaluate the project's potential contribution to traffic conditions on the five study area intersections identified above. The City's General Plan Circulation Element contains the following objective and policy related to transportation compliance and LOS targets (City of Santa Clarita 2011):

- **Objective C 2.2:** Adopt and apply consistent standards throughout the Santa Clarita Valley for street design and service levels, which promote safety, convenience, and efficiency of travel.
    - **Policy C 2.2.4:** Strive to maintain a Level of Service (LOS) D or better on most roadway segments and intersections to the extent practical; in some locations, a LOS E may be acceptable, or LOS F may be necessary, for limited durations during peak traffic periods.

Based on the City's Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita report (Transportation Analysis Report), unsatisfactory traffic congestion occurs when the LOS is degraded by project-added trips from LOS D to LOS E or F, or, if an intersection is already operating at LOS D or worse, and the project increases delay of more than 4.0 seconds for an intersection operating at LOS D and more than 2.0 seconds for an intersection operating at LOS E or F (City of Santa Clarita 2020b). These criteria would be applied to determine if intersection improvements are needed to accommodate the project and avoid any conflict with the City's General Plan objective and policy addressing the City's circulation system.

The Highway Capacity Manual, 6th Edition, methodology, established by the Transportation Research Board, was used to analyze the operation of the five signalized study area intersections (TRB 2016). As shown in Appendix H, with the addition of project traffic to Existing and Opening Year conditions, all study area intersections are forecast to operate at satisfactory LOS (LOS D or better), except for the intersections of Newhall Avenue at Railroad Avenue and Newhall Avenue at Sierra Highway in the PM peak hour. However, the project would not result in more than a 2.0-second delay at these intersections. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the City's General Plan Circulation Element objective and policy listed above because the forecast "Future (2023) With Project" scenarios during either the AM or PM peak hours at any of the five study intersections are not considered to reach "significant" levels based on the City's Transportation Impact Assessment Guidelines.

Furthermore, as discussed above, one of the strategies in the SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS is to expand job opportunities near transit and along center-focused main streets and to promote the redevelopment of underperforming sites and other outmoded nonresidential uses. The project would not conflict with this strategy as the project is immediately adjacent to Newhall Avenue and supports the development of an underperforming property with a new commercial building and residential uses, which would also expand job opportunities. The project site is currently served by one local-access bus line and one regional bus route (service to the North Hollywood Metro Station) directly or provide stops within walking distance (about 0.25 miles). Accordingly, the project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including transit, roadways, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts on transportation.

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. The City's Transportation Analysis Report provides details on appropriate "screening thresholds" that can be used to identify when a proposed land use project is anticipated to result in a less-than-significant VMT impact without conducting a more detailed analysis. A land use project

needs to meet only one of the following screening thresholds to result in a less-than-significant impact: (1) project screening size, which applies to projects that generate 110 or less net daily vehicle trips; (2) Transit Priority Area screening, which applies to projects that are within 0.5 miles of a major transit stop or a transit stop along a high-quality transit corridor with a frequency of service interval of 15 minutes or less; or (3) affordable housing screening, which applies to affordable housing projects (City of Santa Clarita 2020b).

A review of the proposed project's location identified that it is within a designated "Low VMT Area" of the City. As a result, pursuant to the CEQA/VMT "screening" criteria described in the City's Transportation Analysis Report (City of Santa Clarita 2020b), the City has determined that the project would not result in any significant VMT-related impacts and, therefore, is not required to prepare a detailed VMT impact evaluation (Appendix H). As such, the project would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b). Therefore, the project would result in a less-than-significant impact on VMT.

To address the impacts of traffic congestion on the quality of life and economic vitality of the State of California, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority enacted the County Congestion Management Program (CMP) to help inform transportation-related decisions in the region. The CMP's Guidelines for CMP Transportation Impact Analysis require an analysis of all identified arterial monitoring intersections where the project could add 50 or more total trips during either the AM or PM peak hours. Additionally, all freeway mainline segments where a project could be anticipated to add 150 or more trips in either direction during the peak hours must be analyzed (LA Metro 2010). However, as the proposed project is expected to result in substantially fewer than 150 net directional trips during both peak hours, with a maximum of 34 net outbound trips during the AM peak hour (and 16 net inbound trips), and a maximum of 38 inbound trips (and 26 outbound trips) during the PM peak hour. As such, the project would not meet the CMP's minimum 150-trip impact analysis threshold during either peak hour, even if all of its traffic was assumed to travel along the nearest freeway serving the study area, the Antelope Valley Freeway, located less than 1 mile to the southeast of the project site.

A review of the proposed project's trip generation estimates in the Revised Traffic Study Trip Generation Calculations (Appendix H) indicates that it is anticipated to generate a total of about 50 net trips during the AM peak hour and a total of about 64 net trips during the PM peak hour and would therefore result in additions to area traffic that meet or exceed the CMP's minimum 50-trip threshold. However, the general geographic trip distributions for the proposed project indicate not all of the project's trips are expected to travel through the CMP arterial monitoring intersections nearest to the project site. Specifically, approximately 25% of the total (inbound and outbound) trips generated by the project are expected to travel along surface streets to or from northwest of the project site (on Newhall Avenue and Railroad Avenue) and therefore could potentially affect the CMP monitoring intersection of Newhall Avenue and Lyons Avenue. Similarly, approximately 5% of the project's trips are anticipated to travel along the surface street of Sierra Highway to or from the southeast of the site, and potentially through the CMP intersection at Sierra Highway and Placerita Canyon Road. Therefore, even based on these "worst-case" scenarios, which conservatively assume that all of the net project-related traffic traveling into or out of the study area in the general direction of the two CMP arterial monitoring intersections noted earlier would pass through one or both locations, the proposed project's potential traffic additions to any of these locations would be below the CMP's 50-trip threshold during both the AM and PM peak hours, and as such, no further analyses are required.

Therefore, the project would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b), and impacts would 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 would develop the project site consistent with the existing residential and commercial development in the immediate surrounding area and would utilize the existing roadway network, which does not contain sharp curves or dangerous intersections due to design features. The project's proposed driveways on Newhall Avenue would conform to the City's design standards and would provide adequate sight distance, sidewalks, and pedestrian movement controls meeting the City's requirements to protect pedestrian safety. The project's driveways would also conform to applicable emergency access requirements as set forth by LACFD. Furthermore, the project design would be reviewed by the City to ensure all applicable requirements are met. Moreover, the project would not introduce incompatible uses, such as farm equipment, to the project site, and all project-generated traffic would be of a typical type and amount for a mixed-use development. Accordingly, the project would not substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to dangerous road conditions or incompatible uses.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The project would include emergency access via Newhall Avenue near the center and eastern end of the project site's frontage. The project's planned interior road network and the existing regional road system that it interconnects with provide multi-directional primary and secondary emergency evacuation routes consistent with most developments in this area. Consistent with the County's evacuation approach, major ground transportation corridors in the area would be used as primary evacuation routes during an evacuation effort. The primary roadways that would be used for evacuation from the project site are Newhall Avenue and SR-14. Newhall Avenue connects to the SR-14's ramp about 0.75 miles to the east. These roads provide access to urbanized areas and major traffic corridors, including I-5.

The project's ingress/egress and circulation are required to meet LACFD standards to ensure that the new development provides adequate access for emergency vehicles. The project site and surrounding roadway network do not pose any unique conditions that raise concerns for emergency access, such as narrow, winding roads or dead-end streets. Thus, standard engineering practices are expected to achieve the LACFD standards. Furthermore, final project plans are subject to review and approval by LACFD to ensure that the project's access points comply with all LACFD requirements. With compliance with all LACFD requirements, the project would not result in inadequate emergency access. Therefore, the project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to emergency access.

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES				
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
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 § 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

The analysis of the project impacts on tribal cultural resources is primarily based on information contained in the Cultural Resources Phase I Assessment prepared for the project in November 2021 by Envicom Corporation and included as Appendix C of this IS/MND.

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

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)?

Less-than-Significant Impact. No historical resources or unique archaeological resources as defined by CEQA were identified within the project site as a result of either the California Historical Resources Information System records search or the cultural resources survey (Appendix C). The results from the 2021 NAHC Sacred Lands File record search were received on March 17, 2021, with negative findings. To date, no tribal cultural resources have been identified given the lack of prehistoric or Native American ethnographic resources within the project area (Appendix C). As such, impacts would be less than significant.

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 § 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.***

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Under AB 52, tribal cultural resources are defined as resources that the lead agency determines to be tribal cultural resources with a substantial burden of evidence. To date, no tribal cultural resources have been identified given the lack of prehistoric or Native American ethnographic resources within the project area (Appendix C). The discovery of tribal cultural resources poses a potentially significant impact; however, implementation of MM-TCR-1 through MM-TCR-4 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

MM-TCR-1 Worker Environmental Awareness Training. Before the start of construction, a qualified representative, procured by the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) and retained by the project applicant, shall conduct a tribal cultural resources Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training for construction personnel regarding the aspects of tribal cultural resources and the procedures for notifying the FTBMI should tribal cultural resources be discovered by construction staff. Training can be done in conjunction with cultural resources WEAP training, if such training is requested by the proposed project's archaeologist.

MM-TCR-2 Inadvertent Discovery. If cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease, and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards retained by the project applicant shall assess the find. Work on the portions of the project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA, the project applicant shall retain a professional tribal monitor procured by the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians to observe all remaining ground-disturbing activities, including, but not limited to, clearing, grading, excavating, digging, trenching, plowing, drilling, tunneling, quarrying, leveling, driving posts, auguring, blasting, stripping topsoil or similar activity, and archaeological work.

MM-TCR-3 Disposition and Treatment of Inadvertent Discoveries. The Community Development Director and/or the project applicant shall, in good faith, consult with the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians on the disposition and treatment of any tribal cultural resource encountered during all ground-disturbing activities.

MM-TCR-4 Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains. If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County coroner shall be contacted pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. The disposition of those discoveries shall be decided by the Most Likely Descendant, as determined by the Native American Heritage Commission, should those findings be determined as Native American in origin.

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, waste water 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 waste water 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The analysis of the project impacts related to utilities and service systems is primarily based on information contained in the Will Service letters prepared and include as Appendix I of this IS/MND.

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

Water Supply Infrastructure

Less-than-Significant Impact. The water distribution system for the proposed project would tie into existing water lines located in Newhall Avenue. The proposed project would require the construction of the entire on-site water distribution system as well as the connection of the new facilities to the existing domestic water and fire flow system. The construction of new water utility infrastructure is included under

the proposed project and, as such, is analyzed throughout this document as part of potential construction impact analysis; no unique impacts would occur as a result of construction of the on-site water infrastructure, and the impacts would be less than significant.

Wastewater Treatment

Less-than-Significant Impact. Existing sewer lines would accommodate the wastewater generated by the project. The proposed project would discharge wastewater to an existing local sewer line for conveyance to the Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD) Newhall trunk sewer, located in Walnut Street at 16th Street. LACSD's 21-inch diameter trunk sewer has a capacity of 4.3 million gallons per day (mgd) and conveyed a peak flow of 1.5 mgd when last measured in 2018. The expected average wastewater flow from the project would be 0.1074 cubic feet per second (Appendix I). The wastewater from the project site would be treated at the Saugus and Valencia Water Reclamation Plants (WRPs), which are interconnected, forming the Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System. According to LACSD, collectively these WRPs have a capacity of 28.1 mgd and currently process an average flow of 19.6 mgd (Appendix I). LACSD has ample remaining capacity between the two existing WRPs to treat additional flows of wastewater, and no new wastewater treatment facilities would be required or are included as part of the project. Impacts associated with wastewater treatment would be less than significant.

Stormwater Drainage Facilities

Less-than-Significant Impact. As also described in Section 3.10, the project would not substantially increase stormwater runoff discharged from the project site. Runoff from the proposed project would discharge into the existing MS4 system located within Newhall Avenue. A private underground storm drain system would treat the proposed development's required water quality runoff volume and would route water underground and out to the existing public storm drain in Newhall Avenue. The project would comply with all applicable City grading permit regulations and NPDES requirements and would implement BMPs to reduce and treat stormwater runoff from the project site. The project would be required to comply with the City's engineering standards for volume of water discharged in the storm drain system and would comply with the City's stormwater ordinance to ensure that stormwater flows be properly treated before entering the storm drain system. The existing stormwater infrastructure in the project vicinity has been determined to have sufficient capacity to serve the project site. Accordingly, the project would not require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Therefore, impacts associated with stormwater drainage facilities would be less than significant.

Electric Power, Natural Gas, and Telecommunication Facilities

Less-than-Significant Impact. The project site is within the service areas of SCE for electricity, SoCalGas for natural gas, and AT&T and Charter for telecommunications. Extensions of existing infrastructure into the project site would be obtained from existing lines and connections within the area and would not require any construction activities that are not already addressed throughout this IS/MND. As a result of complying

with current regulations, impacts associated with electric power, natural gas, and telecommunication facilities would be less than significant.

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. The project site is served by the SCV Water. The project would create an increased demand for water service. However, similar to the discussion above, while the project would require a Conditional Use Permit to allow for increased building heights, the project is consistent with the underlying zoning and General Plan land use designation of Mixed-Use Corridor (MX-C) for the project site. In addition, the project would not result in atypical water usage, such as those associated with a manufacturing plant or agricultural field. The majority of the water demand by the project is expected to be from consumption by project residents, employees, and landscaping irrigation.

SCV Water adopted its 2020 UWMP in 2021. The 2020 UWMP includes water supply and demand forecasts that are based on the population projections in the general plans of the jurisdictions within the SCV Water service area. Specifically, the 2020 UWMP provides water supply planning for a 30-year planning period in 5-year increments and identifies water supplies needed to meet existing and future demands (SCV Water 2021). In order to estimate demand through 2050, population and water use projections were made based on existing land uses and planned land use development compiled for the service area, including the City and County land use plans. Accordingly, since the project would not create atypical water usage and is consistent with the City's General Plan and zoning, water demand by the project has been accounted for in SCV Water's projections. SCV Water has sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources. Therefore, impacts related to water supply would be less than significant.

c) Would the project result in a determination by the waste water 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. Wastewater from the project site is treated at the Saugus and Valencia WRPs. According to LACSD, these WRPs currently treat 19.6 mgd of wastewater and have a combined capacity to treat 28.1 mgd of wastewater at the primary, secondary, and tertiary level. Wastewater flows from the project would total 0.1074 cubic feet per second, which represents a negligible increase (0.16%) in overall systems flows previously approved in a previous sewer study analysis done for the project site (Appendix I). There would be adequate capacity to serve the proposed project in addition to existing commitments. 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 City's commercial franchised waste hauler is Burrtec Waste Industries Inc., which provides waste collection services, including organics recycling, mixed recycling, and green waste collection, to all commercial and industrial locations within the City. The City is served primarily by two landfills—Antelope Valley and Sunshine Canyon.

The closest landfill to the project site is Sunshine Canyon Landfill, which has a maximum permitted throughput of 12,100 tons per day and a remaining capacity of 66,200,000 tons (CalRecycle 2025a). In the unlikely event that Sunshine Canyon Landfill closed or reached capacity, Antelope Valley Landfill, located northeast of the project site, has a maximum permitted throughput of 5,548 tons per day and a remaining capacity of 12,194,026 tons and would have adequate capacity to accommodate the project (CalRecycle 2025b).

All non-hazardous solid waste generated from the project site (e.g., plastic and glass bottles and jars, paper, newspaper, metal containers, cardboard) would be recycled per local and state regulations, with a diversion goal of 75%, in compliance with the Integrated Waste Management Act. In addition, the project would be required to comply with the City's Construction and Demolition Recycling regulations as well as required City recycling programs during operation. Remaining non-hazardous solid waste would be disposed of at one of the nearby landfills. The City would review building plans and ensure that adequate space is set aside to allow for the collection and storage of recyclable materials on the project site before the Building Official issues building permits. Accordingly, the project would be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs and would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts related to solid waste 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. Although the increase in solid waste generated would be minimal compared to the daily permitted capacity at Sunshine Canyon, buildout of the proposed project would contribute to the volume of solid waste generated in the City that is diverted to existing landfills. The proposed project would contribute to the acceleration of landfill closures. However, compliance with City, County, and state waste reduction programs and policies would reduce the amount of solid waste being transferred to the landfills. The proposed project would be required to comply with applicable state and local regulations associated with the reduction of solid waste entering landfills, including the California Integrated Waste Management Act, as well as the City's plans, policies, and programs related to the recycling/diversion and the disposal of solid waste.

During construction, all wastes would be recycled to the maximum extent possible, in accordance with the City's requirements. Additionally, the project must prepare a construction and demolition material management plan, which would identify the type of project and estimate the weight of materials to be recycled during construction, as well as indicate the vendor or facility that has been commissioned to collect, divert, reuse, or receive the construction and demolition materials.

All non-hazardous solid waste generated from the project site once operational (e.g., plastic and glass bottles and jars, paper, newspaper, metal containers, and cardboard) would be recycled, with a goal of 75% of waste diverted from landfills, in compliance with the Integrated Waste Management Act. Thus, the project would comply with state and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste during construction and operation. Impacts would be less than significant.

3.20 Wildfire

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

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

Less-than-Significant Impact. The City's Emergency Operations Plan (City of Santa Clarita 2020a) addresses the City's planned response and recovery to emergencies associated with natural disasters and technological incidents, provides an overview of organizational concepts, identifies components of the City's emergency management organization within the Standardized Emergency Management System and the National Incident Management System, and describes the overall responsibilities of the federal, State, and County entities and the City of protecting life and property and assuring the well-being of the population. Additionally, the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan (City of Santa Clarita 2021) outlines several mitigation actions intended to facilitate emergency evacuation, including working with LACFD and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office to coordinate the Public Alert and Warning Notification System, coordinating with LACFD to enhance emergency services to increase the efficiency of wildfire response and recovery activities, and incorporating mass notification procedures (e.g., text, social media) into evacuation notification efforts.

The project would include emergency access via Newhall Avenue near the center and eastern end of the project site's frontage. The project's planned interior road network and the existing regional road system that it interconnects with provide multi-directional primary and secondary emergency evacuation routes

consistent with most developments in this area. Consistent with the County's evacuation approach, major ground transportation corridors in the area would be used as primary evacuation routes during an evacuation effort. The primary roadways that would be used for evacuation from the project site are Newhall Avenue and SR-14. Newhall Avenue connects to the SR-14's ramp about 0.75 miles to the east. These roads provide access to urbanized areas and major traffic corridors, including I-5.

During an emergency evacuation from the project, the primary and secondary roadways may provide citizen egress while responding emergency vehicles are inbound. Because the roadways are all designed to meet or exceed County requirements, unobstructed travel lane widths, shoulders, vehicle turnouts, adequate parking, turning radius, grade maximums, signals at intersections, and roadside fuel modification zones, potential conflicts that could reduce the roadway efficiency are minimized, allowing for smoother evacuations.

All in all, the project site is in an existing developed area with access to major roadways that would allow for emergency evacuation. Therefore, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with emergency response, and impacts would be less than significant.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, would the project 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 proposes a mixed-use development including a total of 106 multifamily residential units, 4,000 square feet of commercial retail space, and recreational and open space areas. The project site is considered a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone within a Local Responsibility Area (CAL FIRE 2024). The site currently has varied vegetation but mostly consists of non-native vegetation that was established after human disturbance and includes a mix of scrub oak chaparral, chamise chaparral, and coast live oak woodlands. Existing potential ignition sources include vehicle storage, powerlines, off-site commercial uses and residential neighborhoods, arson, and vehicle-related ignitions from SR-14 or I-5.

While the project would add more residents to the area, research indicates that the type of dense developments like the proposed project are not associated with increased vegetation ignitions. Housing density directly influences susceptibility to fire because in higher density developments, there is one interface (the community perimeter) with the wildlands, whereas lower density development creates more structural exposure to wildlands, less or no ongoing maintained landscapes (an intermix rather than interface), and consequently more difficulty for fire resources to protect structures. The intermix includes structures among the unmaintained fuels, whereas the proposed project would convert all fuels within the footprint and provide a wide, managed fuel modification zone separating homes from unmaintained fuel and creating a condition that makes defense easier. A study by Syphard and Keeley (2015) states that "[t]he WUI [wildland–urban interface], where housing density is low to intermediate is an apparent influence in most ignition maps," further enforcing the conclusion that lower density housing poses a higher ignition risk than higher density communities. They also state that "[d]evelopment of low-density, exurban housing may also lead to more homes being destroyed by fire" (Syphard and Keeley 2015). A vast wildland–urban interface already exists in the areas adjacent to the development site, with some older, more fire-vulnerable structures constructed before stringent fire code requirements were imposed on residential development, with varying levels of maintained fuel modification buffers in the area.

Given the anticipated growing population of the County's wildland–urban interface areas, including in Santa Clarita, and the region's fire history, it can be anticipated that periodic wildfires will occur in the open space areas of the County, with the natural open spaces south of the project site being no exception. Given the climatic, vegetative, and topographic characteristics and local fire history of the area, once developed, the project site could be subject to periodic wildfires that may start on, burn onto, or spot into the site.

The proposed project would introduce potential ignition sources to the site; however, all new structures would be constructed to the County and City Fire Codes, 2022 California Building Standards Code Chapter 7A, and 2022 California Fire Code standards. As discussed, the ignition-resistant construction standards required for development in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone address roofs, eaves, exterior walls, vents, appendages, windows, and doors and result in hardened structures. The project would implement a fire-hardened landscape, highly ignition-resistant residential dwelling units, and conversion of flashy fuels (non-native grasslands) to developed areas, with designated review of all landscaping and maintenance of fuel modification areas. Fires from off site would not have continuous fuels across this site and would therefore be expected to burn around and/or over the site via spotting. The project is not expected to result in the heightened fire hazard typically associated with the wildland–urban interface, since the entirety of the project is being converted to high-density ignition-resistant structures and landscaping. The fire hazard of wildland–urban interface areas is more closely correlated to lower density residential areas that have combustible vegetation between homes that allow for fire spread. The ignition-resistant features of the project would form a redundant system of protection to minimize the likelihood of exposing residents and visitors, as well as structures, to the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. This same fire protection system would provide protections from an on-site fire spreading to off-site vegetation. Accidental fires within the maintained landscape or structures in the project area would have limited ability to spread. It should be noted that while these standards would provide a high level of protection to structures for the project, there is no guarantee that compliance with these standards would prevent damage or destruction of structures by fire in all cases. The proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors. Therefore, impacts would be 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. The project would require the installation of water sources and other underground utilities typical of a new mixed-use residential development. The project would not require installation of new roads, emergency water sources, power lines, or any overhead utility lines. Since the project location is surrounded by existing development and roads, fuel breaks are not required. Project development and associated on-site infrastructure would not exacerbate fire risks. Therefore, impacts 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. Project implementation would not pose a substantial risk from wildfire related to flooding or landslides from runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. The ridge southwest of the project site at a neighboring site is identified as susceptible to earthquake-induced landslides, but the ridge was recently graded as part of the planned development. Further, once developed,

the project site would be graded to a flat surface. The Geotechnical Engineering Investigation (Appendix D) concluded the project site does not pose significant landslide risks based on the slope stability analysis, and no history of landslides was found during the site-specific geotechnical analysis. Therefore, while a fire occurring on a landscape can increase erosion potential, the project would be stabilized during the construction phase. Additionally, the proposed changes to drainage patterns would not result in on- or off-site flooding or other adverse effects related to stormwater quantity or quality. Stormwater management BMPs would be implemented during construction. Once occupied, the risks of flooding or landslides would be minimized because drainage rates would be the same in the pre- and post-development conditions. Due to those factors, the project would not expose people or structures to downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

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 Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed throughout this IS/MND, the project does not have the potential to degrade the environment's quality or result in significant environmental impacts that cannot be reduced to less than significant following compliance with the established regulatory framework (i.e., local, state, and federal regulations) and the recommended mitigation measures.

As concluded in Section 3.4, Biological Resources, following compliance with MM-BIO-1, MM-BIO-2, and MM-BIO-3, potential impacts to biological resources would be reduced to less than significant.

As concluded in Section 3.5, Cultural Resources, following compliance with MM-CUL-1, potential impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to less than significant.

As concluded in Section 3.7, Geology and Soils, following compliance with MM-GEO-1, potential impacts to paleontological resources would be reduced to less than significant.

As concluded in Section 3.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, following compliance with MM-HAZ-1, MM-HAZ-2, and MM-HAZ-3, potential impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be reduced to less than significant.

As concluded in Section 3.18, Tribal Cultural Resources, following compliance with MM-TCR-1, MM-TCR-2, MM-TCR-3, and MM-TCR-4, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less than significant.

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 with Mitigation Incorporated. The project would not cause impacts that are cumulatively considerable. The project has the potential to result in significant impacts related to biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, tribal cultural resources, and paleontological resources; however, with the mitigation measures outlined throughout this IS/MND, these project impacts would be mitigated to less-than-significant levels.

A significant cumulative impact may occur if the project, in conjunction with related projects in the region, would result in impacts that are less than significant when viewed separately but would be significant when viewed together. When considering the project in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the vicinity of the project site, the project does not have the potential to cause impacts that are cumulatively considerable. As detailed in the above discussions, the project would not result in any significant unavoidable impacts in any environmental categories. In all cases, the impacts

associated with the project are limited to the project site and would not result in a significant contribution to any cumulative impacts. Therefore, based on the analysis contained in this IS/MND, the project would not result in a Mandatory Finding of Significance due to cumulative impacts.

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 Incorporated. All potential impacts of the project have been identified, and mitigation measures have been provided, where applicable, to reduce potential impacts to less-than-significant levels. Upon implementation of these mitigation measures, the project would not have the potential to result in substantial adverse impacts on human beings either directly or indirectly. No additional mitigation measures would be required. Therefore, the project would not have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

4 References and Preparers

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4.2 List of Preparers

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SOURCE: ESRI World Imagery

DUDEK

0 500 1,000 Feet

FIGURE 1-1

Project Location

Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project

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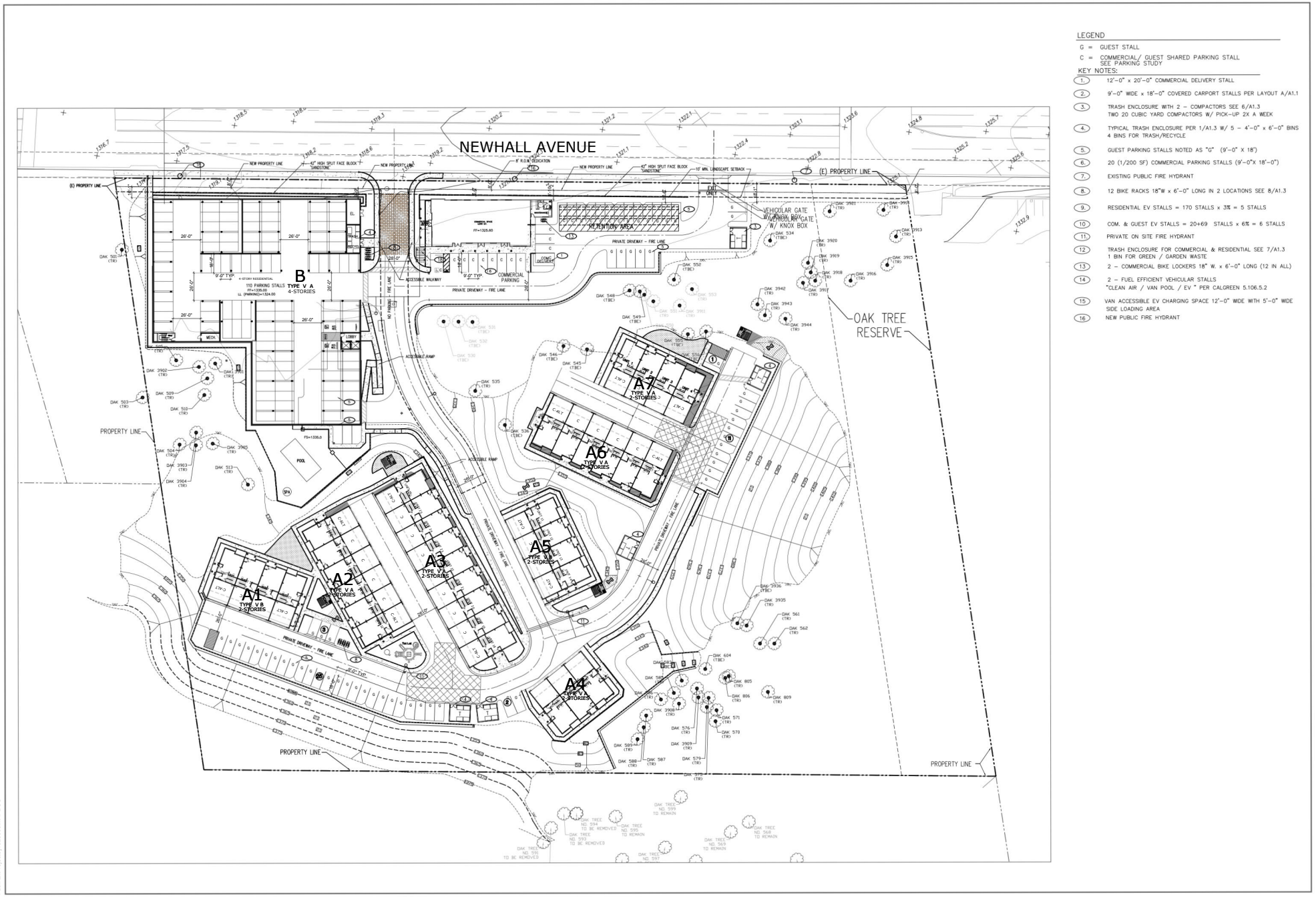

SOURCE: Oakes Architects, 2022

BASEMENT SITE PLAN

FIGURE 1-2

Conceptual Site Plan

Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project

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SOURCE: L.A. Group Design Works, 2022

FIGURE 1-3

Landscape Plan

Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project

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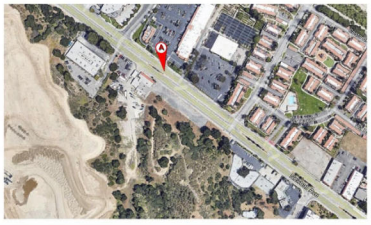

SOURCE: Visionscape Imagery, 2024

FIGURE 3.1-1

Visual Simulations, View A

Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project

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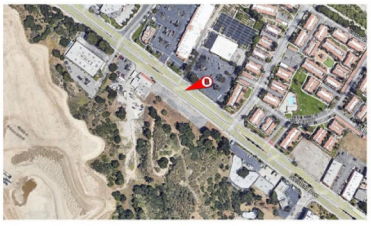

SOURCE: Visionscape Imagery, 2024

FIGURE 3.1-2

Visual Simulations, View B

Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project

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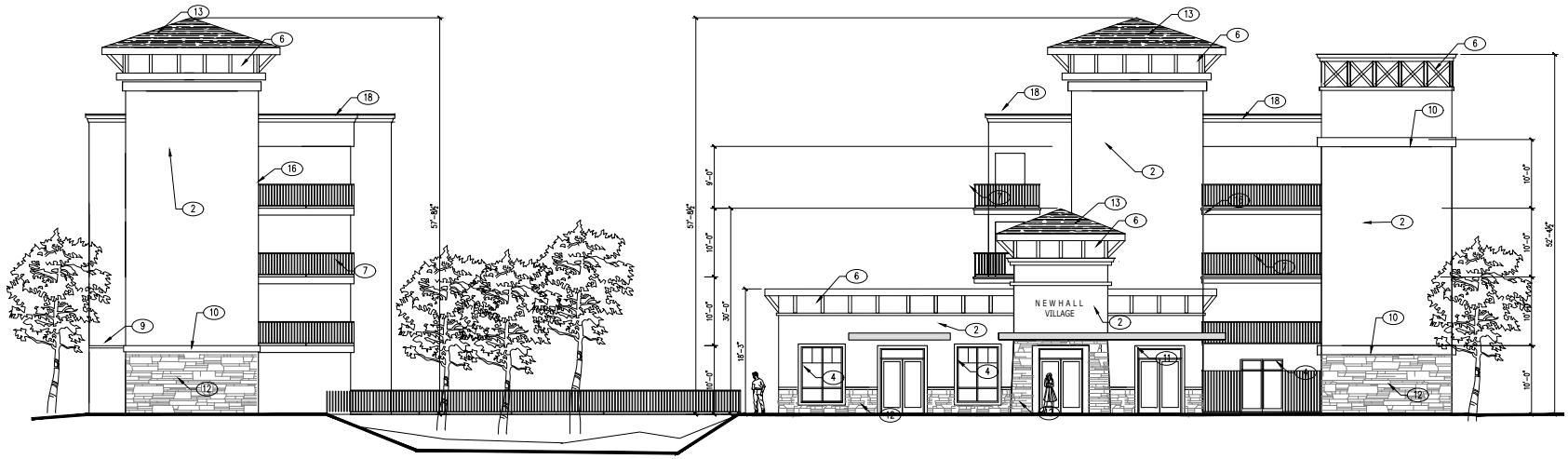

1 BUILDING B SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"

2 BUILDING B NORTH ELEVATION
SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"

SOURCE: Oakes Architects, 2022

FIGURE 3.1-3
Conceptual Elevations
Newhall Avenue Mixed-Use Development Project

DUDEK

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