Mitigated Negative Declaration

Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department
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Publication Date:	July 31, 2026
Public Review Period:	20 days (recirculation)
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Permit Sonoma File Number:	UPE19-0072
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Pursuant to Section 15071 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and the attached Initial Study, constitute the environmental review conducted by the County of Sonoma as lead agency for the proposed project described below:

PROJECT DATA

Project Name:	Azari Vineyards Tasting Room
Applicant/Operator:	Kamal Azari**,** 1321 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma
Project Location:	1321 and 1399 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma
Project APNs:	020-050-026 and 020-050-009
General Plan Land Use	Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA), 100-acre density
Zoning Designation:	LEA (Land Extensive Agriculture) B6 100-acre density with RC50/50 (Riparian Corridor) Combining District Overlay
Decision Body:	Planning Commission
Appeal Body:	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Project Description:

Use Permit modification amending the approved operation (UPE06-0055) of a 1,600-square-foot winery facility with an 8,000-case annual production capacity on a 16.72-acre parcel to include the adjacent 16.67-acre parcel under the same ownership for the following uses: (1) establishment and operation of a new 2,400-square-foot public tasting facility accommodating up to 20 daily visitors with two employees, 5,400 square-feet of outdoor patio area, a 30-space gravel parking lot, and 11:00am to 5:00pm operating hours, Thursday through Sunday; and (2) hosting seven annual winery events for up to 125 guests with nine event staff and 29 additional overflow parking spaces during regular public room tasting hours, located on two contiguous LEA (Land Extensive Agriculture) zoned parcels totaling 33.39 acres, subject to the Petaluma Dairy Belt Area Plan at 1321 and 1339 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma, APN 020-050-026, 020-050-009; Supervisorial District 2.

POTENTIALLY AFFECTED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

The proposed project may potentially affect environmental resources marked (X) under “Yes” below, involving at least one impact identified as *Potentially Significant* or Less than Significant *with Mitigation* as discussed within the corresponding sections of this Initial Study.

Potential Impact Summary

Resource Sections		Abbrev.	Yes	No
1.	Aesthetics	VIS		X
2.	Agriculture & Forestry Resources	AG		X
3.	Air Quality	AIR	X	
4.	Biological Resources	BIO	X	
5.	Cultural Resources	CUL		X
6.	Energy	ENG		X
7.	Geology and Soils	GEO	X	
8.	Greenhouse Gas Emission	GHG		X
9.	Hazards and Hazardous Materials	HAZ		X
10.	Hydrology and Water Quality	HYD		X
11.	Land Use and Planning	LUP		X
12.	Mineral Resources	MIN		X
13.	Noise	NOI	X	
14.	Population and Housing	POP		X
15.	Public Services	PUB		X
16.	Recreation	REC		X
17.	Transportation	TRA		X
18.	Tribal Cultural Resources	TCR		X
19.	Utilities and Service Systems	UTL		X
20.	Wildfire	FIRE		X
21.	Mandatory Findings of Significance	MFS		X

RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

The following lists other public agencies whose approval is required for the project, or who have jurisdiction over resources potentially affected by the project.

Agency	Activity	Authorization
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers	Wetland dredge or fill Work in navigable waters	Clean Water Act, Section 401 Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 106
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	Incidental take permit for listed plant and animal species	Endangered Species Act
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Lake or streambed alteration	Fish and Game Code, Section 1600
Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)	Stationary air emissions	BAAQMD Rules and Regulations Regulation 2, Rule 1 and Rule 2; Regulation 9, Rule 8; and other BAAQMD administered Statewide Air Toxics Control Measures (ATCM) for stationary diesel engines
Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District (NSCAPCD)	Stationary air emissions	
Native American Heritage Commission		
State Historic Preservation Office		

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDING:

Based on the evaluation in the attached Initial Study, I find that the project described above could not have a significant effect on the environment, and a Negative Declaration is proposed.

Based on the evaluation in the attached Expanded Initial Study, I find that the project described above will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment, provided the mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study are included as conditions of approval for the project and a Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed. The applicant has agreed in writing to incorporate identified mitigation measure into the project plans



Prepared by: July 31, 2026
Date

I. INTRODUCTION:

Permit Sonoma has prepared an Initial Study of a Use Permit request to modify the approved (UPE06-0055) operation of an 8,000-case annual production winery facility on a 16.72-acre parcel containing 8.31 existing vineyard acres and 0.53 existing olive orchard acres. The use permit modification proposes to incorporate the 16.67-acre adjacent parcel under the same ownership to allow as part of the approved winery operation the following uses: (a) continued agricultural production of 5.73 existing vineyard acres; (b) establishment and operation of a new 2,400-square-foot public tasting facility accommodating up to 20 daily visitors with two employees, 5,400 square-feet of outdoor patio space, a 30-space gravel parking area, and operating hours from 11:00am to 5:00pm, Thursday through Sunday; and (c) hosting seven agricultural promotional events per year (including two industry events) for up to 125 guests with nine staff (including two tasting room employees) and 29 additional overflow parking spaces during regular tasting room hours.

The project site consists of two contiguous LEA (Land Extensive Agriculture) zoned parcels totaling 33.39 acres, subject to the Petaluma Dairy Belt Area Plan at 1321 and 1339 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma, APN 020-050-026, 020-050-009; Supervisorial District 2.

This report is the Initial Study required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The report was prepared by Derik Michaelson, Project Planner for Permit Sonoma, Project Review Division. Information on the project was provided by Azari Winery and consultants. Technical studies were provided by qualified consultants to support the conclusions in this Expanded Initial Study. Technical studies, other reports, documents, and maps referred to in this document are available for review through the Project Planner, online, or the Permit Sonoma Records Division.

Please contact the Project Planner, Derik Michaelson, at derik.michaelson#@sonomacounty.gov or (707) 565-3095 for more information.

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project site consists of two contiguous parcels totaling 33.39 acres situated side-by-side on Spring Hill Road in the unincorporated Petaluma Dairy Belt region of Sonoma County, approximately 0.5 miles west of the Petaluma city limits. The westerly parcel is 16.72 acres. The easterly parcel is 16.67 acres. Both parcels are agriculturally zoned.

APN	Acres	Address	Existing Use
020-050-009	16.72	1339 Spring Hill Rd	Residential; vineyard; winery
020-050-026	16.67	1321 Spring Hill Rd	Vineyard; undeveloped land

WESTERLY PARCEL - 16.72 ACRES

The 16.72-acre westerly parcel is located at 1339 Spring Hill Road and contains a primary single-family residence, four legal nonconforming single-family dwellings, a 1,600-square-foot winery facility, 8.13 acres of existing vineyard, and approximately 0.53 acres of existing olive tree groves.

Existing Winery Operation
The winery operation is approved for production of up to 8,000 cases annually under Use Permit UPE06-

0055. The winery facility is located toward the southerly rear of the property, approximately 1,200 feet from the site frontage on Spring Hill Road. The winery operates with two employees. The approved operating hours are 7:00am to 7:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am to 7:00pm on weekends. The use permit specifically references public tastings and special events as not included in the approved scope of operation.

The winery facility consists of a 1,600-square-foot converted garage structure housing existing fermentation tanks and other wine-making equipment. A 600-square-foot covered bay serving as the facility's crush pad is attached to the west side of the building. The exterior bay supports the existing hopper and grape press. Barrel fermentation and case storage for the winery is served by the "walkout basement" located beneath the adjacent residence. The adjacent residence is located directly to the north of the winery building. The walkout basement provides approximately 2,460-square-feet of storage space dedicated for winery use.

Existing winery production includes approximately 8.24 acres of vineyard harvested on site. An additional 5.62 acres of vineyard is harvested from the adjacent parcel under the same ownership to the east. The winery production is also approved for grape importation from other off-site vineyards. The current use permit allows for up to seven one-ton truckloads of imported grapes per year.

Access
Winery access is served by an existing 12-foot-wide driveway from Spring Hill Road. Eight parking spaces (including I handicapped space) are located between the winery and the house. The winery process wastewater is treated by a septic system near the field located to the west.

Water and Groundwater
The three existing wells will produce adequate water supply at 45 gallons per minute to fulfill the total annual water demand for the existing uses, including for the winery at 0.25 acre-feet, the vineyard at 3 acre-feet, and the five existing residential uses at 1.35 acre-feet. The groundwater recharge rate on the site is 9 acre-feet per minute, which is roughly twice the on-site water demand. Therefore, there is adequate well water production capacity and groundwater supply to support the winery and existing uses on the site and in the local area.

EASTERLY PARCEL - 16.67 ACRES

The 16.67-acre easterly parcel is located at 1321 Spring Hill Road and contains the proposed location for the new public tasting facility near the northerly site frontage and roadway. The parcel is currently developed with 5.62 acres of existing vineyard at the rear southerly end of the parcel. The remainder of the site is mostly undeveloped consisting predominantly of ruderal and non-native annual grassland. Site access is provided by the same driveway serving the winery parcel immediately to the west. Two 5,000-gallon water storage tanks exist within the northwest portion of the parcel. One water supply well currently exists in the northern portion of the site.

The tasting room site is situated at the top of a grassy slope which falls eastward to a drainage way draining to San Antonio Creek further to the south. The unnamed intermittent drainage runs from east to west through the middle of the parcel. A small portion of the drainage way near the easterly side of the parcel is designated as a streamside conservation area per the Sonoma County Riparian Corridor Combining Zone.

Ground elevations across the easterly parcel range from approximately 320 to 440 feet above mean sea level (MSL). Per the Biological Assessment Report (Daniel Edelstein, Oct. 28, 2021), the project site slopes at approximately 10% from the northwest to the southeast. The soil profile consists of Steinbeck Loam (SnC) and Los Osos Clay Loam (LoD) per the USDA NRCS Custom Soil Resource Report. This soil profile is not considered to support wetland vegetation species. The soil composition in the profile of this area provides acceptable drainage percolation for any rising water levels that could potentially occur during the rainy season and/or high rain episodes.

Vegetation, Habitats, and Biological Resources:
The undeveloped portions of the site consist of upland, ruderal, highly disturbed habitat dominated by two

different vegetation habitats: ruderal, frequently disturbed, upland, non-native grassland and sporadic Blue Gum Eucalyptus woodland consisting of four 110-foot-tall non-native Blue Gum Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*) trees. The Eucalyptus trees are located along the northern boundary of the parcel fronting Spring Hill Road.

Based on the biological surveys (Biological Assessment Report, prepared by Daniel Edelstein, October 28, 2021), the project site is devoid of native botanical species. The diversity of plant species was low during the surveys, with non-native plant species dominating the project site. Only common plant and wildlife species were seen during the surveys. No rare, special-status plant and wildlife species were detected.

An on-site drainage/watercourse exists south of the project site development area. The development area is located outside of the Riparian Corridor zone.

SURROUNDING USES

The surrounding properties are developed with residential and agricultural uses. There are vineyards located further west on Spring Hill Road. The other agricultural land in the area is used for grazing, There are two other houses located next to the access road, near Spring Hill Road within 200 feet of the proposed tasting room. The aerial photograph shows that the nearest house on the adjoining property is located about 1,000 feet from the winery.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a Use Permit request for amending the approval (UPE06-0055) of an existing 8,000-case winery operation to include the 16.67-acre adjacent parcel for continued vineyard production use and to establish a new 2,400 square foot tasting room facility with seven annual promotional events.

The tasting room building includes a 2,400-square-foot public visitor building, including a 1,873 square-foot main tasting hall, a 277-square-foot food preparation area, and restrooms. Outdoor amenities include 4,250 square feet of patio space and an 1,145-square foot circular viewing terrace to the east of the building. The proposed building height is 20 feet.

The project locates the tasting facility approximately 100 feet back from the site frontage on Spring Hill Road. The proposed grading plan locates the finished floor elevation of the building 36 inches below natural grade. The project proposes retaining walls of approximately 40 inches in height supporting the facility's southerly rear patio and viewing terrace.

The project proposes a 30-space gravel parking area along the front of the tasting building adjacent to Spring Hill Road. An 18-inch-high landscape berm is proposed along the immediate frontage between the parking area and roadway. The parking area proposes a one-way circulation pattern with two driveways on Spring Hill Road, including a westerly ingress entrance and an easterly egress exit. Overflow event parking is located further to the east of the main parking area. The overflow area includes 29 additional spaces for a combined total of 59 parking spaces for the entire facility.

The tasting room will operate with two employees and anticipates up to 20 visitors per day on average. The facility also proposes seven annual promotional events for up to 125 guests per each event. A staff of nine employees is proposed for each event, including the 2 tasting room employees. Events will utilize portable toilets in addition to the tasting room restroom. Indoor music and amplified sound is proposed.

Proposed Hours of Operation

- ***Tasting room* hours** – 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, Thursday-Sunday
- ***Winery events* hours** – 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, Thursday-Sunday

Proposed Winery Events and Activities

- ***Agricultural Promotional Events*** will include up to five (5) events from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm with a maximum of 125 guests. Food and wine pairings may be provided. Events will utilize music and amplified sound.

- ***Industry-Wide Event Days*** up to a total of two (2) per year with a total of 125 people over the course of the entire day. Industry-wide events shall be between 11:00am and 5:00pm. Indoor music and amplified sound conforming to noise standards of the General Plan is proposed.

Proposed Employees
- ***Tasting room*** (during normal business hours) - 2 full-time employees.
- ***Winery events*** – 9 employees, including the 2 tasting room employees

Proposed Food Service
- **Food and Wine Tasting Pairings** (no meals) may be provided during permitted tasting hours as part of normal business activities. Food and wine pairing will be pre-prepared samples or tastes produced from food products from the local area. Food will be from a pre-fixed pairing menu and only during tasting room hours. There is no restaurant or deli service provided.
- ***Food on-site for events*** will be prepared in the food preparation area within the tasting room building. Food can be provided for occasional employee lunches and employee harvest party. Appetizers or meals featuring local foods and food products may be prepared for occasional marketing or promotional activities that are not open to drop-in guests. Food must be consumed on-site.

Access and Parking
The project proposes a 30-space parking gravel parking area with two driveways fronting Spring Hill Road. The parking lot includes a one-way circulation pattern entering at the westerly driveway and exiting at the easterly driveway. Additional overflow consisting of an open field is located just beyond the east end of the main parking lot drive-isle near the egress driveway. The informal overflow parking provides sufficient area for 29 parking spaces.

County operating standards for wineries and tasting rooms per Zoning Section 26-18-260(E)(6)(a) require one space for every 2.5 guests plus one additional space per each employee. The code requires formal permanent spaces accommodating the daily tasting room demand and allows the provision of informal spaces for remaining overflow based on the largest proposed event size. The daily tasting room demand is 20 visitors (8 spaces) with two employees (2 spaces), requiring a total of ten formal parking spaces. The largest proposed event for the project is 125 guests (50 spaces) plus nine employees (9 spaces), requiring a total of 59 parking spaces. The project proposes a formal gravel parking area accommodating 30 parking spaces along the site frontage between the tasting room and roadway. The undeveloped field to the east of the tasting room and main parking area is proposed to accommodate the 29 overflow spaces.

There are no existing bicycle lanes along the project frontage on Spring Hill Road. However, per the Focused Traffic Study (W-Trans, July 22, 2021), in the updated project list 2019 of *Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA)*, a Class III bicycle route is planned on Spring Hill Road to be connected to the existing Class II bicycle lanes on Western Avenue on the east, and planned Class II bicycle lanes along Valley Ford Road-Bodega Avenue on the west. Since a Class III route consists of signing only, the existing physical facilities provide adequate bicycle access to the site and access for bicyclists would be enhanced with the completion of planned bike facilities. No bicycle parking spaces are proposed.

Circulation
The Focused Traffic Study (W-Trans, July 22, 2022) provides that under peak traffic conditions for the project, which would be during a 100-person event, Spring Hill Road will continue to operate acceptably at Level of Service (LOS) A along both westbound and eastbound directions. The project proposes two driveways associated with the permanent parking lot on Spring Hill Road. The proposed egress driveway onto Spring Hill Road allows outbound sight lines extending more than 200 feet in each direction for exiting vehicles, meeting the County standard for required sight distance. The proposed ingress driveway also provides adequate westward sight-distance for vehicles entering the parking area from the westbound approach along Spring Hill Road.

Water, Wastewater, and Waste Disposal
The property's location in a Class 4 Groundwater Availability Zone. All water supply is from groundwater. There are two 5,000-gallon water storage tanks located within the northwest portion of the existing parcel.

Their locations are shown on the Site Plan. One water supply well currently exists in the northern portion of the project site and will supply water for the project.

Per the Hydrogeologic Report (EBA Engineering, February 22, 2022), the total water use for the project site (0.21 AF/yr) equates to approximately one percent of the annual groundwater recharge during drought conditions. While the assumed drought scenario calculations do provide some context to evaluate recharge under periods of extremely limited rainfall, years exhibiting above average rainfall would provide an excess of water being available for recharge.

A septic system (SEP19-0690) is proposed for the tasting room and bathrooms in the location shown on the Site Plan. The septic system will be adequate to treat and dispose of all of the sanitary wastewater generated by the Azari tasting room.

Since the winery on the adjacent parcel is already developed, the solid waste disposal company that is currently servicing the winery will service the tasting room site.

IV. SETTING

The regional climate is characterized by a temperate climate with moderately warm summers, cool winters, and moderate precipitation levels. The microclimate in the Santa Rosa and Petaluma Valleys is characteristic of the transition zones between inland and coastal areas, with measurable precipitation 47 days per year, totaling 29 inches of rainfall on average.

The site vicinity is primarily dominated by similar-sized parcels that are, likewise, devoted to agricultural/vineyard/orchard activities along with dairy/chicken farming operations. No small or large parks, natural areas, or reserves exist within one mile of the site in all directions. More specifically, toward the north across from the project site, residences exist amid large upland parcels that also feature both landscaping and natural vegetation.

East and southeast of the project site, another residence occurs on a similar parcel consisting of upland, non-native grassland along with cultivated plantings. Immediately west and southwest of the project site, the owner cultivates a productive vineyard on the adjacent 1399 Spring Hill Road parcel where he resides. The owner's vineyard to the west extends into the project parcel, encompassing approximately 6-acres of productive vineyard on-site.

V. ISSUES RAISED BY THE PUBLIC OR AGENCIES

A referral packet was drafted and circulated on January 12, 2021, to inform and solicit comments from selected relevant local, state, and federal agencies, local Tribes, and to special interest groups that were anticipated to take interest in the revised project. Comments were received from Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works, Sonoma County Department of Health Services, Permit Sonoma Fire Prevention Section, Permit Sonoma Natural Resources Section, Permit Sonoma Building Division, Permit Sonoma Project Review Health, Permit Sonoma Grading and Storm Water Section, State Water Resources Control Board, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Northwest Information Center, City of Petaluma Planning Department, Sonoma County Transit, and Sonoma County ACTTC-Central Collections. Their comments included recommended conditions of approval.

Assembly Bill 52 Project Notifications were sent to the Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians, Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Mishewal Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley, Middletown Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Lytton Rancheria of California, Kashia Pomos Stewarts Point Rancheria and Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.

No issues were raised. Mitigation measures and standard County conditions of approval shall be incorporated into the project as presented in the Initial Study and will substantially reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

An Early Neighborhood Notification was posted on-site and mailed to parcel owners within a 300-foot radius buffer from the subject parcel on January 22, 2021, and no responses were received. In addition, a Hearing Notice for a March 28, 2024, Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments hearing was posted on-site and mailed to parcel owners within a 300-foot radius buffer from the subject parcel on March 18, 2024. Permit Sonoma received community member comments regarding traffic impacts, project compatibility with the neighborhood rural character, the number and intensity of visitor-serving activities and events, noise concerns, and the preservation of rural open agricultural space.

VI. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This section analyzes the potential environmental impacts of this project based on the criteria set forth in the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's implementing ordinances and guidelines.

Each question was answered by evaluating the project as proposed without considering the effect of any added mitigation measures. The Initial Study includes a discussion of the potential impacts and identifies mitigation measures to substantially reduce those impacts to a level of less than significant where feasible. All references and sources used in this Initial Study are listed in the Reference section at the end of this report and are incorporated herein by reference.

The owner, Kamal Azari, Azari Winery, has agreed to accept all mitigation measures listed in this Initial Study as conditions of approval for the proposed project, and to obtain all necessary permits.

VII. SOURCE DOCUMENTS

In preparation of the Initial Study checklist, the following documents were referenced/developed and are hereby incorporated as part of the Initial Study. All documents are available in the project file or for reference at the Permit and Resource Management Department.

1. Project Design Plans
    a. Common Architecture & Design, *Schematic Design, Azari Tasting Room*, *1321 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma, California, Sonoma County APN 020-050-026,* June 14, 2026.
    b. Summit Engineering, *Overall Site Plan, Preliminary Grading and Sections*, *Azari Tasting Room*, *1321 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma, California, Sonoma County APN 020-050-026,* July 14, 2026.
2. Project Technical Reports:
    a. EBA Engineering Group, *Hydrogeologic Report for General Plan Policy WR-2E, 1321 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma, California, Sonoma County APN 020-050-026*, February 22, 2022.
    b. Daniel Edelstein, Consulting Biologist & Certified Wildlife Biologist Asc. *Biological Assessment Report*; July, 2021; Updated October 28, 2021; Addendum December 13, 2023.
    c. Daniel Edelstein, Consulting Biologist & Certified Wildlife Biologist Asc. *Addendum – Biological Assessment Report*; December 13, 2023.
    d. Illingworth & Rodkin, *Environmental Noise Assessment, Azari Vineyard Tasting Room, 1321 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma, Sonoma County,* June 29, 2021.
    e. Illingworth & Rodkin, *Event Noise Mitigation Options with Tasting Room and Site Plan update, Azari Vineyard Tasting Room, 1321 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma, Sonoma County,* June 26, 2026.
    f. Illingworth & Rodkin, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis, Azari Vineyards Tasting Room at 1321 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma, Sonoma County, California*, July 7, 2021.
    g. W-Trans, Revised Final *Focused Traffic Study for the Azari Tasting Room Project*, February 26, 2025
    h. W-Trans, *Traffic Management Plan for the Azari Tasting Room Project*, April 24, 2025
3. Sonoma County General Plan and EIR
4. Sonoma County Zoning Ordinance
5. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
6. Other Regulatory References:
    a. BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines; Bay Area Air Quality Management District; April 1999; California Air Resources Board (CARB) http://www.arb.ca.gov/.
    b. California Environmental Protection Agency: https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/
    c. Dept of Toxic Substances Control: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov
    d. California Regional Water Quality Control Board
    i. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/contact_us/rwqcbs_directory.html
    e. Integrated Waste Management Board –
    f. https://www.rpvca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1145/AB-939-Integrated-Waste-Management-Act-of-1989-PDF
    g. Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones; State of California; 1983.
    h. Sonoma County Tree Protection Ordinance (Ord. No. 6478), April 30, 2024,
    i. Sonoma County Aggregate Resources Management Plan and Program EIR, 1994.
    j. North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board,
    k. http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ northcoast/ water_ issues/programs/non_chapter_15_permitting.shtml.
    l. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), September 2014.
    m. Santa Rosa Plain Watershed Groundwater Management Plan, Santa Rosa Plain Basin Advisory Panel, 2014
    n. Sonoma County Important Farmland Map 1996. California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.
    o. California Natural Diversity Database, California Department of Fish & Game.

1. AESTHETICS:

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Scenic Corridors and Landscapes:

Pursuant to the County's *Visual Assessment Guidelines*, the project ranks "Moderate" in Site Sensitivity since the site does not meet the criteria below for low sensitivity, but the site has no land use or zoning designations protecting scenic resources. The Visual Dominance of the project is "Dominant" due to the prominence of the proposed tasting room at the top of the project site adjacent to Spring Hill Road. The Site Sensitivity and Visual Dominance Tables 9 and 10 from the County's Visual Assessment Guidelines are provided below for reference.

Table 9: Site Sensitivity Table from Sonoma County Visual Assessment Guidelines

Sensitivity	Characteristics
Low	The site is within an urban land use designation and has no land use or zoning designations protecting scenic resources. The project vicinity is characterized by urban development, or the site is surrounded by urban zoning designations and has no historic character and is not a gateway to a community. The project site terrain has visible slopes less than 20 percent and is not on a prominent ridgeline and has no significant natural vegetation of aesthetic value to the surrounding community.
Moderate	The site or portion thereof is within a rural land use designation or an urban designation that does not meet the criteria above for low sensitivity, but the site has no land use or zoning designations protecting scenic resources. The project vicinity is characterized by rural or urban development but may include historic resources or be considered a gateway to a community. This category includes building or construction sites with visible slopes less than 30 percent or where there is significant natural features of aesthetic value that is visible from public roads or public use areas (i.e. parks, trails etc.).
High	The site or any portion thereof is within a land use or zoning designation protecting scenic or natural resources, such as General Plan designated scenic landscape units, coastal zone, community separators, or scenic corridors. The site vicinity is generally characterized by the natural setting and forms a scenic backdrop for the community or scenic corridor. This category includes building and construction areas within the SR designation located on prominent hilltops, visible slopes less than 40 percent or where there are significant natural features of aesthetic value that are visible from public roads or public use areas (i.e., parks, trails etc.). This category also includes building or construction sites on prominent ridgelines that may not be designated as scenic resources but are visible from a designated scenic corridor.

Maximum	The site or any portion thereof is within a land use or zoning designation protecting scenic resources, such as General Plan designated scenic landscape units, coastal zone, community separators, or scenic corridors. The site vicinity is generally characterized by the natural setting and forms a scenic backdrop for a designated scenic corridor. This category includes building or construction sites within the scenic resource designation on or near prominent ridgelines, visible slopes greater than 40 percent or where there are significant natural features of aesthetic value that are visible from a designated scenic corridor.

Table 10: Visual Dominance

Dominance	Characteristics
Dominant	Project elements are strong – they stand out against the setting and attract attention away from the surrounding landscape. Form, line, color, texture, and night lighting contrast with existing elements in the surrounding landscape.
Co-Dominant	Project elements are moderate – they can be prominent within the setting, but attract attention equally with other landscape features. Form, line, color, texture, and night lighting are compatible with their surroundings.
Subordinate	Project is minimally visible from public view. Element contrasts are weak – they can be seen but do not attract attention. Project generally repeats the form, line, color, texture, and night lighting of its surroundings.
Inevident	Project is generally not visible from public view because of intervening natural land forms or vegetation.

The project site is not within a Scenic Resource designation. The proposed tasting room is located at the top of the property clearly visible from Spring Hill Road and the proposed parking lot is located adjacent to Spring Hill Road. The tasting room will have wood siding, the roof will be red composite shingles, and the roof of the cupola on top of the tasting room will be copper. The windows will be custom-built aluminum. Sashes will be a bronze coloration.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

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

The project site is neither located within nor visible from a scenic resource or State scenic highway and no historic buildings or other similar features, natural, manmade, or otherwise, are known to exist on or within the vicinity of the project site.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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?

The project proposes a 2,400sf public tasting room building visible to Spring Hill Road at approximately 100 feet from the street frontage. A 30-space gravel parking area is proposed in front of the building adjacent to roadway. The two adjacent properties on the opposite side of Spring Hill Road are developed with existing homes situated on a slightly higher elevation looking down on the project site.

The project proposes specific design elements intended lessen its visual impact on the adjacent properties and as seen from Spring Hill Road. The project proposes an 18-inch high landscape berm along the site frontage to help screen the adjacent parking area. The project includes a landscape plan identifying an appropriate volume and variety of frontage and interior planting selections to help soften the visibility of the building and parking improvements. The finished floor elevation of the building is situated 36 inches below grade to minimize the vertical perception of its overall height. The building's below-grade floor elevation combined with the proposed landscaping, its 100-foot separation from the roadway, and its relatively low roof height work together to reduce the architectural scale and massing of the project as seem from the public roadway and adjacent properties.

The rural roadway frontage along Spring Hill Road is not a scenic corridor and based on the physical elements incorporated into the proposed site plan, landscaping and building design, the project does not appear to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views as seen from its surroundings.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

The proposed lighting plan indicates minimal light glare and exposure resulting from the project. The proposed lighting fixtures consist of 24-inch high pathway bollard lights and fully shielded downward facing wall mounted sconces.

The ground-mounted pathway fixtures are located along the easterly entrance to the facility. The wall-mounted sconces are located on the rear of the building and not visible to public views from the roadway. The exterior pathway and rear wall fixtures propose a low wattage output and a "very warm white" color temperature at 2700 kelvin. Tasting and winery events will only occur during daylight hours only and no lighting fixtures for the parking area are proposed.

All proposed lighting is considered DarkSky compliant and verification of final lighting details by the Design Review Committee and staff clearance of the permitting plans prior to issuance is required for the project as a standard Condition of Approval.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

2. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES:

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?

The project proposes neither the removal nor the conversion of any existing agricultural production land. The project site consists of two contiguous parcels totaling 33.39 acres. The two parcels are considered Farmland of Local Importance and together contain approximately 13.86 acres pf existing vineyard land as part of an 8,000-case approved winery operation. The current zoning for both parcels is and shall remain LEA (Land Extensive Agriculture).

The original use permit approval (UPE06-0055) for the winery references a single 16.72-acre parcel supporting vineyard production and winery-related facility, processing, and storage operations. The 16.72-acre winery parcel contains approximately 8.24 acres of existing vineyard and 0.53 acres of existing olive orchard.

The current use permit request seeks to modify the original winery approval and acknowledge use of the 16.67-acre adjacent parcel as part of the winery operation. The current request additionally seeks approval to develop the adjacent parcel with a new public tasting facility, also in support of the existing winery operation. The adjacent parcel is under the same ownership and currently provides 5.62 existing vineyard acres in support of the winery operation. The proposed tasting facility is located near Spring Hill Road toward the opposite northerly end of the parcel and does not interfere with nor require any removal of the existing vineyard portion of the site.

Impact Level:
No Impact

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or Williamson Act Contract?

The project site is not under a Williamson Act contract. The property is designated Land Extensive Agriculture by the Sonoma County General Plan. The General Plan policy for Land Extensive Agricultural states that agricultural production, agricultural support uses, and visitor-serving uses, as provided in the Agricultural Resources Element of the General Plan, are allowed uses, provided a Use Permit is approved.

The proposed project must be found consistent with the General Plan's Agricultural Element Goals, Objectives and Policies, which include the following:

> **Policy AR-4a**: *"The primary use of any parcel within the three agricultural land use categories shall be agricultural production and related processing, support services, and visitor serving uses. Residential uses in these areas shall recognize that the primary use of the land may create traffic and agricultural nuisance situations, such as flies, noise, odors, and spraying of chemicals."*

The proposed tasting room will contain a 2,400 square-foot tasting facility for wine produced on-site (adjacent to the subject parcel, owned by same applicant), including a 400-square-foot food preparation area. The food preparation area is proposed for warming catered food for the special events. A total of 4,973-square feet of patio and walkways are proposed along with a 2,000-square foot terrace.

Twenty wine tasters a day are expected. Seven (7) winery events (5 Agricultural Promotional Events and 2 Industry-Wide Events) per year are proposed at the tasting room with 125 guests per event and 9 employees, which include the 2 tasting room employees. A new permanent parking lot with 30 spaces is proposed adjacent to the new tasting room building, along with an overflow parking area with 29 spaces proposed to the east adjacent to the permanent lot. Two new driveways are proposed to allow access and egress, respectively, to the parking lot from Spring Hill Road.

The proposed UPE19-0072 tasting room will serve wine and olive oil produced from vineyards and trees on-site and in a production facility on the 16.72-acre parcel (APN 020-050-009) adjacent to the west of the subject parcel, which is permitted (UPE06-0055) for a maximum annual production of 8,000 cases of wine produced from grapes primarily grown on-site. No tasting or special events were approved as part of UPE06-0055.

The LEA (Land Extensive Agriculture) zoning district of the Zoning Ordinance allows for tasting rooms per Sec. 26-18-210. Tasting rooms must be consistent with general plan policies AR 6-d and AR 6-f.

Policy AR-6d: *"Follow these guidelines for approval of visitor serving uses in agricultural areas:*

(1) The use promotes and markets only agricultural products grown or processed in the local area.
(2) The use is compatible with and secondary and incidental to agricultural production activities in the area.
(3) The use will not require the extension of sewer and water.
(4) The use is compatible with existing uses in the area.
(5) Hotels, motels, resorts, and similar lodging are not allowed.
(6) Activities that promote and market agricultural products such as tasting rooms, sales and promotion of products grown or processed in the County, educational activities and tours, incidental sales of items related to local area agricultural products are allowed.
(7) Special events on agricultural lands or agriculture related events on other lands in the Sonoma Valley Planning Area will be subject to a pilot event coordination program which includes tracking and monitoring of visitor serving activities and schedule management, as necessary, to reduce cumulative impacts.

Winery events have been found consistent with the agricultural zoning districts, including the LEA zoning district, if the events can be found to promote agricultural products processed on the site. In addition, such events can be found compatible with surrounding agricultural activities if hours and the frequency of the events are limited and there are no substantial noise or traffic impacts as a result of the activities.

Winery events relate to promoting and selling an agricultural product that is produced on the site, such as wine and creating label recognition. The wine is produced on the parcel adjacent to where the winery is located. Winery events are a compatible use for agricultural land because they are a marketing tool to ensure the long-term viability of wine sales and they promote the long-term viability of agriculture within the County. The addition of events at this site will not exceed in the level of service capacity for roads in the project vicinity. The project would not require the extension of sewer or water.

Policy AR-6f: Local concentrations of visitor serving and recreational uses, and agricultural support uses as defined in Goal AR-5, even if related to surrounding agricultural activities, are detrimental to the primary use of the land for the production of food, fiber and plant materials and may constitute grounds for denial of such uses. In determining whether or not the approval of such uses would constitute a detrimental concentration of such uses, consider all the following factors:

(1) Whether the above uses would result in joint road access conflicts, or in traffic levels that exceed the Circulation and Transit Element's objectives for level of service on a site specific and cumulative basis.
(2) Whether the above uses would draw water from the same aquifer and be located within the zone of influence of area wells.
(3) Whether the above uses would be detrimental to the rural character of the area

The project site is not located withing a local area of concentration of wineries.

Impact Level:
No Impact

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g)?

The project site is not under the TP (Timberland Production) zoning district, nor will the project conflict with or cause a change to lands under TP zoning.

Impact Level:
No Impact

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project does not result in a loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. The project site has been used for agriculture (a winery) since 1881.

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Impact Level:
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?

The project does not involve other changes in the environment that could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use.

Impact Level:
No Impact

3. AIR QUALITY:

Where applicable, 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?

The project is within the jurisdiction of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), which is currently designated as a nonattainment area for State and federal ozone standards, the State PM_{10} standard, and State and federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards. The District has adopted an Ozone Attainment Plan and a Clean Air Plan in compliance with federal and State Clean Air Acts. These plans include measures to achieve compliance with both ozone standards. The plans deal primarily with emissions of ozone precursors (nitrogen oxides [NOx] and volatile organic compounds, also referred to as Reactive Organic Gases [ROG]). The project will not conflict with the District's air quality plans because the proposed project does not involve construction or development that would generate substantial emissions.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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

State and Federal governments have established standards for six criteria air pollutants: ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and particulates with a diameter of less than 10 and 2.5 microns (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$, respectively). In addition to criteria air pollutants, there are other, secondary pollutants that can lead to the formation of criteria air pollutants. For example, nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) react with sunlight and can lead to the formation of ground level ozone.

Since the geographic area is within the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) jurisdiction, their ACEQA thresholds apply to the project.

the BAAQMD is currently designated as a nonattainment area for State and federal ozone standards, the State PM_{10} standard, and State and federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards.

The project will not have a cumulative effect on ozone because it will not generate substantial traffic which would result in substantial emissions of ozone precursors (ROG and NOx). See discussion in Section 17, Transportation Traffic, below.

The project will have no long-term effect on $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}, because all surfaces will be paved, gravel, landscaped, or otherwise treated to stabilize bare soils, and dust generation will be insignificant. However, there could be a significant short-term emission of dust (which would include $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}) during construction. These emissions could be significant at the project level and could also contribute to a cumulative impact.

Construction Emissions
Per the *Azari Vineyards Tasting Room Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis* (Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc., July 7, 2021), construction of the project would emit 226 metric tons of CO2e. Neither the County of Sonoma nor the BAAQMD have quantified thresholds for construction activities. However, the analysis concludes the emissions would be below the lowest threshold adopted by BAAQMD and could be considered less-than-significant. BAAQMD recommends quantifying emissions and disclosing that GHG emissions would occur during construction. BAAQMD also encourages the incorporation of best management practices to reduce GHG emissions during construction where feasible and applicable. Emissions of air pollutants or their precursors would be well below BAAQMD- thresholds. See GHG section below for further information on GHG emissions and climate change.

Operational Emissions
The *Sonoma County General Plan* Resource Conservation Element addresses pollutants from mobile sources (e.g., transportation sources). The project will create traffic; therefore, the following goal would be relevant to the proposed project:

Goal RC-13: *Preserve and maintain good air quality and provide for an air quality standard that will protect human health and preclude crop, plant, and property damage in accordance with requirements of the federal and State CAA's (Clean Air Act).*

State and Federal standards have been established for the "criteria pollutants": ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, and particulate (PM10 and PM2.5). To determine whether standards for any of these pollutants would be violated, the emissions from both stationary and mobile sources must be considered.

The project would not add any new equipment or processes that would have significant emissions or require permits from the air district.

Mobile emissions are criteria pollutants that would result from additional traffic generated by the project. The project would cause mobile emissions because it would add traffic, however, the increase over the existing traffic at the site would be very small. Mobile emissions from planned special events were calculated in a separate model run and were based on a scenario involving ten 200-person events annually. W-Trans predicts 22 daily trips and an average of 110 trips for each special event (*Focused Traffic Study for the Azari Tasting room Project*, July 22, 2021). This level of daily traffic, including periodic events is below the screening criteria for Vehicles Miles traveled due to the relatively low trip count. Annually, the project would potentially generate 8,030 trips (22 trips x 365 days) and the special events would generate 1,100 trips (110 trips x 10 events). On an annual basis, event trips would represent 14 percent of the typical mobile emissions. The CalEEMod predicted annual mobile emissions were increased by 14 percent to account for ten special events per year. Based on the scope of the project, the emissions analysis concludes emission of criteria pollutants would be less than significant. Similarly, GHG emissions would be insignificant and not result in significant climate impacts provided the project meets its fair share of reduction as discussed under the GHG section below.

In conclusion, air quality impacts would be reduced to less than significant by including dust control measures as described in the following mitigation measure

Impact Level:
Less than Significant with Mitigation.

Mitigation AIR-1: The following dust control measures shall be included in the project:

a. Water or alternative dust control method shall be sprayed to control dust on construction areas, soil stockpiles, and staging areas during construction as directed by the County.
b. Trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials over public roads will cover the loads or will keep the loads at least two feet below the level of the sides of the container or will wet the load sufficiently to prevent dust emissions.
c. Vehicle speeds on unpaved areas shall be limited to 15 miles per hour.
d. Final surfacing (i.e., pavement or concrete, gravel, landscaping) shall be completed as soon as possible after earthwork is finished, unless seeding or soil binders are used.
e. Idling time of diesel-powered construction equipment shall be limited to five minutes. Signs shall be posted reminding workers of this idling restriction at all access points and equipment staging areas during construction of the proposed project.
f. All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications and shall have a CARB-certified visible emissions evaluator check equipment prior to use at the site.
g. Trackout shall not be allowed at any active exit from the project site onto an adjacent paved public roadway or shoulder of a paved public roadway that exceeds cumulative 25 linear feet and creates fugitive dust visible emissions without cleaning up such trackout within 4 hours of when the Construction Coordinator identifies such excessive trackout, and shall not allow more than 1 quart of trackout to remain on the adjacent paved public roadway or the paved shoulder of the paved public roadway at the end of any workday.
h. Visible emissions of fugitive dust shall not be allowed during cleanup of any trackout that exceeds 20 percent opacity as determined by the Environmental Protection Agency in *Method 203B – Opacity Determination for Time-Exception Regulations (August 2017)*. Trackout is defined by BAAQMD in *Regulation 6, Rule 6: Prohibition of Trackout (August 2018)* as "any sand, soil, dirt, bulk materials or other solid particles from a site that adhere to or agglomerate on the exterior surfaces of vehicles (including tires), and subsequently fall or are dislodged onto a paved public roadway or the paved shoulder of a paved public roadway on the path that vehicles follow at any exist and extending 50-feet out onto the paved public roadway beyond the boundary of the site. Material that has collected on the roadway from erosion is not trackout."

Monitoring AIR-1: Permit Sonoma staff shall verify the AIR-1 measures listed on all associated grading, building, or improvement plans prior to permit issuance.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Sensitive receptors are facilities that house or attract children, the elderly, people with illnesses, or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Hospitals, schools, convalescent facilities, and residential areas are examples of sensitive receptors. Localized impacts to sensitive receptors generally occur when sources of air pollutants and sensitive receptors are located near one another. The surrounding area is a mix of agricultural and rural residential uses. The proposed project would not create an incompatible situation as the commercial use of the project site does not involve stationary or point sources of air pollutants which generate substantial pollutant concentrations.

Although there will be no substantial long-term increase in emissions, during construction there could be short term dust emissions that would affect nearby residents. Dust emissions can be reduced to less than significant by Mitigation Measure AIR-1.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant with Mitigation AIR-1

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

The project is not an odor-generating use, nor located near an odor-generating source that may affect sensitive receptors. The use would have no significant odor impacts.

Construction equipment may generate odors during project construction. The impact would be less than

significant due to the distant proximity of sensitive receptors and construction would be short-term that ceases upon completion of the project.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

4. 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?

According to the *Biological Assessment Report* (Daniel Edelstein Consulting Biologist and Certified Wildlife Biologist Asc., October 28, 2021), the proposed project will not have a substantial adverse effect. Surveys did not yield the presence of any rare, special-status animal and floristic species on the site. All of the botanical special-status species were assessed based on the results of a query at the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and the CNPS web site for the Petaluma 7.5-minute United States Geological Service (USGS) quadrangle. There are no known special status species on the project site, and none listed on the State's Diversity Database. No significant impact to special-status animals or plants or critical habitat is expected by the project. However, the Biological Assessment Report recommends the following avoidance and minimization measures prior to the beginning of groundbreaking and construction at the project site.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant with Mitigation

Mitigation BIO-1: The following Mitigation Measure shall be printed on all grading and building permit sheets:

"If construction on the project site occurs between February 1 and August 31, an Avian Biologist must conduct surveys for nesting songbird and raptor species in accordance with established California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) survey protocols. Surveys should cover the Site and all suitable nesting habitat within 500 feet of its boundaries. If nesting songbird or raptor species are detected, the Avian Biologist must establish buffers around nests that are sufficient to ensure that breeding is not likely to be disrupted or adversely impacted by construction. Buffers around active songbird nests will be 75 feet and 500 feet for non-listed raptors, unless a qualified biologist determines that smaller buffers would be sufficient to avoid impacts to nesting raptors. Factors to be considered for determining buffer size will include: the presence of natural buffers provided by vegetation or topography; nest height; locations of foraging territory; and baseline levels of noise and human activity. Buffers will be maintained until the Avian Biologist has determined that young have fledged and are no longer reliant upon the nest or parental care for survival."

Monitoring BIO-1**:** Prior to issuance of grading and building permits, the Project Planner will verify the note is printed on all grading and building permit plan sheets and verify surveys are conducted as noted.

Mitigation BIO-2: The following Mitigation Measure shall be printed on all grading and building permit sheets:

a. Pre-construction survey for the American Badger should be conducted in development zones no fewer than 14 days and no more than 30 days prior to the beginning of ground disturbance and/or construction activities at the project site, or for any Project activity likely to impact the American Badger. If construction activities (including ground disturbing activities) are phased, then so shall the pre-construction surveys be phased.

b. If dens are found within the construction area and require removal, they shall be monitored for badger presence using a tracking medium or a video probe. Tracking medium must be monitored for three consecutive days to provide evidence of vacancy. All dens and burrows within the construction area and which contain badger sign must be hand excavated by a trained Wildlife Biologist. If a den is found to be occupied by an American Badger, the den shall not be excavated until the badger is allowed to passively vacate the den.
c. If dens are located within 100 feet of construction areas, but not within construction areas, they shall not be removed. Instead, exclusion fencing should be added to ensure no encroachment of equipment The exclusion fencing around each observed badger burrow shall consist of plastic construction fencing held in place by t-posts every 25 feet, or by a rope and flagging fence. The purpose of the fencing is to exclude construction activities occurring near the den (s).
d. To ensure the above design prescription is executed successfully, an important design feature should occur: Gaps of three feet should be present every 25 feet in a fence to allow a badger to go in and out. Consequently, construction equipment will not be able to encroach within 100 feet of a burrow, but the gaps will allow a badger to get around a fence, if necessary. The fencing should be around the outside of any burrow, equidistant from it 100 feet in all directions to prevent construction equipment encroachment.
e. Project-related vehicles shall observe a 20-mph speed limit while on the Site. This is particularly important at night (between sunset and sunrise) when American badgers are most active. Construction activities at night (sunset to sunrise) should be prohibited.
f. To prevent inadvertent entrapment of American badgers or other animals during the construction phase of the project, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches more than two feet deep shall be covered at the close of each working day by plywood or similar materials or provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they shall be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals by a qualified biologist or trained monitor.

    i. In the case of trapped animals, escape ramps or structures shall be installed immediately to allow the animal(s) to escape. If an entrapped animal is incapable of escaping or is otherwise trapped for an excess of 12 hours, the California Department of Fish and Game should be contacted for advice.
    ii. All construction pipes, culverts, or similar structures with a diameter of four inches or greater that are stored in an unfenced storage yard for one or more overnight periods should be thoroughly inspected the qualified Wildlife Biologist for American Badgers before the pipe is subsequently buried, capped, or otherwise used or moved in anyway. If necessary, and under the direct supervision of a Wildlife Biologist, a pipe inhabited by a badger may be moved once to remove it from the path of construction activity, until the animal has escaped."

Monitoring BIO-2: Prior to issuance of grading and building permits, the Project Planner will verify the note is printed on all grading and building permit plan sheets and verify surveys are conducted as noted.

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?

The project site is not designated with a BR (Biotic Resource) Combining District and there are no designated critical habitat areas within the project site. The project does have an RC (Riparian Corridor) with 50-foot setbacks. However, the drainage/watercourse existing south of the project site would not be impacted. The project does not include any direct disturbance along a riparian habitat or designated sensitive natural community.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

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?

Per the *Biological Assessment Report* states no jurisdictional wetland habitat or waters of California habitat exists on the project site, plus no nexus or connectivity exists from the project site to the off-site watercourse. The project site does not involve any direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption of any federally protected wetlands.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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?

The project site is not zoned BH (Biotic Habitat) Combining Zone. There are no designated or critical habitat areas within the project site. The project will not interfere with the movement of migratory fish or wildlife species.

Impact Level:
No Impact

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No trees would be removed with the project development. No biological resources would be impacted by the project.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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

Habitat conservation plans and natural community conservation plans are site-specific plans to address effects on sensitive species of plants and animals. The project site is not located in an area subject to a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

Impact Level:
No Impact

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES:

Assembly Bill 52 Project Notifications were sent to the Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians, Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Mishewal Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley, Middletown Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Lytton Rancheria of California, Kashia Pomo Stewarts Point Rancheria and Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. These Native American tribes were invited to consult on the project pursuant to Public Resources Code sections 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2.

Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?

A Cultural Resources Survey was prepared for the project. The site is undeveloped, therefore, no historical resources pursuant to §15064.5 are present.

Impact Level:
No Impact

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

A Cultural Resources Survey was prepared for the project. No archaeological finds were recorded as a result of the survey. See section 18.a. below for standard condition of approval to ensure that cultural or archaeological resources are protected if unearthed during ground-disturbing activities.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

There are no known archaeological resources on the site, but the project could uncover such materials during construction. In the event that human remains are unearthed during construction, state law requires that the County Coroner be contacted in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the State Health and Safety Code to investigate the nature and circumstances of the discovery. If the remains were determined to be Native American interment, the Coroner will follow the procedure outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15065.5(e).

A standard condition of approval requires the following language be printed on the grading and building plans:

> ***NOTES ON PLANS:*** *"If human remains are encountered, all work must stop in the immediate vicinity of the discovered remains and PRMD staff, County Coroner and a qualified archaeologist must be notified immediately so that an evaluation can be performed. If the remains are deemed to be Native American and prehistoric, the Native American Heritage Commission must be contacted by the Coroner so that a "Most Likely Descendant" can be designated."*

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

6. 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?

Illingworth & Rodkin (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis) found the proposed project would have direct and indirect emissions that are below the former GHG operational threshold (1,100 metric tons of CO2e per year) recommended by BAAQMD for new project. This analysis considers updated GHG thresholds adopted by the BAAQMD in 2022, which relies on prescriptive standards related to Building Operations and Transportation and more of a qualitative analysis requiring that each project due its fair share to reduce climate change. As documented in the GHG analysis in Section 8. below the project would meet the current BAAQMD thresholds; therefore, the project's GHG emissions would not significantly contribute to a cumulative impact on global climate change.

The project will not result in significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation. Short-term energy demand

would result from construction activities including energy needed to power worker and vendor vehicle trips as well as construction equipment. Long-term energy demand would result from operation of the project, which would include activities such as lighting, heating, and cooling of structures. Consistent with BAAQMD, the facility would operate on electricity and no gas-powered appliances are permitted. In addition, the proposal includes use of solar panels to the maximum extent feasible to reduce demand on non-renewable energy resources.

Although implementation of the project would result in an increase in energy usage compared to current conditions due to the new structures on the project site, the increase in energy use would not be wasteful nor inefficient because of measures incorporated into project design, including energy-efficient building design meeting CALGreen requirements.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

The project would be required to comply with Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations, Building Energy Efficiency Standards. Additionally, the project is not located in an identified area designated for renewable energy productions nor would the project interfere with the installation of any renewable energy systems. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct with applicable State and local plans for promoting use of renewable energy and energy efficiency. The project owner has committed to utilizing rooftop solar on all south-facing roofs, has designed the project to be all-electric (no natural gas) and utilize LED lighting fixtures throughout the project.

Impact Level:
No Impact

7. 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.

The site is not located in an Alquist-Priolo fault zone based on the Safety Maps in the Sonoma County General Plan. The project zoning does not include G (Geologic Hazard Area) Combining District per the Zoning Ordinance.

Impact Level:
No Impact

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

All of Sonoma County is subject to seismic shaking from earthquakes along the San Andreas, Healdsburg-Rodgers Creek, and other faults. Predicting seismic events is not possible at this time, nor is providing mitigation that can entirely reduce the potential for injury and damage that can occur during a seismic event. Approved building permit plans demonstrating compliance with current seismic safety standards is required prior to project construction. The project is therefore not likely to result in a significant risk of loss, injury, or death relating to seismic ground failure.

Impact Level:

No Impact

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

The project os not likely to result in a significant risk of loss, injury, or death from seismic ground failure or liquefaction. The California Building Code and the codes and policies of Sonoma County have been developed to address seismic hazards to the most reasonable extent possible. The County requires grading and building plans demonstrating compliance with the civil design requirements of the California Building Code (CBC) prior to project construction.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

iv. Landslides?

The project site is not located in a landslide prone area per the California Landsides Inventory map at https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/maps-data
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Impact Level:
Less than Significant

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

The project includes grading, cuts and fills which may result in soil erosion or loss of topsoil and requires the issuance of a grading permit. The County requires approved grading plans demonstrating compliance with the civil engineering and drainage design requirements prior to project construction, including measures for erosion control built into the project design and during construction activities. The mitigation below further ensures compliance with County standards and practices for minimizing potential soil erosion or topsoil loss from grading activities.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant with Mitigation

Mitigation

Mitigation GEO-1: The applicant shall submit an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan prepared by a registered professional engineer as an integral part of the grading plan. The Erosion and Sediment Control Plan shall be subject to review and approval of the Permit and Resource Management Department prior to the issuance of a grading permit. The Plan shall include temporary erosion control measures to be used during construction of cut and fill slopes, excavation for foundations, and other grading operations at the site to prevent discharge of sediment and contaminants into the drainage system. The Erosion and Sediment Control Plan shall include the following measures as applicable:

a) Throughout the construction process, groundwater disturbance shall be minimized and existing vegetation shall be retained to the extent possible to reduce soil erosion. All construction and grading activities, including short-term needs (equipment staging areas, storage areas and field office locations) shall minimize the amount of land area disturbed. Whenever possible, existing disturbed areas shall be used for such purposes.
b) All drainage ways, wetland areas and creek channels shall be protected from silt and sediment in storm runoff through the use of silt fences, diversion berms, and check dams. Fill slopes shall be compacted to stabilize. All exposed surface areas shall be mulched and reseeded and all cut and fill slopes shall be protected with hay mulch and /or erosion control blankets as appropriate.
c) Material and equipment for implementation of erosion control measures shall be on-site by October 1st. All grading activity shall be completed by October 15th, prior to the onset of the rainy season, with all disturbed areas stabilized and revegetated by October 31st. Upon approval of PRMD, extensions for short-term grading may be allowed. PRMD in conjunction with any specially permitted rainy season grading may require special erosion control measures.

Monitoring GEO-1: Building/grading permits for ground disturbing activities shall not be approved for issuance by Project Review staff until the above notes are printed on applicable building, grading and improvement plans. The applicant shall be responsible for notifying construction contractors about erosion control requirement.

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?

The County's permitting process requires compliance with standard geotechnical requirements addressing potential construction-related impacts resulting from geological instability, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse. An approved grading plan demonstrating compliance with current code standards is required for the project and its construction is therefore not likely to cause geological instability based on unique or unforeseen soil conditions.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

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?

The County' permitting process applies standard design and construction practices accounting for potential expansive soil conditions before issuing approved construction plans, thereby ensuring that related impacts are less than significant.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant.

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?

The project proposes a non-standard type septic system to the west and southwest of the proposed tasting room for disposal of domestic wastewater These areas are identified in the pre-perc site inspection performed under SEV07-0960 and the percolation test performed under SEV07-1062. The County requires the septic system be designed in accordance with the current OWTS Manual and sized to accommodate the domestic wastewater demand generated by the proposed use, including domestic wastewater generated by employees, daily visitors,
and annual event guests.

The applicant is working with the Permit Sonoma Well & Septic Section per the SEP19-0690 permit application for a new nonstandard at-grade mound septic system. The "limits of the suitable septic system" plus the locations of the tanks per SEP19-0690 are indicated on the Site Plan.

Any necessary system design and demonstration of reserve areas shall be done under permit and the current standards from the Permit Sonoma Well and Septic Section, and may require both soils analysis, groundwater and percolation testing. If a permit for a standard, innovative, or experimental sewage disposal system sized to meet all peak flows proves infeasible, then the applicant shall revise the project to a reduced size, not to exceed the on-site disposal capabilities of the project site and attendant easements. The Well and Septic Section shall not sign off on building permits until all required septic system testing and design elements have been met.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic

feature?

No unique paleontological resources or geological features are known to exist on or near the project constriction site.

Impact Level:
No Impact

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS:

Regulatory Setting

Executive Order S-3-05
The Governor announced on June 1, 2005, through Executive Order S-3-05, the following GHG emission reduction targets:

- By 2010, California shall reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels;
- By 2020, California shall reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; and
- By 2050, California shall reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

Executive Order B-30-15
On April 29, 2015, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-30-15. Therein, the Governor directed the following:

- Established a new interim statewide reduction target to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.
- Ordered all state agencies with jurisdiction over sources of GHG emissions to implement measures to achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the 2030 and 2050 reduction targets.
- Directed CARB to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to express the 2030 target in terms of million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32)
In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (codified in the California Health and Safety Code [HSC], Division 25.5 – California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006),which focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020. HSC Division 25.5 defines GHGs as CO2, CH4, N2O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF6 and represents the first enforceable statewide program to limit emissions of these GHGs from all major industries with penalties for noncompliance. The law further requires that reduction measures be technologically feasible and cost effective. Under HSC Division 25.5, CARB has the primary responsibility for reducing GHG emissions. CARB is required to adopt rules and regulations directing state actions that would achieve GHG emissions reductions equivalent to 1990 statewide levels by 2020.

A specific requirement of AB 32 was to prepare a Climate Change Scoping Plan for achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reduction by 2020. CARB developed and approved the initial Scoping Plan in 2008, outlining the regulations, market-based approaches, voluntary measures, policies, and other emission reduction programs that would be needed to meet the 2020 statewide GHG emission limit and initiate the transformations needed to achieve the State's long-range climate objectives.

The First Update to the Scoping Plan was approved by CARB in May 2014 and built upon the initial Scoping Plan with new strategies and recommendations. In 2014, CARB revised the target using the GWP values from the IPCC AR4 and determined that the 1990 GHG emissions inventory and 2020 GHG emissions limit is 431 MMTCO2e. CARB also updated the State's BAU 2020 emissions estimate to account for the effect of the 2007–2009 economic recession, new estimates for future fuel and energy demand, and the reductions required by regulation that were adopted for motor vehicles and renewable energy.

Senate Bill 97
SB 97, enacted in 2007, directed OPR to develop California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (*CEQA Guidelines*) "for the mitigation of GHG emissions or the effects of GHG emissions." In December 2009, OPR adopted amendments to the *CEQA Guidelines*, Appendix G Environmental Checklist, which created a new resource section for GHG emissions and indicated criteria that may be used to establish significance of GHG emissions. Appendix F of the *CEQA Guidelines* states that, in order to ensure that energy implications are considered in project decisions, the potential energy implications of a project shall be considered in an EIR, to the extent relevant and applicable to the project. Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines further states that a project's energy consumption and proposed conservation measures may be addressed, as relevant and applicable, in the Project Description, Environmental Setting, and Impact Analysis portions of technical sections, as well as through mitigation measures and alternatives.

Senate Bill 32 and Assembly Bill 197
In 2016, Senate Bill (SB) 32 and its companion bill AB 197, amended HSC Division 25.5 and established a new climate pollution reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, while including provisions to ensure the benefits of state climate policies reach into disadvantaged communities.

2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update
In response to SB 32 and the 2030 GHG reduction target, CARB approved the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update (2017 Scoping Plan Update) in December 2017. The 2017 Scoping Plan Update outlines the proposed framework of action for achieving the 2030 GHG target of 40 percent reduction in GHG emissions relative to 1990 levels (CARB, 2017). CARB determined that the target Statewide 2030 emissions limit is 260 MMTCO2e, and that further commitments will need to be made to achieve an additional reduction of 50 MMTCO2e beyond current policies and programs. The cornerstone of the 2017 Scoping Plan Update is an expansion of the Cap-and-Trade program to meet the aggressive 2030 GHG emissions goal and ensure achievement of the 2030 limit set forth by Executive Order B-30-15.

In the Update, CARB recommends statewide targets of no more than six metric tons CO2e per capita by 2030 and no more than two metric tons CO2e per capita by 2050. CARB acknowledges that since the statewide per capita targets are based on the statewide GHG emissions inventory that includes all emissions sectors in the State, it is appropriate for local jurisdictions to derive evidence-based local per-capita goals based on local emissions sectors and growth projections. To demonstrate how a local jurisdiction can achieve their long-term GHG goals at the community plan level, CARB recommends developing a geographically-specific GHG reduction plan (i.e., climate action plan) consistent with the requirements of CEQA Section 15183.5(b). A so- called "CEQA-qualified" GHG reduction plan, once adopted, can provide local governments with a streamlining tool for project-level environmental review of GHG emissions, provided there are adequate performance metrics for determining project consistency with the plan.

Sonoma County Regional Climate Action Plan
Climate Action 2020 and Beyond (CA2020) was the regional climate action plan for Sonoma County, adopted by the Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) on July 11, 2016. CA2020 was not adopted as a qualified GHG reduction plan due to legal challenges and subsequent court decision. However, the underlying GHG emissions analysis and GHG inventory provides the basis for deriving a GHG threshold of significance.

California CEQA Guidelines
State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.4 specifically addresses the significance of GHG emissions, requiring a lead agency to make a "good-faith effort" to "describe, calculate or estimate" GHG emissions in CEQA environmental documents. Section 15064.4 further states that the analysis of GHG impacts should include consideration of (1) the extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions, (2) whether the project emissions would exceed a locally applicable threshold of significance, and (3) the extent to which the project would comply with "regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions."

The CEQA Guidelines do not require or recommend a specific analytical methodology or provide quantitative criteria for determining the significance of GHG emissions, nor do they set a numerical threshold of significance for GHG emissions. The 2009 amendments also include a new Subdivision

15064.7(c) which clarifies that in developing thresholds of significance, a lead agency may appropriately review thresholds developed by other public agencies, or recommended by other experts, provided the decision of the lead agency to adopt such thresholds is supported by substantial evidence.

The California Natural Resources Agency has also clarified that the amended CEQA Guidelines focus on the effects of GHG emissions as cumulative impacts, and that they should be analyzed in the context of CEQA's requirements for cumulative impact analysis (see Section 15064(h)(3)).

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4(c) includes the following direction on measures to mitigate GHG emissions, when such emissions are found to be significant:

Consistent with Section 15126.4(a), lead agencies shall consider feasible means, supported by substantial evidence and subject to monitoring or reporting, of mitigating the significant effects of greenhouse gas emissions. Measures to mitigate the significant effects of greenhouse gas emissions may include, among others:

(1) Measures in an existing plan or mitigation program for the reduction of emissions that are required as part of the lead agency's decision;
(2) Reductions in emissions resulting from a project through implementation of project features, project design, or other measures;
(3) Off-site measures, including offsets that are not otherwise required, to mitigate a project's emissions;
(4) Measures that sequester greenhouse gases;

Bay Area Air Quality Management District 2022 Thresholds for Land-Use Projects
Projects must include, at a minimum, the following project design elements:

1. *Buildings*
   a. *The project will not include natural gas appliances or natural gas plumbing (in both residential and nonresidential development).*
   b. *The project will not result in any wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy usage as determined by the analysis required under CEQA Section 21100(b)(3) and Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines.*
2. *Transportation*
   a. *Achieve a reduction in project-generated vehicle miles traveled (VMT) below the regional average consistent with the current version of the California Climate Change Scoping Plan (currently 15 percent) or meet a locally adopted Senate Bill 743 VMT target, reflecting the recommendations provided in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA:*
      a. *Residential projects: 15 percent below the existing VMT per capita*
      b. *Office projects: 15 percent below the existing VMT per employee*
      c. *Retail projects: no net increase in existing VMT*
      d. *Achieve compliance with off-street electric vehicle requirements in the most recently adopted version of CALGreen Tier 2.*

Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
Senate Bill (SB) 743 established a change in the metric to be applied for determining transportation impacts associated with development projects. Rather than using a Level of Service (LOS) analysis that uses delay-based criteria, the increase in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as a result of a project is now the basis for determining California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) impacts with respect to transportation and traffic. The County of Sonoma has not yet established thresholds of significance related to VMT. Therefore, the project related VMT impacts were assessed based on guidance provided by the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in the publication Transportation Impacts (SB 743) CEQA Guidelines Update and Technical Advisory, 2018.

The OPR Technical Advisory identifies several criteria that may be used by jurisdictions to identify certain types of projects that are unlikely to have a VMT impact and can be "screened" from further VMT analysis. A screening criterion that pertains to small projects is one that OPR identifies as generating fewer than 110 new vehicle trips per day. Per the Focused Traffic Study for the Azari Tasting Room Project (W-Trans, November 29, 2022), the tasting room would be expected to generate an average of 22 trips per day on a typical weekday. Further, the proposed ten event days per year with an average of 110 daily trips translates to an average of 21 daily trips for the 52 Saturdays in a year. Altogether, the project would generate an annual average of 43 daily trips which falls well below the OPR threshold. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the project can be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact on VMT.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions
As stated previously, the California Emissions Estimator Model, Version 2020.4.0 (CalEEMod) was used to estimate construction and operational emissions. CalEEMod was also used to estimate full build-out operational GHG emissions.

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis (Illingworth & Rodkin, July 7, 2021) states that CalEEMod defaults for energy use were used, which include the 2019 Title 24 Building Standards. Indirect emissions from electricity were computed in CalEEMod. The model has a default rate of 203.98 pounds of CO2 per megawatt of electricity produced, which is based on PG&E's 2019 emissions rate. The project is anticipated to use 294,640 gallons of water per year for domestic uses and 238,336 gallons for irrigation. The wastewater from domestic use would be treated would be disposed of in a non-standard type septic system. Default model assumptions for emissions associated with solid waste generation use were applied to the project.

The project was initially reviewed under the 2010 BAAQMD Air Quality CEQA Guidelines which included an emissions threshold of 1,100 metric tons (MT) of CO2e or an emission efficiency metric of 4.6 MT of CO2e per year per service population (future residences and full-time workers) if the threshold is exceeded.

The GHG analysis concludes the proposed project would have direct and indirect emissions of 55 metric tons of GHG emissions a year, that are substantially below the former GHG operational thresholds.

The project has been reviewed for compliance with the BAAQMD CEQA thresholds for GHG adopted in 2022 and is in compliance by ensuring that no natural gas will be used for appliances or heating, LED light fixtures will be used throughout, rooftop solar will be installed, and the applicant is meeting the CALGreen Tier 2 mandatory electric-vehicle regulations.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

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

The County's adopted goals and policies include GP Policy OSRC-14.4 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 25% below 1990 levels by 2015. Sonoma County emissions in 2015 were 9% below 1990 levels, while the countywide population grew 4%. In May 2018, the Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution of Intent to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions that included adoption of the Regional Climate Protection Agency's goal to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, consistent with SB32 and AB197 climate pollution reduction targets. The Resolution of Intent included specific measures that can further reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

All new development is required to evaluate all reasonably feasible measures to reduce GHG emissions and enhance carbon sequestration. The following greenhouse gas emission reduction measures are incorporated into the project by the applicant and are included as a condition of approval:

- Solar panels will cover all south-facing parts of the tasting room building roof.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

9. 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?

Constructing a tasting room and allowing events at the tasting room would not create a hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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

Constructing a tasting room and allowing events at the tasting room would not create a hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Impact Level:
No Impact

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

The subject property is not within a one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Constructing a tasting room and allowing events would not result in hazardous materials emission.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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

The site is not identified as a hazardous materials sites under Government Code Section 65962.5.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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

The site is not within the referral area boundary of Sonoma County (STS) Airport.

Impact Level:
No Impact

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The project would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with the County's adopted emergency operations plan. There is no separate emergency evacuation plan for the County. In any case, the project would not change existing circulation patterns, access and egress would continue to be from Springhill Road, a County maintained roadway.

Impact Level:
No Impact

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

The project site is not located in a high wildland fire hazard. Events will take place indoors or outdoors on improved areas and not in high grass or remote areas on the site.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY:

Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

The project site drains to a tributary of San Antonio Creek which is a tributary of the Petaluma River. The Petaluma River is 303d listed for sediment nutrient pathogen, diazanon and mercury. The project requires implementation of erosion/sediment control measures during construction and grading activities minimizing potential sediment erosion into off-site waterways so as not to violate any current water quality standards under Mitigation GEO-1. This project is located outside the boundary subject to the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and not subject to SUSMP measures nor coverage under the State General Industrial Permit, as adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

The project proposes a non-standard at-grade mound septic system through permit application SEP19-0690. Tasting room domestic wastewater shall be disposed of in a non-standard type septic system to the west and southwest of the proposed tasting room, in the area of the pre-perc site inspection performed under SEV07-0960 and the percolation test performed under SEV07-1062. The septic system shall be designed in accordance with the current OWTS Manual and be sized to accommodate the domestic wastewater generated by the proposed use, including domestic wastewater generated by employees, wine tasters, and special event guests. Project conditions require the septic system to be evaluated to ensure the septic system is functioning properly prior to initiation of the use so water quality will not be impacted.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

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

EBA Engineering (EBA) has prepared a *Hydrogeologic Report (Report) dated* February 22, 2022, for the project. The project location is within a Class 4 Groundwater Availability Zone and *Policy WR-2E* of the Sonoma County General Plan requires preparation of the report to assess the project's proposed

development demand on existing and future groundwater supplies and whether potential drawdown impacts may occur as a result within the determined cumulative impact area (CIA). The Report identifies the cumulative impact area (CIA) consisting of approximately 60 acres and encompassing 10 properties, including the two project properties. The Report determined the boundary of the 60-acre impact area based on existing and future site development characteristics, zoning designations for surrounding properties, existing site hydrogeology, and the scope of new development, uses, and activities proposed by the project.

The Hydrogeologic Report describes the westerly parcel of the project with three wells supporting the existing winery, agricultural, and residential uses on-site, and that the existing well (WELL-1321) on the easterly parcel is currently unused. The existing and future groundwater use for the easterly parcel (Project Site) was provided by the property owner and estimated by EBA Engineering using industry standard values for domestic/incidental use off-site groundwater use information. The ensuing groundwater use estimations conservatively assume that the water supply well for each of these parcels is located within the CIA. Existing and projected groundwater use associated with the proposed development and with the adjoining and nearby properties are summarized below and in the following the table

Single-Family Dwellings. EBA's analysis of single-family related water use is based on the number of bedrooms associated with existing dwellings within the CIA and on the assumption of additional 3-bedroom dwellings for properties having remaining development potential.

Vineyards. EBA evaluated the water use estimates for the existing on-site vineyards and within the surrounding CIA. The westerly parcel at 1399 Spring Hill Road currently provides irrigation for the on-site vineyards on both westerly and easterly project site parcel, including approximately 8.24 vineyard acres for the westerly parcel and approximately six acres for the easterly project site parcel. Water use for the easterly parcel vineyard is therefore included in the estimate for off-site groundwater use. The Report also evaluates the potential use of surrounding grassland for future off-site vineyard development within the CIA. The EBA Report assumes off-site groundwater use for future vineyard development accounting for a total of 10 acres within the CIA.

Winery. Water use associated with the 6,000-case winery located at 1399 Spring Hill Road (APN 020-050-009) was estimated as part of the existing off-site groundwater use. According to Appendix A of the Sonoma County General Plan, Water Resource Element, the volume of process water for a winery in Sonoma County is 2.15 acre-feet per 100,000 gallons of wine produced. Taking into consideration the number of gallons in 6,000 cases of wine and the process water value provided by the County, EBA estimated the water use for a 6,000-case winery to be approximately 0.31 acre-feet.

SUMMARY TABLE - EXISTING AND PROJECTED GROUNDWATER USE

Description	Existing (AF/yr)	Future Additional (AF/yr)	Future Combined (AF/yr)
Project Site Groundwater Use			
Domestic and Irrigation Use (1)	0.00	0.93	0.93
Septic Return Flow Offset (2)	0.00	- 0.72	- 0.72
Project Site Totals	***0.00***	***0.21***	***0.21***
Off-Site Groundwater Use			
Single Family Dwellings – Domestic Use (3)	6.00	0.75	6.75
Single Family Dwellings – Incidental Use (4)	2.00	0.25	2.25
Vineyard Irrigation (5) (7)	1.20	6.00	7.20
Winery (6)	0.31	0.00	0.31
Landscape Offset (Lawn) (8)	- 0.41	0.00	- 0.41
Off-Site Totals	***9.10***	***7.00***	***16.10***
Combined Groundwater Use			
Combined Totals	***9.10***	***7.21***	***16.31***

AF/yr = Acre-Feet per Year

NOTES:
(1) Based on revised domestic water use estimate from BC Engineering Group and a reduced irrigation water use estimate from Louise Leff (landscape architect).
(2) Based on an 80% septic return flow applied to the projected annual domestic water use.
(3) Based on 24 existing bedrooms and three future additional bedrooms at an incremental water use of 0.25 AF/yr per bedroom.
(4) Based on 8 existing dwellings and one future additional dwelling at an incremental water use of 0.25 AF/yr per dwelling.
(5) Based on a water use estimate provided by the client for 14.5 acres of existing vineyard.
(6) Based on a 6,000-case winery located at 1399 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma.
(7) Off-site future additional is based on hypothetical development of vineyards within the CIA. This estimate should be considered extremely conservative since it assumes that water supply for any future off-site vineyards would be from a well located within the CIA and within the same formation as the project site well (Sonoma Volcanics).
(8) Based on a 0.115 AC lawn located at 1399 Spring Hill Road, Petaluma.

The Report includes a water budget analysis comparing groundwater recharge characteristics to the projected on-site groundwater use over a given calendar year. The water budget calculations also account for drought conditions and potential impacts to surface waters and aquatic habitats.

Based on the evaluated water demand estimates, the Hydrologic Report concludes the proposed project is not likely to have a significant impact on current or future groundwater availability within the cumulative impact area under existing or foreseeable future conditions. Therefore, the proposed project is not expected to substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project impedes sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

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

i. would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

The project is located within 550 feet of a designated riparian corridor to the southeast. Proposed construction and improvements for the project do not extend to such an extent that would potentially result in the alteration of or in substantial erosion or siltation into the nearby stream. Therefore, potential impacts are considered less than significant.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;

The project will not significantly alter drainage patterns on-site or in the general area, nor will it result in on- or off-site flooding. The project does not include any work or alteration of a course of a stream or river.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

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

The project would not substantially alter drainage patterns or capacities of the project site or result in substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

iv. impede or redirect flood flows?

The project site is not classified as being within a 100-year flood plain. The project site is not located in either the F1 (Floodway) or F2 (Floodplain) overlay zoning designations.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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

The project site is located more than 10 miles from the Pacific Ocean and not susceptible to tsunami, mudflow, or seiche.

Impact Level:
No Impact

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

The project is not located in a priority basin for the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. A condition of approval requires that the project comply with all applicable regulations, monitoring, and fees associated with the Groundwater Sustainability Agency as applicable to the project site.

Impact Level:
No Impact

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING:

Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

The project is located within an established rural, agricultural area. The project would not reconfigure existing parcels or roadways. The project would not physically divide an established community.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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?

The General Plan land use and Zoning designation of the property is Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA). This designation allows wineries, tasting rooms, marketing accommodation units, and special events as conditional uses.

General Plan

The project proposal must be found consistent with the General Plan's Agricultural Element Goals, Objectives, and Policies which includes the following policies:

Policy AR-6d: Follow these guidelines for approval of visitor-serving uses in agricultural areas:

1. *The use promotes and markets only agricultural products grown or processed in the local area.*

2. *The use is compatible with and secondary and incidental to agricultural production activities in the area.*
3. *The use will not require the extension of sewer and water.*
4. *The use is compatible with existing uses in the area.*
5. *Hotels, motels, resorts, and similar lodging are not allowed.*
6. *Activities that promote and market agricultural products such as tasting rooms, sales and promotion of products grown or processed in the County, educational activities and tours, incidental sales of items related to local area agricultural products are allowed.*
7. *Special events on agricultural lands or agriculture-related events on other lands in the Sonoma Valley Planning area will be subject to a pilot event coordination program which includes tracking and monitoring of visitor-serving activities and schedule management, as necessary, to reduce cumulative impacts.*

The County generally considers tasting facilities and winery events compatible with surrounding agricultural activities and land uses when the proposed operating hours and the frequency and size of events are appropriately limited and do not result in any substantial noise or traffic impacts.

Tasting rooms and winery events relate to promoting and selling an agricultural product that is produced on the site and to create winery label recognition, which subsequently helps to ensure the long-term viability of wine sales and to promote the long-term viability of grape-growing as an agricultural production use within the County.

The project site is comprised of two adjoining parcels totaling 33.39 acres which together contain a total of 13.86 vineyard acres supporting the existing on-site winery operation. The approved annual production capacity for the winery is 8,000 cases.

The proposed tasting room operation with seven annual events is secondary and incidental to the on-site agricultural production and winery processing activities and therefore supports the promotion and sale of locally grown product currently harvested and produced on-site through the existing winery operation, consistent with thr General Plan.

The Focused Traffic Study (W-Trans; 2/26/25) for the project concludes that the addition of public tasting operations and events at this site will generate additional vehicular traffic which is not expected to exceed service capacity levels for roads in the project vicinity. Project-generated traffic impacts are further discussed below in the Environmental Analysis section.

Policy AR-6d further requires that the use will not require the extension of sewer or water services and that the project is primarily surrounded by agricultural lands; the project is consistent with the requirements of Policy AR-6d.

Policy AR-6f: Local concentrations of visitor serving and recreational uses, and agricultural support uses as defined in Goal AR-5, even if related to surrounding agricultural activities, are detrimental to the primary use of the land for the production of food, fiber and plant materials and may constitute grounds for denial of such uses. In determining whether or not the approval of such uses would constitute a detrimental concentration of such uses, consider all the following factors:

1. *Whether the above uses would result in joint road access conflicts, or in traffic levels that exceed the Circulation and Transit Element's objectives for level of service on a site specific and cumulative basis.*
2. *Whether the above uses would draw water from the same aquifer and be located within the zone of influence of area wells.*
3. *Whether the above uses would be detrimental to the rural character of the area.*

Land Extensive Agriculture zoning (LEA – Sec. 26-06-010)

The LEA zoning district enhances and protects lands best suited for permanent agriculture use and capable of relatively low production per acre of land, and implements the LEA category of the General Plan and the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element.

The LEA zoning district of the Zoning Ordinance allows for tasting rooms per Sec. 26-18-210. Tasting rooms must be consistent with General Plan policies AR-6d and AR-6f.

The project site is not located within a local area of concentration of wineries. Pursuant to Sonoma County Code Section 26-06-030 – Agriculture & Resource Zones Allowed Land Uses, the winery, tasting rooms and related agricultural promotional events and industry wide events are allowed in the LEA zone, subject to obtaining a use permit.

The proposal is consistent with Winery Events ordinance definitions and operating standards, Zoning Code Section 26-18-260. Section 26-18-260(E)(3) of the Zoning Code allows for events that have been evaluated for a variety of factors specific to the site and surrounding uses, including, but not limited to, septic capacity, available water supply, emergency access, availability of on-site parking, noise attenuation, increased risk of harm to people or property as a result of hazards, and the potential for negative cumulative effects related to noise, traffic, and water supplies. The proposed events related to the UPE19-0072 were evaluated as a part of the CEQA analysis and found not to result in cumulative negative effects with the implementation of Mitigation Measures as required.

Section 26-18-260(E)(4) restricts hours of operations related to Tasting Rooms and Events. The proposed hours of operations for the proposed tasting room and events meet these standards. Section 26-18-260(E)(6) of the Zoning Code outline parking requirements for wineries and tasting rooms.

Per the guidelines of Sec. 26-86-010 – *Required* Parking, the parking supply proposed for the site is adequate to accommodate both the anticipated daily parking demand and the demand during events. The proposed project would supply 59 parking spaces on-site, including 30 spaces for the tasting room and 29 overflow parking spaces.

To accommodate the daily parking demand during typical tasting room operations, one space for every employee on-site as well as one space per 2.5 tasting room guests is provided. Two tasting room employees and a maximum of 20 tasting room visitors translate to ten required parking spaces, including two for employees and eight for tasting room visitors. The proposed 30-space permanent parking area is overparked by 20 spaces and provides more than adequate parking to accommodate the daily visitor demand, with a surplus of 20 spaces.

The maximum number of parking spaces needed on-site during a 125-person event with nine staff is 59 spaces. This assumes one vehicle per employee and 2.5 guests per vehicle. The maximum of 59 parking spaces needed during an event is equal to the total parking supply including the permanent (30 tasting room spaces) and overflow parking (29 spaces). The proposed 59 parking spaces (30 permanent parking spaces; 29 overflow) is adequate to accommodate the anticipated peak parking demand for the project.

The subject parcel includes a small portion of the top of the watershed of a designated riparian corridor (Respini Creek) that runs from the subject parcel to the southeast. The Riparian Corridor Combining District (Sec. 26-65-005) imposes (RC50/50) a 50-foot streamside conservation area and 50-foot development setback from the creek. The proposed development is sited approximately 550-feet northwest from and will not impact the function of the designated Respini Creek riparian corridor.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

12. 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?

There is no known mineral resource of value to the region and the residents of the state located on the property. The site is not zoned MR (Mineral Resources). The project will not result in the loss of a known mineral resource.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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?

The site is not designated in an MR (Mineral Resource) zoning district. The Sonoma County General Plan does not designate the project site as within a known mineral resource deposit area.

Impact Level:
No Impact

13. NOISE:

Would the project:

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?

The Noise Element of the Sonoma County General Plan establishes goals, objectives and policies including performance standards to regulate noise affecting residential and other sensitive receptors. The General Plan sets separate standards for transportation noise and for noise from non-transportation land uses.

The proposed tasting room facility and associated improvements are located near the site frontage of the property adjacent to Spring Hill Road. The applicant's acoustic consultant Illingworth & Rodkin have prepared an *Environmental Noise Assessment* for the project dated June 29, 2021. An addendum prepared on June 26, 2026, includes updated impact analysis and recommendations specific to the proposed winery event related activities.

AMBIENT SOURCES
An *Environmental Noise Assessment* prepared for the project by Illingworth & Rodkin, June 29, 2021, measured ambient noise levels occurring at this location. The study identified noise sources resulting primarily from afternoon and evening wind on the surrounding Eucalyptus trees and other leaves in the area, and from the distant sound of passing vehicles along Spring Hill Road. The noise study also identified background sound levels resulting from adjacent residential uses and existing vineyard activities during low winds or periods without passing vehicles.

PROJECT-SPECIFIC SOURCES
The 2021 Illingworth & Rodkin study and its 2026 addendum identifies three nearby residences as the closest noise sensitive uses potentially affected by project specific noise levels anticipated from daily tasting room activities and during winery events. Other noise sensitive residential uses in the project vicinity are located at greater distances from the project. Recommended mitigation measures reducing impacts to acceptable levels on the nearest sensitive uses also reduce such impacts to acceptable levels on those located at greater distances. Potential nose related impacts and recommended mitigation measures for reducing those impacts to acceptable levels are summarized below under *On-Site Vehicle Parking*, *Tasting Room Activities*, and *Winery Events and Activities*.

On-Site Vehicle Parking

The noise assessment concludes that noise levels associated with vehicle and visitor use of the tasting room parking lot and overflow area is not expected to exceed the daytime NE-2 noise standards at the property lines of the closest adjacent residences. According to the Sonoma County winery standards under Zoning Code Section 26-18-250, the proposed 125-person events staffed by nine employees establishes the maximum parking demand for the project. With a requirement of one space for every 2.5 guests and an additional space for each employee, the total event parking demand is 59 spaces. The daily tasting room demand with two employees and up to 20 visitors per day is 10 spaces.



The project proposes a gravel parking lot providing 30 spaces adjacent to Spring Hill Road at the northerly end of the site. The parking area includes 28 regular and 2 handicap parking spaces. The proposed overflow area consists of an unimproved field to the east of the main parking lot. The vacant field is large enough to support at least 20 additional vehicles during 125-person events. With the main parking area providing 30 spaces and a maximum parking demand of 59 spaces, the remaining overflow demand for events is 29 spaces.

The noise assessment identifies the primary sources of parking lot associated noise levels as those emanating from vehicle circulation, engine starts, and door slams. The noise study bases its analysis on measurements established from the acoustic center of the parking associated noise sources to the property lime of the nearest sensitive land use. The noise study identifies three nearby residences as the closest noise sensitive uses potentially affected by project use of the proposed parking areas. The respective property line boundaries from the center of the main parking and overflow area of these residences are approximately 200, 90, and 300 feet. Other noise sensitive residential uses in the project vicinity are located at greater distances from the project driveway and parking areas.

The 30-space main parking area adjacent to Spring Hill Road is expected to accommodate the 20-person daily visitor demand for the tasting room operation and roughly half (50.8%) of the total 59-person parking demand during events. The vacant field to the east of the main parking area is expected to serve remaining overflow parking during events. Considering the anticipated parking source levels at these

distances from the nearest (non-applicant owned) residential property lines, the average maximum parking associated noise levels generated at the respective property lines of Residences 1, 2, and 3 by the project is 46dBA, 53dBA and 42dBA.

Table 5: Parking Lot Noise Levels

L08 (Noise Level Exceeded 5 to 15 min. in an Hour), dBA			
	Residence number (see Figure 2)		
	1	**2**	**3**
Unadjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	60	60	60
Daytime Ambient Noise Levels (see Table 3)	*47*	*51*	*43*
Parking lot Noise at Receiver	46	53	42
Operations Exceed Ambient by 10 dBA?	No	No	No
NE-2 Adjustment	0	0	0
Adjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	60	60	60
Parking Lot Noise Exceeds NE-2?	**No**	**No**	**No**

Given the expected visitor and employee use, the maximum noise levels produced by engine starts and door slams would be expected to occur for less than 15 minutes out of an hour and fall in the 5 to 15 minutes per hour or the L08 NE-2 daytime category of 60 dBA. Based on the concluded study results in Table 5 (above), the noise assessment supports that noise levels associated with vehicle and visitor use of the tasting room parking lot and overflow area will not exceed the daytime NE-2 noise standards at the property lines of the closest adjacent residences.

Tasting Room Activities

The noise assessment concludes that noise levels associated with wine tasting activities, including a total of 20 daily visitors on average, would not result in noise levels exceeding the daytime NE-2 noise standards at the property lines of the closest adjacent residences. The noise study recommends that any live music performances and/or amplified speech during daily public tastings be limited to indoors with windows and doors closed, as provided under Mitigation Noise-1.

Winery Events and Activities

The 2021 Illingworth & Rodkin study concludes that amplified speech and/or acoustic or amplified music conducted outdoors during events exceeds the County NE-2 standards at the property lines of all adjacent residences. The 2026 addendum further supports this finding. Mitigation Noise-1 provides that live music performances and/or amplified speech during winery events be limited to indoors with windows and doors closed. The 2026 Illingworth & Rodkin addendum identifies additional limitations and mitigations addressing outdoor noise generating sources associated with the hosting of proposed winery events for the project. The recommended best management practices for reducing potential winery event-related noise impacts to less than significant levels are listed at the end of this section under Mitigation Noise-1 and Mitigation Noise-2.

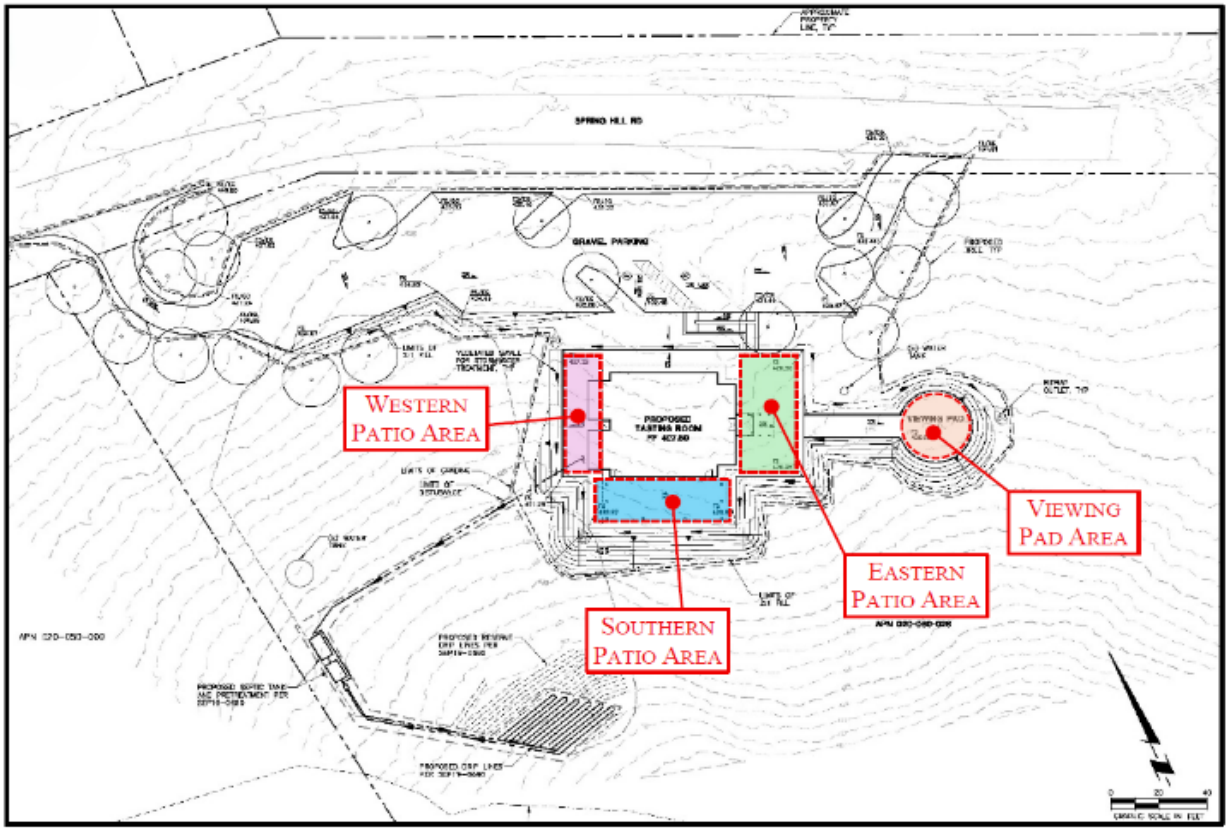
The noise study identifies four project areas providing outdoor gathering space for event guests. In determining the acoustic center of outdoor activities occurring in these four areas, the noise study takes into consideration the design and orientation of the main building, the orientation of the outdoor patios relative to the building, and the topographical relationship of the patio areas and tasting room building to the property lines of the adjacent noise sensitive uses. The study identifies these locations under Figure 2 and property line distances to the adjacent sensitive uses in Table 1.

Table 1: Distances from outdoor event area to Property Lines of Adjacent Residences

Outdoor Event Area	Distance to Acoustic center of outdoor events (feet)		
	Residence 1	Residence 2	Residence 3

Viewing Pad	320	170	435
Eastern Patio	375	165	400
Southern Patio	450	195	325
Western Patio	490	165	300

Figure 2: Tasting Room Site Plan and Outdoor Event Areas



Based on the findings shown in Tables 2a through 2d, outdoor events with background music, exclusive of restricted live performances or amplified speech, proposed outdoor gathering spaces for the project may support the following number of guests without exceeding with the maximum exterior noise exposure thresholds established by the Sonoma County General Plan Noise Element:

- Viewing Pad: up to 50 Guests
- Eastern Patio: up to 20 Guests
- Southern Patio: up to 125 guests
- Western Patio: up to 20 Guests

The noise study analysis concludes the project may support events for up to 125 guests as proposed held either within the main building or on the southern patio, with use of the three remaining outdoor spaces limited to supporting general guest circulation or small groups not exceeding the established occupancy limits. The western outdoor space is primarily expected to support employee access to rear building entrance with minimal use for guest traffic. Events held within the building or on the southern patio would include limited access to the viewing platform. The viewing platform is expected to serve as an amenity during 100-person events supporting no more than 50 guests at any given time. The eastern patio at the tasting room main entry is a large area which may physically support well over the established 20-person occupancy limit. Limiting the outdoor use of this space is therefore required to maintain the established

occupancy while safely supporting guest circulation patterns.

To maintain maximum occupancy limits for the viewing platform and exterior circulation paths surrounding the building during events, this initial study recommends as additional mitigation measures the installation of suitable occupancy plaques to promote guest awareness and enforcement of the occupancy limitations. For the eastern patio, additional planting features or other similar physical design elements are recommended to safely support guest circulation patterns while avoiding the cumulative provision of open areas or seating or standing amenities supporting more than 20 guests at any given time.

Outdoor Patio Event Noise Levels - Tables 2a - 2d:

Table 2a. Viewing Platform

	L_{50} (Noise Level exceeded 30 min. or more in an Hour)		
	Residence number (see Figure 2)		
Outdoor Event L_{50} Levels at Receivers	**1**	**2**	**3**
Unadjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	50	50	50
NE-2 Adjustment for speech and/or music	-5	-5	-5
Daytime Ambient Noise Levels (see Table 3)	*38*	*43*	*35*
1.Amplified Music Performances	**52**	**59**	**49**
2.Amplified Speech	**50**	**57**	**47**
3.Non-amplified (acoustic) Music Performances	**47**	**54**	44
4.20 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	34	41	31
5.50 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	38	45	35
6.100 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	41	**48**	38
7.200 Guests in Normal Conversation w/Bkg. Music	**46**	**53**	43
Events Exceed Ambient by 10 dBA?	**Yes:** 1,2 **No:** 3,4,5,6,7	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6	**Yes:** 1,2 **No:** 3,4,5,6,7
Total NE-2 Adjustments: speech/music (0 or -5) ambient (0 or -5)	**-10:** 1,2,3 **-5:** 3,4,5,6,7	**-10:** 1,2,3,7 **-5:** 4,5,6	**-10:** 1,2 **-5:** 3,4,5,6,7
Adjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	**40:** 1,2 **45:** 3,4,5,6,7	**40:** 1,2,3,7 **45:** 4,5,6	**40:** 1,2 **45:** 3,4,5,6,7
Outdoor Event Noise Exceeds NE-2?	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6	**Yes:** 1,2,3,6,7 **No:** 4,5	**Yes:** 1,2 **No:** 3,4,5,6,7

Table 2c: Southern Patio

Outdoor Event L_{50} Levels at Receivers	L_{50} (Noise Level exceeded 30 min. or more in an Hour) Residence number (see Figure 2) 1	2	3
Unadjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	50	50	50
NE-2 Adjustment for speech and/or music	-5	-5	-5
Daytime Ambient Noise Levels (see Table 3)	*38*	*43*	*35*
1. Amplified Music Performances	**52**	**48**	**55**
2. Amplified Speech	**50**	**46**	**53**
3. Non-amplified (acoustic) Music Performances	**47**	43	**50**
4. 20 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	34	30	37
5. 50 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	38	34	41
6. 100 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	41	37	44
7. 200 Guests in Normal Conversation w/Bkg. Music	**46**	42	**49**
Events Exceed Ambient by 10 dBA?	**Yes:** 1,2 **No:** 3,4,5,6,7	**No:** all	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6
Total NE-2 Adjustments: speech/music (0 or -5) ambient (0 or -5)	**-10:** 1,2 **-5:** 3,4,5,6,7	**-5:** all	**-10:** 1,2,3,7 **-5:** 4,5,6
Adjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	**40:** 1,2 **45:** 3,4,5,6,7	**45:** all	**40:** 1,2,3,7 **45:** 4,5,6
Outdoor Event Noise Exceeds NE-2?	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6	**Yes:** 1,2 **No:** 3,4,5,6,7	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6

Table 2b: Eastern Patio

Outdoor Event L_{50} Levels at Receivers	L_{50} (Noise Level exceeded 30 min. or more in an Hour) Residence number (see Figure 2) 1	2	3
Unadjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	50	50	50
NE-2 Adjustment for speech and/or music	-5	-5	-5
Daytime Ambient Noise Levels (see Table 3)	*38*	*43*	*35*
1. Amplified Music Performances	**54**	**62**	41
2. Amplified Speech	**52**	**60**	39
3. Non-amplified (acoustic) Music Performances	**49**	**57**	36
4. 20 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	36	44	23
5. 50 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	40	**48**	27
6. 100 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	43	**51**	30
7. 200 Guests in Normal Conversation w/Bkg. Music	**48**	**56**	35
Events Exceed Ambient by 10 dBA?	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6	**No:** all
Total NE-2 Adjustments: speech/music (0 or -5) ambient (0 or -5)	**-10:** 1,2,3,7 **-5:** 4,5,6	**-10:** 1,2,3,7 **-5:** 4,5,6	**-5:** all
Adjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	**40:** 1,2,3,7 **45:** 4,5,6	**40:** 1,2,3,7 **45:** 4,5,6	**45:** all
Outdoor Event Noise Exceeds NE-2?	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6	**Yes:** 1,2,3,5,6,7 **No:** 4	**No:** all

Table 2d. Western Patio

Outdoor Event L_{50} Levels at Receivers	L_{50} (Noise Level exceeded 30 min. or more in an Hour) Residence number (see Figure 2) 1	2	3
Unadjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	50	50	50
NE-2 Adjustment for speech and/or music	-5	-5	-5
Daytime Ambient Noise Levels (see Table 3)	*38*	*43*	*35*
1.Amplified Music Performances	39	**62**	**56**
2.Amplified Speech	37	**60**	**54**
3.Non-amplified (acoustic) Music Performances	34	**57**	**51**
4.20 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	21	44	38
5.50 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	25	**48**	42
6.100 Guests in Raised Conversation w/Bkg. Music	28	**51**	43
7.200 Guests in Normal Conversation w/Bkg. Music	33	**56**	**50**
Events Exceed Ambient by 10 dBA?	**No:** all	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6
Total NE-2 Adjustments: speech/music (0 or -5) ambient (0 or -5)	**-5:** all	**-10:** 1,2,3,7 **-5:** 4,5,6	**-10:** 1,2,3,7 **-5:** 4,5,6
Adjusted Table NE-2 Daytime Limit	**45:** all	**40:** 1,2,3,7 **45:** 4,5,6	**40:** 1,2,3,7 **45:** 4,5,6
Outdoor Event Noise Exceeds NE-2?	**No:** all	**Yes:** 1,2,3,5,6,7 **No:** 4	**Yes:** 1,2,3,7 **No:** 4,5,6

Additional Mitigation Option

Additionally, the 2026 noise study addendum evaluated the potential for increasing the established outdoor occupancies to support a greater number of outdoor event guests beyond the southern patio. The study concludes that a greater number of guests may be achieved by installing f a 4-foot-high noise barrier along the top of the 18-inch-tall frontage landscape berm, including up to 125 guests for all outdoor spaces with the viewing platform limitation remaining at 50 guests. The conceptual soundwall location and elevation are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

The noise study addendum indicates the project proposes optional locations for holding events and that the installation of a soundwall along the site frontage may support a greater number of event guests in these locations without exceeding the maximum exterior noise exposure thresholds established by the Sonoma County General Plan Noise Element. However, installation of an additional solid wall along the top of the proposed landscape berm is not recommended for the reasons listed below:

- The current project does not include plans or details describing the sound wall barrier
- The additional mitigation measure may result in potential visual and/or safety related impacts that have not been evaluated as part of this initial study.
- The noise study analysis supports outdoor events for up to 125 guests as proposed and does not require additional mitigation.

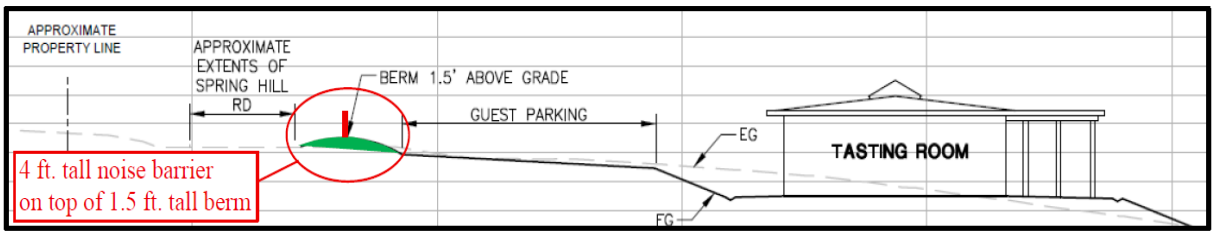


Figure 4: Sectional view of berm and noise barrier

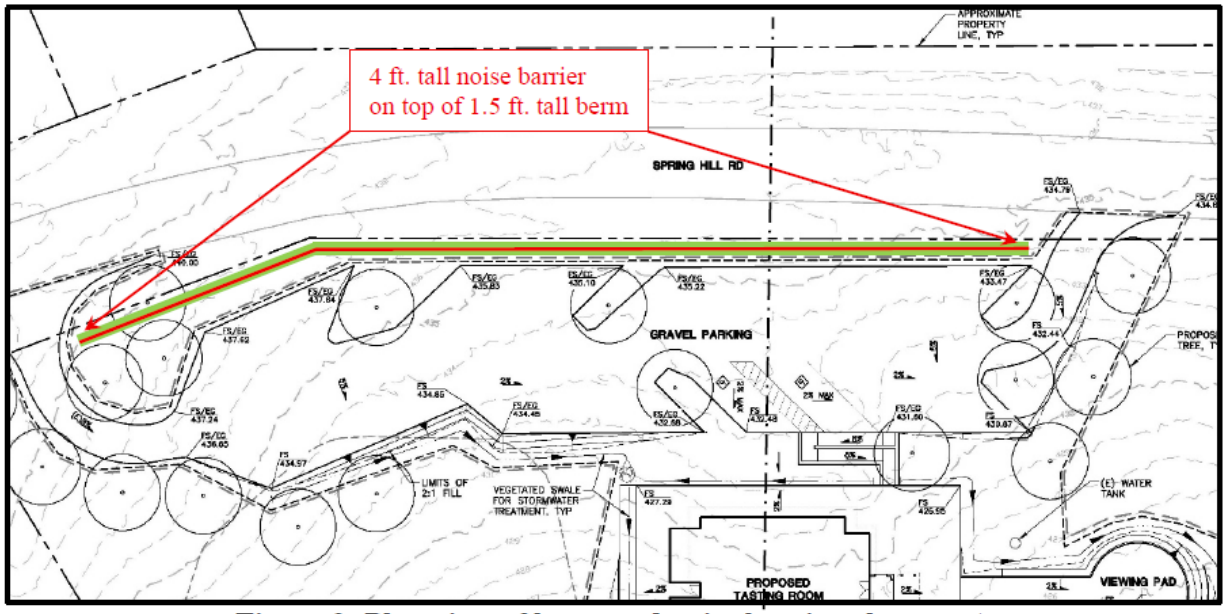


Figure 3: Plan view of berm and noise barrier placement

CONSTRUCTION NOISE

The 2021 Illingworth & Rodkin study assesses noise levels associated with anticipated construction activities for the project. The study identifies construction-related noise levels that may potentially exceed County thresholds if not properly managed.

Noise impacts resulting from construction depend on the noise generated by various pieces of construction equipment, the timing and duration of noise-generating activities, the distance between construction noise sources and noise-sensitive receptors, any shielding provided by intervening structures or terrain, and ambient noise levels. Construction noise impacts primarily result when construction activities occur during noise-sensitive times of the day (early morning, evening, or nighttime hours), when construction occurs in areas immediately adjoining noise-sensitive land uses, or when construction durations last over extended periods of time. Each construction phase would include a different mix of equipment operating. The highest noise levels are typically generated when impact tools are used (e.g., jackhammers, hoe rams). Site grading and excavation activities would also generate high noise levels as these phases often require the simultaneous use of multiple pieces of heavy equipment, such as dozers, excavators, scrapers, and loaders. Lower noise levels result from construction activities when less heavy equipment is required to complete the tasks. Pile driving is not anticipated for project construction.

Construction would be conducted within the allowable hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Extreme noise generating construction methods, such as impact pile driving, are not proposed. Given the small project area, multiple pieces of heavy construction equipment are also not anticipated. The nearest residential property line is located over 60 feet and the nearest residential structure is over 200 feet from areas of the

site that would undergo major construction activities. Construction noise levels may exceed 87 dBA Leq at 60 feet and 77 dBA at 200 feet during busy construction periods and would drop off at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of distance between the noise source and the receptor. Construction noise levels would range from 63 to 74 dBA Leq at 100 feet.

The noise study recommends implementation of standard best management practices to limit construction hours to daytime periods only, reduce construction noise levels emanating from the site, and minimize disruption and annoyance at adjacent noise sensitive uses. The recommended best management practices for reducing potential construction-related noise impacts to less than significant levels are listed below under Mitigation Noise-3.

CUMULATIVE NOISE ENVIRONMENT

The 2021 noise assessment analyzes the cumulative effect if the few other wineries in the project vicinity held outdoor events on the same day and time as the project winery, a worst-case condition. The study identifies few other wineries in the project vicinity with the closest being over 3,000 feet from the project site. The result of this analysis indicated that cumulative noise levels at the identified residential receivers adjacent to the project site would increase by less than 1 dBA. As a result, the 2021 assessment concludes the potential cumulative noise levels will be indistinguishable from the project-specific noise levels.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant with Mitigation

Mitigation:

Mitigation Noise-1: Live music performances and/or amplified speech during winery events or daily public tastings shall be limited to indoors with windows and doors closed.

Monitoring Noise-1: If noise complaints are received from nearby residents, and they appear to be valid complaints in Permit Sonoma's opinion, then Permit Sonoma staff shall determine if the operation is complying with mitigation measures/NE-2 standards and if not, the owner/operator shall implement additional Measures needed to meet the NE-2 noise standards

Mitigation Noise-2: Large events exceeding 100 guests shall occur within the main tasting building and outdoor gatherings of no more than 100 guests shall occur on the southern patio terrace only, subject to the following limitations:

a. Use of the circular viewing patio shall be limited to no more than 50 guests at any time.
b. All other exterior outdoor areas, including the eastern entry patio and the northern and western walkway spaces, shall be used primarily for circulation and otherwise limited to supporting gatherings of no more than 20 guests at any time.
c. For the eastern entry patio, additional planting features or other similar physical design elements shall be installed to accommodate safe and efficient guest circulation patterns while avoiding the cumulative provision of gathering areas or seating amenities supporting more than a total of 20 guests at any time.
d. Suitable plaques promoting guest awareness of applicable outdoor occupancy limitations shall be installed where required and most appropriate.

Monitoring Noise-2: Prior to permit issuance, the applicant shall provide adequate plans and materials verifying implementation of the items specified under Mitigation Noise-2, to the satisfaction of Permit Sonoma Planning staff. If noise complaints are received from nearby residents, and they appear to be valid complaints in Permit Sonoma's opinion, then Permit Sonoma staff shall determine if the operation is complying with mitigation measures/NE-2 standards and if not, the owner/operator shall implement additional Measures needed to meet the NE-2 noise standards.

Mitigation Noise-3: The following standard best management practices shall be included on all construction plans and implemented during construction:

a. Limit construction to between the hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

b. Limit work to non-motorized equipment on Sundays and holidays.
c. Locate construction staging areas as far as practical from nearby sensitive receptors.
d. Locate stationary noise-generating equipment, such as air compressors or portable power generators, as far as practical from nearby sensitive receptors.
e. Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment. Air compressors and pneumatic equipment should be equipped with mufflers, and impact tools should be equipped with shrouds or shields.
f. Prohibit all unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.

Monitoring Noise-3**:** If noise complaints are received from nearby residents, and they appear to be valid complaints in Permit Sonoma's opinion, then Permit Sonoma staff will verify that conditions are met.

b) Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?

The 2021 Illingworth & Rodkin study identifies noise levels potentially associated with construction-related vibration for the project. The 2021 noise study assesses typical construction-related vibration levels and concludes the project will not result in vibrational impacts because potential vibration levels at the nearest residential building fall well below the generally accepted threshold used by Caltrans. The study clarifies there no applicable Federal, state, or local quantitatively defined regulations relating to vibration resulting from construction activities and that a significant impact may occur if buildings adjacent to the proposed construction site were exposed to vibration levels exceeding a vibration limit of 0.3 in/sec PPV.

The study provides that Caltrans generally accepts a vibration limit of 0.3 in/sec PPV as one which minimizes damage at buildings of normal conventional construction. The construction of the project may generate perceptible vibration at nearby residential land uses when heavy equipment or impact tools (e.g. jackhammers, hoe rams) are used near the perimeter of the site improvement areas. Vibration-producing activities would occur when heavy equipment is used to during demolition, site preparation work, grading and excavation, trenching, and paving. Foundation construction techniques involving impact or vibratory pile driving, which can cause excessive vibration, are not anticipated as part of the project.

Under Table 10, the 2021 noise study identifies typical vibration levels from construction equipment that may occur within 200 feet from the nearest residential building. The dropping of heavy equipment (e.g., clam shovel drop) and vibratory rollers produce vibration levels 0.009 in/sec PPV at 200 feet. Jackhammers would generate vibration levels of 0.0001 in/sec PPV and drilling would generate vibration levels of 0.004 in/sec PPV at this distance. Vibration levels would vary depending on soil conditions, construction methods, and equipment used.

Table 10: Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	PPV at 200 ft. (in/sec)
Clam shovel drop	0.009
Vibratory Roller	0.009
Hoe Ram	0.004
Large bulldozer	0.004
Caisson drilling	0.004
Loaded trucks	0.003
Jackhammer	0.002
Small bulldozer	0.0001
Source: Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, Federal Transit Administration, Office of Planning and Environment, U.S. Department of Transportation, September 2018, as modified by Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc., June 2021.	

Impact Level:
No Impact

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The site is not within an airport land use plan as designated by Sonoma County or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport.

Impact Level:
No Impact

14. 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)?

The project would not include construction of a substantial amount of homes, businesses or infrastructure and therefore would not induce substantial population growth.

Impact Level:
No Impact

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The project does not include the displacement of any existing housing or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere in the County.

Impact Level:
No Impact

15. PUBLIC SERVICES:

Would the project:

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, police, schools, parks, other public facilities?

The project will not increase residents or employees such that governmental services and/or facilities will have to be expanded. Development impact fees are required to address workforce housing and potential impacts to schools and traffic.

Specifically:

1. Fire Protection: The County Fire Marshal requires that the Project comply with Fire Safe Standards, including fire protection methods such as sprinklers in buildings, alarm systems, extinguishers, vegetation management, hazardous materials management, and management of flammable or combustible liquids and gases.

2. Police: The Sonoma County Sheriff provides police protection services.
3. Schools, parks, or other public facilities: The project will not generate additional students; nor will it significantly increase demand for parks or other public facilities.
4. Other public facilities: No other public facilities would be adversely impacted by this project.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

16. RECREATION:

Would the project:

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?

The proposed project would not involve activities that would cause or accelerate substantial physical deterioration of parks or recreational facilities.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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?

Comment The project does not include a recreational facility and is of a project-type that does not require the construction or expansion of a recreational facility.

Impact Level:
No Impact

17. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

Three transportation-related plans have been adopted in Sonoma County: the Sonoma County General Plan 2020 Circulation Element, the Sonoma County Transportation Authority Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2009), and the Sonoma County Bikeways Plan. The project will not conflict with any of these plans.

The Focused Traffic Study for the Azari Tasting Room Project (W-Trans, November 29, 2021) states that there are no existing bicycle lanes along the project frontage on Spring Hill Road. However, as contained in the updated project list 2019 of Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), a Class III bicycle route is planned on Spring Hill Road to be connected to the existing Class II bicycle lanes on Western Avenue on the east and planned Class II bicycle lanes along Valley Ford Road-Bodega Avenue on the west. As a Class III route consists of signing only, the existing physical facilities provide adequate bicycle access to the site, though the planned future signing would provide additional notification to drivers of the potential for encountering bicycle traffic.

The traffic study includes the following conclusions:

- The proposed tasting room would be expected to generate 22 daily trips on average, including four trips each during the weekday evening peak hour and weekend midday peak hours. The proposed 125-person events would all be on Saturdays and would be expected to generate an average of 118 trip ends at the driveway, including 80 trips during the weekend midday peak hour.
- The lack of existing dedicated facilities for pedestrians in the project vicinity is consistent with the rural setting and adequate given that no pedestrian or transit trips are anticipated.
- Bicycle facilities are absent in the project vicinity, but the existing facilities provide adequate access for bicyclists and would be enhanced with the completion of planned bike facilities outlined in the Countywide Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan.
- The project is anticipated to result in a less-than-significant transportation impact on VMT based on the OPR Guidelines.
- Under Existing conditions, Spring Hill Road is operating acceptably at LOS A and would be expected to continue doing so upon adding trips associated with proposed events.
- Adequate sight distances for the advisory speed are available for trips to and from the proposed project driveways.
- The parking lot should be designed to meet Sonoma County Design criteria to achieve adequate access and circulation for emergency response vehicles.
- A left-turn lane is not warranted at the proposed project driveway based on existing plus event volumes.
- The proposed vehicle parking supply is adequate to meet the anticipated parking demand during typical operations and winery events.

A referral describing the project was sent to Sonoma Public Infrastructure (formerly Department of Transportation and Public Works), which requested additional information on sight lines, driveway placement, queuing distances, and potential traffic impacts to the surrounding neighborhood; SPI provided draft conditions of approval for the project as follows:

Right of Way Requirements:

1. The Applicant shall offer right-of-way to the County of Sonoma, free of encumbrances, and of sufficient width:
    a. As necessary to create public right-of-way a total of 25 feet wide on the Applicant's side of the road, as measured from the existing pavement centerline, for the full length of the property's frontage on Spring Hill Rd. This condition shall be void if the existing right-of-way meets or exceeds the minimum requirement(s) described above.
    b. To contain all public drainage facilities.

2. The Applicant shall dedicate right-of-way as roadway easement. The Applicant shall have prepared an easement deed, together with the required descriptions and shall submit them to the County Surveyor for review and approval. A copy of the recorded deed shall be submitted to the Land Development Section of Permit Sonoma (PRMD) prior to clearance of these conditions.

Intersections of Roads and Driveways:

3. The Applicant shall construct driveway entrances such that they conform to Board of Forestry Fire Safety Regulations §1270 et seq. and County standards and meet the following criteria to allow for concurrent emergency ingress and egress as well as the smooth and safe movement of passenger vehicles entering and exiting the public road (Spring Hill Road) that provides access to the property. This condition shall be void if the existing entrances meet these requirements. A signed and stamped statement from a Registered Civil Engineer, licensed in the State of California, will be required to prove the driveways (project's entries to Spring Hill Road) meet these requirements.
    a. A minimum paved throat width of twenty (20) feet.
    b. Entrance curves having a minimum pavement radius of 25 feet; the entrance curves shall begin on a line that is a minimum of 12 feet distant from, and parallel with, the physical centerline of Spring Hill Road. A 1:10 pavement taper shall be constructed on both sides

of the entrance if required per County of Sonoma Department of Transportation and Public Works Construction Standard Drawing 815. Entrance curve radii may be reduced with the approval of the Fire Prevention of Permit Sonoma (PRMD).

c. The minimum sight distance for vehicles entering and exiting the driveway shall be in accordance with current County requirements for the speed traveled on Spring Hill Road. Any monuments and/or signs that result from this proposal shall be located outside of the necessary sight distance triangles to achieve the minimum County required sight distance at each driveway. Refer to County of Sonoma Department of Transportation and Public Works Construction Standard Drawing 812, latest revision, for rural County road driveway and private road intersections.
d. The entry shall be surfaced with asphalt concrete a minimum distance of 25 feet from the existing edge of pavement.
e. The entry shall intersect the public road as close to perpendicular as possible, but in no case shall the entry intersect the public road at more than 20 degrees from perpendicular.
f. Refer to County of Sonoma Department of Transportation and Public Works Construction Standard Drawing 815, latest revision, for private road and driveway intersection details.

4. Driveway cross-drains within the County right-of-way shall be upgraded to a minimum 18-inch culvert under the driveways.
5. The Applicant shall maintain all existing and proposed vegetation fronting the site as well as within the public right-of-way to preserve the sight distance triangles necessary to achieve the minimum County required sight distance at any project driveway where it intersects a public roadway.

Traffic Safety Gate Setback:

6. The Applicant shall locate driveway gates a minimum distance of 30 feet from the edge of the pavement, in accordance with Standard Detail 242.

Traffic Study:

7. Left turns from the project onto Spring Hill Rd shall be prohibited as presented in the Traffic Study.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) (evaluation of transportation impacts of land use projects using vehicle miles traveled)?

In the traffic study, the project related vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impacts were assessed based on guidance provided by the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in the publication Transportation Impacts (SB 743) CEQA Guidelines Update and Technical Advisory, 2018. The OPR Technical Advisory identifies several criteria that may be used by jurisdictions to identify certain types of projects that are unlikely to have a VMT impact and can be "screened" from further VMT analysis. One of these screening criteria pertains to small projects, which OPR identifies as generating fewer than 110 new vehicle trips per day.

As described in the Revised Focused Traffic Study (February 26, 2025), the tasting room would be expected to generate an average of 22 trips per day on a typical weekday. Further, the proposed seven event days per year with an average of 118 daily trips translates to an average of 25 daily trips for the 52 Saturdays in a year. Altogether, the project would generate an annual average of 22 daily trips which falls well below the OPR threshold. Therefore, the traffic study states that it is reasonable to conclude that the project can be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact on VMT.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

c) Substantially increase hazards due to geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

There are no substantially hazardous design features. The project has been conditioned on driveway improvements and required parking attendants during events to direct traffic to the parking areas on the site.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

The parking lot will be designed to meet Sonoma County design criteria, including the width of the drive aisle and the radii of the curves at the entry and exit. Subject to current standards emergency access would be adequate.

Impact Level:
No Impact

f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?

The traffic study analyzed the project to determine if the parking supply proposed for the site is adequate to accommodate both the anticipated daily parking demand and the demand during events. The proposed project would supply 59 parking spaces around the site, including 30 spaces for the tasting room and 29 overflow parking spaces.

To accommodate the daily parking demand during typical tasting room operations, there should be at least one space provided for every employee on-site as well as about one space per 2.5 tasting room guests. Two tasting room employees and a maximum of 20 tasting room visitors translate to ten parking spaces, including two for employees and eight for tasting room visitors. Therefore, the proposed 30 permanent parking spaces near the tasting room would be adequate to accommodate the parking demand during a typical operation.

The maximum number of parking spaces needed on-site during a 125-person event, for which there would be up to nine staff, including the two tasting room employees, would be 59 spaces. This assumes one vehicle per employee and 2.5 guests per vehicle. The maximum of 59 parking spaces needed during an event is equal to the total parking supply including the permanent (30 tasting room spaces) and overflow parking (29 spaces). The proposed 59 parking spaces (30 permanent parking spaces; 29 overflow) would be adequate to accommodate the anticipated parking demand.

Impact Level:
No Impact

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES:

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California native American tribe, and that is i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5030.1(k), or ii) A resource determined by the lead agency. In its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Assembly Bill 52 Project Notifications were sent to the Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians, Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Mishewal Wappo Tribe of

Alexander Valley, Middletown Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Lytton Rancheria of California, Kashia Pomos Stewarts Point Rancheria, and Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. These Native American tribes were invited to consult on the project pursuant to Public Resources Code sections 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2 but did not request consultation.

There are no known tribal cultural resources on the site, but the project could uncover such resources during construction. In order to ensure that no tribal cultural or archaeological resources are unearthed during ground disturbing activities, a standard condition is required for the project as follows:

The following language shall be printed on building or grading plans for ground disturbing activities:

> ***NOTE ON PLANS:*** *"During construction activities, if archaeological remains are uncovered, work at the place of discovery should be halted immediately until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the finds pursuant to Government Code Section 15064.5. If archaeological materials such as pottery, arrowheads or midden are found, all work shall cease and Permit Sonoma staff shall be notified so that the find can be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist (i.e., an archaeologist registered with the Society of Professional Archaeologists). Artifacts associated with prehistoric sites include humanly modified stone, shell, bone or other cultural materials such as charcoal, ash and burned rock indicative of food procurement or processing activities. Prehistoric domestic features include hearths, fire pits, or house floor depressions whereas typical mortuary features are represented by human skeletal remains. Historic artifacts potentially include all by-products of human land use greater than 50 years of age including trash pits older than fifty years of age. The developer shall designate a Project Manager with authority to implement the mitigation prior to issuance of a building/grading permit. When contacted, a member of Permit Sonoma Project Review staff and the archaeologist shall visit the site to determine the extent of the resources and to develop proper procedures required for the discovery. No work shall commence until a protection plan is completed and implemented subject to the review and approval of the archaeologist and Project Review staff. Mitigation may include avoidance, removal, preservation and/or recordation in accordance with accepted professional archaeological practice."*

In the event that human remains are unearthed during construction, state law requires that the County Coroner be contacted in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the State Health and Safety Code to investigate the nature and circumstances of the discovery. If the remains were determined to be Native American interment, the Coroner will follow the procedure outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15065.5(e).

A standard condition of approval requires the following language be printed on the grading and building plans:

> ***NOTES ON PLANS:*** *"If human remains are encountered, all work must stop in the immediate vicinity of the discovered remains and Permit Sonoma staff, County Coroner and a qualified archaeologist must be notified immediately so that an evaluation can be performed. If the remains are deemed to be Native American and prehistoric, the Native American Heritage Commission must be contacted by the Coroner so that a "Most Likely Descendant" can be designated."*

The above standard conditions of approval will ensure that a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource will not occur.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS:

Would the project:

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

As stated in Section 10(b) above, all water supply will be from groundwater. There is an existing well (WELL-1321) on the project site that will be utilized for water supply for the proposed development. The *Hydrogeologic Report for General Plan Policy WR-2E* (EBA Engineering, February 22, 2022) was prepared to determine whether there are adequate existing and future groundwater supplies to accommodate the proposed development demands and to estimate the effects of drawdown, if any, within the designated cumulative impact area (CIA). The hydrologic report found based on the proposed water use and the estimates presented in the report, the report concludes that the proposed project will not have a significant impact on current and future groundwater availability at the project site, nor within the CIA under existing or foreseeable future use conditions.

As stated above, tasting room domestic wastewater shall be disposed of in a non-standard type septic system to the west and southwest of the proposed tasting room, in the area of the pre-perc site inspection performed under SEV07-0960 and the percolation test performed under SEV07-1062. The septic system shall be designed in accordance with the current OWTS Manual and be sized to accommodate the domestic wastewater generated by the proposed use, including domestic wastewater generated by employees, wine tasters, and special event guests. The applicant is working with the Permit Sonoma Well & Septic Section per the SEP19-0690 permit application for a new nonstandard at-grade mound septic system. The “limits of the suitable septic system” plus the locations of the tanks per SEP19-0690 are indicated on the Site Plan (Figure 5 above).

Permit Sonoma Grading & Storm Water Section submitted conditions of approval for drainage improvements. The conditions state drainage improvements shall maintain off-site natural drainage patterns, limit post-development storm water quantities and pollutant discharges in compliance with Permit and Resource Management Department’s (Permit Sonoma’s) best management practices guide, and shall abide by all applicable standards and provisions of the Sonoma County Code and all other relevant laws and regulations. Existing drainage patterns shall be maintained, to the maximum extent practicable, to not adversely impact adjacent properties or drainage systems. Proposed drainage improvements shall not adversely impact adjacent properties or drainage systems.

The proposed project does not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

As stated above in 10.b above, *Hydrogeologic Report for General Plan Policy WR-2E* (EBA Engineering, February 22, 2022) was prepared as required by Permit Sonoma for the project due to the property’s location in a Class 4 Groundwater Availability Zone to comply with requirements set forth in Policy WR-2e of the Sonoma County General Plan. The purpose of Policy WR-2e is to determine whether there are adequate existing and future groundwater supplies to accommodate the proposed development demands and to estimate the effects of drawdown, if any, within the designated cumulative impact area (CIA).

The hydrogeologic report concludes that based on the proposed water use and the estimates presented in the report, the proposed project will not have a significant impact on current and future groundwater availability at the project site, nor within the CIA under existing or foreseeable future use conditions. Therefore, the proposed project has sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.

Impact Level:

Less than Significant

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

The project is not served by a wastewater treatment provider. See 9.a above.

Impact Level:
No Impact

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?

The solid waste disposal needs at the existing winery facility will continue to be met. Sonoma County has a solid waste management program in place that provides solid waste collection and disposal services for the entire County. The program can accommodate the permitted collection and disposal of the waste that will result from the proposed project.

Impact Level:
No Impact

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

There is no evidence that the existing adjacent winery facility is not complying with all regulations to solid waste. The tasting room project associated with the adjacent winery will also comply with applicable solid waste management and reduction requirements.

Impact Level:
No Impact

20. WILDFIRE

a) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

According to the Wildland Fire Hazard Areas map in the Public Safety Element of the Sonoma County General Plan, the project site is not located in a High or Very High wildland fire hazard area. The project site is located within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Protection Responsibility Area. There is no separate emergency evacuation plan for the County. Furthermore, the project would not cause an interference with emergency evacuations.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant.

b) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire severity zones, would the project due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Public Resource Code 4202 provides that the State Fire Marshal classify lands within state responsibility areas into fire hazard severity zones. Government Code 51178 provides that the State Fire Marshal identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent

statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. According to 2024 CalFire mapping, the project site is in a State Responsibility Area and designated Moderate for fire hazard severity. The project site is not located within a high or very high fire severity zone. The nearest high fire hazard severity zone is approximately 2 miles from the project site. The construction of a new structure in accordance with current building standards should decrease the risk to structures on the project parcel.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant.

c) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire severity zones, 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 of that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

The project site is not located within a high or very high fire severity zone. The nearest high fire hazard severity zone is approximately 2 miles from the project site. The construction of a new structure in accordance with current building standards should decrease the risk to structures on the project parcel. The County Fire Prevention fire safe requirements require the following:

a. Access roads: minimum emergency access is required to provide safe access for emergency fire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently, and to allow unobstructed traffic circulation during a wildfire or other emergency.
    - Residential and Commercial Roads 20 feet in width required.
    - Driveways must have minimum 12 feet in width required.
b. Premises Identification and Road Naming: Approved road names & signs, address numbers, building numbers or approved building identification placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street or road shall be provided.
c. Gates: Where gates or similar barriers are installed across access roads, an approved lock shall be installed as required by the fire code official.
d. Water Supply: An approved water supply capable of supplying the required fire flow for fire protection shall be provided to premises.
    - Building Features: Fire sprinklers and fire alarm system may be required based on existing and new use.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant.

d) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire severity zones, 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?

No structures or uses occupied by people exist down slope of the project site that could potentially be at significant risk from impacts associated with post-fire slope instability. The project is subject to compliance with standard conditions of approval that work to address potential drainage changes and minimize run-off related impacts associated with downslope or downstream flooding or landslides. The standard conditions include the following.

1. A drainage report for the proposed project shall be prepared by a civil engineer, currently registered in the State of California, be submitted with the grading and/or building permit application and be subject to review and approval by the Grading & Storm Water Section of Permit Sonoma. The drainage report shall include, at a minimum, a project narrative, on- and off-site hydrology maps, hydrologic calculations, hydraulic calculations, pre- and post-development analysis for all relevant existing and proposed drainage facilities. The drainage report shall abide by and contain all applicable items in the Drainage Report Required Contents (DRN-006) handout.

2. Drainage improvements shall be designed by a civil engineer, currently registered in the State of California, and in accordance with the Sonoma County Water Agency Flood Management Design Manual. Drainage improvements shall be shown on the grading/site plans and be submitted to the Grading & Storm Water Section of the Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma) for review and approval. Drainage improvements shall maintain off-site natural drainage patterns, limit post-development storm water quantities and pollutant discharges in compliance with Permit and Resource Management Department's best management practices guide, and shall abide by all applicable standards and provisions of the Sonoma County Code and all other relevant laws and regulations. Existing drainage patterns shall be maintained, to the maximum extent practicable, to not adversely impact adjacent properties or drainage systems. Proposed drainage improvements shall not adversely impact adjacent properties or drainage systems.

3. As part of the grading plans, the applicant shall include an erosion prevention/sediment control plan which clearly shows best management practices to be implemented, limits of disturbed areas/total work, vegetated areas to be preserved, pertinent details, notes, and specifications to prevent damages or minimize adverse impacts to the surrounding properties and the environment. Tracking of soil or construction debris into the public right-of-way shall be prohibited. Runoff containing concrete waste or by-products shall not be allowed to drain to the storm drain system, waterway(s), or adjacent lands. The erosion prevention/sediment control plan shall abide by and contain all applicable items in the Grading Permit Required Application Contents (GRD-004) handout.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

21. 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?

Per the *Biological Assessment Report* for the site (Updated 10-28-2021 from the original July 2021 report, prepared by Daniel Edelstein, Consulting Biologist & certified Wildlife Biologist Asc.), there is an absence of rare, special-status plant species on the project site which is not surprising, given periodic, ongoing disturbance at the project site. More specifically, its soil bed is consistently subject annually to trampling and compaction by domestic animals and machines. The *Biological Assessment Report* concludes that the proposed project will not result in significant negative impacts upon the site's biological resources, including any special-status plant and animal species.

The *Biological Assessment Report* also concludes that the Project will not result in negative impacts upon movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. The Site does not occur within or next to any established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors and, in addition, the Project will not impede any common or rare, special-status species to utilize wildlife nursery sites. No wetland/riparian setback violation will occur as a result of the Project upon the drainage/watercourse existing south of the Site's southern-most boundary.

Impact Level:
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)?

Cumulative projects are limited in the area and include existing, proposed, and probable future project development. No significant effects associated with cumulative development have been identified to which the project would make a cumulatively considerable contribution. As noted in this initial study, this project will not result in significant adverse impacts related to traffic congestion or safety. The project will not make a considerable contribution to any other significant cumulative impacts.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant

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

The project would not result in any significant changes to the existing environment. The proposed project will have a less than significant impact on vehicle miles traveled. Aesthetic and Noise mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project to reduce effects to surrounding neighbors in terms of exterior lighting and amplified sound. Based on the discussion and information provided in this initial study, the project environmental effects will not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

Impact Level:
Less than Significant