Draft Environmental Impact Report

400 Saratoga Avenue Residential Project

SCH No.: 2025050498



Prepared by

CITY OF SANTA CLARA CALIFORNIA
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THE MISSION CITY

In Consultation with

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May 2026

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Summary

Project Overview

As proposed, the golf course would be divided into three parcels with residential development on the southwestern parcel (3.66 acres); a 1.77-acre, City designated public park; and the golf course on the remaining 25.54 acres. While the golf course would be reconfigured, no changes are proposed to the existing 6.4-acre portion of the golf course that consists of the driving range, clubhouse, and surface parking lot. Vehicle access to the project site would be provided via a new 26-foot-wide driveway on Pruneridge Avenue.

The project would include the demolition of an approximately 1,800 square foot maintenance building (at the southern end of the site), and construction of a five-story residential apartment building with up to 316 units wrapped around a seven-story parking garage structure (Building 1) and a one-story, 2,460 square foot maintenance building (Building 2) with an approximately 4,286 square foot outdoor storage and equipment yard.

The project would require the City's approval of a General Plan Amendment and Rezoning for the 3.66-acre residential portion of the site.

Summary of Significant Impacts

The following table summarizes the significant impacts and mitigation measures addressed within this Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The complete project description and a full discussion of impacts and mitigation measures can be found in Section 2.0 Project Information and Description and Section 3.0 Environmental Setting, Impacts, & Mitigation.

Significant Impacts	Mitigation and Avoidance Measures
Impact BIO-1.1 Project construction could impact nesting birds on or adjacent to the site, if present.	**MM BIO-1.1** Construction shall be scheduled to avoid the nesting season to the extent feasible. The nesting season for most birds, including most raptors, in the San Francisco Bay area extends from February 1 through August 31. If it is not possible to schedule construction and tree removal between September and January, then pre-construction surveys for nesting birds shall be completed by a qualified ornithologist to ensure that no nests shall be disturbed during project implementation. This survey shall be completed no more than 14 days prior to the initiation of grading, tree removal, or other demolition or construction activities during the early part of the breeding season (February through April) and no more than 30 days prior to the initiation of these activities during the late part of the breeding season (May through August).

Significant Impacts	Mitigation and Avoidance Measures
	During this survey, the ornithologist shall inspect all trees and other possible nesting habitats within and immediately adjacent to the construction area of nests. If an active nest is found sufficiently close to work areas to be disturbed by construction, the ornithologist, in consultation with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), shall determine the extent of a construction free buffer zone to be established around the nest to ensure that nests of bird species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Agreement (MBTA) or Fish and Game Code shall not be disturbed during project construction.
Impact CUL-2.1 Construction of the proposed project would result in excavation in an area which has moderate sensitivity for archeological resources, and could disturb unrecorded archaeological resources. (Significant Impact)	**MM CUL-2.1** Prior to commencement of any ground-disturbing activity on-site, the project applicant shall retain a registered professional archaeologist to be present during all ground-disturbing activity associated with the project. For the purposes of these conditions, ground-disturbing activities shall be defined as any ground disturbance, including but not limited to, excavation, grading, grubbing, scarring, drilling, scraping, blading, trenching, vegetation removal, or demolition of the existing structure or site improvements within the development area shown on the project plans. A registered professional archaeologist shall be given five days' written notice prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activity. The project applicant shall document receipt of notification in writing. **MM CUL-2.2** In the event that buried, or previously unrecognized archaeological deposits or materials of any kind are inadvertently exposed during any construction activity, work within 50 feet of the find shall cease until a qualified archaeologist can assess the find and provide recommendations for further treatment, if warranted. The archaeologist, in consultation with the project applicant, shall make the necessary plans for treatment of the find(s) if the resource is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). Construction within a radius determined by the archaeologist shall not recommence until the assessment is complete.
Impact CUL-3.1 The proposed project could result in the disturbance of human remains during excavation of the project site. (Significant Impact)	**MM CUL-3.1** In the event that human remains are discovered during excavation and/or grading of the site, all activity within a 50-foot radius of the find shall be stopped. The Santa Clara County Coroner shall be notified and shall make a determination as to whether the remains are of Native American origin or whether an investigation into the cause of death is required. If the remains are determined to be Native American,

Significant Impacts	Mitigation and Avoidance Measures
	the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) immediately. Once NAHC identifies the most likely descendants, the descendants will make recommendations regarding proper burial, which will be implemented in accordance with Section 15064.5(e) of the CEQA Guidelines.
Impact GEO- 6.1 Construction activities could disturb paleontological resources in older Pleistocene sediments at depth under the project site.	**MM GEO-6.1** If vertebrate fossils are discovered during construction, all work on the site shall stop immediately, the Director of Community Development or the Director's designee shall be notified, and a qualified professional paleontologist shall assess the nature and importance of the find and recommend appropriate treatment. Treatment may include, but is not limited to, preparation and recovery of fossil materials so that they can be housed in an appropriate museum or university collection and may also include preparation of a report for publication describing the finds. The project applicant shall be responsible for implementing the recommendations of the qualified paleontologist. A report of all findings shall be submitted to the Director of Community Development or the Director's designee prior to issuance of the occupancy permit.
Impact HAZ-2.1 The proposed project could expose construction workers to hazardous materials when conducting construction activities around the above ground storage tank in the maintenance yard on site. Additionally, due to the historical agricultural uses on-site, there could be residual pesticides that could be exposed as part of construction activities.	**MM HAZ-2.1** The project shall develop and implement a Site Management Plan (SMP) that outlines the measures required to mitigate potential risks (avoid exposure of to hazardous petroleum materials or agricultural residual materials such as pesticides) to construction workers and the environment from potential exposure to hazardous substances that may be encountered during soil intrusive or construction activities on-site. As part of the SMP, a worker health and safety plan shall be prepared that identifies procedures to address potential hazards to construction workers and off-site receptors that may result from construction activities. The SMP shall also identify all wells on-site and identify measures to protect and/or abandon existing remediation systems, groundwater monitoring wells, and soil vapor monitoring wells. All wells to be abandoned shall be permitted through the SCVWD. The SMP shall be submitted to the City, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the County of Santa Clara Department of Environmental Health (DEH) for approval prior to commencement of construction activities.

Summary of Alternatives

CEQA requires that an EIR identify alternatives to the project as proposed. As detailed in the table above, the project would result in significant impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, and from hazardous materials. The alternatives have been developed to reduce one or more of the significant impacts of the proposed project.

No Project – No Development Alternative

The No Project – No Development Alternative would retain the golf course use as is. If the project site were to remain as is, there would be no significant impacts. This alternative would not meet any of the project objectives.

Reduced Development Alternative

The reduced development alternative would reduce the size of the proposed residential project to reduce impacts resulting from construction or intensity of project operations. The proposed alternative to reduce the residential component could involve a decrease in building height or smaller building footprint on the project site.

Areas of Known Controversy

Section 15123 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires the summary section of a Draft EIR to identify areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public. Area of public concern include:

- Potential for nesting raptors on-site
- Traffic conditions and parking on roadways near the project site
- Replacement of trees located on the project site
- Construction noise adjacent to residential uses
- Zoning changes

Section 1.0 Introduction and Purpose

1.1 Purpose of the Environmental Impact Report

The City of Santa Clara, as the Lead Agency, has prepared this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Pruneridge Apartments and Golf Course Project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines.

As described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15121(a), an EIR is an informational document that assesses potential environmental impacts of a proposed project, as well as identifies mitigation measures and alternatives to the proposed project that could reduce or avoid adverse environmental impacts (CEQA Guidelines 15121(a)). As the CEQA Lead Agency for this project, the City of Santa Clara is required to consider the information in the EIR along with any other available information in deciding whether to approve the project. The basic requirements for an EIR include discussions of the environmental setting, significant environmental impacts including growth-inducing impacts, cumulative impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives. It is not the intent of an EIR to recommend either approval or denial of a project.

1.2 EIR Process

1.2.1 Notice of Preparation and Scoping

In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City of Santa Clara prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this EIR. The NOP was circulated to local, state, and federal agencies on May 12, 2025. The standard 30-day comment period concluded on June 10, 2025. The NOP provided a general description of the proposed project and identified possible environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the project. The City of Santa Clara also held a public scoping meeting on May 28, 2025, to discuss the project and solicit public input as to the scope and contents of this EIR. The meeting was held at 1500 Warburton Avenue at Santa Clara City Hall. Appendix A of this EIR includes the NOP and comments received on the NOP.

1.2.2 Draft EIR Public Review and Comment Period

Publication of this Draft EIR will mark the beginning of a 45-day public review period. During this period, the Draft EIR will be available to the public and local, state, and federal agencies for review and comment. Notice of the availability and completion of this Draft EIR will be sent directly to every agency, person, and organization that commented on the NOP, as well as the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation. Written comments concerning the environmental review contained in this Draft EIR during the 45-day public review period should be sent to:

Daniel Sobczak, AICP, Associate Planner
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050
(408) 615-2485

1.3 Final EIR/Responses to Comments

Following the conclusion of the 45-day public review period, the City of Santa Clara will prepare a Final EIR in conformance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15132. The Final EIR will consist of:

- Revisions to the Draft EIR text, as necessary;
- List of individuals and agencies commenting on the Draft EIR;
- Responses to comments received on the Draft EIR, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines (Section 15088);
- Copies of letters received on the Draft EIR.

Section 15091(a) of the CEQA Guidelines stipulates that no public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified which identifies one or more significant environmental effects of the project unless the public agency makes one or more written findings. If the lead agency approves a project despite it resulting in significant adverse environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level, the agency must state the reasons for its action in writing. This Statement of Overriding Considerations must be included in the record of project approval.

1.3.1 Notice of Determination

If the project is approved, the City of Santa Clara will file a Notice of Determination (NOD), which will be available for public inspection and posted within 24 hours of receipt at the County Clerk's Office and available for public inspection for 30 days. The filing of the NOD starts a 30-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines Section 15094(g)).

Section 2.0 Project Information and Description

2.1 Project Location and Existing Setting

The approximately 31-acre project site is comprised of one parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 294-45-055) located at 400 Saratoga Avenue in the City of Santa Clara. The project site consists of the nine-hole Pruneridge Golf Club, including a clubhouse, driving range, maintenance facility, and landscaping. The site is surrounded by residences to the north, Saratoga Avenue, residential, retail, and a preschool to the east, Pruneridge Avenue, retail, and a gas station to the south, and San Tomas Expressway and residential uses to the west. The location of the project can be seen in Figures 2.1-1 and 2.1-2.

The project site has a General Plan designation of Parks/Open Space and is within a PD – Planned Development zoning district.

2.2 Project Description

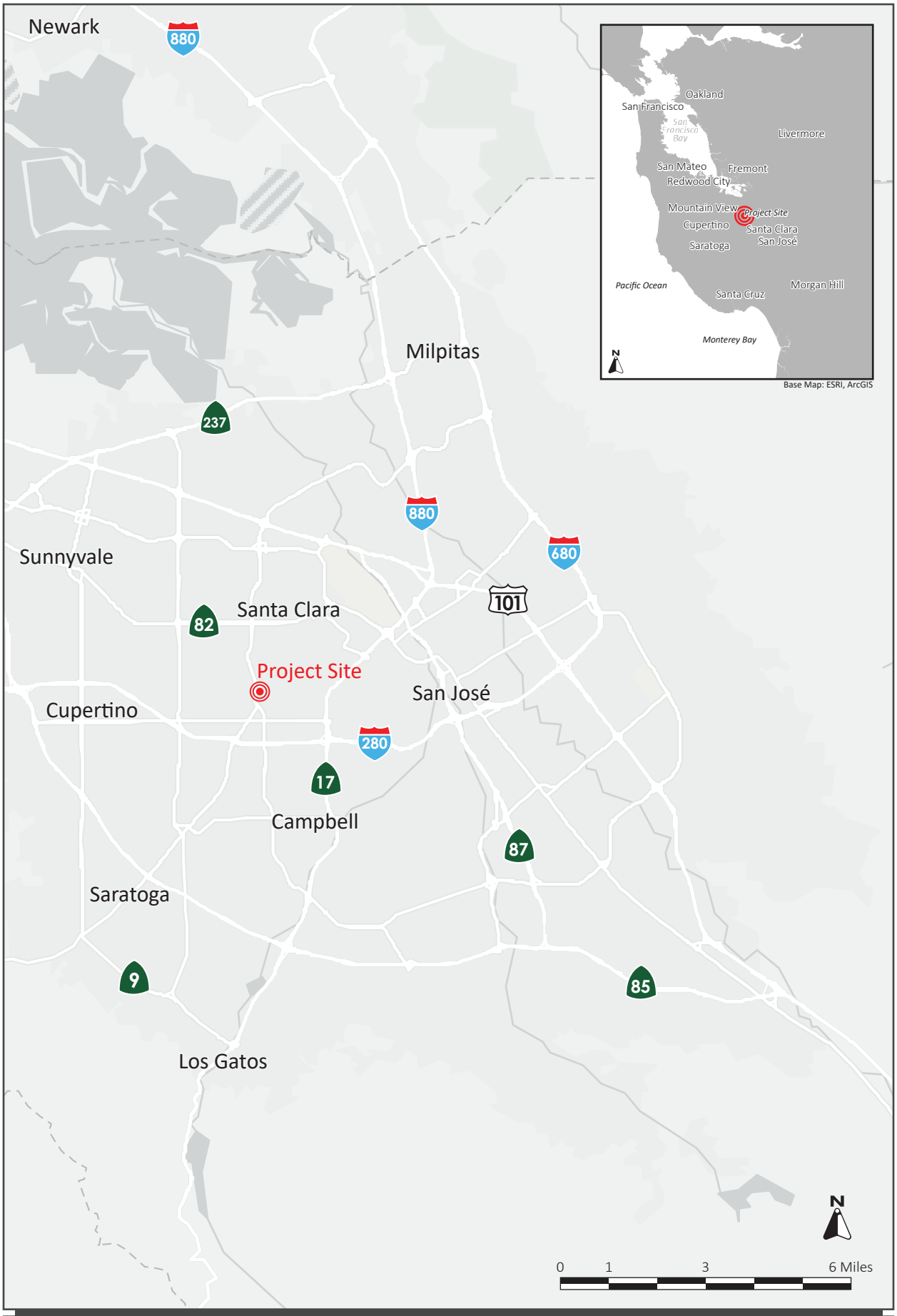
The project site would be divided into three parcels and proposes residential development on the southwestern parcel (3.66 acres), a 1.77-acre public park, and the golf course on the remaining 25.54 acres. While the golf course would be reconfigured, no changes are proposed to the existing 6.4-acre portion of the golf course parcel that consists of the driving range, clubhouse, and surface parking lot.

2.2.1 Proposed Residential Development and Maintenance Facility

The project would include the demolition of approximately 1,800 square feet of maintenance buildings (at the southern end of the site) and construction of a five-story apartment building with up to 316 units wrapped around a seven-story parking garage structure (Building 1), and a new one-story, 2,460 square foot maintenance building (Building 2) with an approximately 4,286 square foot outdoor storage and equipment yard. Building 2 would be located east of Building 1. The site plan for the project can be seen in Figure 2.2-1 below.

The residential portion of the project would be located on the parcel at the southwest corner of the site, and most units would include a private outdoor deck or balcony. Building 1 would have a maximum height of 69 feet for the residential building and 82 feet for the parking garage structure contained within the residential building. The residential building would designate 47 units as affordable dispersed around the building.

Building 2 would replace the existing 1,800 square foot on-site maintenance building. The proposed building would have a maximum height of 20 feet at the top of the roof. The storage yard would be used to store equipment such as driving range ball pick-up machines, mowers, tractors and aerifiers.



REGIONAL MAP | FIGURE 2.1-1



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH AND SURROUNDING LAND USES | FIGURE 2.1-2



POJECT SITE PLAN

FIGURE 2.2-1

The proposed project would also include a new approximately 1.77 acre (77,140 square foot) public park which would be dedicated to the City. The park would be designed by the City of Santa Clara and constructed as a part of the proposed project.

The project would require the City's approval of a General Plan Amendment and Rezoning for the 3.66-acre residential portion of the site. The existing General Plan land use designation would change from Parks/Open Space to Very High Residential (which allows up to 100 residential units per acre). This portion of the site would be rezoned from a PD - Planned Development Zoning to an R-5 – Very High-Density Residential Zoning which allows high-density residential development ranging from 51 units per acre to 100 units per acre. The proposed maintenance facility and public park would retain the site's existing Parks/Open Space General Plan land use designation and PD – Planned Development zoning district.

2.2.2 Proposed Golf Course Reconfiguration

As proposed, the project would reconfigure the layout of approximately 19.1 acres of the existing golf course, which would include the relocation of holes from the redeveloped portion of the site and replacement of some existing landscaping with new landscaping. No changes are proposed for the existing driving range, clubhouse, and parking lot which total approximately 6.4 acres. The existing General Plan Parks/Open Space land use designation and PD Zoning would be retained on this portion of the site.

2.2.3 Vehicle and Pedestrian Access and Parking

Vehicle access to the project site would be provided via a new 26-foot-wide driveway on Pruneridge Avenue. The driveway on Pruneridge Avenue would provide access to the parking structure for Building 1, the parking area for the public park, and the maintenance yard area for Building 2.

The Building 1 parking structure would include up to 414 vehicle parking stalls, including 42 electric vehicle (EV) stalls, 274 EV ready stalls, and seven visitor stalls. In addition, a total of 332 bicycle parking stalls would be included. These bicycle parking spaces would be split between temporary and long term spaces in ratios consistent with City requirements. Thirteen parking spaces would be provided for the public park.

2.2.4 Open Space Park, Landscaping, and Outdoor Areas

The project would have approximately 1.26 acres of common open space for future residents. The residential building would include a swimming pool and spa in the approximately 9,950 square foot central courtyard area. Additional outdoor common space would also include an approximately 1,400 square foot 5th floor roof deck area. The project's indoor fitness room and clubhouse area would total approximately 9,381 square feet. Landscaping, including trees, would be planted throughout the outdoor areas which would total approximately 34,245 square feet. The construction and dedication of the future City park located on the eastern end of the project site would serve the residents of the project site and the general public.

2.2.5 Construction and Demolition

The project would export up to 2,000 cubic yards of soil from the project site (this includes both the residential and golf sites). Development of the residential and maintenance buildings on the project site would require grading for utilities, drainage, roads, and buildings foundations. Demolition and construction of the residential component of the project would take up to approximately 26 months.

Construction of the golf course redesign would require grading and excavation to move some of the existing holes and improve drainage and irrigation on-site. The golf course redesign would only occur if the proposed residential component was constructed and would be completed in a second phase of construction taking approximately 10 months. There are portions of the golf course renovation that may be able to run in advance of or concurrently with the housing project while Design and Construction Drawings are in progress. The entire project, including the golf course improvements, is estimated to take approximately 26 months.

2.2.6 Utilities

Stormwater runoff would flow to drainage management areas and would be treated in bioretention/biotreatment areas. Stormwater would be directed to three existing 15-inch storm drains in Pruneridge Avenue, and flow to the City's stormwater system.

New domestic water lines and fire service water lines would connect to existing eight- to 10-inch water mains in Pruneridge Avenue. The project would connect to a 16-inch recycled water line in Pruneridge Avenue. Recycled water would be used for outdoor landscaping at the residential building, park area, maintenance facility, and golf course areas of the site. The project's new sanitary sewer lines would connect to existing 10-inch sanitary sewer lines in Pruneridge Avenue. Electricity at the project site would be provided by Silicon Valley Power (SVP).

2.2.7 Green Building and Water Conservation Measures

The proposed project would include the following green building measures in compliance with the California Green Building Standards Code—Part 11, Title 24, California Code of Regulations (CALGreen):

- Bicycle facilities and EV charging stations.
- Construction in conformance with Title 24 and CALGreen to promote energy and water efficiency.
- Install a plumbing and wiring chase for a future solar hot water installation.
- Recycled water for landscaping
- Optimized energy performance using efficient HVAC equipment and building materials.
- Ongoing metering of power usage.

- Efficient landscape water usage and installation of low flow fixtures within the buildings.
- Proper disposal of on-site waste including recyclables, yard trimmings, and garbage.
- Planting trees and installing roofing materials to reduce the heat island effect.

2.2.8 Transportation Demand Management Plan Measures

The City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) states that multi-family developments must achieve a minimum 20 percent reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) with 10 percent reduction through the implementation of active transportation demand management (TDM) measures. The project TDM Plan includes the TDM measures and features listed below.

- Program administration for the TDM program including designating a transportation coordinator, providing an online kiosk/TDM information board and transportation information brochures, participation in a transportation management association, and trip planning assistance.
- Density of housing and affordable housing in proximity to transit
- A bike share program
- Bicycle parking
- Sidewalk improvements along the project frontage
- Contribution to a future bike lane

2.3 Project Objectives

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15124, the EIR must include a statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project. The objectives for the project are:

- Update the current golf course by implementing a new golf course routing plan that continues to provide nine holes of golf with some new fairways, greens and tee boxes.
- Irrigate the updated golf course and existing driving range facility using recycled water where possible.
- Provide a new maintenance building to house course equipment such as lawn mowers, tractors, and other equipment used to maintain the golf course.
- Construct and dedicate a park to the City.
- Provide up to 316 new residential units along Pruneridge Avenue of which 15 percent will be affordable.
- Provide common residential open space which could include an internal courtyard with a pool, and a separate roof deck for gathering.
- Support the long-term sustainability of the golf course by introducing a complementary residential community that generates the economic resources necessary to fund course renovations and ensure ongoing maintenance

2.4 Required Permits and Approvals

This EIR would provide decision-makers in the City of Santa Clara, other public agencies, and the general public with relevant environmental information to use in considering the project. If the proposed project is approved, the EIR could be used by the City in conjunction with discretionary approvals including, but not limited to, the following:

- General Plan Amendment
- Rezoning
- Tentative Map
- Architectural Review
- Tree Removal Permits
- Public Works clearances including Grading
- Amendment to the Scenic View Easement

Section 3.0 Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation

This section presents the discussion of impacts related to the following environmental subjects in their respective subsections:

3.1	Aesthetics	3.11	Land Use and Planning
3.2	Agriculture and Forestry Resources	3.12	Mineral Resources
3.3	Air Quality	3.13	Noise
3.4	Biological Resources	3.14	Population and Housing
3.5	Cultural Resources	3.15	Public Services
3.6	Energy	3.16	Recreation
3.7	Geology and Soils	3.17	Transportation
3.8	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	3.18	Tribal Cultural Resources
3.9	Hazards and Hazardous Materials	3.19	Utilities and Service Systems
3.10	Hydrology and Water Quality	3.20	Wildfire

The discussion for each environmental subject includes the following subsections:

Environmental Setting – This subsection 1) provides a brief overview of relevant plans, policies, and regulations that compose the regulatory framework for the project and 2) describes the existing, physical environmental conditions at the project site and in the surrounding area, as relevant.

Impact Discussion – This subsection includes the recommended checklist questions from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines to assess impacts.

- **Project Impacts** – This subsection discusses the project's impact on the environmental subject as related to the checklist questions. For significant impacts, feasible mitigation measures are identified. "Mitigation measures" are measures that will minimize, avoid, or eliminate a significant impact (CEQA Guidelines Section 15370). Mitigation measures are numbered to correspond to the impact they address. For example, MM BIO-1.3 refers to the third mitigation measure for the first impact in the Biological Resources section.
- **Cumulative Impacts** – This subsection discusses the project's cumulative impact on the environmental subject. Cumulative impacts, as defined by CEQA, refer to two or more individual effects, which when combined, compound or increase other environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts may result from individually minor, but collectively significant effects taking place over a period of time. CEQA Guideline Section 15130 states that an EIR should discuss cumulative impacts "when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable." The discussion does not need to be in as great detail as is necessary for project impacts, but is to be "guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness."

The purpose of the cumulative analysis is to allow decision makers to better understand the impacts that might result from approval of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, in conjunction with the proposed project addressed in this EIR.

The CEQA Guidelines advise that a discussion of cumulative impacts should reflect both their severity and the likelihood of their occurrence (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)). To accomplish these two objectives, the analysis should include either a list of past, present, and probable future projects or a summary of projections from an adopted general plan or similar document (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)). This EIR uses the list of projects approach and a summary of projections approach, depending on the resource topic.

The analysis must determine whether the project's contribution to any cumulatively significant impact is cumulatively considerable, as defined by CEQA Guideline Section 15065(a)(3). The cumulative impacts discussion for each environmental issue accordingly addresses the following issues: 1) would the effects of all of past, present, and probable future (pending) development result in a significant cumulative impact on the resource in question; and, if that cumulative impact is likely to be significant, 2) would the contribution from the proposed project to that significant cumulative impact be cumulatively considerable?

For each resource area, cumulative impacts may occur over different geographic areas. For example, the project effects on air quality would combine with the effects of projects in the entire air basin, whereas noise impacts would primarily be localized to the surrounding area. The geographic area that could be affected by the proposed project varies depending upon the type of environmental issue being considered. Section 15130(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines states that lead agencies should define the geographic scope of the area affected by the cumulative effect. Table 3.0-1 provides a summary of the different geographic areas used to evaluate cumulative impacts.

Table 3.0-1: Geographic Considerations in Cumulative Analysis

Resource Area	Geographic Area
Aesthetics	Project site and adjacent parcels
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Countywide
Air Quality	San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin
Biological Resources	Project site and adjacent parcels
Cultural Resources	Project site and adjacent parcels
Energy	Energy provider's territory
Geology and Soils	Project site and adjacent parcels
GHGs	Planet-wide
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Project site and adjacent parcels
Hydrology and Water Quality	West Valley watershed

Table 3.0-1: Geographic Considerations in Cumulative Analysis

Resource Area	Geographic Area
Land Use and Planning/Population and Housing	Citywide
Minerals	Identified mineral recovery or resource area
Noise and Vibration	Project site and adjacent parcels
Public Services and Recreation	Citywide
Transportation/Traffic	Citywide
Tribal Cultural Resources	Project site and adjacent parcels
Utilities and Service Systems	Citywide
Wildfire	Within or adjacent to the wildfire hazard zone

3.1 Aesthetics

3.1.1 Environmental Setting

3.1.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Senate Bill 743 (2013)

Senate Bill (SB) 743 was adopted in 2013 and requires lead agencies to use alternatives to level of service (LOS) for evaluating transportation impacts, specifically vehicle miles traveled (VMT). SB 743 also included changes to CEQA that apply to transit-oriented developments, as related to aesthetics and parking impacts. Under SB 743, a project's aesthetic impacts will no longer be considered significant impacts on the environment if:

- The project is a residential or mixed-use residential project, or employment center project and
- The project is located on an infill site within a transit priority area.

SB 743 also clarifies that local governments retain their ability to regulate a project's aesthetics impacts outside of the CEQA process.

Streets and Highway Code Sections 260 through 263

The California Scenic Highway Program (Streets and Highway Code, Sections 260 through 263) is managed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The program is intended to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. There are no state-designated scenic highways in Santa Clara. Interstate 280 (I-280) from the San Mateo County line to State Route (SR) 17, which includes segments in Santa Clara, is an eligible, but not officially designated, State Scenic Highway.

In Santa Clara County, the one state-designated scenic highway is SR 9 from the Santa Cruz County line to the Los Gatos City Limit. In San Mateo County, there are three state-designated scenic highways which include SR 1 from the Santa Cruz County line to the Half Moon Bay City limit, a segment of SR 35 from the Santa Cruz County line to SR 92, and I-280 from the Santa Clara County line to the San Bruno City limit. Eligible State Scenic Highways (not officially designated) include SR 17 from the Santa Cruz County line to SR 9, SR 35 from Santa Cruz County line to SR 9, Interstate 280 from the San Mateo County line to SR 17, and the entire length of SR 152 within the County.

Santa Clara General Plan

The following General Plan policies related to aesthetics are applicable to the proposed development project.

Policy	Description
5.3.1-P3	Support high quality design consistent with adopted design guidelines and the City's architectural review process
5.3.1-P10	Provide opportunities for increased landscaping and trees in the community, including requirements for new development to provide street trees and a minimum 2:1 on- or off-site replacement for trees removed as part of the proposal to help increase the urban forest and minimize the heat island effect
5.3.4-P8	Encourage building heights of up to five stories in large mixed-use developments along arterial street frontages, with the potential for taller buildings north of the Caltrain corridor.
5.3.4-P10	Require parking to be substantially below-grade or in structures with active uses along streets.
5.3.4-P12	Prioritize pedestrian-oriented streetscape and building design in mixed-use development, including features such as wider sidewalks, street furniture, specialty planters, signage, public art, street trees, special paving materials, decorative awnings, enhanced entrances, colors, variety of materials, and textures and distinctive building massing and articulation.

Santa Clara City Code

The City Code includes regulations associated with protection of the City's visual character, to promote a sound and attractive community appearance, as stated in Chapter 8.30 Public Nuisances and Chapter 18.52 Regulations for Public, Quasi-Public, and Public Park or Recreation Zoning Districts.[1] The City Code also includes an Architectural Review process, as outlined in Zoning Ordinance Chapter 18.76. The Architectural Review process is intended to serve the following purposes:

- Encourage the orderly and harmonious appearance of structures and properties;
- Maintain the public health, safety, and welfare;
- Maintain property and improvement values throughout the City;
- Encourage the physical development of the City that is consistent with the General Plan and other City regulations; and
- Enhance the aesthetic appearance, functional relationships, neighborhood compatibility and excellent design quality.

Architectural Review Process – Community Design Guidelines

At a Development Review Hearing (DRH), the Community Development Director or designee reviews plans and drawings submitted for architectural review for design, aesthetic considerations, and consistency with zoning standards, generally prior to submittal for building permits. The DRH follows the City's Community Design Guidelines. The intent of these guidelines is to provide consistent development standards in the interest of continued maintenance and enhancement of the high-quality living and working environment in the City. However, since the enactment of the

[1] City of Santa Clara. Santa Clara City Code. https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClara/#!/SantaClara08/SantaClara0830.html#8.30. Accessed March 6, 2025.

Housing Accountability Act (HAA), for residential projects, the DRH process usually focuses only on whether the project meets objective design criteria.

3.1.1.2 Existing Conditions

Project Site

The project site is developed with a golf course, supporting structures, and a surface parking lot. The golf course mostly consists of a landscaped grass area with scattered trees. The largest visual elements are the large safety nets lining the fairways of the golf course near roadways and surrounding the practice area of the course. Adjacent to the practice area there is a one-story clubhouse with stucco walls and a red tile roof. Pictures of the project site can be seen in Photos 1-3. The project site is not located within a Transit Priority Area subject to SB 743.

Surrounding Land Uses

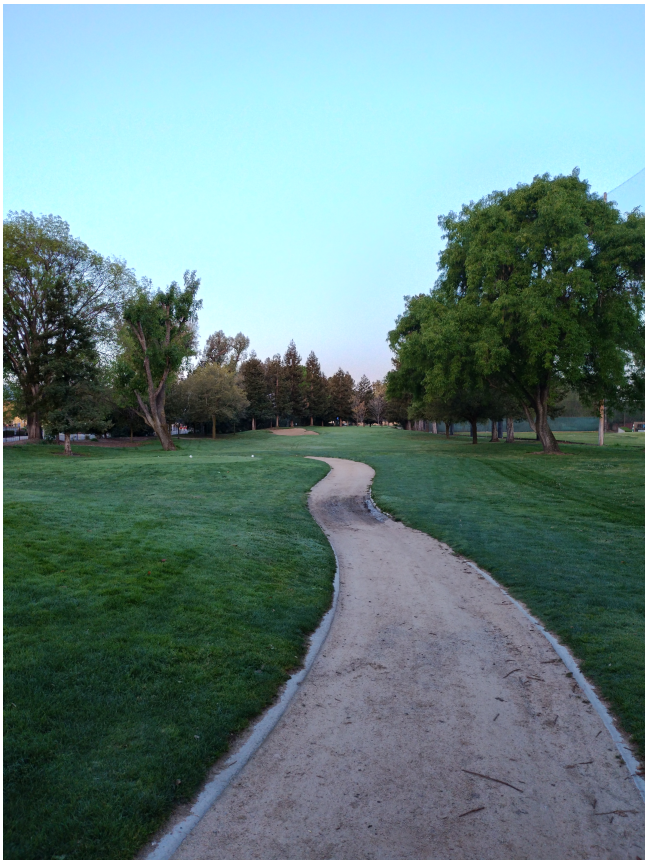
The project site is predominately surrounded by one- to two-story residential buildings with some single-story commercial structures south of the project site. There are also one- and two-story residential buildings (townhouses) within a development in the center of the golf course. Pictures of the surrounding areas can be seen in Photos 4-6.

Scenic Views, Resources, and Corridors

Based on the City's General Plan, views of the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range and stretches of open space and undeveloped land in the Ulistac Natural Area are scenic features in the Santa Clara area but are not defined as scenic vistas. The project site and the surrounding area are relatively flat and prominent viewpoints, other than the surrounding buildings, are limited. The project area has minimal to no scenic views of the Diablo foothills to the east, Santa Cruz Mountains to the west, and Santa Teresa Hills to the south. No natural scenic resources, such as outcroppings, are present on-site or within the project area. Additionally, the project site is located approximately six miles north of SR 9.

Light and Glare

Sources of light and glare are abundant in the urban environment of the project site and project area, including but not limited to streetlights, vehicular headlights, internal and external building lights, security lights, and reflective building surfaces and windows.












SAN TOMAS LIQUOR

3.1.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on aesthetics, except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

1) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
2) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
3) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings?[2] If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?
4) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

3.1.2.1 Project Impacts

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

There are no scenic vistas within the City according to the certified 2010-2035 General Plan Integrated Final EIR (General Plan FEIR). However, there are views of the community and in certain locations within the City, surrounding natural features including views of the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range and stretches of open space and undeveloped land in the Ulistac Natural Area.[3]

The proposed project is located within an urban, developed area of the City. While the site itself is mostly open space that is visually comparable to a local park, the site is not itself designated as a scenic vista and is not in proximity to any natural open space areas. The surrounding area is developed with a mix of uses and has no designated scenic vistas. The proposed project may block views from some existing nearby residences and businesses, but private views are not protected scenic resources under CEQA. Public viewpoints would also change as a result of the project. The project, however, would not block views of designated scenic vistas from the public areas around the site. Therefore, the proposed development project would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista. **(No Impact)**

[2] Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.
[3] City of Santa Clara. 2010-2035 General Plan Integrated Final Environmental Impact Report. SCH# 2008092005. January 2011. Page 141.

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

The nearest state scenic highway, SR 9, is located approximately six miles from the project site. The proposed project would not damage any scenic resources, such as trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

c) In non-urbanized areas, would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

The project site is primarily visible from the Pruneridge Avenue, San Tomas Expressway, and Saratoga Road frontages. The site itself is mostly open space that is visually comparable to a local park. Implementation of the proposed project would alter the visual characteristics of the golf course by adding a new residential building. There are, however, existing residences within the golf course and the new residential building, while taller than the existing residences, would occupy only a portion of the site. Most of the site would remain as open space (i.e., the golf course and proposed public park). The development of a five-story apartment building along a primary roadway adjacent to the golf course would not substantively degrade the visual character or quality of the project area.

While the proposed project would result in a change in the visual character of the project area, the project would be consistent overall with the urban, mixed-use development in the project area. The project area is a mix of modern and classical architectural styles and there is no single defining architectural style. In addition, site development would be subject to the City's Architectural Review process which provides recommendations and aesthetics guidelines for all proposed development to ensure compliance with applicable zoning and other regulatory requirements. For these reasons, the proposed project would not substantially degrade existing visual character or quality of public views of the site or its surroundings **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

Due to the project area's developed character, the current level of light and glare is typical of that in an urban setting. Nighttime lighting impacts are considered significant when they interfere with or intrude into neighboring residences. Light pollution is typically related to the use of high voltage light fixtures with inadequate shields and improper positioning or orientation. Lighting and building materials on the project site will be reviewed by Planning staff through the City's Architectural Review Process prior to issuance of building permits for consistency with the City's Design

Guidelines to reduce light and glare and to ensure it will not create a substantial new source of light or glare. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.1.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative aesthetics impact?

The cumulative impact area for Aesthetics impacts is within the project site and directly surrounding areas. The proposed project would not result in any significant impacts on aesthetic resources in the project area and there are no projects in the cumulative impact area that would further contribute to impacts on aesthetic resources. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative aesthetics impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

3.2.1 Environmental Setting

3.2.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) assesses the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural land and conversion of these lands over time. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status. The best quality land is identified as Prime Farmland. In CEQA analyses, the FMMP classifications and published county maps are used, in part, to identify whether agricultural resources that could be affected are present on-site or in the project area.[4]

California Land Conservation Act

The California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners to restrict parcels of land to agricultural or related open space uses. In return, landowners receive lower property tax assessments. In CEQA analyses, identification of properties that are under a Williamson Act contract is used to also identify sites that may contain agricultural resources or are zoned for agricultural uses.[5]

Fire and Resource Assessment Program

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) identifies forest land, timberland, and lands zoned for timberland production that can (or do) support forestry resources.[6] Programs such as CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program are used to identify whether forest land, timberland, or timberland production areas could be affected are located on or adjacent to a project site.[7]

[4] California Department of Conservation. "Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program." Accessed March 6, 2025. http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx.
[5] California Department of Conservation. "Williamson Act." http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/lca.
[6] Forest Land is land that can support 10 percent native tree cover and allows for management of forest resources (California Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)); Timberland is land not owned by the federal government or designated as experimental forest land that is available for, and capable of, growing trees to produce lumber and other products, including Christmas trees (California Public Resources Code Section 4526); and Timberland Production is land used for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses (Government Code Section 51104(g)).
[7] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. "Fire and Resource Assessment Program." Accessed March 6, 2025. http://frap.fire.ca.gov/.

3.2.1.2 Existing Conditions

According to the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the project site is classified as Urban and Built-Up Land. The project site does not contain agricultural resources or timberland resources, and it is not under an existing Williamson Act contract.[8]

3.2.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on agriculture and forestry resources, would the project:

1) 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?
2) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?
3) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?
4) Result in a loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
5) 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?

3.2.2.1 Project Impacts

a) Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, 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 site is currently developed with a golf course and proposes to build a residential building and park area while reconfiguring the golf course layout. The FMMP of the California Resources Agency did not identify the project site as having Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The proposed project would have no impact on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance as it would not convert any agricultural land to a non-agricultural use. **(No Impact)**

[8] County of Santa Clara. Williamson Act Properties Geodatabase. Accessed March 6, 2025. Williamson Act Properties Geodatabase.

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

The project site is zoned as Planned Development (PD). The existing zoning is not inclusive of agricultural use. The site is not under a Williamson contract. Accordingly, the project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. **(No Impact)**

c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production?

The project is zoned as Planned Development (PD). The existing zoning does not include forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Therefore, the project would not conflict with existing contract forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production zoning. **(No Impact)**

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

The project site is not listed as forest land of any type. The project is zoned as Planned Development (PD). The proposed project would not be converting the site to a non-forest use because the site is currently developed. Therefore, the project would have no impact on forest land and would not result in the loss of this resource. **(No Impact)**

e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project site is in an urbanized area of the City and is not adjacent to agricultural or forest land. The proposed project would not result in the conversion of agricultural or forest land surrounding the project site to non-agricultural or non-forest uses. Therefore, the project would have no impact on surrounding agricultural or forest resources. **(No Impact)**

3.2.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant agricultural and forestry resources impact?

The cumulative impact area for agricultural resources is countywide. The project site does not contain any agricultural or forestry resources and the project would have no impact on these resources. Therefore, the project would not contribute to any cumulatively considerable impacts on agricultural or forestry resources. **(No Cumulative Impact)**

3.3 Air Quality

The information in this section is based, in part, on the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment completed for the project in June 2025. This report is included for reference as Appendix B of this EIR.

3.3.1 Environmental Setting

3.3.1.1 Background Information

Criteria Pollutants

Criteria air pollutants are pollutants that have established federal or State standards for outdoor concentrations to protect public health. Pursuant with the federal and State Clean Air Acts, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established and enforced the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), respectively. The NAAQS and CAAQS address the following criteria air pollutants: ozone (O_3), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less (PM_{10}), particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micros or less ($PM_{2.5}$), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and lead. The CAAQS also includes visibility reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Toxic air contaminants (TACs) include airborne chemicals that are known to have short- and long-term adverse health effects. TACs are found in ambient air, especially in urban areas, and are caused by industry, agriculture, diesel fuel combustion, and commercial operations (e.g., dry cleaners). TACs are typically found in low concentrations, even near their source (e.g., diesel particulate matter [DPM] near a freeway). Unlike criteria air pollutants, which have a regional impact, TACs are highly localized and regulated at the individual emissions source level.

DPM is the predominant TAC in urban air and is estimated to represent about three-quarters of the cancer risk from TACs. DPM is comprised of diesel exhaust which is a complex mixture of gases, vapors, and fine particles. Medium- and heavy-duty diesel trucks represent the bulk of DPM emissions from California highways. The majority of DPM is small enough to be inhaled into the lungs. Most inhaled particles are subsequently exhaled, but some deposit on the lung surface or are deposited in the deepest regions of the lungs (i.e., areas most susceptible to injury).[9] Chemicals in diesel exhaust, such as benzene and formaldehyde, are also TACs identified by the CARB.

An overview of the sources of criteria pollutants and TACs, as well as their associated health effects, is provided in Table 3.3-1.

[9] California Air Resources Board. "Overview: Diesel Exhaust and Health." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/overview-diesel-exhaust-and-health.

Table 3.3-1: Sources and Health Effects of Criteria Air Pollutants and Toxic Air Contaminants

Pollutants	Description and Sources	Primary Effects
Ozone (O_3)	O_3 is a secondary criteria air pollutant that is the result of a photochemical (sunlight) reaction between reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x). Pollutants emitted by motor vehicles, power plants, industrial boilers, refineries, and chemical plants are the common sources for this reaction. High O_3 levels are caused by the cumulative emissions of ROG and NO_X. These precursor or primary pollutants react under certain meteorological conditions to form high O_3 levels. Commons sources of ROG and NO_x are vehicles, industrial plants, and consumer products.	Aggravation of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases Irritation of eyes Cardiopulmonary function impairment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	NO_2 is a reactive gas that combines with nitric oxide (NO) to form NO_x. NO_2 is the byproduct of fuel combustion, with common sources of NO_2 being emissions from cars, trucks, buses, power plants, and off-road equipment. Other sources of NO_2 include high temperature stationary combustion and atmospheric reactions.	Aggravation of respiratory illness Reduced visibility
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	CO is a colorless, odorless, and toxic gas that is the product of incomplete combustion of carbon-containing substances (e.g., when something is burned). Common outdoor sources of CO include mobile vehicles (passenger cars and trucks) and machinery that burn fossil fuels.	Interferes with oxygen delivery to the body's organ due to binding with the hemoglobin in the blood Fatigue, headaches, confusion, and dizziness
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) and Coarse Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	Particulate Matter (PM) is any material that is emitted as liquid or solid particles or a gaseous material, such as dust, soot, aerosols, and fumes. PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ are both small enough particulates to be inhaled into the human lungs, and $PM_{2.5}$ is small enough to deposit into the lungs, which poses an increased health risk compared to PM_{10}. Typical sources of PM include stationary combustion of solid fuels, construction activities, vehicles, industrial processes, and atmospheric chemical reactions.	Reduced lung function, especially in children Aggravation of respiratory and cardiorespiratory diseases Increased cough and chest discomfort Reduced visibility
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	SO_2 is a pungent and colorless gaseous pollutant. SO_2 is part of the sulfur oxides (SO_x) group and is the pollutant of greatest concern in the SO_x group. SO_x can react with other compounds in the atmosphere to form small particles. These particles contribute to pollution. SO_2 is primarily formed from fossil fuel combustion at power plants and other industrial facilities. Sources of SO_2 include motor vehicles, locomotives, ships, and off-road diesel equipment that are operated with fuels that contain high levels of sulfur. Industrial processes, such as natural gas and petroleum extraction, oil refining, and metal processing.	Aggravation of respiratory illness Respiratory irritation such as wheezing, shortness of breath and chest tightness Increased incidence of pulmonary symptoms and disease, decreased pulmonary function

Pollutants	Description and Sources	Primary Effects
Lead	Lead is a naturally occurring element that can be found in all parts of the environment including the air, soil, and water. As an air pollutant, lead is present in small particles. The most common historic source of lead exposure was the past use of leaded gasoline in motor vehicles. The exhaust resulting from use of leaded gasoline would release lead emissions into the air. Now, major sources of lead in the air are from ore and metals processing plants and piston-engine aircraft operating on leaded aviation fuel. Other sources are waste incinerators, utilities, and lead-acid battery manufacturers. The highest air concentrations of lead are usually found near lead smelters.	Adversely affect the nervous system, kidney function, immune system, reproductive and developmental systems and the cardiovascular system
Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs)	TACs include certain air pollutants known to increase the risk of cancer and/or a range of other serious health effects. Sources of TAC include, but are not limited to, cars and trucks, especially diesel-fueled; industrial sources, such as chrome platers; dry cleaners and service stations; and building materials and products.	Cancer Chronic eye, lung, or skin irritation Neurological and reproductive disorders

Sensitive Receptors

Some groups of people are more affected by air pollution than others. CARB has identified the following groups who are most likely to be affected by air pollution: children under 16, the elderly over 65, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. These groups are classified as sensitive receptors. Locations that may contain a high concentration of these sensitive population groups include residential areas, hospitals, daycare facilities, elder care facilities, and elementary schools.

Worker Receptors

In addition to the sensitive receptors mentioned above, the Air District considers worker receptors when reviewing impacts from air pollution and TACs. Worker receptors are adults (16 years and older) that work indoors and/or outdoors at off-site locations zoned for commercial and industrial uses. Typical developments that include worker receptors are offices, retail shops, manufacturing uses, light industrial uses, or heavy industrial uses.[10]

[10] Bay Area Air Quality Management District. *California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines Appendix E: Recommended Methods for Screening and Modeling Local Risks and Hazards*. Page E-14.

3.3.1.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal and State

Clean Air Act

At the federal level, the EPA is responsible for overseeing implementation of the Clean Air Act and its subsequent amendments. The federal Clean Air Act requires the EPA to set national ambient air quality standards for the six common criteria pollutants, discussed previously; PM, O_3, CO, SO_2, NO_2, and lead.[11]

CARB is the state agency that regulates mobile sources throughout the state and oversees implementation of the state air quality laws and regulations, including the California Clean Air Act. The EPA and the CARB have adopted ambient air quality standards establishing permissible levels of these pollutants to protect public health and the climate. Violations of ambient air quality standards are based on air pollutant monitoring data and are determined for each air pollutant. Attainment status for a pollutant means that a given air district meets the standard set by the EPA and/or CARB.

Diesel Risk Reduction Plan

To address the issue of diesel emissions in the state, CARB developed the Risk Reduction Plan to Reduce Particulate Matter Emissions from Diesel-Fueled Engines and Vehicles. In addition to requiring more stringent emission standards for new on-road and off-road mobile sources and stationary diesel-fueled engines to reduce particulate matter emissions by 90 percent, this plan involves the application of emission control strategies to existing diesel vehicles and equipment to reduce DPM and other pollutants. Implementation of this plan, in conjunction with stringent federal and CARB-adopted emission limits for diesel fueled vehicles and equipment, including off-road equipment, will significantly reduce emissions of DPM and NO_X.

Regional

2017 Clean Air Plan

The Bay Area Air District (Air District) is the agency primarily responsible for assuring that the federal and state ambient air quality standards are maintained in the San Francisco Bay Area, which includes the project area. Regional air quality management districts, such as the Air District, must prepare air quality plans specifying how federal and state air quality standards will be met. The Air District's most recently adopted plan is the Bay Area 2017 Clean Air Plan. The 2017 Clean Air Plan focuses on the following two related Air District goals and how to achieve them:

- Protect air quality and health at the regional and local scale by attaining all state and national air quality standards and eliminating disparities among Bay Area communities in cancer health risk from TAC; and

[11] NO_x is the group of nitrogen compounds (NO_2 and nitric oxide [NO]) that typically represents NO_2 emissions because NO_2 emissions contribute the majority of NO_x exhaust emissions emitted from fuel combustion.

- Protect the climate by reducing Bay Area greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2040 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.[12]

CEQA Air Quality Guidelines

The Air District CEQA Air Quality Guidelines are intended to serve as a guide for those who prepare or evaluate air quality impact analyses for projects and plans in the San Francisco Bay Area. Jurisdictions in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin utilize the thresholds and methodology for assessing air quality impacts developed by the Air District within their CEQA Air Quality Guidelines. The guidelines include information on legal requirements, Air District rules, methods of analyzing impacts, and recommended mitigation measures. The latest CEQA Air Quality Guidelines are the 2022 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines adopted on April 20, 2023, by the Air District's Board of Directors.

Community Air Risk Evaluation Program

Under the Community Air Risk Evaluation (CARE) program, the Air District has identified areas with high TAC emissions, and sensitive populations that could be adversely affected by them. The Air District uses this information to establish policies and programs to reduce TAC emissions and exposures. Impacted communities identified to date are in Concord, Richmond/San Pablo, San José, eastern San Francisco, western Alameda County, Vallejo, San Rafael, and Pittsburg/Antioch. The main objectives of the program are to:

- Evaluate health risks associated with exposure to TACs from stationary and mobile sources;
- Assess potential exposures to sensitive receptors and identify impacted communities;
- Prioritize TAC reduction measures for significant sources in impacted communities; and
- Develop and implement mitigation measures to improve air quality in impacted communities.

Santa Clara General Plan

General Plan policies related to air quality that are applicable to the project include the following.

Policy	Description
5.10.2-G1	Improved air quality in Santa Clara and the region.
5.10.5-G2	Reduced greenhouse gas emissions that meet the State and regional goals and requirements to combat climate change.
5.10.5-P3	Encourage implementation of technological advances that minimize public health hazards and reduce the generation of air pollutants.
5.10.5-P4	Encourage measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to reach 30 percent below 1990 levels by 2020.
5.10.5-P6	Require "Best Management Practices" for construction dust abatement.

[12] Bay Area Air Quality Management District. *Final 2017 Clean Air Plan.* April 19, 2017. Page 12.

3.3.1.3 Existing Conditions

The San Francisco Bay Area (Bay Area) Air Basin is designated a nonattainment area for the federal O_3 and $PM_{2.5}$ standards and for the state O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ standards.[13,14] The Bay Area is designated as an attainment area for both the NAAQS and CAAQS for CO, SO_2, and NO_2. As the regional air district, the Air District is responsible for attaining the NAAQS and CAAQS for these pollutants. As part of an effort to attain and maintain ambient air quality standards for O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, the Air District has established thresholds of significance for these air pollutants and their precursors that apply to both construction period and operational period impacts. Controlling the emissions of these precursor pollutants is the focus of the Air District attempts to reduce O_3 levels. The highest O_3 levels in the Bay Area occur in the eastern and southern inland valleys where temperatures are higher, there is less wind circulation, and sources of the precursor pollutants (i.e., ROG and NO_x) are prominent. In the Bay Area, most particulate matter is generated from the following activities: combustion, factories, construction, grading, demolition, agriculture, and motor vehicles. Elevated concentrations of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ are the result of both region-wide emissions and localized emissions.

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors near the project site include the residences in the surrounding area and school sites near the golf course.

3.3.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on air quality, would the project:

1) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?
2) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?
3) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
4) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Note: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the determinations.

[13] Bay Area Air Quality Management District. "Air Quality Standards and Attainment Status." Last Updated January 5, 2017. https://www.baaqmd.gov/about-air-quality/research-and-data/air-quality-standards-and-attainment-status. Accessed March 6, 2025.

[14] The area has attained both state and federal ambient air quality standards for CO. The project does not include substantial new emissions of SO_2 or lead. These criteria pollutants are not discussed further.

3.3.2.1 Project Impacts

As discussed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(b), the determination of whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment calls for judgment on the part of the lead agency and must be based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data. The City of Santa Clara has considered the air quality thresholds updated by the Air District in May 2017 and regards these thresholds to be based on the best information available for the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin and conservative in terms of the assessment of health effects associated with TACs and $PM_{2.5}$. The Air District CEQA Air Quality thresholds used in this analysis are identified in Table 3.3-2 and 3.3-3 below.

Table 3.3-2: Bay Area Air District Air Quality Significance Thresholds

Criteria Air Pollutant	Construction Thresholds*	Operation Thresholds	Operation Thresholds
	Average Daily Emissions (pounds/day)	Average Daily Emissions (pounds/day)	Annual Average Emissions (tons/year)
ROG and NO_x	54	54	10
PM_{10}	82 (exhaust)	82	15
$PM_{2.5}$	54 (exhaust)	54	10
CO	Not Applicable	9.0 ppm (eight-hour) or 20.0 ppm (one-hour)	9.0 ppm (eight-hour) or 20.0 ppm (one-hour)
Fugitive Dust	Dust Control Measures/Best Management Practices	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

* The Air District recommends for construction projects that require less than one year to complete, lead agencies should annualize impacts over the scope of actual days that peak impacts would occur rather than over the full year. Additionally, for phased projects that results in concurrent construction and operational emissions. Construction-related exhaust emissions should be combined with operational emissions for all phases where construction and operations overlap.
Source: Bay Area Air Quality Management District. 2022 California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines. April 2023. Pages 3-5 and 3-6.

Table 3.3-3: Bay Area Air District Health Risks and Hazards Thresholds

Health Risk	Single Source	Combined Cumulative Sources
Cancer Risk	10 per one million	100 per one million
Non-Cancer Hazard Index	1.0	10.0
Annual $PM_{2.5}$ Concentration	0.3 µg/m^3	0.8 µg/m^3 (average)

Notes: µg/m3 = micrograms per cubic meter
Thresholds are applicable to construction and operational activities.
Source: Bay Area Air Quality Management District. 2022 California Environmental Quality Act Air Quality Guidelines. April 2023. Pages 3-5 and 3-6.

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

Plan Consistency

The Air District is the regional agency responsible for overseeing compliance with State and Federal laws, regulations, and programs within the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin. The Air District, with assistance from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), prepares and implements specific plans to meet the applicable laws, regulations, and programs. The most recent and comprehensive of which is the Bay Area 2017 Clean Air Plan which has the goal of attaining air quality standards, reducing population exposure to protect public health, and reducing GHG emissions to protect the climate. The Air District has also developed CEQA guidelines to assist lead agencies in evaluating the significance of air quality and GHG impacts. In formulating compliance strategies, the Air District relies on planned land uses established by local general plans. Land use planning affects vehicle travel, which, in turn, affects region-wide emissions of air pollutants and GHGs.

The 2017 Clean Air Plan, adopted by the Air District in April 2017, includes control measures that are intended to reduce air pollutant emissions in the Bay Area either directly or indirectly. Guidance provided in the Air District CEQA guidelines recommends that Plans show consistency with the control measures listed within the Clean Air Plan.

At the project level, there are no consistency measures or thresholds provided in the Air District's CEQA guidance. The proposed project is a residential development, below the 638-unit screening level for operational impacts, that would not introduce any substantial sources of air pollutants or sources permitted by the Air District. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the latest Clean Air planning efforts because the project would have emissions below the Air District thresholds (see Table 3.3-4 and 3.3-5 below), the project would be considered urban infill, the project would be located near employment centers, and the project would be located near transit with regional connections.

Construction Criteria Pollutants

The extent of the construction activity on-site was estimated based on the equipment planned for use, and duration of construction equipment operation. Based on an estimated construction schedule with a start date of January 2027 for each project area, the entire project would be built out over a period of approximately 26 months (565 construction workdays) with the earliest year of operation assumed to be 2029.

Table 3.3-4: Construction Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Annual Emissions (tons per day)	ROG	NO_x	PM_{10} Exhaust	$PM_{2.5}$ Exhaust
2027 (Apartments + Golf Course + Public Park)	0.20	1.50	0.05	0.04
2028+2029* (Apartments)	2.54	2.13	0.04	0.03
Average Daily Emissions (pounds per day)				
2027 (261 construction workdays)	1.56	11.52	0.37	0.34
2028+ 2029 (304 construction workdays)	16.70	14.01	0.24	0.22
Air District Significance Threshold (pounds per day)	54	54	82	54
Significant?	No	No	No	No

Note: Average daily emissions calculated by dividing the construction emissions by the number of construction workdays.

*only two months in 2029, therefore the years are combined

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment. June 6, 2025.

The ROG, NO_x and exhaust PM emissions during construction would not exceed the established Air District thresholds for environmental impact. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant criteria pollutant emissions impact during construction of the proposed project. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Operational Criteria Pollutants

During operations of the proposed project, the project would generate emissions from vehicle trips and building operations. The modeled emissions for project operations are shown in Table 3.3-5.

Table 3.3-5: Operational Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Scenario	ROG	NO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Annual Emissions (tons/year)				
2029	2.43	0.43	1.01	0.26
Significance Threshold (tons/year)	10	10	15	10
Significant?	*No*	*No*	*No*	*No*
Average Daily Emissions (pounds/day)*				
2030	13.31	2.36	5.52	1.43
Air District Significance Threshold (pounds per day)	54	54	82	54
Significant?	*No*	*No*	*No*	*No*

*Average daily emissions calculated based on annual emissions and 365 days per year for operations.

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment. June 6, 2025.

Operation of the proposed project would not contribute enough trips to considerably increase emissions from operational sources in the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant operational criteria pollutants impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The Bay Area is considered a non-attainment area for ground-level O_3 and $PM_{2.5}$ under both the federal Clean Air Act and state Clean Air Act. The proposed project would increase criteria pollutants in the Bay Area, contributing to existing violations of O_3 standards. Per the Air District CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, air pollution by its nature is largely a cumulative impact. No single project is sufficient in size by itself, to result in nonattainment of ambient air quality standards. If a project exceeds the identified significance thresholds, its emissions would be cumulatively considerable, resulting in significant adverse air quality impacts to the region's existing air quality conditions. As discussed above, the proposed project would not result in any air criteria pollutant emissions exceeding the Air District's significance thresholds. As a result, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is in non-attainment. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

Fugitive Dust

During construction, the proposed project would result in dust from vehicles and other construction activities. Based on the estimates in the Air Quality Assessment, the fugitive dust emissions for the construction of the proposed project were determined to be less than 0.08 tons for the entirety of the construction period. The proposed project would be required to implement Air District Standard Construction Procedures to limit the dispersion of particulate matter during construction.

Condition of Approval

During any construction period of ground disturbance, the applicant shall ensure that the project contractor implement measures to control dust and exhaust. Implementation of the measures recommended by the Air District and listed below would reduce the air quality impacts associated with grading and new construction to a less than significant level. Additional measures are identified to reduce construction equipment exhaust emissions. The contractor shall implement the following best management practices that are required of all projects:

- All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day.
- All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site shall be covered.

- All visible mud or dirt track-out onto adjacent public roads shall be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited.
- All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 miles per hour (mph).
- All roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as practicable. Building pads shall be laid as soon as practicable after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
- All excavation, grading, and/or demolition activities shall be suspended when average wind speeds exceed 20 mph.
- All trucks and equipment, including their tires, shall be washed off prior to leaving the site.
- Unpaved roads providing access to site located 100 feet of further from a paved road shall be treated with a 6- to 12-inch layer of compacted layer of wood chips, mulch, or gravel.
- Publicly visible signs shall be posted with the telephone number and name of the person to contact at the lead agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The Air District's General Air Pollution Complaints number shall be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

With implementation of the Air District recommended basic control measures, the fugitive particulate matter produced by the proposed project would be reduced to approximately 0.01 tons for the whole construction period and would result in less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Construction Toxic Air Contaminants Impacts

Construction of the proposed project would cause the release of emissions known to result in greater occurrences of cancer and other health conditions. Two locations were identified as maximally exposed individuals (MEI) for the project site, one for cancer risk and the other for annual $PM_{2.5}$ concentration. The cancer risk MEI is located at a single-family residence west of the project site opposite San Tomas Expressway. The annual $PM_{2.5}$ concentration MEI was located at a commercial worker receptor southeast of the site opposite Pruneridge Avenue. The location of these receptors can be seen in Figure 3.3-1 below. The Air Quality Assessment analyzed infant and adult exposures to TACs at the residences surrounding the project site and adult exposure at nearby businesses. The analysis also calculated the TAC emissions at the nearby preschool. Infant exposure at residences and preschool was used as a worst-case assumption because child and adult exposures would be less severe. The results of the modeling conducted as a part of the Air Quality Assessment are summarized below in Table 3.3-6.

Table 3.3.-6: Construction TAC Risks

Source	Cancer Risk (per million)	Annual $PM_{2.5}$ ($\mu g/m^3$)	Hazard Index
Project Impact – Maximum Residential Impact			
Project Construction	8.62 (infant)	0.03	0.01
Air District Single-Source Threshold	10	0.3	1.0
Significant?	No	No	No
Maximum Worker Impact			
Project Construction	0.51 (adult)	0.06	0.01
Air District Single-Source Threshold	10	0.3	1.0
Significant?	No	No	No
Maximum School Impact - L'Academy Language Immersion Preschool			
Project Construction	6.02 (infant)	0.01	<0.01
Air District Single-Source Threshold	10	0.3	1.0
Significant?	No	No	No

Note: The age used to calculate the cancer risk is in paratheses. Bold numerical text indicates an exceedance of a threshold.
Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment. June 6, 2025.

Based on the information in Table 3.3-6 above, the proposed project would not result in construction TACs exceeding the Air District impact thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact from pollutant exposure on sensitive receptors during construction. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Operational Toxic Air Contaminant Impacts

Diesel equipment, including emergency generators and heavy-duty diesel-powered trucks are the primary sources of operational TACs. The use of these stationary diesel generators is not proposed for this project and, due to the land uses proposed, the project would not generate large amounts of new truck trips that would involve diesel vehicles. Therefore, the proposed project operations would not generate TACS from project traffic or stationary sources and would have a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Health Risk from Criteria Pollutants

In a 2018 decision (*Sierra Club v. County of Fresno*), the state Supreme Court determined CEQA requires that when a project's criteria air pollutant emissions would exceed applicable thresholds and contribute a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative regional criteria pollutant impact, the potential for the project's emissions to affect human health in the air basin



Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc., June 6, 2025.

MAXIMALLY EXPOSED INDIVIDUAL

FIGURE 3.3-1

must be disclosed. State and federal ambient air quality standards are health-based standards, and exceedances of those standards result in continued unhealthy levels of air pollutants. As stated in the 2017 Air District CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, air pollution by its nature is largely a cumulative impact. No single project is sufficient in size, by itself, to result in nonattainment of ambient air quality standards. Instead, a project's individual emissions contribute to existing cumulatively significant adverse air quality impacts. In developing thresholds of significance for air pollutants, the Air District considered the emission levels for which a project's individual emissions would be cumulatively considerable. If a project has a less than significant impact for criteria pollutants, it is presumed to have no adverse health effect. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The proposed project would introduce a residential development to the project site which is occupied by a golf course. During construction of the proposed project, operation of construction vehicles may result in temporary odors related to fuel combustion, but these would be temporary and would not result in a significant impact. The development would not produce emissions different from any other residential building and would not create unpleasant odors for residents around the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact from odors produced on-site. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.3.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative air quality impact?

The cumulative impact area for air quality impacts is the totality of the San Francisco Air Basin. Additionally, cumulative impacts for TACs would be the project site and area approximately 1,000 feet from the project site. For criteria pollutants, the analysis above includes a cumulative perspective because the thresholds for these impacts include a greater scope of assessment than the individual project impacts. Therefore, criteria pollutant impacts would not be cumulatively considerable, as discussed in impact area b).

To analyze cumulative project construction TAC impacts, the health risks of the proposed project were added to the health risks generated by surrounding emitters of TACs. These impacts are summarized below in Table 3.3-7. The analysis included roadways such as San Tomas Expressway, Pruneridge Avenue, Saratoga Avenue and generators located at multiple nearby businesses and facilities.

Table 3.3-7: Cumulative Health Risk Impacts at the MEI

Source	Cancer Risk (per million)	Annual $PM_{2.5}$ ($\mu g/m^3$)	Hazard Index
Total/Maximum Project Impact	8.62 (infant)	0.06	0.01
San Tomas Expressway, ADT 45,634	1.93	0.07	<0.01
Pruneridge Ave, ADT 12,211	0.21	0.09	<0.01
Saratoga Ave, ADT 10,769	0.06	0.04	<0.01
Lucky #774 (Facility ID #18310, Generator), MEIs at 670 feet	<0.01		
City of Santa Clara - Fire Station #4 (Facility ID #18701, Generator), MEIs at 1,175 feet	0.09		
Pruneridge Golf Club (Facility ID #108890, GDF), MEIs at 1,150 feet	0.01		0.01
APRO LLC dba United Pacific #2206 AD (Facility ID #112370, GDF), MEIs at 950 feet.	0.30		0.03
Cumulative Total	<11.23	0.26	<0.08
Air District Cumulative Source Threshold	100	0.8	10.0
Significant?	No	No	No

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment. June 6, 2025.

As shown above, the proposed project would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to an exceedance of TACs when combined with existing sources. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant cumulative TAC impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.3.3 Non-CEQA Effects

Per *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District,* 62 Cal. 4th 369 (2015) *(BIA v. BAAQMD)*, effects of the environment on the project are not considered CEQA impacts. The following discussion is included for informational purposes only because the City of Santa Clara has policies that address existing air quality conditions affecting a proposed project.

A Health Risk Assessment (included as part of Appendix B) was completed to determine if existing TAC sources would create a health risk for the new sensitive receptors (residents) that the project would create. The TAC sources near the project site, including San Tomas Expressway, Pruneridge Avenue, Saratoga Avenue and generators located at multiple nearby businesses and facilities, were used in this health risk assessment. Trips on the roadways were extrapolated to the 2029 operational year to accurately represent operation conditions.

Maximum increased cancer risks were calculated for the future residents of the project site using the maximum modeled TAC concentrations. A 30-year exposure period was used in calculating cancer risks assuming the residents would include infants and adults in the new apartments for 24 hours per day for 350 days per year.

The highest concentrations of pollutants would occur at the first-floor receptor at the southeastern corner of the site. Cancer risks and annual $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations associated with roadways and the nearby generators are greatest nearest to the source and decrease with distance. The surrounding sources of TAC were determined to not exceed Air District cumulative thresholds; however, San Tomas Expressway would exceed the single source Annual $PM_{2.5}$ thresholds for the new residents of the proposed project. The community risk at the project site is shown in Table 3.3-8.

Table 3.3-8: Impacts from Nearby Sources to Project Site Receptors

Source		Cancer Risk (per million)	Annual $PM_{2.5}$ ($\mu g/m^3$)	Hazard Index
San Tomas Expressway, ADT 46,520	Without MERV13	3.03	**0.38**	<0.01
	With MERV13	1.62	0.11	<0.01
Pruneridge Ave, ADT 12,448	Without MERV13	0.75	0.10	<0.01
	With MERV13	0.44	0.03	<0.01
Saratoga Ave, ADT 10,987	Without MERV13	0.15	0.02	<0.01
	With MERV13	0.08	<0.01	<0.01
Lucky #774 (Facility ID #18310, Generator), MEIs at 670 feet		0.01		
City of Santa Clara - Fire Station #4 (Facility ID #18701, Generator), MEIs at 1,175 feet		0.09		
Pruneridge Golf Club (Facility ID #108890, GDF), MEIs at 1,150 feet		0.03		0.11
APRO LLC dba United Pacific #2206 AD (Facility ID #112370, GDF), MEIs at 950 feet.		3.28		0.53
Cumulative Total	Without MERV13	7.34	0.5	<0.67
	With MERV13	5.55	<0.15	<0.67
Air District Single-Source Threshold		>10.0	>0.3	>1.0
Significant?	Without MERV13	No	**Yes**	No
	With MERV13	No	No	No
Air District Cumulative Source Threshold		100	0.8	10.0
Significant?	Without MERV13	No	No	No
	With MERV13	No	No	No

MERV13 = Minimum Efficiency Reporting Values capturing 3.0-10.0 micron particles 95 percent of the time, 1.0-3.0 microns 90% of the time, and 0.30-1.0 micron 75% of the time.
Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment. June 6, 2025.

Enhanced filtration is required as part of the 2022 California Building Code (CBC), Section 160.2 C: Multi-Family Residential Air Filter Efficiency. By this standard all four story or taller apartment buildings are required to use a filtration system with a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) of at least 13. As shown in Table 3.3-8, with the required inclusion of MERV13 filtration, none of the single-source or cumulative-source thresholds are exceeded at the project site. Therefore, through compliance with standard building code practices, the proposed project would not conflict with City of Santa Clara policies governing safe air quality for new residents.

3.4 Biological Resources

The information in this section is based, in part, on the Arborist report completed by Calyx Tree + Landscape Consulting, LLC in April 2024. This report is included for reference as Appendix C.

3.4.1 Environmental Setting

3.4.1.1 Regulatory Framework

Federal and State

Endangered Species Act

Individual plant and animal species listed as rare, threatened, or endangered under state and federal Endangered Species Acts are considered special-status species. Federal and state endangered species legislation has provided the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) with a mechanism for conserving and protecting plant and animal species of limited distribution and/or low or declining populations. Permits may be required from both the USFWS and CDFW if activities associated with a proposed project would result in the take of a species listed as threatened or endangered. To "take" a listed species, as defined by the State of California, is "to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill" these species. Take is more broadly defined by the federal Endangered Species Act to include harm of a listed species.

In addition to species listed under state and federal Endangered Species Acts, Sections 15380(b) and (c) of the CEQA Guidelines provide that all potential rare or sensitive species, or habitats capable of supporting rare species, must be considered as part of the environmental review process. These may include plant species listed by the California Native Plant Society and CDFW-listed Species of Special Concern.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) prohibits killing, capture, possession, or trade of migratory birds except in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. Hunting and poaching are also prohibited. This includes direct and indirect acts, except for harassment and habitat modification, which are not included unless they result in direct loss of birds, nests, or eggs. The CDFW also protects migratory and nesting birds under California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3800. The CDFW defines taking as causing abandonment and/or loss of reproductive efforts through disturbance.

Sensitive Habitat Regulations

Wetland and riparian habitats are considered sensitive habitats under CEQA. They are also afforded protection under applicable federal, state, and local regulations, and are generally subject to regulation by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control

Board (RWQCB), CDFW, and/or the USFWS under provisions of the federal Clean Water Act (e.g., Sections 303, 304, 404) and State of California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

Fish and Game Code Section 1602

Streambeds and banks, as well as associated riparian habitat, are regulated by the CDFW per Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code. Work within the bed or banks of a stream or the adjacent riparian habitat requires a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFW.

Local

Santa Clara General Plan

General Plan policies relevant to the proposed project include the following:

Policies	Description
5.3.1-P10	Provide opportunities for increased landscaping and trees in the community, including requirements for new development to provide street trees and a minimum 2:1 on- or off-site replacement for trees removed as part of the proposal to help increase the urban forest and minimize the heat island effect.
5.10.1-P4	Protect all healthy cedars, redwoods, oaks, olives, bay laurel, and pepper trees of any size, and all other trees over 36 inches in circumference measured from 48 inches above-grade on private and public property, as well as in the public right-of-way.

3.4.1.2 Existing Conditions

The project site is in a developed, urban area of the City of Santa Clara. Surrounding land uses consist of residential and commercial development. Vegetation in the vicinity of the project site includes landscaping consisting of grass, shrubs, and trees. Habitats in developed areas such as the project area include predominantly urban adapted birds and animals. There are no waterways, wetlands, or other sensitive habitats located on or adjacent to the project site. The nearest waterways are San Tomas Creek, located approximately 1,000 feet north the project site in a covered channel, and Saratoga Creek, located approximately 0.7 miles west of the project site.

The project site contains a golf course with trees and large grass areas, and paved parking areas. The project site is bounded by a paved sidewalk and street trees, and by adjacent development. A large variety of tree species are present on-site including but not limited to red ironbark, coast redwood, evergreen ash, Italian stone pine, Deodar cedar, Silver dollar gum, red maple, Maidenhair tree, coast live oak, red river gum, southern live oak, glossy privet. The tree survey identified 216 trees within the project site and immediately adjacent to the site. Of the 216 trees, 44 are off-site. Half the trees were in good and excellent condition, and Coast redwood made up most of the trees evaluated (79 trees). Twenty-six trees are street trees along San Tomas Expressway, and eight of the trees within the project area were determined to be “unsuitable” pine and eucalyptus trees under the Santa Clara Tree Ordinance. The trees are listed in Appendix C of this report below and their locations are shown in Figure 3.4-1 below.

TREE DISPOSITION LEGEND

KEY	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
	EXISTING TREE TO REMAIN *Dependent upon condition of tree at construction time	255
	EXISTING TREE TO BE REMOVED	185
	EXISTING OFF-SITE TREE TO REMAIN	44
	PROPOSED TREES	*

MITIGATION LEGEND

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
EUCALYPTUS AND PINE TREES TO REMAIN	20
OTHER TREES TO REMAIN	69
EUCALYPTUS AND PINE TREES TO BE REMOVED	8
OTHER TREES TO BE REMOVED	75
Required Mitigation Trees for Pines and Eucalyptus 1:1	8
Required Mitigation Trees for Pines and Eucalyptus 2:1	150
Total Required Mitigated Trees	158
PROPOSED TREES	101

0 20 40 80 Feet

N

LOCATION OF TREES ON AND NEAR THE PROJECT SITE

FIGURE 3.4-1

3.4.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on biological resources, would the project:

1) 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 (CDFW) or United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)?
2) 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 CDFW or USFWS?
3) 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?
4) 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?
5) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
6) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

3.4.2.1 Project Impacts

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS?

Special-Status Species

As discussed in Existing Conditions, the project site does not contain habitat suitable for special - status plant and animal species. The project would result in the redevelopment of an already urbanized area of the City of Santa Clara and would not result in the modification of any sensitive habitat area. As a result, development of the proposed project would not adversely affect any candidate, sensitive, or special-status species. (**Less than Significant Impact)**

Nesting Birds

The trees and shrubs within and bordering the project site could provide nesting habitat for birds, including migratory birds or raptors. Nesting birds are among the species protected under the provisions of the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 2800.

Construction activities on-site during the nesting season (February to August) could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that results in abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered a taking by the CDFW; any loss of fertile eggs, nesting raptors, or any activities resulting in nest abandonment would constitute an impact.

Impact BIO-1.1: Project construction could impact nesting birds on or adjacent to the site, if present. **(Significant Impact)**

Mitigation Measure

In compliance with federal and state regulations and protocol, the project shall implement the following mitigation measure, to reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less than significant level.

MM BIO-1.1: Construction shall be scheduled to avoid the nesting season to the extent feasible. The nesting season for most birds, including most raptors, in the San Francisco Bay area extends from February 1 through August 31.

If it is not possible to schedule construction and tree removal between September and January, then pre-construction surveys for nesting birds shall be completed by a qualified ornithologist to ensure that no nests shall be disturbed during project implementation. This survey shall be completed no more than 14 days prior to the initiation of grading, tree removal, or other demolition or construction activities during the early part of the breeding season (February through April) and no more than 30 days prior to the initiation of these activities during the late part of the breeding season (May through August).

During this survey, the ornithologist shall inspect all trees and other possible nesting habitats within and immediately adjacent to the construction area of nests. If an active nest is found sufficiently close to work areas to be disturbed by construction, the ornithologist, in consultation with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), shall determine the extent of a construction free buffer zone to be established around the nest to ensure that nests of bird species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Agreement (MBTA) or Fish and Game Code shall not be disturbed during project construction.

The project, through implementation of the above mitigation measure, would reduce impacts to nesting birds by avoiding construction during nesting bird season or completing pre-construction nesting bird surveys to minimize and/or avoid impacts to nesting birds. **(Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated)**

b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS?

The project site is located approximately 0.7 miles from the nearest natural waterway; therefore, there is no riparian habitat in the project area. The site is not identified as containing sensitive habitat. For these reasons, development of the project site would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community. **(No Impact)**

c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

The project site does not contain, nor is it adjacent to, any wetlands. As a result, the project would not affect any federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. **(No Impact)**

d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The project site is surrounded by development, and there are no sensitive habitats or waterways on or adjacent to the project site. Due to the highly developed nature of the project area, the project site does not provide dispersal habitat for any native resident migratory fish or wildlife species and does not act as a substantial wildlife corridor. There are no identified wildlife nursery sites present on the project site. For these reasons, future development under the project would have a less than significant impact on migratory fish or wildlife species, wildlife corridors, and wildlife nursery sites. In addition, as described under Impact BIO-1, measures to mitigate impacts to nesting birds will be implemented if they are found on-site during pre-construction surveys. As a result, the project would not substantially interfere with the movement of any native or migratory species, or the use of any nursery sites. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

As proposed, the project would remove 88 existing trees on and near the project site, including eight unsuitable trees, for the new residential development, and plant new landscaping around the proposed development. The project would also remove 121 trees for the golf course portion of the project. As outlined in General Plan Policy 5.3.1-P10, new development is required to provide street trees and a minimum 2:1 on- or off-site replacement for trees removed. As part of the landscape plan, the project proposes 155 new 24-inch box trees to be planted throughout the project site for the residential component of the project. Tree replacement for the golf course portion of the

project has not been determined at this time and will be coordinated with the City at the time of implementation. Based on the replacement rate required by the General Plan, the proposed development project would not meet the City's replacement requirements on-site and would require additional off-site replacement trees to comply with the General Plan Policy 5.3.1-P10.

Condition of Approval

In compliance with City requirements, the proposed project shall replace the removed trees as outlined below.

The project applicant will coordinate with the supervising planner to identify locations off-site for replacement trees in addition to the trees proposed as part of the landscaping on-site in accordance with General Plan Policy 5.3.1-P10 and Santa Clara City Code Chapter 12.35. Per the code, on multi-family and commercial sites, all trees that are removed shall be replaced at a 2:1 ratio with 24-inch box trees, or replaced at a 4:1 ratio with 15-gallon trees. Certain "unsuitable" species (e.g. Pinus, Eucalyptus) shall be replaced at a 1:1 ratio with minimum 15-gallon trees. This will require the planting of 285, 24-inch box trees off-site to fully offset the removal of trees on-site to replace trees for both the apartment and golf course improvements. The project applicant will provide the supervising planner with appropriate documentation to confirm that all on- and off-site replacement trees have been planted prior to issuance of occupancy permits.

The inclusion of the Condition of Approval above, the proposed project would provide on- and off-site planting of trees at a ratio of 2:1 to replace the trees removed from the site. With full offset of the removed trees the proposed project would comply with local tree preservation policies and would result in a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The project site is not located within an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Plan, or other approved habitat conservation plan. The project, therefore, would not conflict with any approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. **(No Impact)**

3.4.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative biological resources impact?

The cumulative impact area for biological resources is the project site and adjacent parcels. The proposed project would impact resources on the project site by removing trees and potentially disturbing nesting birds during construction. The project would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level with the identified mitigation measures protecting or avoiding resources on-site.

There are no other projects adjacent to the project site that would result in impacts on biological resources. Therefore, because the proposed project would result in a less than significant project impact and would not contribute to an existing impact in the project area, the proposed project would have a less than significant cumulative impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.5 Cultural Resources

The following discussion is based upon an Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment completed by Archeological/Historical Consultants in April 2025. A copy of the Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment, which is a confidential report, is on file with the City of Santa Clara Planning Division and is available upon request with appropriate credentials.

3.5.1 Environmental Setting

3.5.1.1 Regulatory Framework

Federal and State

National Historic Preservation Act

Federal protection is legislated by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and the Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979. These laws maintain processes for determination of the effects on historical properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Section 106 of the NHPA and related regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 800) constitute the primary federal regulatory framework guiding cultural resources investigations and require consideration of effects on properties that are listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP. Impacts to properties listed in the NRHP must be evaluated under CEQA.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) is administered by the State Office of Historic Preservation and encourages protection of resources of architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural significance. The CRHR identifies historic resources for state and local planning purposes and affords protections under CEQA. Under Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c), a resource may be eligible for listing in the CRHR if it meets any of the NRHP criteria.[15]

Historical resources eligible for listing in the CRHR must meet the significance criteria described previously and retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. A resource that has lost its historic character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the CRHR if it maintains the potential to yield significant scientific or historical information or specific data.

The concept of integrity is essential to identifying the important physical characteristics of historical resources and, therefore, in evaluating adverse changes to them. Integrity is defined as "the authenticity of a historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance." The processes of determining integrity are

[15] California Office of Historic Preservation. "CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(3) and California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6." Accessed October 4, 2024. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(3) and California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6.

similar for both the CRHR and NRHP and use the same seven variables or aspects to define integrity that are used to evaluate a resource's eligibility for listing. These seven characteristics include 1) location, 2) design, 3) setting, 4) materials, 5) workmanship, 6) feeling, and 7) association.

California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act

The California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act applies to both state and private lands. The act requires that upon discovery of human remains, construction or excavation activity must cease and the county coroner be notified.

Public Resources Code Section 5097.98

Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines specifies procedures to be used in the event of an unexpected discovery of Native American human remains on non-federal land. These procedures are outlined in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. These codes protect such remains from disturbance, vandalism, and inadvertent destruction, establish procedures to be implemented if Native American skeletal remains are discovered during construction of a project, and establish the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as the authority to resolve disputes regarding disposition of such remains.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, in the event of human remains discovery, no further disturbance is allowed until the county coroner has made the necessary findings regarding the origin and disposition of the remains. If the remains are of a Native American, the county coroner must notify the NAHC. The NAHC then notifies those persons most likely to be related to the Native American remains. The code section also stipulates the procedures that the descendants may follow for treating or disposing of the remains and associated grave goods.

Santa Clara General Plan

The following General Plan policies related to cultural resources are applicable to the proposed development project.

Policy	Description
5.6.3-P1	Require that new development avoid or reduce potential impacts to archaeological, paleontological and cultural resources.
5.6.3-P4	Require that a qualified paleontologist/archaeologist monitor all grading and/or excavation if there is a potential to affect archeological or paleontological resources, including sites within 500 feet of natural water courses and the Old Quad neighborhood.
5.6.3-P5	In the event that archeological/paleontological resources are discovered, require that work be suspended until the significance of the find and recommended actions are determined by a qualified archeologist/paleontologist.
5.6.3-P6	In the event that human remains are discovered, work with the appropriate Native American representative and follow the procedures set forth in state law.

3.5.1.2 Existing Conditions

Subsurface Resources

Prehistoric Resources

Native Americans occupied Santa Clara Valley and the greater Bay Area for more than 5,000 years. The exact time period of the Ohlone (originally referred to as Costanoan) migration into the Bay Area is debated by scholars. Dates of the migration range between 3000 B.C. and 500 A.D. Regardless of the actual time frame of their initial occupation of the Bay Area and, in particular, Santa Clara Valley, it is known the Ohlone had a well-established population of approximately 7,000 to 11,000 people with a territory that ranged from the San Francisco Peninsula and the East Bay, south through the Santa Clara Valley and down to Monterey and San Juan Bautista.

The Ohlone people practiced hunting, fishing, and collecting seasonal plant and animal resources, including tidal and marine resources from San Francisco Bay. The customary way of living, or lifeway, of the Costanoan/Ohlone people disappeared by about 1810 due to disruption by introduced diseases, a declining birth rate and the impact of the California mission system established by the Spanish in the area in 1777.

Archaeological sites are most often found in flat locations with access to a consistent source of fresh water. The nearest perennial freshwater source is Saratoga Creek, which is less than one mile to the west. In the past, a large unnamed slough ran through the project area itself, however, currently the nearest source of water is approximately 0.7 miles from the project site. Additionally, no Native American archeological resources have been recorded in the vicinity, however a slough historically ran through the project site so there is a moderate sensitivity for these resources in the project area.

Mission Period

Spanish explorers began coming to Santa Clara Valley in 1769. From 1769 to 1776, several expeditions were made during which time the explorers encountered the local Native American tribes. These expeditions lead to the establishment of the California Missions, including the first Mission Santa Clara founded in 1777 near what is today the Martin Avenue/De La Cruz Boulevard intersection. After being destroyed by flooding, a second Mission Santa Clara was constructed. The third, fourth, and fifth Missions were constructed on what is today the Santa Clara University campus, located approximately 1.52 miles northeast of the project site. During the Mission period, the Mission controlled much of the land (approximately 80,000 acres) in Santa Clara Valley and the Native Americans were brought into the Mission, effectively ending the Ohlone's traditional occupation of the valley.

Post-Mission and American Period

Historic-era maps of the project area were examined to identify the history of the site from the late 1800s to present. By 1876, the project area was included in a 116-acre farming plot owned by

Benjamin Culbertson Shartzer. The land switched hands multiple times between 1885 and 1903 when the area was subdivided into Bond Track #1. The area was used for agricultural activities during these years. Aerial photography in 1930 show the area used as orchards with the slough running through it, and by 1956 the development in the area was shifting towards residential neighborhoods. The area was fully developed, and the project site had been turned into a golf course by 1967. Based on the review of historical land use patterns and the previously recorded historical buildings, the project area has a low sensitivity for historic-era archaeological resources.

Historic Resources on the Project Site

Structures on the project site include the clubhouse and a few maintenance buildings/sheds (constructed between 1970 and 1990). The clubhouse is not proposed to be modified and was not considered in the analysis. The exact age of the maintenance buildings is unknown, but they are non-descript secondary structures which are not historically or culturally significant and are not listed as historic on any inventory.

3.5.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on cultural resources, would the project:

1) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?
2) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?
3) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

3.5.2.1 Project Impacts

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

The project site does not contain any historical resources pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact resulting from a substantial adverse change in significance of a historical resource. **(No Impact)**

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

There are no recorded archeological sites located within the boundaries of the project site. Additionally, based on the findings of the Archeological Sensitivity Assessment prepared for this project, there is a moderate sensitivity for archaeological resources in the project area. Therefore,

construction of the proposed project could result in the discovery of undocumented archaeological resources on the project site.

Impact CUL-2.1 Construction of the proposed project would result in excavation in an area which has moderate sensitivity for archeological resources, and could disturb unrecorded archaeological resources. **(Significant Impact)**

Mitigation Measures

The project shall implement the following mitigation measure to reduce impacts to subsurface archaeological resources to a less than significant level.

MM CUL-2.1 Prior to commencement of any ground-disturbing activity on-site, the project applicant shall retain a registered professional archaeologist to be present during all ground-disturbing activity associated with the project. For the purposes of these conditions, ground-disturbing activities shall be defined as any ground disturbance, including but not limited to, excavation, grading, grubbing, scarring, drilling, scraping, blading, trenching, vegetation removal, or demolition of the existing structure or site improvements within the development area shown on the project plans. A registered professional archaeologist shall be given five days' written notice prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activity. The project applicant shall document receipt of notification in writing.

MM CUL-2.2 In the event that buried, or previously unrecognized archaeological deposits or materials of any kind are inadvertently exposed during any construction activity, work within 50 feet of the find shall cease until a qualified archaeologist can assess the find and provide recommendations for further treatment, if warranted. The archaeologist, in consultation with the project applicant, shall make the necessary plans for treatment of the find(s) if the resource is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). Construction within a radius determined by the archaeologist shall not recommence until the assessment is complete.

With implementation of the above mitigation measures, the project would have a less than significant impact on subsurface archeological resources. **(Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated)**

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

The City of Santa Clara as a whole is documented as having been occupied during the prehistoric and historic eras, and was the location of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th iterations of Mission Santa Clara. As

such, the project site has a potential for the discovery of human remains during the excavation of the project site because there is a moderate sensitivity for Native American resources.

Impact CUL-3.1 The proposed project could result in the disturbance of human remains during excavation of the project site. **(Significant Impact)**

Mitigation Measures

The project shall implement the following mitigation measure to reduce impacts to human remains to a less than significant level.

MM CUL-3.1 In the event that human remains are discovered during excavation and/or grading of the site, all activity within a 50-foot radius of the find shall be stopped. The Santa Clara County Coroner shall be notified and shall make a determination as to whether the remains are of Native American origin or whether an investigation into the cause of death is required. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) immediately. Once NAHC identifies the most likely descendants, the descendants will make recommendations regarding proper burial, which will be implemented in accordance with Section 15064.5(e) of the CEQA Guidelines.

With implementation of mitigation measure MM CUL-3.1, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact on human remains. **(Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated)**

3.5.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

a) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative cultural resources impact?

The geographic area for cumulative cultural resources impacts is the project site and adjacent parcels.

Any nearby cumulative projects would require excavation and grading or other activities that may affect as yet unrecorded prehistoric cultural resources and/or identified historic resources. Impacts to subsurface resources from the project would be mitigated to less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures MM CUL-2.1 – MM CUL-2.3 and MM CUL-3.1 identified above. All other cumulative projects would be required to implement comparable mitigation, consistent with the archaeological sensitivity of each site. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a cumulatively considerable impact on subsurface archaeological resources. As the project does not contain any historic structures, the project would not have a cumulatively considerable impact on the loss of historic structures within Santa Clara. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.6 Energy

3.6.1 Environmental Setting

3.6.1.1 Regulatory Framework

Federal and State

Energy Star and Fuel Efficiency

At the federal level, energy standards set by the EPA apply to numerous consumer products and appliances (e.g., the EnergyStar™ program). The EPA also sets fuel efficiency standards for automobiles and other modes of transportation.

Renewables Portfolio Standard Program

In 2002, California established its Renewables Portfolio Standard Program, with the goal of increasing the percentage of renewable energy in the state's electricity mix to 20 percent of retail sales by 2010. Governor Schwarzenegger issued Executive Order (EO) S-3-05, requiring statewide emissions reductions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. In 2008, EO S-14-08 was signed into law, requiring retail sellers of electricity serve 33 percent of their load with renewable energy by 2020. In October 2015, Governor Brown signed SB 350 to codify California's climate and clean energy goals. A key provision of SB 350 requires retail sellers and publicly owned utilities to procure 50 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2030. SB 100, passed in 2018, requires 100 percent of electricity in California to be provided by 100 percent renewable and carbon-free sources by 2045.

Executive Order B-55-18 (2018) and Assembly Bill 1279 (2022)

Executive Order B-55-18 was issued in September 2018. It ordered a new statewide goal of achieving carbon neutrality no later than 2045 and to maintain net negative emissions thereafter.

Assembly Bill 1279, also known as the California Climate Crisis Act, was approved on September 16, 2022, and codifies the statewide goal set by Executive Order B-55-18 of achieving net zero GHG emissions no later than the year 2045 and maintaining net negative emissions thereafter. In addition, this bill has a statewide goal of reducing anthropogenic GHG emissions by 85 percent below the 1990 levels by the year 2045. The bill requires CARB to work with relevant state agencies to ensure that updates to the scoping plan, identify and recommend measures to achieve these policy goals, and implement strategies that enable CO_2 removal solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies in California. The bill requires CARB to submit an annual report.

California Building Standards Code

The Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings, as specified in Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations (Title 24), was established in 1978 in response to a

legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. Title 24 is updated approximately every three years.[16] Compliance with Title 24 is mandatory at the time new building permits are issued by city and county governments.[17]

California Green Building Standards Code

CALGreen establishes mandatory green building standards for buildings in California. CALGreen was developed to reduce GHG emissions from buildings, promote environmentally responsible and healthier places to live and work, reduce energy and water consumption, and respond to state environmental directives. CALGreen covers five categories: planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material and resource efficiency, and indoor environmental quality.

Advanced Clean Cars Program

CARB adopted the Advanced Clean Cars II program in 2022 in coordination with the EPA and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The program combines the control of smog-causing pollutants and GHG emissions into a single coordinated set of requirements for vehicle model years 2026 through 2035. The program promotes development of environmentally superior passenger cars and other vehicles, as well as saving the consumer money through fuel savings.[18]

Local

Santa Clara General Plan

Energy-related General Plan policies appliable to the project are shown in the following table.

Policy	Description
5.10.3-P4	Encourage new development to incorporate sustainable building design, site planning and construction, including encouraging solar opportunities.
5.10.3-P5	Reduce energy consumption through sustainable construction practices, materials, and recycling.
5.10.3-P6	Promote sustainable buildings and land planning for all new development, including programs that reduce energy and water consumption in new development.

Santa Clara Reach Code

Reach Codes are local ordinances adopted by the local government that exceed and enhance the current version of state's Energy and Green Building standards codes. By adopting the City Reach

[16] California Building Standards Commission. "California Building Standards Code." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Codes#@ViewBag.JumpTo.
[17] California Energy Commission (CEC). "2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards." Accessed March 4, 2026. 2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards
[18] California Air Resources Board. "Advanced Clean Cars II." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/advanced-clean-cars-program/advanced-clean-cars-ii

Code ordinance, the City of Santa Clara utilized this opportunity to not only meet local climate action goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also to achieve greater energy savings and accelerate decarbonization. The Santa Clara Reach Code includes mandatory measures for Electrical Vehicle Charging and photovoltaic panels that are applicable to all new building permit applications filed with the City.

Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling Program

The City of Santa Clara requires applicants seeking building or demolition permits for projects greater than 5,000 square feet to recycle at least 65 percent of discards. Diversion is achieved through recycling or reuse.

3.6.1.2 Existing Conditions

Total energy usage in California was approximately 6,882 trillion British thermal units (Btu) in the year 2022, the most recent year for which this data was available.[19] Out of the 50 states, California is ranked second in total energy consumption and 49th in energy consumption per capita. The breakdown by sector was approximately 18 percent (1,204 trillion Btu) for residential uses, 17 percent (1,193 trillion Btu) for commercial uses, 22 percent (1,539 trillion Btu) for industrial uses, and 43 percent (2,916 trillion Btu) for transportation.[20] This energy is primarily supplied in the form of natural gas, petroleum, nuclear electric power, and hydroelectric power.

Electricity

Electricity in Santa Clara County in 2022 was consumed primarily by the non-residential sector (75 percent), followed by the residential sector consuming 25 percent. In 2022, a total of approximately 17,101 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity was consumed in Santa Clara County.[21]

SVP is the City of Santa Clara's energy utility and would provide electricity service to the project site. SVP provides residential customers with carbon-free power as their standard, default power supply. This means the power generation produces no net carbon emissions. For commercial customers, SVP offers several options for participation in green energy programs, including a carbon-free energy option.[22] The project site currently uses no electricity because it is occupied by a golf course area.

[19] United States Energy Information Administration. "California State Energy Profile." Accessed March 6, 2025. California State Energy Profile.
[20] Ibid.
[21] California Energy Commission. Energy Consumption Data Management System. "Electricity Consumption by County." Accessed March 6, 2025. http://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx.
[22] Silicon Valley Power. "Did you Know." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.siliconvalleypower.com/svp-and-community/about-svp/faqs.

Natural Gas

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) provides natural gas services within the City of Santa Clara. In 2023, California's natural gas supply came from a combination of in-state production and imported supplies from other western states and Canada.[23] In 2022, Santa Clara County used less than four percent of the state's total consumption of natural gas.[24] The project site currently uses no natural gas because it is occupied by a golf course area.

Fuel for Motor Vehicles

In 2023, California produced 118 million barrels of crude oil and in 2019, 15.4 billion gallons of gasoline were sold in California.[25, 26] The average fuel economy for light-duty vehicles (autos, pickups, vans, and sport utility vehicles) in the United States has steadily increased from about 13 miles per gallon (mpg) in the mid-1970s to 27.1 mpg in 2023.[27] Federal fuel economy standards have changed substantially since the Energy Independence and Security Act was passed in 2007. That standard, which originally mandated a national fuel economy standard of 35 miles per gallon by the year 2020, was updated in April 2022 to require all cars and light duty trucks achieve an overall industry average fuel economy of 49 mpg by model year 2026.[28,29]

3.6.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on energy, would the project:

1) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?
2) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

[23] California Gas and Electric Utilities. 2023 *California Gas Report.* Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/Joint_Biennial_California_Gas_Report_2023_Supplement.pdf.
[24] California Energy Commission. "Natural Gas Consumption by County." Accessed March 6, 2025. http://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx.
[25] U.S. Energy Information Administration. "Petroleum & Other Liquids, California Field Production of Crude Oil." February 28, 2023. Accessed March 6, 2025. Petroleum & Other Liquids, California Field Production of Crude Oil
[26] California Department of Tax and Fee Administration. "Net Taxable Gasoline Gallons." Accessed March 6, 2025. Net Taxable Gasoline Gallons.
[27] United States Environmental Protection Agency. "The 2024 EPA Automotive Trends Report: Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Fuel Economy, and Technology since 1975." November 2024. Accessed March 6, 2025. The 2024 EPA Automotive Trends Report: Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Fuel Economy, and Technology since 1975..
[28] United States Department of Energy. *Energy Independence & Security Act of 2007.* Accessed March 6, 2025. http://www.afdc.energy.gov/laws/eisa.
[29] United States Department of Transportation. USDOT Announces New Vehicle Fuel Economy Standards for Model Year 2024-2026." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/usdot-announces-new-vehicle-fuel-economy-standards-model-year-2024-2026.

3.6.2.1 Project Impacts

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

Construction Impacts

Construction requires efficiency in processes and resource use to optimize construction operations to ensure that the building process is not wasteful. Accordingly, the energy consumption and use of materials on a construction site would be as minimal as possible and would not be wasteful and inefficient for the duration of the construction process. The project would be mandated to comply with the City's requirements to recycle or salvage a minimum of 65 percent of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste for reuse, minimizing energy impacts from the creation or production of new construction materials. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not result in excessive or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

Operational Impacts

The proposed project would construct up to 316 residential units on a site currently occupied by a golf course. The existing use of the golf course area requires minimal energy consumption, and the proposed project would increase energy consumption on the project site. Based on the size of the project, the dwelling units would be categorized as mid-rise apartments and are estimated to consume approximately 3,804 kWh of energy per year per unit.[30] In total, the apartment building would utilize approximately 1,202,064 kWh of energy per year. This would result in a net increase in electrical demand for the City because the site is currently developed with golf course uses. Additionally, the proposed project would be amending the General Plan to allow for housing on a site previously designated for park or open space uses. The proposed project would, therefore, increase energy demand for the City by approximately 1.2 GWh per year.[31] The City currently has a demand of approximately 4,700 GWh per year[32] and the proposed project would increase the City's demand for energy by approximately 0.00025 percent per year. This increase would be negligible relative to the total energy production provided by SVP. Additionally, the proposed project would be compliant with Title 24 energy regulations and would include energy efficient appliances which would ensure energy use on-site is as efficient as possible. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project operations. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

[30] CalEEMod. Appendix C: Emission Factors and Data Tables Table E-15.1. Residential Energy Consumption by End Use, Electricity Demand Forecast Zone, and Housing Type.
[31] There are one million kilowatts in a gigawatt. Therefore, 1,202,064 kWh is equal to 1.2 GWh.
[32] Silicon Valley Power. Utility Fact Sheet. December 2024.

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

The project would not result in a substantial energy increase and would implement energy efficiency standards consistent with the CBC and CALGreen. Additionally, the proposed project would be consistent with the Santa Clara Reach Code which requires EV charging, photovoltaic panels, and efficiency measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower energy consumption. Therefore, the project would comply with state and local plans for renewable energy and energy efficiency. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.6.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative energy impact?

As stated above the proposed project would increase the City demand for energy by approximately 0.00025 percent per year. Additionally, the proposed project would include energy conservation measures including compliance with Title 24 and use of energy efficient appliances.

The proposed project includes a General Plan amendment and would contribute to energy consumption beyond what was expected in the General Plan land use assumptions. However, compliance with General Plan policies and Title 24 requirements, including CALGreen requirements, would ensure that projects reduce growth in energy consumption to the maximum extent possible. Therefore, although the General Plan amendment projects would expand energy consumption, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative energy impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.7 Geology and Soils

The information in this section is based, in part, on the Geotechnical Exploration completed by KC Engineering Company on June 12, 2024. This report is included for reference as Appendix D of this EIR.

3.7.1 Environmental Setting

3.7.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed following the 1971 San Fernando earthquake. The act regulates development in California near known active faults due to hazards associated with surface fault ruptures. Alquist-Priolo maps are distributed to affected cities, counties, and state agencies for their use in planning and controlling new construction. Areas within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone require special studies to evaluate the potential for surface rupture to ensure that no structures intended for human occupancy are constructed across an active fault.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (SHMA) was passed in 1990 following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. The SHMA directs the California Geological Survey (CGS) to identify and map areas prone to liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and amplified ground shaking. CGS has completed seismic hazard mapping for the portions of California most susceptible to liquefaction, landslides, and ground shaking, including the central San Francisco Bay Area. The SHMA requires that agencies only approve projects in seismic hazard zones following site-specific geotechnical investigations to determine if the seismic hazard is present and identify measures to reduce earthquake-related hazards.

California Building Standards Code

The CBC prescribes standards for constructing safe buildings. The CBC contains provisions for earthquake safety based on factors including occupancy type, soil and rock profile, ground strength, and distance to seismic sources. The CBC requires that a site-specific geotechnical investigation report be prepared for most development projects to evaluate seismic and geologic conditions such as surface fault ruptures, ground shaking, liquefaction, differential settlement, lateral spreading, expansive soils, and slope stability. The CBC is updated every three years.

California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Regulations

Excavation, shoring, and trenching activities during construction are subject to occupational safety standards for stabilization by the California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) under Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations and Excavation Rules. These regulations minimize the potential for instability and collapse that could injure construction workers on the site.

Public Resources Code Section 5097.5

Paleontological resources are the fossilized remains of organisms from prehistoric environments found in geologic strata. They range from mammoth and dinosaur bones to impressions of ancient animals and plants, trace remains, and microfossils. These materials are valued for the information they yield about the history of the earth and its past ecological settings. California Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 specifies that unauthorized removal of a paleontological resource is a misdemeanor. Under the CEQA Guidelines, a project would have a significant impact on paleontological resources if it would disturb or destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

Local

Santa Clara General Plan

General Plan geology and soils-related policies applicable to the project include the following.

Policy	Description
5.10.5-P5	Regulate development, including remodeling or structural rehabilitation, to ensure adequate mitigation of safety hazards, including flooding, seismic, erosion, liquefaction and subsidence dangers.
5.10.5-P6	Require that new development is designed to meet current safety standards and implement appropriate building codes to reduce risks associated with geologic conditions.
5.10.5-P7	Implement all recommendations and design solutions identified in project soils reports to reduce potential adverse effects associated with unstable soils or seismic hazards.

3.7.1.2 Existing Conditions

The City of Santa Clara is located in the Santa Clara Valley, a relatively flat alluvial basin, bounded by the Santa Cruz Mountains to the southwest and west, the Diablo Mountain Range to the east, and San Francisco Bay to the north.

The project site is underlain by clay soils across the site which are prone to shrink and swell movement with changes in water content. The clayey soils near the surface have a high plasticity and a high shrink swell capacity.

The San Francisco Bay Area is known to be a seismically active region. The nearest active fault to the site is the San José fault located approximately 1,000 feet northeast of the site. However, this fault may not be active or accurately mapped.[33] Other major faults located near the project site are summarized below in Table 3.7-1.[34]

Table 3.7-1: Geologic Faults Near the Project Area

Fault Name	Distance From Site
San Jose fault	1000 feet northeast
Standford Faul	2000 feet southwest
Cascade fault	3.2 miles southwest
Silver Creek fault zone	3.9 miles northeast
Monte-Shannon fault zone	4.7 miles southwest
San Andreas fault zone	8.7 miles southwest
Hayward fault zone	10.6 miles northeast

The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone and is not located in a designated fault rupture hazard zone.[35] The potential for ground surface rupture due to a fault crossing the site was determined to be low. The site is not located in a State of California liquefaction seismic hazard zone.[36] Further, based on the types of sediment and depths of soils on the site, there is a low potential for ground surface damage caused by liquefaction.

Groundwater depth on the project site was determined to be approximately 13 to 27 feet below the ground surface (bgs) based on the hazardous materials report for the project site.

3.7.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on geology and soils, would the project:

1) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
    - Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault (refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42)?
    - Strong seismic ground shaking?

[33] USGS. "Quaternary Fault and Fold Database of the United States." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://earthquake.usgs.gov/static/lfs/nshm/qfaults/Reports/244.pdf.
[34] USGS. "U.S. Quaternary Faults." Accessed March 6, 2025. U.S. Quaternary Faults.
[35] KC Engineering Company, Inc. *Preliminary Geotechnical Exploration Report.* June 12, 2024.
[36] Ibid.

- Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
- Landslides?

2) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?
3) 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?
4) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in the current California Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?
5) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?
6) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?

3.7.2.1 Project Impacts

a) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault; strong seismic ground shaking; seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or landslides?

The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Although there are no faults crossing the site, the City of Santa Clara is located within a seismically active area and earthquake related ground shaking would be expected to affect the project site during the lifetime of the proposed project. Based on the location of the site and the general topographic layout of the landforms, the project site would not experience fault rupture or landslides during an earthquake event. To prevent impacts created by strong ground shaking the proposed project would comply with the requirements of the CBC which are applied to all projects in the City of Santa Clara as described below.

<u>Conditions of Approval</u>

- Consistent with General Plan Policy 5.10.5-P6 and General Plan Policy 5.10.5-P7, the project will be built using standard engineering and seismic safety design techniques. Building design and construction at the site shall be completed in conformance with the recommendations of a design-level geotechnical investigation, which will be included in a geotechnical report to the City. The report shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Santa Clara's Building Division as part of the building permit review and issuance process. The building shall meet the requirements of applicable Building and Fire Codes, including the current California Building Code, as adopted or updated by the City. The project shall be designed to withstand potential geologic hazards identified on the site, including

liquefaction and shrink swell capacity of soils, and the project shall be designed to reduce the risk to life or property in compliance with the Building Code.

With implementation of the Condition of Approval, the proposed project would not create hazards or worsen geologic hazards including earthquake induced liquefaction or lateral spreading.

Based on these determinations, although the project site would experience strong ground shanking during an earthquake, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with the CBC which would reduce risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known fault or as a result of a geologic hazard. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The proposed project would excavate and grade a site greater than one acre in size which would disturb sediment on-site and cause erosion during storm events. Therefore, the proposed project would be required to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). To prevent erosion and limit the loss of soil from the site, the proposed project would be required to comply with grading and excavation requirements in the Santa Clara City Building Code. In addition, the project would be required to comply with the following Conditions of Approval:

Conditions of Approval

- All excavation and grading work would be scheduled in dry weather months or construction sites would be weatherized[37] to withstand or avoid erosion.
- Stockpiles and excavated soils would be covered during construction with secured tarps or plastic sheeting.
- Vegetation in disturbed areas would be replanted as quickly as possible after construction.

Through the implementation of a SWPPP and the identified Conditions of Approval to reduce construction-related water quality impacts, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on soil erosion and loss of topsoil. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

As discussed under checklist question a), the project site is flat and is not located within a liquefaction zone. Hazards such as lateral spreading, landslides, subsidence, or collapse during seismic shaking are not present at the site due to the flat topography and the absence of free face slopes at the site, such as creeks or cliffsides. The proposed project would be constructed in

[37] Weatherized refers to measures that would protect exposed soils from rain and stormwater runoff.

compliance with a site-specific geotechnical report, Santa Clara City Code (SCCC), and the CBC requiring the project to analyze and remediate site-specific soil conditions. Therefore, the proposed project would not be susceptible to geologic instability and have a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

d) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in the current California Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Expansive soils possess a "shrink-swell" characteristic. Shrink-swell is the cyclic change in volume (expansion and contraction) that occurs in fine-grained clay sediments from the process of wetting and drying. Structural damage may result over a long period of time, usually the result of inadequate soil and foundation engineering or the placement of structures directly on expansive soils. As discussed previously in the existing conditions section, the soil profile on-site is generally comprised of clayey soils near the surface which have a high potential for shrink-swell action due to their clay content. Although expansive soils can be a hazard, the risk is reduced through implementation of standard engineering and building practices, implementation of techniques specified in the CBC, and adherence to the recommendations in the site-specific geotechnical report.

As required by General Plan Policy 5.10.5-P6 and General Plan Policy 5.10.5-P7, the project shall implement all structural recommendations provided in the design-level geotechnical investigation report. Therefore, through adherence to these recommendations and the current CBC, the project would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property due to expansive soils. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The proposed project would connect to Santa Clara City municipal waste systems and would not require septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts from utilizing alternative wastewater in soils incapable of supporting these uses. **(No Impact)**

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

The project site is underlain by geologic units of Holocene age, per the City's 2010-2035 General Plan, which are generally not considered sensitive for paleontological resources because biological remains younger than 10,000 years are not usually considered fossils.[38] These sediments have low

[38] City of Santa Clara. *Draft 2010-2025 General Plan Integrated Final EIR*. January 2011. Figure 4.5-1

potential to yield fossil resources or to contain significant nonrenewable paleontological resources. More recent sediments, however, may overlie older Pleistocene sediments with high potential to contain paleontological resources. These older sediments, often found at depths of greater than 10 feet bgs, have yielded the fossil remains of plants and extinct terrestrial Pleistocene vertebrates. The proposed project would include subsurface excavation, which would extend to a depth of 10 feet bgs. Therefore, the project could encounter previously unknown resources on-site and may result in the destruction of these resources resulting in a significant impact.

Impact GEO- 6.1 Construction activities could disturb paleontological resources in older Pleistocene sediments at depth under the project site.

Mitigation Measures

The project shall implement the following mitigation measure to reduce impacts to paleontological resources to a less than significant level.

MM GEO-6.1 If vertebrate fossils are discovered during construction, all work on the site shall stop immediately, the Director of Community Development or the Director's designee shall be notified, and a qualified professional paleontologist shall assess the nature and importance of the find and recommend appropriate treatment. Treatment may include, but is not limited to, preparation and recovery of fossil materials so that they can be housed in an appropriate museum or university collection and may also include preparation of a report for publication describing the finds. The project applicant shall be responsible for implementing the recommendations of the qualified paleontologist. A report of all findings shall be submitted to the Director of Community Development or the Director's designee prior to issuance of the occupancy permit.

Through compliance with the above Mitigation Measure, the proposed project would avoid impacts to paleontological resources or unique geological features. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact through directly or indirectly destroying a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.7.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant geology and soils impact?

The cumulative impact area for geologic impacts is the project site and adjacent parcels. The proposed project would comply with policy and mitigation measures reducing impacts on site to a less than significant level to avoid hazards from geologic conditions. The proposed project impacts would not expand beyond the boundary of the project site, and there are no projects in the direct vicinity that are currently creating geologic or soils impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would

result in a less than significant cumulative contribution to a cumulatively significant impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The information in this section is based, in part, on the Air Quality and GHG Assessment prepared by Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. and included as Appendix B of this document. Additionally, the information in the City of Santa Clara Climate Action Plan 2022 (2022 CAP) checklist which is included in Appendix E.

3.8.1 Environmental Setting

3.8.1.1 Background Information

GHGs are gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and regulate the earth's temperature. This phenomenon, known as the greenhouse effect, is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate. In GHG emission inventories, the weight of each gas is multiplied by its global warming potential (GWP) and is measured in units of CO_2 equivalents (CO_2e). The most common GHGs are CO_2 and water vapor but there are also several others, most importantly methane (CH_4), Nitrous Oxide N_2O, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6). These are released into the earth's atmosphere through a variety of natural processes and human activities (anthropogenic). Natural and anthropogenic sources of GHGs are generally as follows:

- CO_2 exchange between the atmosphere, ocean, and land surface
- CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O are emitted from wildfires and volcanic eruptions
- CO_2 and N_2O are byproducts of fossil fuel combustion
- N_2O is associated with agricultural operations such as fertilization of crops
- CH_4 is commonly created by off-gassing from agricultural practices (e.g., keeping livestock) and landfill operations
- Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were widely used as refrigerants, propellants, and cleaning solvents, but their production has been stopped by international treaty
- HFCs are now used as a substitute for CFCs in refrigeration and cooling
- PFCs and SF_6 emissions are commonly created by industries such as aluminum production and semiconductor manufacturing

An expanding body of scientific research supports the theory that global climate change is currently causing changes in weather patterns, average sea level, ocean acidification, chemical reaction rates, and precipitation rates, and that it will increasingly do so in the future. Per the 2022 Scoping Plan from CARB, atmospheric concentrations of CO_2 have increased by 50 percent since the Industrial Revolution and continue to increase at a rate of two parts per million each year, which will result in increased global temperatures.[39] The climate within California are adversely affected by the global warming trend. Increased precipitation and sea level rise will increase coastal flooding, saltwater intrusion, and degradation of wetlands. Mass migration and loss of plant and animal species could

[39] CARB. *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality*. December 2022. Page 3.

also occur. Potential effects of global climate change that could adversely affect human health include more extreme heat waves and heat-related stress; an increase in climate-sensitive diseases; more frequent and intense natural disasters such as flooding, hurricanes and drought; and increased levels of air pollution.

3.8.1.2 Regulatory Framework

State

Assembly Bill 32 (2006) and State Bill 32 (2016)

Under the California Global Warming Solutions Act, known as AB 32, CARB established a statewide GHG emissions cap for 2020, adopted mandatory reporting rules for significant sources of GHGs, and adopted a comprehensive plan, known as the Climate Change Scoping Plan, identifying how emission reductions would be achieved from significant GHG sources. The first Scoping Plan was approved by CARB in 2008 and must be updated at least every five years. Since 2008, there have been two updates to the Scoping Plan.

In 2016, SB 32 was signed into law, amending the California Global Warming Solution Act. SB 32, and accompanying Executive Order B-30-15, require CARB to ensure that statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 40 percent below the 1990 level by 2030. CARB updated its Climate Change Scoping Plan in December of 2017 to accelerate 2030 statewide target in terms of million metric tons of CO_2e ($MMTCO_2e$). Based on the emissions reductions directed by SB 32, the annual 2030 statewide target emissions level for California is 260 $MMTCO_2e$.

2022 Scoping Plan

On December 15, 2022, CARB approved the 2022 Scoping Plan. The 2022 Scoping Plan provides a sector-by-sector guide on how to reduce man-made (i.e., anthropogenic) GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels and achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 over a 25-year horizon.[40] The primary focus of the 2022 Scoping Plan is to reduce the usage of fossil fuels by electricizing the transportation sector, procuring electricity from renewable resources, phasing out natural gas in land use developments, and building transit-oriented communities that encourage multi-modal transportation. If implemented successfully, the 2022 Scoping Plan would not only reduce GHG emissions but also reduce smog-forming air pollution (NO_x) by 71 percent and reduce fossil fuel demand by 94 percent. The 2022 Scoping Plan also details natural carbon capture and storage process along with mechanical carbon capture programs to address the remaining 15 of anthropogenic GHG emissions that will remain post-2045. To meet these goals, CARB also includes a revised goal of reducing state GHG emissions 48 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

[40] CARB. *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality*. December 2022. Page 5.

Senate Bill 375 (2008) and Plan Bay Area 2050

SB 375, known as the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Climate Protection Act, was signed into law in September 2008. SB 375 builds upon AB 32 by requiring CARB to develop regional GHG reduction targets for automobile and light truck sectors for 2020 and 2035. The per capita GHG emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicles in the Bay Area include a seven percent reduction by 2020 and a 15 percent reduction by 2035.

Consistent with the requirements of SB 375, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) partnered with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the Air District, and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission to prepare the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of the Regional Transportation Plan process. The SCS is referred to as Plan Bay Area 2050.

Plan Bay Area 2050 is a long-range plan for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area that provides strategies that increase the availability of affordable housing, support a more equitable and efficient economy, improve the transportation network, and enhance the region's environmental resilience. Plan Bay Area 2050 promotes the development of a variety of housing types and densities within identified priority development areas (PDAs). PDAs are areas generally near existing job centers or frequent transit that are locally identified for housing and job growth.[41]

Play Bay Area 2050 includes a goal to increase the number of households that live within 0.5 mile of frequent transit by 2050. Plan Bay Area 2050 promotes strategies that support active and shared modes, combined with a transit-supportive land use patterns, which together are forecasted to lower the share of Bay Area residents that drive to work alone from 50 percent in 2015 to 33 percent in 2050, resulting in a decrease in GHG emissions. Plan Bay Area 2050 also provides a path to emissions reductions via goals to expand TDM initiatives that support and augment employers' commute programs.

The 100 Percent Clean Energy Act (2018)

The 100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018 was adopted on September 10, 2018. The overall goal is to have all retail electricity sold in California be procured from 100 percent renewable and zero-carbon resources by the year 2045. SB 100 also modified the renewables portfolio standard to 50 percent by 2025 and 60 percent by 2030.

Executive Order B-55-18 (2018) and Assembly Bill 1279 (2022)

Executive Order B-55-18 was issued in September 2018. It ordered a new statewide goal of achieving carbon neutrality no later than 2045 and to maintain net negative emissions thereafter.

[41] Association of Bay Area Governments and Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Plan Bay Area 2050. October 21, 2021. Page 20.

Assembly Bill 1279, also known as the California Climate Crisis Act, was approved on September 16, 2022, and codifies the statewide goal set by Executive Order B-55-18 of achieving net zero GHG emissions no later than the year 2045 and maintaining net negative emissions thereafter. In addition, this bill has a statewide goal of reducing anthropogenic GHG emissions by 85 percent below the 1990 levels by the year 2045. The bill requires CARB to work with relevant state agencies to ensure that updates to the scoping plan identify and recommend measures to achieve these policy goals and implement strategies that enable CO_2 removal solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies in California. The bill requires CARB to submit an annual report.

Advanced Clean Cars II Regulation

To continue reducing air pollutants and GHG emissions in the transportation sector, CARB adopted the Advanced Clean Cars II Regulations (Resolution 22-12) on August 25, 2022. The new regulation requires that by 2035 all new passenger cars, trucks, and SUVs sold in California will be zero-emission vehicles. This regulation bans the sale of new gasoline or diesel passenger cars, trucks, and SUVs in California from automakers. Beginning in 2026, 35 percent of new vehicle sales must be zero-emission vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (EV) and that percentage will increase per year. By 2030, 70 percent of new vehicle sales will be zero-emissions vehicles and by the 2035 model year 100 percent of new vehicle sales will be zero-emissions. CARB will limit the use of plug-in hybrid EVs in the percentage requirements to keep the manufacturing of zero-emissions as the primary goal. Existing gasoline cars can continue to be driven and sold as used cars beyond 2035. CARB is required to track and report on the zero-emissions vehicle market development annually.

California Building Standards Code – Title 24 Part 11 and Part 6

The CALGreen Code is part of the California Building Standards Code under Title 24, Part 11.[42] The CALGreen Code encourages sustainable construction standards that incorporate planning/design, energy efficiency, water efficiency resource efficiency, and environmental quality. These green building standard codes are mandatory statewide and are applicable to residential and non-residential developments. The most recent CALGreen Code (2025 CALGreen Code) was effective as of January 1, 2026.

The California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (California Energy Code) is under Title 24, Part 6 and is overseen by the CEC. This code includes design requirements to conserve energy in new residential and non-residential developments. This Energy Code is enforced and verified by cities during the planning and building permit process. The 2025 Energy Code replaced the 2022 Energy Code as of January 1, 2026. There are new 2025 standards for single-family residences, multi-family

[42] Refer to https://www.dgs.ca.gov/BSC/CALGreen.

residences, and non-residential uses.[43,44,45] Major changes include updates to photovoltaic sizing, updates to mandatory battery energy storage system readiness, and mandatory requirements for air filters on HVAC systems, .

Requirements for EV charging infrastructure are set forth in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and are regularly updated on a three-year cycle. The CALGreen standards consist of a set of mandatory standards required for new development, as well as two more voluntary standards known as Tier 1 and Tier 2. The 2025 CALGreen standards require deployment of additional EV chargers in various building types, including multi-family residential, hotel, and non-residential land uses. They include requirements for both EV capable parking spaces and the installation of EV supply equipment for multi-family residential and nonresidential buildings. The 2025 CALGreen standards also include requirements for both EV readiness and the actual installation of EV chargers.

CALGreen also requires new construction and demolition projects to have a diversion of at least 65 percent of the construction waste generated.

Regional and Local

2017 Clean Air Plan

To protect the climate, the 2017 Clean Air Plan prepared by the Air District includes control measures designed to reduce emissions of methane and other super-GHGs that are potent climate pollutants in the near-term, and to decrease emissions of carbon dioxide by reducing fossil fuel combustion.

Air District CEQA Thresholds for Evaluating Climate Impacts from Land Use Projects and Plans

In April 2022, the Air District Board of Directors adopted the Justification Report: CEQA Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts from Land Use Projects and Plans. The report includes the Air District's thresholds of significance for use in determining whether a proposed project or plan will have a significant impact on climate change and provides substantial evidence to support these thresholds. The April 2022 GHG thresholds replace the GHG thresholds set forth in the May 2017 Air District CEQA Air Quality Guidelines and represent what is required of new land use development projects and plans to achieve California's long-term climate goal of carbon neutrality by 2045.

[43] California Energy Commission. "2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards What's New for Single-Family Residential." Accessed March 4, 2026. http://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/Whats_New_for_2025_Single-Family_ada.pdf
[44] California Energy Commission. "2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards What's New for Multifamily." Accessed March 4, 2026. 2025 What's New for Multifamily
[45] California Energy Commission. "2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards What's New for Nonresidential." Accessed March 4, 2026. What's New for Nonresidential Buildings

Santa Clara Climate Action Plan 2022

The City of Santa Clara Climate Action Plan 2022 (2022 CAP) is designed to meet the statewide GHG reduction targets for 2030 set by SB 32. As a Qualified Climate Action Plan, the 2022 CAP allows for tiering and streamlining of GHG analyses under CEQA. The 2022 CAP identifies existing City policies and regulations as well as new measures to be implemented by development projects in the areas of building/energy use, transportation and land use, materials and consumption, natural resources and water resources, and community resilience and wellbeing. Projects that comply with the policies and strategies outlined in the 2022 CAP would have a less than significant GHG impact.

Silicon Valley Power

SVP is the City of Santa Clara's energy utility and would provide electricity service to the project site. Starting in January 2018, SVP provides residential customers with carbon-free power as their standard, default power supply. This means the power generation produces no net carbon emissions. For commercial customers, SVP offers several options for participation in green energy programs, including a carbon-free energy option.[46]

Santa Clara General Plan

General Plan policies related to GHG emissions from the project include the following.

Policy	Description
5.3.1-P10	Provide opportunities for increased landscaping and trees in the community, including requirements for new development to provide street trees and a minimum 2:1 on- or off-site replacement for trees removed as part of the proposal to help increase the urban forest and minimize the heat island effect.
5.8.5-P1	Require new development and City employees to implement transportation demand management programs that can include site-design measures, including preferred carpool and vanpool parking, enhanced pedestrian access, bicycle storage and recreational facilities.
5.8.5-P5	Encourage transportation demand management programs that provide incentives for the use of alternative travel modes to reduce the use of single-occupant vehicles.

3.8.1.3 Existing Conditions

Unlike emissions of criteria and toxic air pollutants, which have regional and local impacts, emissions of GHGs have a broader, global impact. Global warming is a process whereby GHGs accumulating in the upper atmosphere contribute to an increase in the temperature of the earth and changes in weather patterns. GHG emissions from the existing site are primarily associated with vehicle trips to the site and energy consumption from the clubhouse building.

[46] Silicon Valley Power. "Carbon-Free FAQ." Accessed February 28, 2025. https://www.siliconvalleypower.com/svp-and-community/about-svp/faqs.

3.8.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on greenhouse gas emissions, would the project:

1) Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
2) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?

3.8.2.1 Project Impacts

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

Construction Emissions

GHG emissions associated with construction were computed to be 1,182 MT of CO_2e for the total construction period.[47] These are the emissions from on-site operation of construction equipment, vendor and hauling truck trips, and worker trips. Neither the City nor the Air District have an adopted threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions, though the Air District recommends quantifying emissions and disclosing that GHG emissions would occur during construction. Construction of the project would be temporary and would not result in a permanent increase in emissions. Therefore, the project would not interfere with the implementation of SB 32 or AB 32.

Operational Emissions

Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(b), the determination of whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment calls for careful judgment on the part of the Lead Agency and must be based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data.

The Air District has set qualitative thresholds to determine if impacts would occur as a result of project level GHG emissions. A project would be determined to have a less than significant impact if it is consistent with a local GHG reduction strategy (Threshold B) or if the project meets the minimum project design elements recommended by the Air District (Threshold A). Threshold B would not be applicable for the project because the project requires a General Plan Amendment. As such, the project would not be consistent with the land use assumptions of the City's qualified CAP.

To meet the Air District's GHG Threshold A, the project would be required to demonstrate the following:

[47] Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment. June 6, 2025.

- Avoid construction of new natural gas connections for the residential building,
    - The proposed project would be fully electric powered and would not include any new natural gas infrastructure.
- Avoid wasteful or inefficient use of electricity,
    - The proposed project would meet CALGreen Building Standards Code requirements which are designed to be energy efficient.
- Include electric vehicle charging infrastructure that meets current Building Code CALGreen Tier 2 compliance, and
    - The proposed project's parking design would meet the Tier 2 compliance standards through the inclusion of 42 EV stalls and 274 EV ready stalls.
- Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita by 15 percent over baseline conditions.
    - The VMT analysis provided for the proposed project found that the project would have a less than significant VMT impact because VMT is forecasted at 9.47 miles per capita, which is below the threshold of 11.33 miles per capita (representing a 15 percent reduction in regional VMT). Therefore, the project-level VMT per capita is less than the threshold of significance that is based on SB 743.

Based on the analysis provided above, the proposed project would be consistent with Air District Threshold A. For this reason, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact resulting from operational GHG emissions. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

2017 Clean Air Plan

As discussed in Section 3.3 Air Quality, the project would not conflict with the 2017 Clean Air Plan because it would not exceed the Air District CEQA Air Quality Guidelines screening size of 638 apartments for operational criteria pollutant. Therefore, the proposed 316 apartment units would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the 2017 Clean Air Plan. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

2022 Climate Action Plan

As stated above, the proposed project would include a General Plan amendment that would make the project inconsistent with the 2022 CAP. Nevertheless, the project proposes many of the measures included in the CAP to provide compliance with CAP policies. The project's conformance with applicable reduction measures for new development in the CAP are summarized below. Refer to Appendix E for more details about the project's conformance with the 2022 CAP Compliance Checklist.

The project would be constructed with all-electric appliances and would not utilize natural gas. The project would be required to be built in accordance with the most recent CALGreen Tier 1 requirements. As mentioned on the City's website, City of Santa Clara residents would be compliant with SB 1383 since organic waste is collected in the garbage container and is delivered to a mixed waste processing facility where it is separated from the garbage and made into compost material. [48] Therefore, the project would comply with SB 1383.[49] The project would be consistent with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans and would have space for bicycle parking in a bicycle room. The proposed project would comply with Action N-3-5 and would connect with recycled water lines for irrigation on the project site. To reduce stormwater pollution, the project proposes bioretention/flow-through planter areas throughout the project site and silva cell water treatment systems[50] within the project area.

The project is transit-oriented and is located near VTA Route 57 which has 15-minute headways. The project would also implement Traffic Demand Management (TDM) measures such as providing bicycle parking and on-site amenities, providing trip planning information, providing a bike share program, and including affordable housing units, and would comply with Actions T-3-1,TDM plan requirements and T-3-3, Transit-oriented development. The project would also comply with Action M-3-4, carbon-smart building materials because the development would be constructed utilizing sustainable building materials. The project would salvage and reuse construction materials; therefore, the project would be consistent with Action M-3-1, reuse of salvageable building materials. The proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

The proposed project would not conflict or otherwise interfere with the statewide GHG reduction measures identified in CARB's Scoping Plan, nor would the project conflict with SB 100 goals. Specifically, the proposed buildings would be constructed in conformance with CALGreen and the Title 24 Building Code, which requires high-efficiency water fixtures, water-efficient irrigation systems, and compliance with current energy efficiency standards. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.8.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant GHG emissions impact?

As discussed in Section 3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions, GHG emissions have a broader, global impact. No single project is sufficient in size, by itself, to change the global average temperature.[51]

[48] City of Santa Clara. "Mixed Waste Processing." Accessed February 28, 2025. https://www.santaclaraca.gov/our-city/departments-g-z/public-works/environmental-programs/residential-garbage-recycling/mixed-waste-processing.
[49] AB 1826 and AB 341 are not applicable to the project since the project does not include any commercial uses.
[50] A specialized bioretention system that provides for greater water treatment through infiltration of stormwater through soil and other permeable layers.
[51] Air District. CEQA Guidelines. May 2017. Page 2-1.

Therefore, due to the nature of GHG impacts, if a project does not result in a significant GHG impact, then the project would not result in significant cumulative GHG impact. As discussed above, the proposed project would not generate GHG emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment or conflict with a plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The project, therefore, would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a GHG impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The information in this section is based on the Phase 1 completed for the proposed project by Montrose Environmental on August 28, 2024. This report is included as Appendix F of this EIR.

3.9.1 Environmental Setting

3.9.1.1 Regulatory Framework

Overview

The storage, use, generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials and waste are highly regulated under federal and state laws. In California, the EPA has granted most enforcement authority over federal hazardous materials regulations to the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA). In turn, local agencies have been granted responsibility for implementation and enforcement of many hazardous materials regulations under the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) program. The City of Santa Clara is the local CUPA.

Worker health and safety and public safety are key issues when dealing with hazardous materials. Proper handling and disposal of hazardous material is vital if it is disturbed during project construction. Cal/OSHA enforces state worker health and safety regulations related to construction activities. Regulations include exposure limits, requirements for protective clothing, and training requirements to prevent exposure to hazardous materials. Cal/OSHA also enforces occupational health and safety regulations specific to lead and asbestos investigations and abatement.

Federal and State

Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77

Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 77 Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace (FAR Part 77) sets forth standards and review requirements for protecting the airspace for safe aircraft operation, particularly by restricting the height of potential structures and minimizing other potential hazards (such as reflective surfaces, flashing lights, and electronic interference) to aircraft in flight. These regulations require that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) be notified of certain proposed construction projects located within an extended zone defined by an imaginary slope radiating outward for several miles from an airport's runways, or which would otherwise stand at least 200 feet in height above the ground.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly known as Superfund, was enacted by Congress on December 11, 1980. This law created a tax on the chemical and petroleum industries and provided broad federal authority to respond directly to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health or the

environment. Over five years, $1.6 billion was collected and the tax went to a trust fund for cleaning up abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. CERCLA accomplished the following objectives:

- Established prohibitions and requirements concerning closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites;
- Provided for liability of persons responsible for releases of hazardous waste at these sites; and
- Established a trust fund to provide for cleanup when no responsible party could be identified.

The law authorizes two kinds of response actions:

- Short-term removals, where actions may be taken to address releases or threatened releases requiring prompt response; and
- Long-term remedial response actions that permanently and significantly reduce the dangers associated with releases or threats of releases of hazardous substances that are serious, but not immediately life-threatening. These actions can be completed only at sites listed on the EPA's National Priorities List.

CERCLA also enabled the revision of the National Contingency Plan (NCP). The NCP provided the guidelines and procedures needed to respond to releases and threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. The NCP also established the National Priorities List. CERCLA was amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act on October 17, 1986.[52]

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), enacted in 1976, is the principal federal law in the United States governing the disposal of solid waste and hazardous waste. RCRA gives the EPA the authority to control hazardous waste from the "cradle to the grave." This includes the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. RCRA also sets forth a framework for the management of non-hazardous solid wastes.

The Federal Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA) are the 1984 amendments to RCRA that focused on waste minimization, phasing out land disposal of hazardous waste, and corrective action for releases. Some of the other mandates of this law include increased enforcement

[52] United States Environmental Protection Agency. "Superfund: CERCLA Overview." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-cercla-overview.

authority for the EPA, more stringent hazardous waste management standards, and a comprehensive underground storage tank program.[53]

Government Code Section 65962.5

Section 65962.5 of the Government Code requires CalEPA to develop and update a list of hazardous waste and substances sites, known as the Cortese List. The Cortese List is used by state and local agencies and developers to comply with CEQA requirements. The Cortese List includes hazardous substance release sites identified by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).[54]

Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 provides the EPA with authority to require reporting, record-keeping and testing requirements, and restrictions relating to chemical substances and/or mixtures. Certain substances are generally excluded from TSCA, including, among others, food, drugs, cosmetics, and pesticides. The TSCA addresses the production, importation, use, and disposal of specific chemicals including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), asbestos, radon, and lead-based paint.

California Accidental Release Prevention Program

The California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program aims to prevent accidental releases of regulated hazardous materials that represent a potential hazard beyond the boundaries of a property. Facilities that are required to participate in the CalARP Program use or store specified quantities of toxic and flammable substances (hazardous materials) that can have off-site consequences if accidentally released. The City of Santa Clara Fire Department reviews CalARP risk management plans as the CUPA.

Asbestos-Containing Materials

Friable asbestos is any asbestos-containing material (ACM) that, when dry, can easily be crumbled or pulverized to a powder by hand, allowing the asbestos particles to become airborne. Common examples of products that have been found to contain friable asbestos include acoustical ceilings, plaster, wallboard, and thermal insulation for water heaters and pipes. Common examples of non-friable ACMs are asphalt roofing shingles, vinyl floor tiles, and transite siding made with cement. The EPA began phasing out use of friable asbestos products in 1973 and issued a ban in 1978 on manufacture, import, processing, and distribution of some asbestos-containing products and new uses of asbestos products.[55] The EPA is currently considering a proposed ban on on-going use of

[53] United States Environmental Protection Agency. "Summary of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-resource-conservation-and-recovery-act.
[54] California Environmental Protection Agency. "Cortese List Data Resources." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/.
[55] United States Environmental Protection Agency. "EPA Actions to Protect the Public from Exposure to Asbestos." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.epa.gov/asbestos/epa-actions-protect-public-exposure-asbestos

asbestos.[56] National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) guidelines require that potentially friable ACMs be removed prior to building demolition or remodeling that may disturb the ACMs.

CCR Title 8, Section 1532.1

The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission banned the use of lead-based paint in 1978. Removal of older structures with lead-based paint is subject to requirements outlined by the Cal/OSHA Lead in Construction Standard, CCR Title 8, Section 1532.1 during demolition activities. Requirements include employee training, employee air monitoring, and dust control. If lead-based paint is peeling, flaking, or blistered, it is required to be removed prior to demolition.

Regional and Local

Municipal Regional Permit Provision C.12.f

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were produced in the United States between 1955 and 1978 and used in hundreds of industrial and commercial applications, including building and structure materials such as plasticizers, paints, sealants, caulk, and wood floor finishes. In 1979, the EPA banned the production and use of PCBs due to their potential harmful health effects and persistence in the environment. PCBs can still be released to the environment today during demolition of buildings that contain legacy caulks, sealants, or other PCB-containing materials.

With the adoption of the San Francisco Bay Region Municipal Regional Permit (MRP) by the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board on November 19, 2015, Provision C.12.f requires that permittees develop an assessment methodology for applicable structures planned for demolition to ensure PCBs do not enter municipal storm drain systems.[57] Municipalities throughout the Bay Area are currently modifying demolition permit processes and implementing PCB screening protocols to comply with Provision C.12.f. Buildings constructed between 1950 and 1980 that are proposed for demolition must be screened for the presence of PCBs prior to the issuance of a demolition permit. Single family homes and wood-frame structures are exempt from these requirements.

Santa Clara General Plan

General Plan policies hazardous materials-related policies applicable to the project include the following.

Policies	Description
5.10.5-P23	Require appropriate clean-up and remediation of contaminated sites.

[56]Ibid.
[57] California Regional Water Quality Control Board. *San Francisco Bay Region Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit.* November 2015.

5.10.5-P24	Protect City residents from the risks inherent in the transport, distribution, use and storage of hazardous materials.
5.10.5-P25	Use Best Management Practices to control the transport of hazardous substances and to identify appropriate haul routes to minimize community exposure to potential hazards.

3.9.1.2 Existing Conditions

Existing Uses of the Project Site

The existing uses on the project site include a golf course which includes nine golf holes, a practice area, and a clubhouse and maintenance yard. Within the maintenance yard, gasoline and propane aboveground storage tanks have been added. There are also storage sheds where fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides are kept.

Telecommunication antennas are located at the border of the maintenance yard, on top of the practice area netting poles. These 13 antennas have been on the project site since 1990, and their associated equipment could represent a potential environmental concern if they contain hazardous materials or petroleum products. Records of halogenated solvents removed from the project site associated with the antennas show no signs of release of hazardous materials.

Existing Uses of the Surrounding Properties

Directly north of the project site there are single and multi-family residences. On the east side of the site is Saratoga Avenue and beyond this street is a 7-Eleven convenience store, Ace California Health Clinic, L'Academy Language Immersion Preschool, apartments, and single-family housing. The south side of the project site directly borders Pruneridge Avenue and beyond this street is a shopping center. The shopping center contains a Lucky Grocery Store, CVS Pharmacy, Kumon Math and Reading Center, Citi Bank, Bloom restaurant, Carl's Jr. restaurant, Leichi restaurant, Starbucks Coffee, Classic Cleaners, San Tomas Liquor store, 76 Gas Auto care and Smog, and a vacant commercial building. To the west of the project site is San Tomas Expressway. There is single-family housing across San Tomas Expressway.

Historic Uses of the Project Site

The earliest use of project site was in 1939 where agricultural uses can be seen in an aerial photograph. Agricultural uses continued until approximately 1963. In 1968, aerial photographs show that the project site was developed with the golf course. Based on building permit records, storage buildings were added to the site in 1978 (a 960 square foot storage building) and 1979 (a 1,200 square foot storage building). By 1990, a 336 square foot storage shed was added to the maintenance yard and in 1992 an above ground fuel tank was added. In 2007 and 2016, two fuel tanks were permitted for the site, including a 499-gallon above ground fuel tank and a 99.1-gallon propane tank.

Historic Uses of the Surrounding Properties

The area north of the project site was undeveloped until approximately 1956. By 1956, residential buildings are present in aerial photography in the northwest and by 1963 residential buildings are present to the north.

The south side of the site was similarly undeveloped until approximately 1956. A residential tract was constructed to the southeast in 1956. By 1963 a commercial building had been developed at the corner of Saratoga Avenue and Pruneridge Avenue and in 1968 a gas station had been developed on the southwestern side of the intersection. By 1974 the shopping center to the south had begun development and was completed by 1975. A grocery store, a pharmacy, a dry cleaner and restaurants have occupied the shopping center since it's construction.

The area to the east of the project site was undeveloped until approximately 1950. The first residential development was completed in approximately 1956 and by 1963 a multi-unit housing and commercial development had been constructed. A commercial building east of the site changed occupants over the years from 1963 to 1985 and is currently occupied by a convenience store.

The area west of the project site was undeveloped until 1968 and the current residential development by competed by 1974. San Tomas Expressway was completed by 1968.

Recognized Environmental Conditions

Based on the location of the site, two Recognized Environmental Conditions RECs were identified in proximity to the project site.

- An open materials cleanup case associated with a drycleaner on the adjoining parcel to the south is considered a Vapor Encroachment Condition (VEC) because a cross to upgradient release of PCE has been documented to have impacted groundwater and soil to the south of the project site. An engineered sub-surface ventilation system has recently been installed at this cleanup site. Based on prior and on-going remediation it is unlikely for the contamination plume to travel to the project site.
- In the maintenance yard on-site, there is a large 499-gallon AST for gasoline surrounded by bollards. Based on site observations, no signs of release were noted near the fuel tank. However, although the AST is located on top of a concrete slab, the refueling area is unpaved. Therefore, negligent fueling of vehicles could lead to accidental surface releases of gasoline onto exposed soil.

3.9.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on hazards and hazardous materials, would the project:

1) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
2) 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?
3) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
4) 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?
5) 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, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?
6) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
7) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

3.9.2.1 Project Impacts

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

The proposed project would construct a residential structure, maintenance building, and park area which use small amounts of hazardous materials for interior and exterior maintenance and landscaping. The project would not require the transport of hazardous materials to and from the site during operation of the apartment building and no hazardous materials would be disposed of at the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard as a result of routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, and would have a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The residential component of the proposed project would require operational activities associated with standard cleaning chemicals and some landscaping materials. Use of these materials would be consistent with standard usage at a multi-family residence and would not create a public hazard by utilizing these materials.

While the proposed project would reconfigure the golf course, the new layout and maintenance building would not change operation and maintenance activities at the site. The proposed project would not handle materials on the project site that could be released during an accident or upset because it would construct a residential structure and park which are not associated with the use of these materials. Only minimal hazardous material or petroleum product usage was identified in the Phase 1 ESA prepared for the project therefore operations at the golf course would not result in a hazardous condition on-site.

There is a history of agricultural use on-site as well as the nearby groundwater contamination from Classic Cleaners. During construction soil would be disturbed and, if there are hazardous materials present in soil, groundwater, or soil vapor, the proposed project would expose construction workers to hazardous conditions. In September of 2023 four soil vapor extraction wells (SVE) and Passive Sub-Surface Ventilation system were installed on the Classic Cleaners site to remove and expel volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The groundwater gradient is reported to flow to the north-northeast (cross to upgradient). The nearest well, located approximately 530 south of the project site, was last sampled in October 2023 and PCE was detected at 3.7 micrograms per liter (µg/L). The residential environmental screening level is 15 micrograms per cubic meter for sub-slab soil gas or 0.46 micrograms per cubic meter for indoor, 0.08 milligrams per kilogram in soil, and 0.64 µg/L in groundwater. While the previous sampling detected PCE above the residential levels on the Classic Cleaners site, based on the findings of the Phase 1, the proposed project would not be exposed to hazardous soil vapor from the dry cleaner because the plume is being treated and a subsurface ventilation system has been installed. Furthermore, contamination levels decrease over time and with distance from the source.

The proposed project would need to remove or replace the AST within the maintenance yard and excavation within this area could expose soils contaminated with petroleum products. Furthermore, residual agricultural contamination may be present on-site. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a potentially significant hazard soil disturbance during construction.

Impact HAZ-2.1 The proposed project could expose construction workers to hazardous materials when conducting construction activities around the above ground storage tank in the maintenance yard on site. Additionally, due to the historical agricultural uses on-site, there could be residual pesticides that could be exposed as part of construction activities.

Mitigation Measure

The project shall implement the following mitigation measure to reduce impacts from contaminated soils to a less than significant level.

MM HAZ-2.1 The project shall develop and implement a Site Management Plan (SMP) that outlines the measures required to mitigate potential risks (avoid exposure of to hazardous petroleum materials or agricultural residual materials such as pesticides) to construction workers and the environment from potential

exposure to hazardous substances that may be encountered during soil intrusive or construction activities on-site. As part of the SMP, a worker health and safety plan shall be prepared that identifies procedures to address potential hazards to construction workers and off-site receptors that may result from construction activities.

The SMP shall also identify all wells on-site and identify measures to protect and/or abandon existing remediation systems, groundwater monitoring wells, and soil vapor monitoring wells. All wells to be abandoned shall be permitted through the SCVWD.

The SMP shall be submitted to the City, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the County of Santa Clara Department of Environmental Health (DEH) for approval prior to commencement of construction activities.

Through compliance with proper handling and cleanup procedures, the proposed project would result in a less than significant hazardous materials impact during construction. **(Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated)**

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

The proposed project would be constructed on a parcel adjacent to Westwood Elementary School located at 435 Saratoga Avenue. As stated above, operation of the proposed project would not require the handling of hazardous materials, substances, or waste outside of minor cleaning chemicals used for most residential uses in the City. Transport of waste materials would occur during construction: however, this would be a temporary condition during the demolition phase of the project and would not require the movement of a large amount of material. Therefore, although the project site is located within a quarter mile of an existing school, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact resulting from handling hazardous materials on-site. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The project site is not listed on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard resulting from locating the proposed project on a hazardous materials site. **(No Impact)**

e) If 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 project site is located more than two miles from the San José Mineta International Airport and is outside of the Airport Safety Zone established in the Land Use Compatibility Plan.[58] The proposed project would be under the FAR Part 77 Surfaces height for safe plane operations at the project site, and would not interfere with flight operations or pose a hazard to residents. Additionally, the proposed project is not located within the noise contours of the airport and would not experience excessive noise from airport operations. Therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to a safety hazard or excessive noise. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The project would be constructed in accordance with current building and fire codes and would be required to be maintained in accordance with applicable City policies identified in the General Plan to avoid unsafe building conditions. The proposed project would not alter routes of access, nor would it create impediments to existing emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans in the City of Santa Clara. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on any adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. **(No Impact)**

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

The proposed project is located in the center of the City of Santa Clara and is not within a fire hazard severity zone.[59] Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. **(No Impact)**

[58] County of Santa Clara. San José Mineta International Airport Lan Use Compatibility Plan. https://stgenpln.blob.core.windows.net/document/ALUC_SJC_CLUP.pdf Accessed April 10, 2025.
[59] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Fire and Resource Assessment Program. Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA: As Recommended by Calfire. https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6764/fhszl_map43.pdf. October 8, 2008.

3.9.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant hazards and hazardous materials impact?

The geographic area for hazards and hazardous materials impacts is the project site and parcels within one mile of the project site. The proposed project would not result in any significant impacts and would not contribute to a cumulative impact in concert with other projects because there are no nearby projects with hazards or hazardous materials impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant cumulative hazards and hazardous materials impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.9.3 Non-CEQA Effects

Per *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District,* 62 Cal. 4th 369 (2015) *(BIA v. BAAQMD)*, effects of the environment on the project are not considered CEQA impacts. The following discussion is included for informational purposes only because the City of Santa Clara has policies that address existing hazards and hazardous materials conditions affecting a proposed project.

The proposed project would be required to clean up any outstanding petroleum conditions identified on-site prior to occupancy as described in MM HAZ-2.1. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with City policy to not expose future residents to hazardous conditions.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

3.10.1 Environmental Setting

3.10.1.1 Regulatory Framework

Federal and State

The federal Clean Water Act and California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act are the primary laws related to water quality in California. Regulations set forth by the EPA and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) have been developed to fulfill the requirements of this legislation. EPA regulations include the NPDES permit program, which controls sources that discharge pollutants into the waters of the United States (e.g., streams, lakes, bays, etc.). These regulations are implemented at the regional level by the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). The project site is within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB.

Under Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act, the SWRCB and RWQCBs are required to identify impaired surface water bodies that do not meet water quality standards and develop total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for contaminants of concern. The list of the state's identified impaired surface water bodies, known as the "303(d) list" can be found on the on the SWRCB's website.[60]

National Flood Insurance Program

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) established the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to reduce impacts of flooding on private and public properties. The program provides subsidized flood insurance to communities that comply with FEMA regulations protecting development in floodplains. As part of the program, FEMA publishes Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identify Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs). An SFHA is an area that would be inundated by the one-percent annual chance flood, which is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood.

Statewide Construction General Permit

The SWRCB has implemented an NPDES General Construction Permit for the State of California (Construction General Permit). For projects disturbing one acre or more of soil, a Notice of Intent (NOI) must be filed with the RWQCB by the project sponsor, and a SWPPP must be prepared by a qualified professional prior to commencement of construction and filed with the RWQCB by the project sponsor. The Construction General Permit includes requirements for training, inspections, record keeping, and, for projects of certain risk levels, monitoring. The general purpose of the

[60] California State Water Resources Control Board. "2020-2022 California Integrated Report (Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List and 305(b) Report)." May 11, 2022. Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2020_2022_integrated_report.html.

requirements is to minimize the discharge of pollutants and to protect beneficial uses and receiving waters from the adverse effects of construction-related storm water discharges.

Regional and Local

San Francisco Bay Basin Plan

The San Francisco Bay RWQCB regulates water quality in accordance with the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Basin (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan lists the beneficial uses that the San Francisco Bay RWQCB has identified for local aquifers, streams, marshes, rivers, and the San Francisco Bay, as well as the water quality objectives and criteria that must be met to protect these uses. The San Francisco Bay RWQCB implements the Basin Plan by issuing and enforcing waste discharge requirements, including permits for nonpoint sources such as the urban runoff discharged by a City's stormwater drainage system. The Basin Plan also describes watershed management programs and water quality attainment strategies.

Municipal Regional Permit Provision C.3

The San Francisco Bay RWQCB re-issued the Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit (MRP) in May 2022 to regulate stormwater discharges from municipalities and local agencies (co-permittees) in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties, and the cities of Fairfield, Suisun City, and Vallejo.[61] Under Provision C.3 of the MRP, new and redevelopment projects that create or replace 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface area are required to implement site design, source control, and Low Impact Development (LID)-based stormwater treatment controls to treat post-construction stormwater runoff. LID-based treatment controls are intended to maintain or restore the site's natural hydrologic functions, maximizing opportunities for infiltration and evapotranspiration, and using stormwater as a resource (e.g., rainwater harvesting for non-potable uses). The MRP also requires that stormwater treatment measures are properly installed, operated, and maintained.

In addition to water quality controls, the MRP requires new development and redevelopment projects that create or replace one acre or more of impervious surface to manage development-related increases in peak runoff flow, volume, and duration, where such hydromodification is likely to cause increased erosion, silt pollutant generation, or other impacts to local rivers, streams, and creeks. Projects may be deemed exempt from these requirements if: (1) the post-project impervious surface area is less than, or the same as, the pre-project impervious surface area; (2) the project is located in a catchment that drains to a hardened (e.g., continuously lined with concrete) engineered channel or channels or enclosed pipes, which extend continuously to the Bay, Delta, or flow-controlled reservoir, or, in a catchment that drains to channels that are tidally influenced; or

[61] California Regional Water Quality Control Board San Francisco Region. Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit, Order No. R2-2022-0018, NPDES Permit No. CAS612008. May 11, 2022.

(3) the project is located in a catchment or subwatershed that is highly developed (i.e., that is 70 percent or more impervious).[62]

Municipal Regional Permit Provision C.12.f

Provision C.12.f of the MRP requires co-permittee agencies to implement a control program for PCBs that reduces PCB loads by a specified amount during the term of the permit, thereby making substantial progress toward achieving the urban runoff PCBs wasteload allocation in the Basin Plan by March 2030.[63] Programs must include focused implementation of PCB control measures, such as source control, treatment control, and pollution prevention strategies. Municipalities throughout the Bay Area are updating their demolition permit processes to incorporate the management of PCBs in demolition building materials to ensure PCBs are not discharged to storm drains during demolition. Buildings constructed between 1950 and 1980 that are proposed for demolition must be screened for the presence of PCBs prior to the issuance of a demolition permit. Single-family residential and wood frame structures are exempt.

Water Resources Protection Ordinance and District Well Ordinance

Valley Water operates as the flood control agency for Santa Clara County. Valley Water also provides stream stewardship and is the wholesale water supplier throughout the county, which includes the groundwater recharge program. Well construction and deconstruction permits, including borings 45 feet or deeper, are required under Valley Water's Well Ordinance 90-1. Under Valley Water's Water Resources Protection Ordinance, projects within Valley Water property or easements are required to obtain encroachment permits.

2021 Groundwater Management Plan

The 2021 Groundwater Management Plan (GWMP) describes the Valley Water's comprehensive groundwater management framework, including existing and potential actions to achieve basin sustainability goals and ensure continued sustainable groundwater management. The GWMP covers the Santa Clara and Llagas subbasins, which are located entirely in Santa Clara County. Valley Water manages a diverse water supply portfolio, with sources including groundwater, local surface water, imported water, and recycled water. About half of the county's water supply comes from local sources and the other half comes from imported sources. Imported water includes the District's State Water Project and Central Valley contract supplies and supplies delivered by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) to cities in northern Santa Clara County. Local sources include natural groundwater recharge and surface water supplies. A small portion of the county's water supply is recycled water.

[62] The Hydromodification Applicability Maps developed the permittees under Order No. R2-2009-0074 were prepared using this standard, adjusted to 65 percent imperviousness to account for the presence of vegetation on the photographic references used to determine imperviousness. Thus, the maps for Order No. R2-2009-0074 are accepted as meeting the 70 percent requirement.

[63] California Regional Water Quality Control Board San Francisco Region. Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit, Order No. R2-2022-0018, NPDES Permit No. CAS612008. May 11, 2022.

Local groundwater resources make up the foundation of the county's water supply, but they need to be augmented by the District's comprehensive water supply management activities to reliably meet the county's needs. These include the managed recharge of imported and local surface water and in-lieu groundwater recharge through the provision of treated surface water and raw water, acquisition of supplemental water supplies, and water conservation and recycling.[64]

Construction Dewatering Waste Discharge Requirements

Each of the RWQCBs regulate construction dewatering discharges to storm drains or surface waters within its Region under the NPDES program and Waste Discharge Requirements.

Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program

The Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP) is an association of thirteen cities and towns in Santa Clara Valley, the County of Santa Clara, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District that share a common NPDES municipal stormwater permit to discharge stormwater to South San Francisco Bay. The SCVURPPP and member agencies implement pollution prevention, source control, monitoring and outreach programs aimed at reducing pollution in stormwater runoff, protecting water quality and beneficial uses of San Francisco Bay and Santa Clara Valley creeks and rivers. This includes implementation of the Santa Clara Valley Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program (SCVNSPC) and Urban Runoff Management Plan (URMP) which provide BMPs for controlling stormwater entering waterbodies from point and non-point sources.

City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan

General Plan policies applicable to hydrology and water quality include, but are not limited to, the following listed below.

Policy	Description
5.10.5-P11	Require that new development meet stormwater and water management requirements in conformance with state and regional regulations.
5.10.5-P13	Require that development complies with the Flood Damage Protection Code.
5.10.5-P15	Require new development to minimize paved and impervious surfaces and promote on-site Best Management Practices for infiltration and retention, including grassy swales, pervious pavement, covered retention areas, bioswales, and cisterns, to reduce urban water run-off.
5.10.5-P16	Require new development to implement erosion and sedimentation control measures to maintain an operational drainage system, preserve drainage capacity and protect water quality.
5.10.5-P17	Require that grading and other construction activities comply with the Association of Bay Area Governments' Manual of Standards for Erosion and Sediment Control Measures and with the California Stormwater Quality Association, Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbook for Construction.
5.10.5-P18	Implement the SCVNSPC Program, SCVURPPP, and the URMP.

[64] Valley Water. *2021 Groundwater Management Plan, Santa Clara and Llagas Subbasins.* November 2021.

5.10.5-P20	Maintain, upgrade and replace storm drains throughout the City to reduce potential flooding.
5.10.5-P21	Require that storm drain infrastructure is adequate to serve all new development and is in place prior to occupancy.

3.10.1.2 Existing Conditions

Groundwater

The project is in a confined area of the Santa Clara Subbasin and does not contribute to the recharging of the groundwater aquifer.[65] Groundwater on-site was estimated to be at depths of approximately 13 to 30 feet below ground surface (bgs). The depth at which groundwater is encountered below the surface may vary due to factors such as changing seasons, variations in rainfall, and the pumping of nearby wells.

Storm Drainage

The City of Santa Clara owns and maintains the municipal storm drainage system serving the project area. The site is currently a golf course which consists of landscaped areas with small amounts of sidewalk to provide walking paths. The golf course portion of the site is mostly pervious and allows for infiltration across the entirety of the project site. The area of the clubhouse and parking lot feature more impervious areas and drain into the stormwater drainage system located in Saratoga Road.

Flooding

The project site is located in the Zone X FEMA flood hazard zone which is defined as the area between the limits of the base flood and the 0.2-percent-annual-chance (or 500-year) flood and is considered to be a moderate flood zone area.[66,67]

Dam Failure

The project site is within the dam inundation zone for the James J Lenihan Dam and is not within the dam inundation zone for the Leroy Anderson Dam.[68]

3.10.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on hydrology and water quality, would the project:

[65] Santa Clara Valley Water. *Groundwater Management Plan for the Santa Clara and Llagas Subbasins.* 2021.
[66] FEMA. "FEMA Flood Map Service Center: Search By Address." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home.
[67] FEMA. "Glossary." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.fema.gov/about/glossary.
[68] California Department of Dams. "California Dam Breach Inundation Map Web Publisher." Accessed March 6, 2025. California Dam Breach Inundation Map Web Publisher.

1) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?
2) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?
3) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
    - result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;
    - substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;
    - 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
    - impede or redirect flood flows?
4) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?
5) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

3.10.2.1 Project Impacts

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

Construction Impacts

Construction of the proposed development project, including demolition of the existing maintenance buildings, grading, and excavation activities, would disturb soil within the project site. As a result, surface runoff after rain events may discharge a greater quantity of sediments to the stormwater system, which ultimately outfalls to the San Francisco Bay. The following measures would be required by the City as Conditions of Approval to reduce potential construction-related water quality impacts:

<u>Conditions of Approval</u>

- Burlap bags filled with drain rock shall be installed around storm drains to route sediment and other debris away from the drains;
- Earthmoving or other dust-producing activities would be suspended during period of high winds;

- All exposed or disturbed soil surfaces would be watered at least twice daily to control dust as necessary;
- Stockpiles of soil or other materials that can be blown by the wind would be watered or covered;
- All trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials shall be covered;
- All paved access roads, parking areas, staging areas and residential streets adjacent to the construction sites would be swept daily (with water sweepers); and
- Vegetation in disturbed areas would be replanted as quickly as possible.

In addition, the project would be required to comply with the NPDES General Permit for Construction Activities and submit a SWPPP and NOI to the State Water Resources Control Board to control the discharge of stormwater pollutants including sediments associated with construction activities. With the implementation of the above measures, and compliance with all permit conditions, construction related water quality impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Post-Construction Impacts

To reduce post-construction water quality impacts, the project is required to comply with the MRP. The proposed project includes LID and self-treating treatment control sized to treat stormwater consistent with water treatment control policies. The stormwater treatment measures include lined bioretention and self-treatment areas, located throughout the site, and Silva cells treating the parking area within and adjacent to the apartment building.

The MRP requires all post-construction stormwater runoff to be treated by numerically sized LID treatment controls, such as biotreatment facilities, unless the project is granted Special Project LID Reduction Credits, which would allow the project to implement non-LID measures for all or a portion of the site depending on the project characteristics. As stated above, the project would include all LID features and would not need Reduction Credits to be applied. Therefore, the proposed project would be in compliance with existing regulations and would not result in significant impacts to water quality. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The proposed project would not be constructed within an area defined as a groundwater recharge area. Additionally, excavation on the project site would be limited to approximately five to 10 feet bgs for utilities installation and would not encounter groundwater during construction because shallow groundwater has been documented at 13 feet bgs. Furthermore, the project would provide pervious surfaces on-site, as shown in Table 3.10-1, which would allow water falling on the project site to infiltrate into the ground during storm events through LID features. Therefore, the proposed

project would result in less than significant impacts on groundwater supply and would not impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site; 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 impede or redirect flood flows?

The proposed project is located within a watershed[69] made up of more than 65 percent impervious surfaces. Therefore, an increase in impervious surfaces on the project site would not cause hydromodification impacts to any waterway in compliance with Santa Clara County C.3 technical guidance. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the alteration of streams or rivers near the project site.

Additionally, the proposed project would increase impervious surfaces on the project site by approximately 56 percent and would be required to provide stormwater treatment consistent with sizing requirements identified in Provision C.3 of the MRP. The proposed project would include 17 drainage areas treated by bioretention, self-retaining landscape planters, flow through planters, and Silva cells located throughout the project site. The existing project site is 90 percent pervious and the proposed project would decrease pervious surfaces to approximately 33 percent of the site. A summary of the impervious surfaces is included in Table 3.10-1 below.

Table 3.10-1: Impervious and Pervious Surface Areas in Square Feet

	Existing Conditions	Project Conditions	Change
Impervious Surfaces	26,748	179,994	+153,246
Pervious Surfaces	244,070	90,824	-153,246
Total	270,818	270,818	---

These bioretention and self-treatment areas provide landscaping designed to allow water to filter through the planters or to evaporate away as it would in normal soil mediums. This slows the release of water into the stormwater system and would limit the surge of water from the impervious surfaces during storm events. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in flooding or runoff exceeding the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage. Additionally, the treatment features would filter stormwater and the proposed project would not contribute to polluted runoff. The proposed project would have a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

[69] A watershed is an area in which all water drains to one body of water.

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

The project site is not located within a tsunami hazard area or located near an inland body of water which could result in seiches during seismic activity. The proposed project is located within the James J Lenihan Dam inundation zone, therefore, in the event of a dam failure the project site would be at risk of flooding. Valley Water maintains and repairs the reservoirs in their jurisdiction. As such, the risk of the site being inundation is minimal.

Additionally, the project site is located within the Zone X flood hazard zone, which means that the project site could experience flooding during a 500-year storm event. This is not a special Flood Hazard Zone, and the proposed project would not have a significant risk of being flooded during storm conditions. Additionally, the proposed project would not introduce uses to the project site which contribute significant pollutants which may enter floodwaters during inundation. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from the release of pollutants during an inundation event. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The proposed project would implement the Conditions of Approval identified under Impact HYD-1, NPDES General Construction Permit requirements, and the SCVNSPC, SCVURPPP and the URMP. As described under Impact HYD-(b), the project would not impact groundwater supplies or impede aquifer recharge. For these reasons, the proposed project would not conflict with, or obstruct implementation of, any water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.10.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant hydrology and water quality impact?

The geographic area for hydrology and water quality impacts would be the San Tomas Creek Watershed.

The proposed project would capture and treat runoff on-site through LID measures and would limit erosion and sediment release through Conditions of Approval during construction. As a result, the proposed project would comply with regional stormwater policies which limit the regional impacts of projects on watersheds. Because the proposed project would have a less than significant impact and all other cumulative projects in the vicinity would be required to comply with the same regulations, the proposed project would have a less than significant cumulative impact on hydrology and water quality. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.11 Land Use and Planning

3.11.1 Environmental Setting

3.11.1.1 Regulatory Framework

Regional and Local

San José Mineta International Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan

The Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport CLUP, adopted by the Santa Clara County Airport Land Use Commission, is intended to safeguard the general welfare of the inhabitants within the vicinity of the airport, as well as aircraft occupants.[70] The CLUP is also intended to ensure that surrounding new land uses do not affect airfield operations. The CLUP identifies the Airfield's Airport Influence Area (AIA). The AIA is a composite of areas surrounding the Airfield that are affected by noise, height, and safety considerations. Within the AIA, the CLUP establishes a (1) noise restriction area, (2) height restriction area, and (3) safety restriction area.

Santa Clara General Plan

The following land use related General Plan policies are applicable to the proposed project.

Policy	Description
5.3.1-P9	Require new development provide adequate public services and facilities, infrastructure, and amenities to serve the new employment or residential growth.
5.3.2-P1	Encourage the annual construction of the housing units necessary to meet the City's regional housing needs assessment by reducing constraints to housing finance and development.
5.3.2-P6	Provide adequate choices for housing tenure, type and location, including higher density, and affordability for low- and moderate-income and special needs household.
5.4.1-P9	Residential development should include front doors, windows, stoops, porches, and bay windows or balconies along street frontages.
5.5.2-P12	Screen loading and trash areas to preclude visibility from off-site and public streets.
5.91-G3	New parks, open space and recreation provided with new development so that existing facilities are not overburdened.

City of Santa Clara Zoning Code

The City's Zoning Code regulates land uses within the boundaries of Santa Clara. The overall goals of the Zoning Code are to promote the city's growth in an orderly manner and to promote and protect the public health, safety, peace, comfort, and general welfare in conformance with the General Plan. For each of the zoning districts in the city, the Code identifies land uses that are permitted,

[70] County of Santa Clara. San José Mineta International Airport Lan Use Compatibility Plan. https://stgenpln.blob.core.windows.net/document/ALUC_SJC_CLUP.pdf. Accessed October 10, 2025.

conditionally permitted, and not permitted. It also establishes standards such as minimum lot size, maximum building height, and the minimum distance buildings must be set back from the street. Provisions for parking, landscaping, lighting, and other rules that guide the development of projects in the city are also included.

3.11.1.2 Existing Conditions

The project site is occupied by Pruneridge Golf Club which is composed of a nine-hole golf course, a driving range, a maintenance area, a clubhouse, and a parking area. The site has a General Plan designation of Parks/Open Space and is within a PD – Planned Development zoning district. The project site is also under a scenic view easement.

The Parks/Open Space General Plan designation is primarily intended for improved and unimproved park and open space facilities including managed natural resource areas and outdoor recreation areas. This designation serves neighborhood, community, and regional parks in addition to public golf courses, recreational facilities, and nature preserves.

The PD – Planned Development zoning designation permits property with a minimum project size of 25 acres, where special consideration of the site and surroundings are necessary to allow creative development solutions that do not meet the allowed use regulations or development standards of the base zone. This zone allows for modification of requirements established by other ordinances and ensures compliance with and implementation of the General Plan. The original PD zoning that was approved prior to the implementation of the zoning code update did not include a 25-acre size criteria requirement.

The land uses around the project site includes a mix of residential and commercial uses. A commercial shopping center is located directly south of the site, and residential uses are located north, east, and west of the site. There is also a group of duplex style residences within the center of the golf course area.

The project site is located approximately 2.4 miles southwest of the San José Mineta International Airport. The site is not located within the AIA, 65 dBA noise contour area, or airport safety zones; however, it is located within the mapped Part 77, 412-foot above mean sea level (amsl) horizontal surface. The elevation on-site is approximately 110 feet amsl.

3.11.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on land use and planning, would the project:

1) Physically divide an established community?
2) 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?

3.11.2.1 Project Impacts

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

A physical division of an established community typically refers to the construction of a physical feature (such as a wall, roadway, or railroad tracks) or the removal of a means of access (such as a local roadway or bridge) that would impair mobility within an existing community or between communities.

The project would redevelop a portion of the golf course property with a five-story residential building and would not construct physical features or close any existing street that would impair community mobility. For these reasons, the project would not physically divide an established community. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

General Plan and Zoning Code

As described within the individual sections of this document, with incorporation of the Conditions of Approval, mitigation measures, and regulatory requirements, the project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The proposed project would be reviewed for compliance with applicable land use plans and policies. As a result, the impact is less than significant.

The proposed development project includes a General Plan Amendment to change the General Plan designation of the residential portion of the project site from Parks/Open Space to Very High-Density Residential.

This designation allows for residential development from 51 to 100 du/acre and is intended to take advantage of proximity to transit and major transportation corridors, offering an urban feel and typically comprised of mid-rise buildings featuring structured or below grade parking and shared outdoor space.

The current land use designation does not provide for the construction of residential units. The new General Plan designation would allow for a maximum of 100 units per acre. Based on the density of the proposed land use, the 3.66-acre residential portion of site could include up to 362 total units under the proposed General Plan Amendment. This would result in an increase in population and resource consumption above the levels analyzed in the General Plan FEIR.

The proposed project would increase the housing on-site by 316 units above the residential development allowed under the current General Plan designation. Per the Housing Element of the General Plan, the City is projected to add 18,847 dwelling units throughout the City by 2031. The proposed increase in housing on the project site is equal to less than two percent of the total housing planned for the City of Santa Clara. Although this would represent an increase in growth on the project site, the proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable policies and goals to reduce environmental impacts resulting from the development. Additionally, the proposed project would comply with the Conditions of Approval, mitigation measures, and regulatory requirements included as part of the General Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact related to conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects.

The proposed project would not be consistent with the PD zoning of the site; therefore, the project would include a rezoning of the site to the Very-High-Density Residential Zone. The Very-High-Density Residential Zone allows for residential uses with a density of 51 to 100 du/acre. Under this designation the proposed project would be within the development assumptions of the revised zoning designation. For these reasons, with a zoning revision the project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with the General Plan or Zoning Code.

Scenic View Easement

The proposed project would include an amendment to the scenic view easement currently in place for the project site. This change would be tied to the General Plan Amendment and would not be removed from the site. Therefore, the proposed project would not remove this easement from the project site and would be consistent with the land use policy governing this easement.

Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport CLUP

The Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport CLUP relies on the FAR Part 77 Notification Surface review process to regulate height restrictions. The proposed maximum building height of 82 feet would not require notification and review by the FAA to determine potential aviation hazard. Given the scale of the proposed project, the project would not conflict with the San José Mineta International Airport CLUP. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.11.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant land use and planning impact?

The geographic area for land use and planning impacts is citywide.

Like the proposed project, construction of the cumulative projects would consist of redevelopment of previously developed sites. Development of some of these sites would result in a change in use and/or an intensification of development. The compatibility of new development with adjacent land

uses, and the general character of surrounding areas are considered as part of Santa Clara's architectural and environmental review processes. Through appropriate site design review of these urban projects, impacts due to conflict with applicable plans and policies would be avoided.
The proposed project and all other cumulative projects would be required to comply with the General Plan. Since the General Plan is the regulatory document for land use impacts, the proposed project's compliance with this document means that the project would not result in cumulative impacts to land use. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant cumulative impact on land use. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.12 Mineral Resources

3.12.1 Environmental Setting

3.12.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) was enacted by the California legislature in 1975 to address the need for a continuing supply of mineral resources, and to prevent or minimize the negative impacts of surface mining to public health, property, and the environment. As mandated under SMARA, the State Geologist has designated mineral land classifications in order to help identify and protect mineral resources in areas within the state subject to urban expansion or other irreversible land uses which would preclude mineral extraction. SMARA also allowed the State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB), after receiving classification information from the State Geologist, to designate lands containing mineral deposits of regional or statewide significance.

3.12.1.2 Existing Conditions

The City of Santa Clara is located in an area zoned MRZ-1, which classifies an area where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present. The area is not known to support significant resources of any other type. No mineral resources are currently being extracted in the City. The State Office of Mine Reclamation's list of mines (the AB 3098 List) regulated under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) does not include any mines within the City.[71]

3.12.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on mineral resources, would the project:

1) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state?
2) 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?

[71] City of Santa Clara. 2010-2035 General Plan Integrated Final EIR. January 2011.

3.12.2.1 Project Impacts

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

As stated above, the proposed project is located in an area where no mineral resources exist or are expected to be encountered. Therefore, the proposed project would not impact the availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state. **(No Impact)**

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

As stated above, the proposed project is located in an area where no mineral resources exist or are expected to be encountered. Therefore, the proposed project would not impact the availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. **(No Impact)**

3.12.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant mineral resources impact?

The cumulative impact area for mineral resources is countywide. The proposed project would not impact the availability of mineral resources on site and would not contribute to a cumulatively significant mineral resources impact. **(No Cumulative Impact)**

3.13 Noise

The information in this section is based partially on the Noise and Vibration Assessment completed by Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. on June 10, 2025. This report is included as Appendix G of this EIR.

3.13.1 Environmental Setting

3.13.1.1 Background Information

Noise

Factors that influence sound as it is perceived by the human ear, include the actual level of sound, period of exposure, frequencies involved, and fluctuation in the noise level during exposure. Noise is measured on a decibel scale, which serves as an index of loudness. The zero on the decibel scale is based on the lowest sound level that the healthy, unimpaired human ear can detect. Each 10 decibel increase in sound level is perceived as approximately a doubling of loudness. Because the human ear cannot hear all pitches or frequencies, sound levels are frequently adjusted or weighted to correspond to human hearing. This adjusted unit is known as the A-weighted decibel, or dBA.

Since excessive noise levels can adversely affect human activities and human health, federal, state, and local governmental agencies have set forth criteria or planning goals to minimize or avoid these effects. Noise guidelines are generally expressed using one of several noise averaging methods, including L_{eq}, DNL, or CNEL.[72] These descriptors are used to measure a location's overall noise exposure, given that there are times when noise levels are higher (e.g., when a jet is taking off from an airport or when a leaf blower is operating) and times when noise levels are lower (e.g., during lulls in traffic flows on freeways or in the middle of the night). L_{max} is the maximum A-weighted noise level during a measurement period.

Vibration

Ground vibration consists of rapidly fluctuating motions or waves with an average motion of zero. Vibration amplitude can be quantified using Peak Particle Velocity (PPV), which is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration wave. PPV has been routinely used to measure and assess ground-borne construction vibration. Studies have shown that the threshold of perception for average persons is in the range of 0.008 to 0.012 inches/second (in/sec) PPV.

[72] L_{eq} is a measurement of average energy level intensity of noise over a given period of time. Day-Night Level (DNL) is a 24-hour average of noise levels, with a 10 dB penalty applied to noise occurring between 10:00 PM and 7:00 AM. Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) includes an additional five dB applied to noise occurring between 7:00 PM and 10:00 PM. Where traffic noise predominates, the CNEL and DNL are typically within two dBA of the peak-hour L_{eq}.

3.13.1.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal

Federal Transit Administration Vibration Limits

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has developed vibration impact assessment criteria for evaluating vibration impacts associated with transit projects. The FTA has proposed vibration impact criteria based on maximum overall levels for a single event. The impact criteria for groundborne vibration are shown in Table 3.13-1 below. These criteria can be applied to development projects in jurisdictions that lack vibration impact standards.

Table 3.13-1: Groundborne Vibration Impact Criteria

Land Use Category	Groundborne Vibration Impact Levels (VdB inch/sec)		
	Frequent Event	**Occasional Events**	**Infrequent Events**
Category 1: Buildings where vibration would interfere with interior operations	65	65	65
Category 2: Residences and buildings where people normally sleep	72	75	80
Category 3: Institutional land uses with primarily daytime use	75	78	83

Source: Federal Transit Administration. *Transit Noise and Vibration Assessment Manual.* September 2018.

State and Local

California Building Standards Code

The CBC establishes uniform minimum noise insulation performance standards to protect persons within new buildings housing people, including hotels, motels, dormitories, apartments, and dwellings other than single-family residences. Title 24 mandates that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources do not exceed 45 L_{dn}/CNEL in any habitable room. Exterior windows must have a minimum Sound Transmission Class (STC) of 40 or Outdoor-Indoor Transmission Class (OITC) of 30 when the property falls within the 65 dBA DNL noise contour for a freeway or expressway, railroad, or industrial source.

City of Santa Clara General Plan

The City's General Plan contains noise goals and policies in Chapter 5, Section 5.10.6 and Appendix 8.14. These goals and policies identify Normally Acceptable noise exposures for various land uses, including limits of 60 dB CNEL for residential exteriors and 45 dB CNEL for residential interiors. The standards also specify an interior limit of 50 dB CNEL for offices, retail and other less sensitive indoor spaces.

The General Plan also identifies the following policies that would be applicable to the project.

Policy	Description
5.10.6-P1	Review all land use and development proposals for consistency with the General Plan Compatibility standards and acceptable noise exposure levels.
5.10.6-P2	Incorporate noise attenuation measures for all projects that have noise exposure levels greater than General Plan "normally acceptable" levels.
5.10.6-P3	New development should include noise control techniques to reduce noise to acceptable levels, including site layout (setbacks, separation and shielding), building treatments (mechanical ventilation system, sound-rated windows, solid core doors and baffling) and structural measures (earthen berms and sound walls).
5.10.6-P4	Encourage the control of noise at the source through site design, building design, landscaping, hours of operation and other techniques.
5.10.6-P5	Require noise-generating uses near residential neighborhoods to include solid walls and heavy landscaping along common property lines, and to place compressors and mechanical equipment in sound-proof enclosures.

Santa Clara City Code

Section 9.10.040 of the City Code establishes noise level performance standards for fixed sources of noise, as seen below in Schedule A. Noise levels at single-family residences, multi-family residences, and at public spaces are limited to 55 dBA during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and 50 dBA at night (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.). Noise levels at commercial and office uses are limited to 65 dBA during daytime hours and 60 dBA during nighttime hours. Section 9.10.060(c) states that if the measured ambient noise level at any given location differs from those levels set forth in Schedule A, the allowable noise exposure standard shall be adjusted in five dBA increments in each category as appropriate to encompass or reflect the ambient noise level.

Schedule A

Receiving Zone	Noise Level (dBA) 7:00am – 10:00 pm	Noise Level (dBA) 10:00 pm – 7:00 am
Single-family and duplex residential	55	50
Multiple-family residential, public space	55	50
Commercial, Office	65	60
Light Industrial	70	70
Heavy Industrial	75	75

Section 9.10.230 prohibits construction activities permitted within 300 feet of residentially zoned property except within the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No construction is permitted on Sundays or holidays. Section 9.10.070 exempts construction activities which occur during allowed hours from Schedule A noise limits.

The City Code does not define the acoustical time descriptor such as L_{eq} (the average noise level) or L_{max} (the maximum instantaneous noise level) that is associated with the above limits. A reasonable interpretation of the City Code would identify the ambient base noise level criteria as an average or median noise level (L_{eq}/L_{50}).

3.13.1.3 Existing Conditions

The project site is currently developed with a golf course and is bounded by Saratoga Avenue to the east, Pruneridge Avenue to the south, San Tomas Expressway to the west, and the remaining portion of the golf course and driving range to the north. The primary noise environment at the project site and in the surrounding areas results from vehicular traffic along Saratoga Avenue, Pruneridge Avenue, and San Tomas Expressway. Aircraft noise associated with San José Mineta International Airport, approximately 2.4 miles northeast of the project site, also contributes to the noise environment.

Two long term noise measurements and five short term noise measurements were taken on-site to quantify the existing noise environment at the project site. The first long-term noise measurement (LT-1) was conducted approximately 100 feet east of the center of San Tomas Expressway, near the western side of the project site. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)[73] for a 24-hour period was 74 dBA. The second long-term noise measurement (LT-2) was made approximately 140 feet west of the center of Saratoga Avenue, near the eastern side of the project site. The noise exposure for the 24-hour period was 63 dBA CNEL.

The five short term measurements were carried out in the locations shown in Figure 3.13-1 below. The measurements conducted at these locations are summarized in Table 3.13-2 below.

Table 3.13-2 Short Term Noise Measurement Data

Noise Measurement Location	Date, Time	Maximum Noise Level	10-minute Average Noise level	Total Range of Noise Levels
ST-1: 320 feet from the centerline of San Tomas Expressway	5/28/2024, 11:20-11:30 am	61	54	41 - 61
ST-2: 120 feet from the centerline of San Tomas Expressway	5/28/2024, 11:40-11:50 am	77	64	49 - 77
ST-3: 65 feet from the centerline of Pruneridge Avenue	5/28/2024, 12:00-12:10 pm	71	61	53 - 71
ST-4: 195 feet from the centerline of Pruneridge Avenue	5/28/2024, 12:20-12:30 pm	58	52	48 - 55
ST-5: 105 feet from the centerline of Pruneridge Avenue	5/28/2024, 12:40-12:50 pm	73	60	53 - 73

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Noise and Vibration Assessment. June 10, 2025

[73] a measure of the cumulative noise exposure in a community, with a five dB penalty added to evening (7:00 pm - 10:00 pm) and a 10 dB addition to nocturnal (10:00 pm - 7:00 am) noise levels.



SHORT TERM NOISE MEASUREMENT LOCATIONS | FIGURE 3.13-1

3.13.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on noise, would the project result in:

1) 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?
2) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?
3) 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?

3.13.2.1 Project Impacts

a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Construction Noise Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project would result in construction activity from January 2027 to February 2029, and would utilize a variety of equipment for demolition, site preparation, grading, trenching, building construction, architectural coating, and paving. The noise levels from this equipment would vary depending on the location of the equipment and how many pieces of equipment are operating at the same time.

The City's Code limits construction activities (including the loading and unloading of materials and truck movements) within 300 feet of residentially zoned property between the hours of 7:00 am to 6:00 pm on weekdays and between the hours of 9:00 am and 6:00 pm on Saturdays. No construction is permitted on Sundays or holidays. The City of Santa Clara does not establish specific noise thresholds; therefore, for the purpose of identifying potential noise impacts, this analysis utilizes the noise limits established by the FTA to identify substantial construction noise impacts. During daytime hours, an exterior threshold of 80 dBA Leq shall be applied for residential land uses, 85 dBA Leq shall be applied at commercial land uses, and 90 dBA Leq shall be applied at industrial land uses.

Based on the equipment expected to be utilized for construction at the project site, the estimated noise levels were modeled for each phase of construction. The noise levels expected at 50 feet from the apartment, park, and golf course portions of the project are summarized below in Tables 3.13-3, 3.13-4, and 3.13-5 below.

Table 3.13-3: Estimated Construction Noise Levels for Apartment Building

Phase of Construction	Total Workdays	Construction Equipment	Estimated Construction Noise Level at 50 feet
Demolition	20	Concrete/Industrial Saw (1) Excavator (1) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (3)	84 dBA Leq
Site Preparation	15	Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (2)	77 dBA Leq
Grading/Excavation	50	Excavator (1) Grader (1) Concrete/Industrial Saw (1) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (3)	85 dBA Leq
Trenching/Foundations	100	Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (1) Excavator (1)	78 dBA Leq
Building – Exterior	320	Crane (2) Forklift (2) Generator Set (4) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (4) Welder (3) Cement Mixer (2)	81 dBA Leq
Building – Interior/ Coating	320	Air Compressor (10) Aerial Lift (8)	77 dBA Leq
Paving	10	Paver (1) Paving Equipment (1) Roller (1) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (1)	77 dBA Leq

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Noise and Vibration Assessment. June 10, 2025

Table 3.13-4: Estimated Construction Noise Levels for the Golf Course

Phase of Construction	Total Workdays	Construction Equipment	Estimated Construction Noise Level at 50 feet
Demolition	45	Concrete/Industrial Saw (1) Rubber-Tired Dozer (1) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (3)	84 dBA Leq
Site Preparation	15	Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (2)	77 dBA Leq
Grading/Excavation	45	Grader (1) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (3)	82 dBA Leq

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Noise and Vibration Assessment. June 10, 2025

Table 3.13-5: Estimated Construction Noise Levels for the Public Park

Phase of Construction	Total Workdays	Construction Equipment	Estimated Construction Noise Level at 50 feet
Demolition	45	Concrete/Industrial Saw (1) Rubber-Tired Dozer (1) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (3)	84 dBA Leq
Site Preparation	15	Grader (1) Rubber-Tired Dozer (1) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (2)	83 dBA Leq
Grading/Excavation	45	Grader (1) Rubber-Tired Dozer (1) Tractor/Loader/Backhoe (3)	83 dBA Leq

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Noise and Vibration Assessment. June 10, 2025

Based on the data above, construction noise levels were estimated at the sensitive receptors near the project site. These noise levels are summarized below in Tables 3.13-6, 3.13-7, and 3.13-8.

Table 3.13-6: Estimated Construction Noise from Apartment Construction at Nearby Land Uses

Phase of Construction	South Commercial (220 ft)	West Residential (280 ft)	North Residential (315 ft)	East Residential (955 ft)
Demolition	71 dBA Leq	69 dBA Leq	68 dBA Leq	58 dBA Leq
Site Preparation	64 dBA Leq	62 dBA Leq	61 dBA Leq	51 dBA Leq
Grading/Excavation	72 dBA Leq	70 dBA Leq	69 dBA Leq	59 dBA Leq
Trenching/Foundations	66 dBA Leq	64 dBA Leq	63 dBA Leq	53 dBA Leq
Building – Exterior	68 dBA Leq	66 dBA Leq	65 dBA Leq	55 dBA Leq
Building – Interior/ Coating	64 dBA Leq	62 dBA Leq	61 dBA Leq	51 dBA Leq
Paving	64 dBA Leq	62 dBA Leq	61 dBA Leq	52 dBA Leq

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Noise and Vibration Assessment. June 10, 2025

Table 3.13-7: Estimated Construction Noise from Golf Course Construction at Nearby Land Uses

Phase of Construction	South Commercial (220 ft)	West Residential (280 ft)	North Residential (315 ft)	East Residential (955 ft)
Demolition	63 dBA Leq	67 dBA Leq	78 dBA Leq	64 dBA Leq
Site Preparation	56 dBA Leq	63 dBA Leq	71 dBA Leq	57 dBA Leq
Grading/Excavation	61 dBA Leq	68 dBA Leq	76 dBA Leq	62 dBA Leq

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Noise and Vibration Assessment. June 10, 2025

Table 3.13-8: Estimated Construction Noise from Public Park Construction at Nearby Land Uses

Phase of Construction	South Commercial (220 ft)	West Residential (280 ft)	North Residential (315 ft)	East Residential (955 ft)
Demolition	72 dBA Leq	59 dBA Leq	63 dBA Leq	64 dBA Leq
Site Preparation	71 dBA Leq	58 dBA Leq	62 dBA Leq	63 dBA Leq
Grading/Excavation	71 dBA Leq	58 dBA Leq	62 dBA Leq	53 dBA Leq

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Noise and Vibration Assessment. June 10, 2025

As shown in Tables 3.13-6 through 3.13-8, construction noise levels would range from 51 to 78 dBA Leq at nearby residential land uses and from 56 to 72 dBA Leq at nearby commercial land uses. These construction noise levels would not exceed the exterior FTA threshold of 80 dBA Leq at residential land uses, or the 85 dBA Leq threshold for commercial land uses near the site. A worst-case scenario would occur if the center of construction activities was on a property line. Under this condition, however, construction noise levels would still not exceed the thresholds at the nearest residential and commercial land uses. The golf course would be closed during demolition and grading activities so golf course users would not be in proximity to the noise sources during construction. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in excessive construction noise and would have a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Operational Noise Impacts

Operational noise from the proposed project would be associated with project traffic, rooftop and ground level mechanical equipment, and operations at the maintenance yard.

Project Traffic

Operational noise impacts from project traffic would occur if project generated traffic would increase noise levels by three dBA CNEL or more. Based on the number of trips generated by the proposed project, ambient noise levels surrounding the project site would be increased by less than one dBA CNEL. Therefore, traffic would not result in an operational noise impact.

Mechanical Equipment

Under the City Code, noise generated by fixed sources would be restricted to 55 dBA during daytime hours (7:00 am to 10:00 pm) and to 50 dBA during nighttime hours (10:00 pm to 7:00 am) at residentially zoned land uses. At existing commercial land uses, noise would be restricted to 65 dBA during daytime hours and to 60 dBA during nighttime hours.

Based on the location of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) on the roof of the proposed apartment building, operation of the five HVAC units simultaneously would result in a noise level of approximately 70 dBA at three feet. The equipment would be shielded by parapets on the rooftop. Based on the shielding and the distance of the equipment from noise receptors, noise generated by the HVAC units would be below the ambient noise levels in the area and not audible at any property lines near the project site.

Maintenance Shop and Yard

The site plan shows that a maintenance shop and yard will be located near the east side of the apartment building, near the public park. Noises related to the yard could include small trucks, forklifts and maintenance vehicles. Worst case noise levels associated with these uses is 68 dBA Leq. Based on the distance of the yard from residential and commercial uses, and the fact that the yard would be enclosed with a six-foot wall, the maintenance shop would not affect ambient noise levels in the area.

The operational noise levels produced by the proposed project, combined, would not result in a measurable noise level increase and would not exceed the City's daytime or nighttime thresholds at receptors surrounding the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant operational noise impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

Construction Vibratory Impacts

The construction of the project may generate vibration when heavy equipment or impact tools, such as jackhammers and hoe rams, are used. Construction activities for the proposed project would include grading, foundation work, paving, and building framing/ finishing. The proposed project would not require and does not propose impact or vibratory pile driving activities.

To determine structural damage resulting from vibration, the California Department of Transportation recommends a vibration limit of 0.5 in/sec PPV for structurally sound buildings, 0.3 in/sec PPV for buildings where structural damage is a major concern, and a conservative limit of 0.25 in/sec PPV for some historic buildings.

No listed historic buildings are adjacent to the project site; therefore, a groundborne vibration level threshold of 0.3 in/sec PPV has been used. The vibratory levels of the proposed project construction on nearby receptors are summarized below in Table 3.13-9.

Table 3.13-9: Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment (in/sec, PPV)

Equipment	PPV at 25 ft. (in/sec)	South Commercial (120 feet)	West Residential (170 feet)	North Residential (165 feet)	East Residential (205 feet)
Clam shovel drop	0.202	0.036	0.025	0.025	0.020
Hydromill in soil	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
Hydromill in rock	0.003	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002
Vibratory Roller	0.210	0.037	0.025	0.026	0.021

Hoe Ram	0.089	0.016	0.011	0.011	0.009
Large Bulldozer	0.089	0.016	0.011	0.011	0.009
Caisson Drilling	0.089	0.016	0.011	0.011	0.009
Loaded Trucks	0.076	0.014	0.009	0.010	0.008
Jackhammer	0.035	0.006	0.004	0.004	0.003
Small Bulldozer	0.003	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 400 Saratoga Avenue Noise and Vibration Assessment. June 10, 2025

Based on the vibration levels associated with the construction of the proposed project, the vibrations from construction activity at the boundary of the project site would not exceed the 0.3 in/sec PPV level. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not result in excessive groundborne vibration for nearby receptors and would have a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Operational Vibratory Impacts

The proposed project would not introduce uses to the project site that would have high operational vibratory impacts, such as heavy machinery or large truck trips. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the generation of excessive groundborne vibration during vibration. **(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 project site is located approximately 2.4 miles from San José Mineta International Airport. The project site is not located within an area identified as having noise levels above 65 dBA and, therefore, would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. **(No Impact)**

3.13.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant noise impact?

Cumulative impacts related to noise include the area associated with the project site and directly surrounding the site. Cumulative noise impacts would include either cumulative traffic noise increases under future conditions or temporary construction noise from multiple construction projects.

A significant cumulative traffic noise increase would occur if two criteria were satisfied. One is if the cumulative traffic noise level increase was three dBA CNEL or greater for areas with ambient noise exceeding 60 dBA CNEL or five dBA CNEL or greater in areas with ambient noise below 60 dBA CNEL.

The other criteria is if the project would make a "cumulatively considerable" contribution to the overall traffic noise increase. The definition of a "cumulatively considerable" contribution would be defined as an increase of one dBA CNEL or more attributable solely to the proposed project.

The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution along any roadway segments with noise-sensitive receptors. Therefore, the project would not result in a cumulative noise increase due to traffic.

Additionally, based on a review of other nearby development projects, there are no other planned or approved projects located within 1,000 feet of the proposed project. Therefore, the noise-sensitive receptors surrounding the project site would not be subject to cumulative construction impacts. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant noise impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.13.3 Non-CEQA Effects

Per *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District,* 62 Cal. 4th 369 (2015) *(BIA v. BAAQMD)*, effects of the environment on the project are not considered CEQA impacts. The following discussion is included for informational purposes only because the City/County of Santa Clara has policies that address existing noise conditions affecting a proposed project. Specifically, Section 9.10.040 of the Code provides noise limits for residential, commercial and industrial land uses in the City.

Future Exterior Noise Environment

The new residential building would include a centrally located ground floor outdoor courtyard that would be shielded from traffic noise, and a fifth-floor outdoor dining area on the east side of the building. A public park area would also be located on the east side of the building.

Considering the shielding provided by the building, the ground floor outdoor courtyard would be exposed to future exterior noise levels of approximately 44 dBA CNEL. The center of the fifth-floor outdoor dining area would be exposed to future exterior noise levels lower than 50 dBA CNEL. These areas would experience noise below the City's 55 dBA CNEL standard.

The public park would not be shielded from traffic noise and would be exposed to future exterior noise levels ranging from approximately 57 to 66 dBA CNEL. Based on the location of the park, the majority of the public park would be in the Generally Acceptable Land Use Category for neighborhood parks, as defined by the City. Exterior noise thresholds are not enforced at private balconies, porches, or front yard areas.

Future Interior Noise Environment

Standard residential construction practices reduce noise levels by approximately 15 dBA between the inside and outside noise levels, assuming the windows are partially open for ventilation. With

the windows fully closed noise would be reduced by approximately 20 to 25 dBA inside residential units. Where noise levels exceed 65 dBA CNEL, forced-air mechanical ventilation systems and sound-rated construction methods are normally required. Common methods or materials for sound reduction include a combination of smaller window and door sizes, sound-rated windows and doors, sound rated exterior wall assemblies, and mechanical ventilation so windows may be kept closed.

Residential units located on the south side of the project site, facing Pruneridge Avenue, would be exposed to exterior noise levels up to 66 dBA CNEL. On the west side of the building, the residential units facing San Tomas Expressway would be exposed to exterior noise levels of up to 74 dBA CNEL. If windows to be partially open in these units, future interior noise levels would be up to 51 dBA CNEL facing Pruneridge Avenue and up to 59 dBA CNEL facing San Tomas Expressway.

The north side of the building would be exposed to exterior noise levels ranging from 57 to 71 dBA CNEL, closer to San Tomas Expressway. The eastern side of the building, near the public park, would be exposed to exterior noise levels ranging from 58 to 61 dBA CNEL, closer to Pruneridge Avenue. If the windows of these units were partially open, the interior noise levels in these units would range from 42 to 56 dBA CNEL on the north side of the building, and from 43 to 46 dBA CNEL on the east side of the building. All other residential units would be exposed to noise levels of 55 dBA CNEL or less and would have interior noise levels of 45 dBA CNEL or less with windows partially open.

To meet the interior noise requirements set forth by the State of California of 45 dBA CNEL, implementation of noise insulation features would be required as a Condition of Approval.

Noise Insulation Features to Reduce Future Interior Noise Levels

The following noise insulation features shall be incorporated into the proposed project to reduce interior noise levels to 45 dBA CNEL or less at residential interiors:

- Provide a suitable form of forced-air mechanical ventilation, as determined by the local building official, for all residential units on the project site, so that windows can be kept closed at the occupant's discretion to control interior noise and achieve the interior noise standards.
- Residential units along the western façade of the building, facing San Tomas Expressway, would require windows and doors with a minimum rating of 33 to 35 STC.
- Residential units along the northern building façade, nearest to San Tomas Expressway, would require windows and doors with a minimum rating of 29 to 30.

The implementation of these design features would reduce interior noise levels to 45 dBA CNEL or less. Standard construction materials, with adequate forced-air mechanical ventilation, would be sufficient for all other residential units.

Conditions of Approval

Interior Noise Standard for Residential Development. The project applicant shall prepare final design plans that incorporate building design and acoustical treatments to ensure compliance with State Building Codes and City noise standards. A project-specific acoustical analysis shall be prepared to ensure that the design incorporates controls to reduce interior noise levels to 45 dBA CNEL or lower within the residential units. The project applicant shall conform to any special building construction techniques required by the City's Building Department, which may include sound-rated windows and doors, sound-rated wall constructions, and acoustical caulking.

3.14 Population and Housing

3.14.1 Environmental Setting

3.14.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Housing-Element Law

State requirements mandating that housing be included as an element of each jurisdiction's general plan is known as housing-element law. The Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) is the state-mandated process to identify the total number of housing units (by affordability level) that each jurisdiction must accommodate in its housing element. California housing-element law requires cities to: 1) zone adequate lands to accommodate its RHNA; 2) produce an inventory of sites that can accommodate its share of the RHNA; 3) identify governmental and non-governmental constraints to residential development; 4) develop strategies and a work plan to mitigate or eliminate those constraints; and 5) adopt a housing element and update it on a regular basis.[74] The City of Santa Clara Housing Element and related land use policies were last updated in May 2024.

Regional and Local

Plan Bay Area 2050

Plan Bay Area 2050 is a long-range plan for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area that provides strategies that increase the availability of affordable housing, support a more equitable and efficient economy, improve the transportation network, and enhance the region's environmental resilience. Plan Bay Area 2050 promotes the development of a variety of housing types and densities within identified Priority Development Areas (PDAs). PDAs are areas generally near existing job centers or frequent transit that are locally identified for housing and job growth.[75]

ABAG allocates regional housing needs to each city and county within the San Francisco Bay Area, based on statewide goals. These allocations are designed to lay the foundation for Plan Bay Area 2050's long-term envisioned growth pattern for the region. ABAG also develops a series of forecasts and models to project the growth of population, housing units, and jobs in the Bay Area. ABAG, MTC, and local jurisdiction planning staff created the Forecasting and Modeling Report, which is a technical overview of the growth forecasts and land use models upon which Plan Bay Area 2050 is based.

[74] California Department of Housing and Community Development. "Regional Housing Needs Allocation and Housing Elements" Accessed March 6, 2025. http://hcd.ca.gov/community-development/housing-element/index.shtml.

[75] Association of Bay Area Governments and Metropolitan Transportation Commission. *Plan Bay Area 2050*. October 21, 2021. Page 20.

Santa Clara General Plan

General Plan policies related to population and housing that are relevant to the project include the following.

Policy	Description
5.3.2-P1	Encourage the annual construction of the housing units necessary to meet the City's regional housing needs assessment by reducing constraints to housing finance and development.
5.3.2-P2	Encourage higher-density residential development in transit and mixed-use areas and in other locations throughout the City where appropriate.
5.3.2-P6	Provide adequate choices for housing tenure, type and location, including higher density, and affordability for low- and moderate-income and special needs households.

3.14.1.2 Existing Conditions

According to the California Department of Finance, the City had a population of approximately 132,048 residents in 53,519 households as of January 2024.[76] There are approximately 137,000 jobs in the City (estimated by ABAG for 2020). In 2035, it is estimated that the City will have approximately 154,825 residents, 54,830 households, 154,300 jobs and 72,080 employed residents.[77]

The jobs/housing relationship is quantified by the jobs/employed resident ratio. When the ratio reaches 1.0, a balance is struck between the supply of local housing and jobs. The jobs/housing resident ratio is determined by dividing the number of local jobs by the number of employed residents that can be housed in local housing.

The City of Santa Clara had an estimated 2.50 jobs for every employed resident in 2010.[78] The General Plan focuses on increased housing and the placement of housing near employment. As a result, the jobs to housing ratio is projected to slightly decrease to 2.48 by 2040.[79] Some employees who work within the City are, and still would be, required to seek housing outside the community with full implementation of the General Plan.

The existing project site is developed with a golf course and a parking lot and does not contribute to the current permanent resident population of the City.

3.14.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on population and housing, would the project:

[76] California Department of Finance. "E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates." May 2022. Accessed: March 2025. http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/E-5/.
[77] City of Santa Clara. 2010-2035 General Plan. December 2014.
[78] City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan. December 2014. Appendix 8.12 (Housing Element). Page 8.12-25.
[79] City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report. 2011.

1) 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)?
2) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

3.14.2.1 Project Impacts

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

The project site is currently used as a golf course and is zoned for parkland or other open space. With approval of the proposed General Plan Amendment, the project would result in an increase of approximately 316 residential units on-site. The 316 residential units would result in an additional approximately 809 new residents on-site compared to the development assumed in the General Plan.[80] This would be a minimal increase (less than one percent) in the overall population of the City of Santa Clara and would be generally consistent with the City's planned growth in residential areas of the City. For these reasons, the proposed development project would not result in substantial unplanned population growth. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The project site does not have housing within the boundaries of the golf course; therefore, the proposed project would not result in the displacement of people or housing in the area. **(No Impact)**

3.14.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant population and housing impact?

As stated above, the proposed project would place housing on the project site, which would result in a net increase in housing within the City, above the assumed build out in the General Plan. The projected growth in the City is approximately 50,000 people over the next 15 years.[81] The proposed

[80] 316 residential units x 2.56 residents per unit = 809 residents
Source: California Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2020-2022, available at http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/E-5/. Accessed April 10, 2025.
[81] City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan. December 2014. Appendix 8.12 (Housing Element). Page 8.12-25.

project would result in approximately 809 new residents which is not part of the planned population growth of the City. This increase is not a significant expansion in the growth of the City and supports the City goals to meet Regional Housing Needs Allocations established by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Additionally, the proposed development project would not result in a loss of housing and, therefore, would not result in a cumulative increase in lost housing. Therefore, the proposed development project would not result in a cumulatively significant population and housing impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.15 Public Services

3.15.1 Environmental Setting

3.15.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Government Code Section 66477

The California Legislature enacted the Quimby Act (Government Code Section 66477) to ensure that new residential developments set aside sufficient parkland and open space for recreational purposes. It provides provisions for the dedication of parkland and/or payment of fees in lieu of parkland dedication to help mitigate the impacts from new residential developments. The Quimby Act authorizes local governments to establish ordinances requiring developers of new residential subdivisions to dedicate parks, pay a fee in lieu of parkland dedication, or perform a combination of the two.

Government Code Section 65995 through 65998

California Government Code Section 65996 specifies that an acceptable method of offsetting a project's effect on the adequacy of school facilities is the payment of a school impact fee prior to the issuance of a building permit. Government Code Sections 65995 through 65998 set forth provisions for the payment of school impact fees by new development by "mitigating impacts on school facilities that occur (as a result of the planning, use, or development of real property" (Section 65996[a]). The legislation states that the payment of school impact fees "are hereby deemed to provide full and complete school facilities mitigation" under CEQA (Section 65996[b]).

Developers are required to pay a school impact fee to the school district to offset the increased demands on school facilities caused by the proposed residential development project. The school district is responsible for implementing the specific methods for mitigating school impacts under the Government Code.

School Impact Fees

California Government Code Section 65996 specifies that an acceptable method of offsetting a project's effect on the adequacy of school facilities is the payment of a school impact fee prior to the issuance of a building permit. Sections 65995-65998 set forth provisions for the payment of school impact fees by new development for "mitigating impacts on school facilities that occur (as a result of the planning, use, or development of real property" (Section 65996[a]). The legislation goes on to say that the payment of school impact fees "are hereby deemed to provide full and complete school facilities mitigation" under CEQA (Section 65996[b]).

In accordance with California Government Code Section 65996, developers pay a school impact fee to the school district to offset the increased demands on school facilities caused by their proposed

residential development projects. The school district is responsible for implementing the specific methods for mitigating school impacts under the Government Code.

Regional and Local

City of Santa Clara 2010 – 2035 General Plan

The City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan includes policies and programs to provide public services throughout the City. Applicable General Plan policies include, but are not limited to, the following listed below.

Policies	Description
5.4.3-P3	Provide pedestrian-oriented ground floor uses and a network of parks and public spaces to serve both residential and non-residential development.
5.9.3-P1	Encourage design techniques that promote public and property safety in new development and public spaces.
5.9.1-P2	Develop new parks to serve the needs of the surrounding community based on the criteria for mini (less than one acre, appropriate for all areas), neighborhood (1-15 acres, appropriate for medium- and high-density residential areas serving individual neighborhoods), and community (over 15 acres, appropriate for medium- and high-density residential areas serving the City as a whole) parks.
5.9.3-P3	Maintain a City-wide average three minute response time for 90 percent of police emergency service calls.
5.9.3-P4	Maintain a City-wide average three minute response time for fire emergency service calls.
5.9.1-P5	Encourage public visibility for all parks, trails and open spaces.
5.9.1-P14	Encourage publicly accessible open space in new development.
5.9.1-P15	Provide opportunities for private maintenance of publicly accessible open space and trails.
5.9.1-P17	Foster site design for new development so that building height and massing do not overshadow new parks and plazas.
5.9.1-P18	Promote open space and recreational facilities in large-scale developments in order to meet a portion of the demand for parks generated by new development.
5.9.1-P20	Promote the continuation of parks per population ratio of 2.4 per 1,000 residents and explore the potential to increase the ratio to 3.0, based on the Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment (Parks Master Plan), referenced in Plan Prerequisite 5.1.1-P24.

Countywide Trails Master Plan

The Santa Clara County Trails Master Plan Update is a regional trails plan approved by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. It provides a framework for implementing the County's vision of providing a contiguous trail network that connects cities to one another, cities to the county's regional open space resources, County parks to other County parks, and the northern and southern urbanized regions of the County. The plan identifies regional trail routes, sub-regional trail routes, connector trail routes, and historic trails.

Parkland Dedication Ordinance

On July 15, 2014, the Santa Clara City Council adopted Ordinance Number 1928 adding Chapter 17.35 ("Park and Recreational Land") to Title 17 ("Development") of the Santa Clara City Code. The purpose of Chapter 17.35 is to help mitigate the impacts of new housing development growth on existing parkland and recreational facilities, consistent with the provisions of the State of California's Quimby Act (Quimby Act) and the California Mitigation Fee Act (MFA). Chapter 17.35 requires new residential developments to provide developed park and recreational facilities and/or pay a fee in-lieu of parkland dedication, at the City's discretion. For subdivisions of 50 units or less, the City may choose to accept only a fee in-lieu of the parkland dedication requirement. The City is meeting the parkland dedication standard of three acres per 1,000 residents per the Quimby Act provisions of the City Code and 2.6 acres per 1,000 residents per the MFA provisions of the City Code with regard to neighborhood parks.

3.15.1.2 Existing Conditions

Fire Protection Services

Fire protection services are provided by the City of Santa Clara Fire Department (SCFD). The SCFD is comprised of 169 sworn firefighters and nine fire stations.[82] The nearest station to the project is Station No. 4, located at 2323 Pruneridge Avenue, approximately 725 feet east of the site.

Police Protection Services

Police protection services are provided by the Santa Clara Police Department (SCPD). The SCPD is divided into four divisions: Services, Field Operations, Investigations, and Special Operations, and has approximately 153 sworn officers and 79 civilians.[83] There are currently two police stations, the headquarters located at 601 El Camino Real and a substation located at 3992 Rivermark Parkway. The distance between the project site and the police headquarters is approximately 1.9 miles. The distance between the project site and substation is approximately 4.3 miles.

Schools

Schools that serve grades K-12 in the City of Santa Clara are operated by six school districts: Santa Clara Unified School District (SCUSD), San José Unified School District, Cupertino Union School District, Fremont Union High School District, Campbell Union School District, and Campbell Union High School District. The project site is located within the service area of the SCUSD. Students in the project area attend Westwood Elementary School, located at 435 Saratoga Avenue, approximately 900 feet northeast of the project site; Buchser Middle School located at 1111 Bellomy Street, approximately 1.35 miles northeast of the project site; and Santa Clara High School, located at 3000 Benton Street, approximately 1.45 miles northwest of the project site.

[82] City of Santa Clara. About Us: Fire Department. https://www.santaclaraca.gov/our-city/departments-a-f/fire-department/about-us. Accessed October 9, 2025.
[83] City of Santa Clara, Police Department. Fact Sheet. https://www.santaclaraca.gov/our-city/departments-g-z/police-department/about-us/fact-sheet. Accessed March 6, 2025.

Parks

The Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department (Department) provides parks and recreational services in the City. The Department is responsible for maintaining and programming the various parks and recreation facilities and works cooperatively with public agencies in coordinating recreational activities within the City. Overall, the Department maintains and operates Central Park, a 45.04-acre community park (45.04 acres improved and Central Park North 34.93 acres unimproved, totaling 79.97 acres), neighborhood parks (127.13 acres improved and 5.22 acres unimproved, totaling 132.35 acres), mini parks (5.1 acres), public open space (16.13 acres improved and 40.08 acres unimproved, totaling 56.21 acres), recreational facilities (24.20 acres improved and excluding the BMX track), recreational trails (8.99 acres improved and 0.20 acres unimproved, totaling 9.19 acres), and joint use facilities (4.4 acres) throughout the City totaling approximately 231.01 improved acres and 80.43 unimproved acres. Community parks are over fifteen acres, neighborhood parks are one to fifteen acres and mini parks are typically less than one acre in size.

Santa Clara City Code Chapter 17.35 requires new residential developments to provide developed park and recreational land and/or pay a fee in-lieu of parkland dedication, at the City's discretion, and pursuant to the Quimby Act and/or the MFA to help mitigate the impacts of the new resident demand on existing parkland and recreational facilities.

The City is meeting the standard of three acres per 1,000 residents per the Quimby provisions of the City Code and 2.60 acres per 1,000 residents per the MFA provisions of the City Code with regard to neighborhood parks.

The nearest park to the project site is Mary Gomez Park and Aquatic Center, approximately 500 feet north of the site. This eight-acre park includes aquatic facilities, a children's playground, picnic tables, BBQ facilities, basketball courts, tennis courts, open grass area, restrooms, and parking.

Libraries

There are three libraries in the City of Santa Clara. Central Park Library is the largest Santa Clara City Library facility located at 2635 Homestead Road, approximately 0.6 miles north of the project site. This library is also located closest to the project site. The second nearest library is Mission Library Family Reading Center, located at 1098 Lexington Street, approximately 1.35 miles northeast of the project site. The third is the Northside Branch located at 695 Moreland Way, approximately 4.3 miles northeast of the project site.

3.15.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on public services, 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:

1) Fire protection?
2) Police protection?
3) Schools?
4) Parks?
5) Other public facilities?

3.15.2.1 Project Impacts

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

The certified General Plan EIR concluded that the existing fire station facilities have capacity to support fire personnel without the need to expand or construct new facilities.[84] However, the new development would result in an increase in the resident population by approximately 809 residents, across 316 units, above the General Plan predicted population growth. The project site is currently served by the SCFD and could continue to be served by the existing facilities without requiring the construction of new or altered facilities because the number of residences would not necessitate a new fire station to meet emergency response demands.[85]

In addition, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with current fire codes, including those specifying emergency vehicle access and reduction of fire hazards. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on fire protection services. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

[84] City of Santa Clara. 2010-2035 General Plan Integrated Final Environmental Impact Report. SCH# 2008092005. January 2011. Pages 206 to 207.
[85] City of Santa Clara. 2010-2035 General Plan Integrated Final Environmental Impact Report. SCH# 2008092005. January 2011. Pages 209.

As described in Impact a), the project would result in a minimal population increase and resultant increase in demand for public services, including police protection. The General Plan FEIR concluded that, if additional police officers are needed, they could be housed in the existing facilities.

The proposed project would result in a General Plan Amendment which would allow the construction of housing on the project site. Although the proposed project and the General Plan Amendment would result in an increase in the population beyond the level analyzed in the General Plan FEIR, the number of residences would not necessitate a new police station to meet emergency response demands. There would be no need for the construction of new or expanded facilities.[86] The project would be adequately served by existing police protection facilities. Therefore, the proposed development project would result in a less than significant impact on police protection services. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The proposed project would construct a residential development which would generate new students for the schools in the SCUSD. Based on multi-family unit student generation rates, the proposed project would generate approximately 28 elementary school students, 11 middle school students, and 16 high school students.[87] In addition, the proposed project would be required to pay school impact fees consistent with AB1600 to support any additional facilities consistent with the General Plan.

The General Plan EIR determined that SCUSD had four closed school sites that could be used to serve new development or could choose to modify school catchment areas or add modular classrooms to accommodate new students. Further the SCUSD identified capacity for 4,483 new students in the school district across all facilities. Therefore, because the proposed project's student generation would be a small portion of the capacity of SCUSD schools, new students generated by the project could be served in existing facilities. Additionally, the project would pay the mandated impact fees, therefore the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on school services. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

[86] City of Santa Clara. 2010-2035 General Plan Integrated Final Environmental Impact Report. SCH#2008092005. January 2011. Page 207.

[87] Santa Clara Unified School District Residential and CID Development School Fee Justification Study. March 28, 2024.
Elementary = 316 units x 0.0881 students/unit = 28 students
Middle School = 316 units x 0.0361 students/unit = 11 students
High School = 316 units x 0.0495 students/unit = 16 students

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

The proposed project would increase the population beyond the planned population in the General Plan. This would result in greater use of recreational facilities than expected in the General Plan. The proposed project would dedicate a 1.7-acre area of the project site to the City of Santa Clara to improve as a park. The proposed project would result in an increase in population of approximately 758 residents[88] which would increase the demand for parks and recreation areas by approximately 1.97 acres. Accounting for the park dedication, the proposed project would require approximately 0.27 acres of additional park area to meet Quimby provisions of the SCCC. Consistent with the Quimby Act and the MFA, impacts from the new resident demand on existing parkland and recreational facilities would be mitigated through in-lieu fees. Therefore, through the park dedication and payment of fees, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on parks and recreation performance objectives. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The addition of approximately 809 residents[89] on-site would result in an increase in demand for public library facilities. The increase would not, however, result in substantial adverse impacts on the existing libraries, or other facilities, and would not require the construction of new facilities. According to the General Plan FEIR, the development consistent with the General Plan land use diagram may result in exceedance of the service ratio for libraries in the City of Santa Clara. The residents in the proposed project would exceed General Plan densities for the site, however, the City of Santa Clara identified that additional residents would not cause the City to fall below their service goals for library services. No new library facilities would need to be constructed to support the proposed project because the City's library system would have capacity to serve the additional residents. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on library services in the City. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

[88] For purposes of the City's parkland dedication requirements, the City relies upon census data to calculate the number of persons per household. For this calculation, the project will generate an estimated 758 residents (2.4 persons/household x 316 units). Based on the MFA standard of 2.6 acres / 1000 residents, the amount of public parkland required for the project is approximately 0.94 acres.

[89] 2.56 residents per housing unit x 316 units = 809 residents
California Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2020-2022, available at http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/E-5/, accessed February 27, 2025.

3.15.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant public services impact?

The impact area for cumulative impacts related to public services is citywide. The proposed project alone would have a less than significant impact on public services because the City facilities would have capacity to serve the proposed project. Based on a review of approved or pending General Plan Amendment projects, approximately 4,000 residential units are proposed, which would increase the demands on the City services.

The General Plan established that existing facilities for police and fire services would have capacity for expansion of staffing, and based on the number of units proposed, these services would not require additional facilities to serve the development. Additionally, some school facilities which have been closed would be available for expansion of school capacity. Additionally, the project and any other future projects allowed by other General Plan Amendments would be required to pay state mandated school impact fees and City mandated park fees to offset the increase in population. The availability for expansion and payment of fees would allow for these services to keep acceptable service ratios, response times, and other performance objectives. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to any public services impact and would result in a less than significant cumulative impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.16 Recreation

3.16.1 Environmental Setting

3.16.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Government Code Section 66477

The California Legislature enacted the Quimby Act (Government Code Section 66477) to ensure that new residential developments set aside sufficient parkland and open space for recreational purposes. It provides provisions for the dedication of parkland and/or payment of fees in lieu of parkland dedication to help mitigate the impacts from new residential developments. The Quimby Act authorizes local governments to establish ordinances requiring developers of new residential subdivisions to dedicate parkland, pay a fee in lieu of parkland dedication, or perform a combination of the two, at the discretion of the City.

Local

City of Santa Clara 2010 – 2035 General Plan

The City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan includes policies and programs to provide public services throughout the City. Applicable General Plan policies include, but are not limited to, the following listed below.

Policies	Description
5.1.1-P20	Prior to 2023, identify the location for new parkland and/or recreational facilities to serve employment centers and pursue funding to develop these facilities by 2035.
5.9.1-P2	Develop new parks to serve the needs of the surrounding community based on the criteria for mini (less than one acre, appropriate for all areas), neighborhood (1-15 acres, appropriate for medium and high-density residential areas serving individual neighborhoods), and community (over 15 acres, appropriate for medium- and high-density residential areas serving the City as a whole) parks
5.9.1-P5	Encourage public visibility for all parks, trails and open spaces.
5.9.1-P14	Encourage publicly accessible open space in new development
5.9.1-P15	Provide opportunities for private maintenance of publicly accessible open space and trails.
5.9.1-P17	Foster site design for new development so that building height and massing do not overshadow new parks and plazas.

City of Santa Clara City Code Chapter 17.35

The purpose of SCCC Chapter 17.35 is to help mitigate the impacts of new housing development growth on existing parkland and recreational facilities subject to the provisions of the Quimby Act and/or the MFA. Chapter 17.35 requires new residential developments to provide developed park

and recreational land and/or pay a fee in lieu of parkland dedication, at the discretion of the City. The City is meeting the parkland dedication standard of 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents per the Quimby provisions of the SCCC and 2.6 acres per 1,000 residents per the MFA provisions of the SCCC for neighborhood parks.

3.16.1.2 Existing Conditions

The Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department provides parks and recreational services in the City. The Department is responsible for maintaining and programming the various parks and recreation facilities and works cooperatively with public agencies in coordinating all recreational activities within the City. Overall, as of July 2023, the Department maintains and operates Central Park, a 45.04-acre community park (45.04 acres improved and Central Park North 34.93 acres unimproved, totaling 79.97 acres), neighborhood parks (127.13 acres improved and 5.22 acres unimproved totaling 132.35 acres), mini parks (5.12 acres), public open space (16.13 acres improved and 40.08 acres unimproved resulting in 56.21 acres), recreational facilities (24.20 acres improved and excluding the BMX track), recreational trails (8.99 acres improved and 0.20 acres unimproved totaling 9.19 acres), and joint use facilities (4.4 acres) throughout the City totaling approximately 231.01 improved acres and 80.43 unimproved acres. Community parks are over fifteen acres, neighborhood parks are one to fifteen acres and mini parks are typically less than one acre in size.

Santa Clara City Code Chapter 17.35 requires new residential developments to provide developed park and recreational land and/or pay a fee in-lieu of parkland dedication, at the City's discretion, and pursuant to the Quimby Act and/or the MFA to help mitigate the impacts of the new resident demand on existing parkland and recreational facilities.

The City is meeting the standard of three acres per 1,000 residents per the Quimby provisions of the City Code and 2.60 acres per 1,000 residents per the MFA provisions of the City Code with regard to neighborhood parks.

The nearest park to the project site is Mary Gomez Park and Pool, approximately 500 feet north of the project site. The park includes a children's play area, picnic facilities, basketball court, tennis courts, a pool, open grass area, and restrooms.

The Community Recreation Center (CRC), located in Central Park, is the hub of recreation activities and programs for the City. The CRC is 27,000 square foot building with a multi-purpose room, stage, kitchen and activity rooms, ceramics room and various offices. This community center is located approximately one mile from the project site.

3.16.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on recreation:

1) 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?
2) 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?

3.16.2.1 Project Impacts

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 increase the population beyond the planned growth in the General Plan. This would result in greater use of recreational facilities than expected with build out of the General Plan. The proposed project would dedicate a 1.7-acre area of the project site to the City of Santa Clara to improve as a park.

The proposed project would result in an increased demand for parkland because the proposed project would add an additional 607 new residents.[90] The increased population associated with the proposed project would increase demand for parks and recreation area by approximately 2.33 acres. Accounting for the park dedication, the proposed project would require approximately 0.63 acres of additional parkland to meet Quimby provisions of the SCCC. Consistent with the Quimby Act, the balance will be mitigated through the payment of an in-lieu fee. Therefore, with the dedication of the park and payment of in-lieu fees, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on parks and recreational facilities. **(Less than Significant 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?

The proposed project would include a 1.7-acre dedication of park area and will be required to pay a fee in-lieu of parkland dedication to help offset the impacts of the new resident demand on existing parkland and recreational facilities. The impacts of construction required for the park are analyzed in this environmental document, and operation of the park would not have an adverse physical effect on the environment because the use would be comparable to the existing golf course area that it will replace. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in adverse physical effects on

[90] For purposes of the City's parkland dedication requirements, the City relies upon census data to calculate the number of persons per household. For this calculation, the project will generate an estimated 607 residents (1.92 persons/household x 316 units). This is different from the more conservative population estimate of 809 residents used throughout the document, which is based on the California Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State. Based on the Quimby Act standard of 3.0 acres / 1000 residents, the amount of public parkland required for the project is approximately 1.82 acres.

the environment through the expansion of parks or recreation facilities. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.16.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant recreation impact?

The cumulative impact area for recreation facilities is citywide. The proposed project would create demand beyond that assumed in the analysis in the General Plan FEIR. As stated above, the proposed project would include a 1.7-acre parkland dedication and would be required to pay fees to mitigate impacts on park and recreational facilities in the City. As a result, the proposed project would reduce its impacts on parks and recreation facilities in the City to a less than significant impact. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulative impact on these resources and would have a less than significant cumulative impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.17 Transportation

The information in this section is based, in part, on the Transportation Assessment (TA) completed by Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. on May 2, 2025. This report is included for reference as Appendix H of this EIR.

3.17.1 Environmental Setting

3.17.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Senate Bill 743 (2013)

SB 743 establishes criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts using a VMT metric intended to promote the reduction of GHG emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses. Specifically, SB 743 requires analysis of VMT in determining the significance of transportation impacts. Local jurisdictions were required by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to implement a VMT policy by July 1, 2020.

SB 743 did not authorize OPR to set specific VMT impact thresholds, but it did direct OPR to develop guidelines for jurisdictions to utilize. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(1) describes factors that might indicate whether a development project's VMT may be significant. Notably, projects located within 0.50 mile of transit should be considered to have a less than significant transportation impact based on OPR guidance.

Regional and Local

Regional Transportation Plan

MTC is the transportation planning, coordinating, and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, including Santa Clara County. MTC is charged with regularly updating the Regional Transportation Plan, a comprehensive blueprint for the development of mass transit, highway, airport, seaport, railroad, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities in the region. MTC and ABAG adopted Plan Bay Area 2050 in October 2021, which includes a Regional Transportation Plan to guide regional transportation investment for revenues from federal, state, regional and local sources through 2050.

Congestion Management Program

VTA oversees the Congestion Management Program (CMP), which is aimed at reducing regional traffic congestion. The relevant state legislation requires that urbanized counties in California prepare a CMP in order to obtain each county's share of gas tax revenues. State legislation requires that each CMP define traffic LOS standards, transit service standards, a trip reduction and transportation demand management plan, a land use impact analysis program, and a capital

improvement element. VTA has review responsibility for proposed development projects that are expected to affect CMP-designated intersections.

Climate Action Plan Transportation Demand Management

The City will require all new multi-family developments to draft and implement a VMT reduction strategy that reduces drive-alone trips by 20 percent. Of the 20 percent reduction, 10 percent must be achieved through active TDM measures.

City of Santa Clara VMT Policy

The Santa Clara City Council adopted a VMT policy in compliance with SB 743 on June 23, 2020. The policy sets thresholds of significance for various land uses, using the countywide average VMT as the environmental baseline. To determine whether a project will have a significant transportation impact, project VMT is compared to the appropriate threshold. For residential land uses, the adopted threshold is 15 percent below the existing countywide VMT per capita. For employment uses, the adopted threshold is 15 percent below the existing countywide VMT per employee. For retail uses, the threshold is the existing countywide VMT for retail uses.

In addition to establishing the environmental baseline and thresholds of significance, the VMT policy establishes screening criteria for certain projects that are presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact. Projects which meet the screening criteria would not be required to quantify VMT and compare it to the City's adopted threshold. Projects which generate less than 110 daily vehicle trips or less would be screened out from a quantitative VMT analysis and would be presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact. Retail land uses providing 50,000 square feet or less would be presumed to be less than significant. Transit supportive projects which are located within VTA-mile of an existing major transit stop or an existing transit stop along a High Quality Transit Corridor[91] would also be presumed to be less than significant, provided that a minimum density of 35 units/acre is met for residential projects, a minimum FAR of 0.75 is met for office/R&D projects, no excess parking is provided, and no affordable dwelling units are replaced.

All proposed projects are required to undergo environmental review as part of the approval process. This includes an analysis of CEQA impacts (VMT) and non CEQA operational measures of intersection efficiency level of service (LOS). The City's VMT policy also establishes LOS as an operational measure of intersection efficiency, which is not defined as a transportation environmental impact per CEQA.

City of Santa Clara Bicycle Plan

The City of Santa Clara Final Bicycle Plan Update (2018) provides a bikeway planning and design tool, which contains the policy vision, design guidance, and specific recommendations to guide public and private investments in active transportation bicycle facilities and related programs.

[91] A high quality transit corridor is a corridor with fixed route bus service with service intervals that do not exceed 15 minutes during peak commute hours.

City of Santa Clara Pedestrian Master Plan

The Pedestrian Master Plan, approved February 25, 2020, is a forward-looking plan to capture the benefits of walking as the City anticipates growth and redevelopment. The plan establishes methods for safe, comfortable, convenient, active, and implementable goals to improve walkability and establish zones for improved pedestrian development.

3.17.1.2 Existing Conditions

Existing Roadway Network

The project site is accessible regionally by Interstate-280 (I-280) and locally the project site can be accessed by San Tomas Expressway, Saratoga Avenue, Pruneridge Avenue, and Stevens Creek Boulevard. These roadways are described below.

San Tomas Expressway runs north and south with a raised median separating the six to eight lane roadway. The roadway features an HOV lane in both directions. No parking is allowed on the street and there is a non-connected sidewalk along some portions of San Tomas Expressway, primarily located near intersections.

Saratoga Avenue runs north and south from Fallon Avenue to the City of Saratoga. The roadway ranges from four to six lanes. On street parking is allowed on both sides of the street in the area near the project site. There are bike lanes on both sides of the street south of Stevens Creek Boulevard and between San Tomas Expressway and Los Padres Boulevard. This roadway provides access to the site by Pruneridge Avenue.

Stevens Creek Boulevard is a six-lane roadway running east and west. This roadway runs from Cupertino to Bascom Avenue. Two-hour parking is allowed on both sides of the street and bike lanes are available from Di Salvo/ Wainwright Avenue. Stevens Creek Boulevard provides access to the site through connection to Saratoga Avenue.

Pruneridge Avenue is a four-lane east/west roadway from Tantau Avenue to Winchester Boulevard where it turns into Hedding Street. There are no bike lanes on the roadway near the project site.

Pedestrian Facilities

Pedestrian facilities consist of sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals at signalized intersections. In the project area, Pruneridge Avenue and Saratoga Avenue have sidewalks on both sides of the street. San Tomas Expressway does not have a connected sidewalk along its length. Crosswalks are provided at all signalized intersections in the project area. All the crosswalks at the nearby signalized intersections include pedestrian signals. Sidewalks and crosswalks in the project area provide access to the nearby transit facilities.

Bicycle Facilities

The project area features multiple bicycle infrastructure options including striped bike lanes (Class II bikeway) and shared bike routes (Class III bikeway). The Class II bikeways near the project are located on the following roadways:

- Saratoga Avenue, between San Tomas Expressway and Los Padres Boulevard and south of Stevens Creek Boulevard
- Homestead Road, for the entire street
- Los Olivos Drive, north of Forbes Avenue
- Los Padres Boulevard, for the entire street

The Class III bikeways near the project site are located on Forbes Avenue, between Los Padres Boulevard and Harvard Avenue.

Transit Facilities

Transit services to the project area are provided by the VTA's Frequent Bus Route 57. The nearest Route 57 bus stops are located on Kiely Boulevard at Pruneridge Avenue, approximately 2,400 feet from the project site. This bus route runs between West Valley College and Old Ironsides Station with 15-minute headways. Other nearby transit routes include routes 23, 59, and 523, however, all bus stops for these routes are located greater than one-half mile from the project site.

3.17.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on transportation, would the project:

1) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian facilities?
2) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?
3) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?
4) Result in inadequate emergency access?

3.17.2.1 Project Impacts

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

Transit Impacts

As stated in Section 3.17.1.2, existing transit service in the project vicinity is provided by VTA Route 57 on Kiely Boulevard. Other nearby routes include routes 23, 59, and 523. VTA has a per capita annual ridership of approximately 21 trips per person per year. Based on this metric, the proposed project would generate approximately 6,636 transit rides per year (approximately 18 riders per day).[92] Route 57 would have sufficient capacity to serve any transit riders generated by the development. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the Regional Transportation Plan for VTA.

Additionally, based on the intersection level of service analysis, the proposed project would result in a minimal increase in vehicle delay at the study intersections. Therefore, the project would not cause a noticeable change in transit travel time and vehicle delay for the bus routes in the study area. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Roadway Impacts

Based on the analysis provided in the TA, intersection level of service for all intersections surrounding the project site would operate acceptably according to Santa Clara City policy under project and cumulative conditions. Additionally, based on the flow of traffic in the area and number of lanes provided on local roadways, the proposed project would not exceed intersection turn lanes queues for roadways near the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on roadway operations in the project area and would be consistent with the Congestion Management Plan.

The results of the freeway segment analysis prepared for the project determined that the number of project trips on the freeway segments would be less than the one percent of the freeway segment capacity. Therefore, the project would not cause a significant increase in traffic on the freeway segments in the study area. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Bicycle Lanes and Pedestrian Facilities

Existing sidewalks along the Pruneridge Avenue and Saratoga Avenue project frontages provide adequate pedestrian connection from the project site to the surrounding area.

[92] MTC/ABAG. Vital Signs Website. Historical Trend for Daily Transit Ridership by Operator. Accessed October 23, 2025. https://vitalsigns.mtc.ca.gov/indicators/transit-ridership.

The project would construct a new five-foot wide sidewalk along the project frontage on San Tomas Expressway to connect the existing sidewalk at the San Tomas Expressway/Pruneridge Avenue intersection to the residential building. The proposed project would also include new sidewalks along the internal drive aisle in front of the residential building and between the park parking lot and maintenance facility.

The proposed project would be required to contribute to the creation of bicycle lanes around the project site and would improve the bicycle infrastructure around the site. The sidewalks and bicycle lanes would connect to the existing sidewalk on Pruneridge Avenue, therefore, access to all proposed facilities within the project would be provided and the project would comply with the Santa Clara Pedestrian Master Plan. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

In Santa Clara, the VMT thresholds of significance are established based on the existing countywide average VMT levels. For residential uses, the threshold of significance is the countywide average VMT per capita of 13.33 minus 15 percent, which calculates to 11.33 VMT per capita. The proposed project would have a VMT of approximately 9.47 per capita, which is lower than the threshold of significance. Therefore, the proposed project would not exceed the Santa Clara VMT threshold and would be consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b). **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The proposed project design was analyzed in the TA to determine if the on-site circulation would be adequate. The analysis determined that the project driveway, which would be between 26 and 30 feet wide, would be consistent with the requirements in the Santa Clara City Code and City Standard Design Guidelines. The sight distance for the driveway accessing the project site from Pruneridge Avenue would be required to be approximately 300 feet, based on Caltrans stopping sight distances for speeds of 40 mph. There are no visual impediments adjacent to the driveway and vehicles exiting the site would not result in a hazard due to geometric design.

The project driveway is approximately 450 feet west of San Tomas Expressway. The worst-case queue for the westbound left-turn queue on Pruneridge Avenue at San Tomas Expressway is a maximum of four vehicles (100 feet) during the AM peak hour. Based on this condition, there would be approximately 325 feet between the end of the left-turn queue on Pruneridge Avenue at San Tomas Expressway and the worst-case eastbound left-turn queue on Pruneridge at the project driveway.

The worst-case queue (175 foot) for the eastbound left-turn on Pruneridge Avenue at Saratoga Avenue would not extend to the project driveway, which is approximately 350 feet west of the intersection, and would not affect vehicles turning in and out of the project driveway or the opposite shopping plaza driveway.

Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Emergency vehicles would access the project site from the street on Pruneridge Avenue or Saratoga Avenue, and the project driveway from Pruneridge Avenue. The project driveway would lead to a 26-foot drive aisle that provides access for emergency vehicles with a turnaround space at the north end of the drive aisle. Based on the location of the driveway and ability for vehicles to access and serve the project site, the project would meet the requirements for emergency access. Additionally, the project would be reviewed by local emergency responders for conformance with design requirements for emergency access. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from inadequate emergency access to the project site. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.17.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant transportation impact?

The cumulative impact area for transportation impacts is Citywide. For the purposes of the transportation impacts discussed above, the analysis was conducted based on a cumulative plus project condition. This considers the roadway network under cumulative conditions to reflect traffic generated by the approved developments and developments that are in the pipeline but are not yet approved (pending developments).

Additionally, the analysis included future improvements at intersections in the project area including improvements that the City of San Jose is proposing for pedestrian and bicycle improvements. These include installing Class IV protected bike lanes on Saratoga Avenue and Stevens Creek Boulevard and removing the pork-chop islands at the southeast corner of the Saratoga Avenue/Stevens Creek Boulevard intersection and northwest corner of the Saratoga Avenue/Kiely Boulevard intersection.

The analysis of the traffic conditions of the proposed project and the project VMT assumed the inclusion of other project in the area. Additionally, the impacts of VMT are based on the cumulative environment of county wide trip generation. Based on the inclusion of cumulative traffic and projects in the area when considering project impacts, the proposed project would contribute to

existing transportation issues, and would result in a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.17.3 Non-CEQA Effects

While the evaluation of project CEQA impacts on the transportation system is based on VMT, in accordance with City Santa Clara Transportation Policy, the following discussion is included for informational purposes because the City of Santa Clara Congestion Management Plan requires preparation of a TA to analyze non-CEQA transportation issues, including local transportation operations, intersection level of service, site access and circulation, and neighborhood transportation issues such as pedestrian and bicycle access, and transportation improvements.

Intersection Level of Service

Based on the level of service analysis conducted on the ten intersections in the project areas, only the intersection at San Tomas Expressway and Pruneridge Avenue would experience a worse level of service, going from level of service (LOS) D to LOS E. This would mean that there is a slightly longer delay for vehicles moving through this intersection, however based on the CMP standards for expressway roads this LOS of E is acceptable. Additionally, this intersection would continue to meet the level of service standard for the City of Santa Clara for AM and PM peak hours under cumulative and cumulative plus project conditions.

A queueing analysis was provided for peak hour operations at the project driveway. Based on an expected maximum of 83 morning peak hour trips and 50 evening peak hour trips, the worst-case scenario for queueing would result in a 60-foot queue (approximately two vehicles) on the project site. This would be accommodated on-site without blocking the parking lot access point. Further, for inbound site access, the proposed project would have approximately 25 inbound trips in the morning peak hour and 78 inbound trips in the evening peak hour. The queue of vehicles accessing the site would be approximately one vehicle in either direction. The existing Pruneridge Avenue turning pockets would support the expected maximum queueing for access to the site.

Trip Generation

The trip generation for the proposed project was calculated based on Institute of Transportation Engineers trip generation rates for Mid-Rise Multifamily Housing (Land Use 221) and Soccer Complex (Land Use 488) to conservatively estimate the number of trips. The trip data for the proposed project is summarized in Table 3.17-1 below.

Table 3.17-1: Project Trip Generation Estimates

Land Use	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour In	AM Peak Hour Out	AM Peak Hour Total	PM Peak Hour In	PM Peak Hour In	PM Peak Hour Total
Residential (316 units)	1,435	27	90	117	75	48	123
TDM Plan Reduction	-144	-3	-9	-12	-8	-4	-12

Park Land Dedication	71	1	0	1	11	5	16
Total Project Trips	1,362	25	81	106	78	49	127

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants. 400 Saratoga Avenue Residential Development Draft TA. May 2, 2025.

Parking

Vehicle

Off-street parking for the residential component of the project would be provided by a parking garage and surface lot for guests. The project would provide a total of 414 residential vehicle parking spaces (407 in the garage and seven visitor spots in surface parking).

According to the City of Santa Clara Zoning Code, multi-family residential projects are required to provide one space per unit for all studio or one-bedroom units and 1.5 spaces per unit for any two- or three-bedroom units, with each unit assigned one space and all other spaces to be provided unbundled[93]. Based on the proposed unit mix of the project, the proposed project would be required to provide 379 residential parking spaces. Therefore, the project meets the minimum long-term vehicle parking space requirements.

Bicycle

Section 18.38.050 of the Zoning Code states that residential projects are required to provide a minimum of one long-term bicycle parking space per unit and one short-term bicycle parking space per 20 units. Based on this requirement, the proposed project would be required to provide a total of 332 bicycle parking spaces (316 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 16 short-term bicycle parking spaces). The proposed project would provide a total of 332 bicycle parking spaces (316 long-term bicycle parking spaces in a bike room located on the first floor of the parking garage and 16 short-term bicycle parking spaces (12 located by the lobby entrance and 4 located by the parking garage entrance.) Therefore, the project would meet the City standards for bicycle parking spaces. The City of Santa Clara does not have specific bicycle parking requirements for parks. Based on the VTA Bicycle Technical Guidelines (2022), VTA recommends parks provide one short-term bicycle parking space per 5,000 square feet of outdoor recreation space. The specific design for the park is not determined at this time, however the proposed park would be 77,091 square feet, and would be required provide 16 spaces per VTA recommendations. The project would comply with the following Condition of Approval.

Condition of Approval

The proposed project shall include 16 parking spaces for bicycles visiting the park area to comply with VTA bicycle parking recommendations.

[93] Included as an additional cost for residents

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

3.18.1 Environmental Setting

3.18.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Assembly Bill 52 (2014)

AB 52, effective July 2015, established a new category of resources for consideration by public agencies called Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs). AB 52 requires lead agencies to provide notice of projects to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area if they have requested to be notified. Where a project may have a significant impact on a TCR, consultation is required until the parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect on a TCR or until it is concluded that mutual agreement cannot be reached.

Under AB 52, TCRs are defined as follows:

- Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are also either:
    - Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources, or
    - Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k).
- A resource determined by the lead agency to be a TCR.

3.18.1.2 Existing Conditions

According to the City of Santa Clara General Plan, all parts of the City have the potential to contain subsurface archeological resources including tribal cultural resources.[94] The Tamien Nation has requested notification of projects in the City of Santa Clara under AB 52. The Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment determined that although no previous Native American resources were recorded near the project site, there was a previous freshwater slough running through the project site. As a result, there is a moderate sensitivity for archeological resources to be present.

3.18.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on tribal cultural resources, would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural

[94] City of Santa Clara. General Plan 2010-2035 Integrated EIR. Page 327. January 2011

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:

1) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?
2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

3.18.2.1 Project Impacts

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?

The project site does not contain any known tribal cultural resources listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k). Additionally, a request for tribal consultation was conducted for the project in August 2025. None of the tribes contacted requested further consultation or mitigation. The project would not cause substantial adverse change in the significance of tribal cultural resources listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k). Additionally, the proposed project would implement the measures identified in Section 3.5 Cultural Resources in the event that Native American resources are discovered. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. **(Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated)**

b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1?

The City of Santa Clara has not identified tribal cultural resources on the project site; therefore, the proposed project would not cause substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as determined by the City. As stated above, if tribal resources are encountered during project construction, the measures identified in Section 3.5 would be implemented to reduce impacts to a less than significant impact. **(Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated)**

3.18.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant tribal cultural resources impact?

The cumulative impact area for tribal cultural resources is the project site and adjacent parcels. There are no identified tribal cultural resources on the project site or the adjacent parcels and no planned development on the adjacent parcels. As discussed above, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts on tribal cultural resources. Because there is no planned development on the adjacent parcels and project impacts would be less than significant, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant tribal cultural resources impact. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

3.19.1 Environmental Setting

3.19.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

State Water Code

Pursuant to the State Water Code, water suppliers providing water for municipal purposes to more than 3,000 customers or supplying more than 3,000 acre-feet (approximately 980 million gallons) of water annually must prepare and adopt an urban water management plan (UWMP) and update it every five years. As part of a UWMP, water agencies are required to evaluate and describe their water resource supplies and projected needs over a 20-year planning horizon, water conservation, water service reliability, water recycling, opportunities for water transfers, and contingency plans for drought events. The City of Santa Clara adopted its most recent UWMP in June 2021.

California Integrated Waste Management Act (1989)

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, established the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), required the implementation of integrated waste management plans, and mandated that local jurisdictions divert at least 50 percent of solid waste generated (from 1990 levels) by 2000 and thereafter. Projects that would have an adverse effect on waste diversion goals are required to include waste diversion mitigation measures.

Assembly Bill 341 (2011)

AB 341 sets forth the requirements of the statewide mandatory commercial recycling program. Businesses that generate four or more cubic yards of garbage per week and multi-family dwellings with five or more units in California are required to recycle.

Senate Bill 610 (2001)

SB 610 amended state law, effective January 1, 2002, to improve the link between information on water supply availability and certain land use decisions made by cities and counties. SB 610 requires preparation of a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) containing detailed information regarding water availability to be provided to the decision-makers prior to approval of specified large development projects that also require a General Plan Amendment. This WSA must be included in the administrative record that serves as the evidentiary basis for an approval action by the city or county on such projects. Under SB 610, WSAs must be furnished to local governments for inclusion in any environmental documentation for certain projects subject to CEQA. Pursuant to the California Water Code (Section 10912[a]), projects that require a WSA include any of the following:

- A proposed residential development of more than 500 dwelling units;

- A proposed shopping center or business establishment employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space;
- A proposed commercial office building employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space;
- A proposed hotel or motel, or both, having more than 500 rooms;
- A proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area;
- A mixed-use project that includes one or more of the projects identified in this list; or
- A project that would demand an amount of water equivalent to, or greater than, the amount of water required by a 500-dwelling unit project.

Senate Bill 1383 (2016)

SB 1383 establishes targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. The bill grants CalRecycle the regulatory authority required to achieve the organic waste disposal reduction targets and establishes an additional target that at least 20 percent of currently disposed edible food is recovered for human consumption by 2025. CalRecycle released an analysis titled "Analysis of the Progress Toward the SB 1383 Organic Wase Reduction Goals" in August 2020 (revised November 2020), which recommended maintaining the disposal reduction targets set forth in SB 1383.[95]

California Green Building Standards Code

CALGreen establishes mandatory green building standards for all buildings in California. The code is updated every three years.[96] CALGreen covers five categories: planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resources efficiency, and indoor environmental quality. These standards include the following mandatory set of measures, as well as more rigorous voluntary guidelines, for new construction projects to achieve specific green building performance levels:

- Reducing indoor water use by 20 percent;
- Reducing wastewater by 20 percent;
- Recycling and/or salvaging 65 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition debris; and
- Providing readily accessible areas for recycling by occupants.

[95] CalRecycle. "Analysis of the Progress Toward the SB 1383 Organic Wase Reduction Goals (DRRR-2020-1693)." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/Publications/Details/1693.
[96] California Building Standards Commission. "California Building Standards Code." Accessed March 6, 2025. https://www.dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Codes#@ViewBag.JumpTo.

3.19.1.2 Existing Conditions

Water Supply

The City of Santa Clara has four sources of water. These sources include two treated water sources from Valley Water and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, groundwater pumped from the Santa Clara sub-basin through the City's owned and operated groundwater wells, and recycled water purchased from South Bay Water Recycling.[97] In 2020, the City's water demand was approximately 18,302 acre feet (approximately 16.3 million gallons per day) for potable water and 3,499 acre feet (3.1 million gallons per day) for recycled water.[98] Recycled water lines are located east of the project site in the Saratoga Avenue roadway at the intersection of Saratoga Avenue and Glendenning Avenue.

The water system consists of approximately 335 miles of water mains, 26 active water wells and seven storage tanks with 28.8 million gallons of water storage capacity.[99]

The project site does not currently have any development contributing to water consumption, however the golf course turf requires approximately 1.9 acre-feet of water per acre. Therefore, the existing site uses approximately of 9,091 gallons of water per day.[100]

Wastewater Services

Sanitary Sewer lines that serve the site are maintained by the City of Santa Clara Sewer Utility. Wastewater from the City of Santa Clara is treated at the Regional Wastewater Facility (Facility), which is owned jointly by the Cities of San José and Santa Clara and is operated by the City of San José's Department of Environmental Services. The facility is one of the largest advanced wastewater treatment facilities in California and serves over 1,400,000 people in San José, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Saratoga and Monte Sereno.[101] The Facility provides primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment of wastewater and has the capacity to treat 167 million gallons of wastewater a day.

Approximately 10 percent of the facility's effluent is recycled for non-potable uses and the remainder flows into San Francisco Bay. The NPDES permit for the Facility includes wastewater

[97] City of Santa Clara. Sewer Utility. https://www.santaclaraca.gov/our-city/departments-g-z/water-sewer-utilities/sewer-utility. Accessed July 29, 2025.
South Bay Recycled Water provides advanced tertiary treated water from the RWF. The City's recycled water program delivers recycled water throughout the City for landscaping, parks, public services and businesses.
[98] City of Santa Clara. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, City of Santa Clara Water Utility. Adopted June 22, 2021.
[99] City of Santa Clara. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, City of Santa Clara Water Utility. Adopted June 22, 2021.
[100] United States Golf Association. How Much Water Does Golf Use and Where Does It Come From?. November 2012.
[101] City of San Jose. San Jose-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility. San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility | City of San José. Accessed July 29, 2025.

discharge requirements. The project site does not generate wastewater under existing conditions, however the clubhouse located within the project parcel does currently utilize wastewater utilities.

Stormwater Drainage

The City of Santa Clara owns and maintains the municipal storm drainage system which serves the project site. Existing storm drain lines are located within Pruneridge Avenue, adjacent to the project site. The project site is approximately 90 percent pervious.

Solid Waste

Solid waste collection in the City of Santa Clara is provided by Mission Trail Waste System and is disposed of at Newby Island Landfill through a contract with the City. As of January 2025, Newby Island Landfill has approximately 10.1 million cubic yards of remaining capacity.[102] Recycling services are provided through Stevens Creek Disposal and Recycling. The site currently generates some solid waste through its golf course operations.

3.19.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on utilities and service systems, would the project:

1) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?
2) Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?
3) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?
4) 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?
5) Be noncompliant with federal, state, or local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

[102] Boccaleoni, Anthony. Division Manager, Republic Services. Personal communications. June 2, 2025.

3.19.2.1 Project Impacts

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

Based on a sewer design analysis conducted for the project, the proposed project would connect to existing utilities located in the streets around the project site which would have a capacity to serve the proposed project. The proposed project also includes a General Plan Amendment which would result in an increase of 316 residential units over the existing General Plan designation. The proposed project would result in a permanent population on-site of approximately 809 residents.

Water Use

The proposed project would use approximately 31,397 gallons of water per year for the apartment component and approximately 5,020 gallons of water per year for the park portion of the project. This would be an increase of approximately 27,326 gallons of water per year over existing conditions for the same golf course area. This would increase demand for water in the City by approximately 0.16 percent above existing demand and beyond the planned demand assumed from build out of the General Plan. The project would utilize existing water lines in Pruneridge Avenue and would not require expansion or relocation of City water facilities or installation of new water lines because the proposed project would only marginally increase the total water demand of the City compared to the projected growth identified in the Urban Water Management Plan.[103] Therefore, the proposed development project would have a less than significant impact.

Wastewater

The proposed development project would generate an estimated 48,644 gallons of wastewater per day.[104] This is less than one tenth of one percent of the City's total allocation of treatment capacity.[105] The proposed development project would not increase the need for wastewater treatment beyond the capacity of the Facility, which has excess capacity for future population growth. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on the need for new wastewater facilities.

The project would connect to existing sewer lines in Pruneridge Avenue, which have adequate capacity to serve the project.[106] Therefore, the project would not require the construction or

[103] City of Santa Clara. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. June 22, 2021.
[104] Wastewater generated by the proposed development project is assumed to be 85 percent of the total water demand.
[105] Based on the City's allocation of treatment capacity of 25 mgd as identified by the Tributary Agencies Estimated Available Plant Capacity – 2020. December 18, 2020. City's allocation of treatment capacit.
[106] Nery Barrera. Sanitary Sewer Capacity Evaluation for the Proposed Development at 400 Saratoga Ave. April 2025.

relocation of new or expanded wastewater lines. The project would have a less than significant impact.

Stormwater Drainage

The project site is currently developed with a golf course, parking lot, and clubhouse. Runoff from the project site currently enters the storm drainage system untreated and unimpeded or infiltrates into the soil. The project would increase the impervious area on the project site by approximately 153,246 square feet or almost 56 percent compared to the existing conditions. While the project would increase impervious surfaces on-site, the project would install bioretention areas and self-treating/self-retaining planters, sized appropriately for their drainage areas, to decrease the rate and volume of stormwater runoff entering the City's storm drainage system. For these reasons, the project would not exceed the capacity of the existing storm drainage system serving the project site and would not require the construction or relocation of new or expanded storm drains. Therefore, the proposed change in land use would not result in runoff in excess of existing storm drain capacity.

Electric Power and Telecommunication Facilities

The project would utilize existing utility connections to connect to the City's electric and telecommunications systems. Although the project would increase the demand on existing facilities in the City, relocation of existing or construction of new facilities would not be needed to serve the proposed project. As a result, the proposed development project would have a less than significant impact on these facilities. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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

The proposed project would use approximately 31,397 gallons of water per year for the apartment component and approximately 5,020 gallons of water per year for the park portion of the project. This would increase demand for water in the City by approximately 0.16 percent above existing demand and beyond the planned demand. This increase is within the assumed water demand accounted for in the Urban Water Management Plan and would not impact the ability for the City to provide water in future years, including normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on the City's water supplies. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

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c) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

As stated above, the proposed project would generate an estimated 26,687 gallons of wastewater per day. This represents less than one tenth of one percent of the City's total allocation of

treatment capacity of 25 million gallons. The City does not currently utilize its total allotted treatment capacity. The proposed project is inconsistent with the planned growth of the City, but would not impact the ability of the RWF to serve the City of Santa Clara as it would fall within the City's allocated capacity for wastewater treatment. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on the wastewater treatment provider's existing commitments

The City of Santa Clara requires analysis of all developments increasing sewer discharge in excess of 5,000 gallons per day to determine if the project would exceed the capacity of pipelines in the project area. The developments included in the assessment are the following:

- Specific developments that have applied to the City and have yet to be constructed as of February 2025;
- Long-term (phased) developments: the portion of longer-term specific developments to be constructed in later phases (e.g., Patrick Henry Drive).
- Long-term future 2035 General Plan Phase 3 development parcels; and
- Entitlement flows as specified in the entitlement agreement

The proposed project's 316 residential units were analyzed assuming a flow rate of 154 gpd/unit (based on the apartment residential unit flow factor assumed for the City's 2025 Master Plan Update). The analysis also included the golf course maintenance building with a proposed flow rate of 0.1 gpd/square foot. Based on the scenario with the project included, the flow in pipelines affected by the project would increase by approximately nine to 11 percent. The flow in any of these pipes, including under Pruneridge Avenue, Los Padres Boulevard, Scott Boulevard, and Saratoga Avenue would not exceed the maximum capacity with the project flow included. Therefore, no capacity improvement for these pipelines has been identified and the existing infrastructure would have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

d) Would the project generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Construction Impacts

During construction, the project would be required to comply with the City of Santa Clara construction debris diversion ordinance which requires projects over 5,000 square feet to divert 65 percent of construction and demolition debris from landfills. This policy would reduce the waste disposal required during the project construction and limit waste accumulation at local landfills.

Operational Impacts

The project is estimated to generate approximately 5,420 pounds of solid waste per day.[107] Santa Clara County's Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) requires each jurisdiction in the County to achieve a landfill diversion requirement of 50 percent per year. As of January 2025, the Newby Island Landfill had a remaining capacity of approximately 10.1 million cubic yards with a reasonable compaction rate of 1,850 pounds per cubic yard.[108] Closure of the Landfill is expected to occur in 2035.[109] In total the proposed project would result in the production of 0.53 cubic yards of waste per day based on the weight of solid waste and compaction rate above. If the Newby Island Landfill is not available to accept waste, the City will prepare a contract with another landfill with capacity, such as Guadalupe Mines in San José, which is not anticipated to close until 2048.

Construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in a significant increase in solid waste generated within the City of Santa Clara and would not require that new landfill facilities be contracted with or constructed to serve the proposed project. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

e) Would the project be noncompliant with federal, state, or local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Consistent with CALGreen requirements, the proposed project would be required to provide on-site recycling facilities, develop a construction waste management plan, salvage at least 65 percent of nonhazardous construction/demolition debris (by weight), and implement other waste reduction measures. Additionally, the estimated increases in solid waste generation from the proposed project would be reduced through implementation of the Santa Clara County IWMP. The IWMP, in combination with existing regulations and programs, would ensure that the proposed project would not result in significant impacts on solid waste disposal capacity in excess of state or local standards or in excess of NISL capacity. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

3.19.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulatively significant utilities and service systems impact?

The geographic area for cumulative utilities and service systems impacts is Citywide. The proposed development project would marginally contribute to the use of utilities and service systems in the City of Santa Clara. The General Plan determined that the planned development in the City would not reduce the ability of the City to provide adequate utility capacity or other services. The proposed development project would include a General Plan Amendment which would increase the

[107] Calrecycle. California's 2017 Per Capita Disposal Rate. Accessed July 9, 2025. https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/lgcentral/goalmeasure/disposalrate/mostrecent/. 809 residents 6.2 lbs. per resident per day = 995 lbs. per day

[108] Boccaleoni, Anthony. Division Manager, Republic Services. Personal communications. June 2025.

[109] Boccaleoni, Anthony. Division Manager, Republic Services. Personal communications. June 2025.

number of dwelling units in the City by approximately less than one percent. This would result in unplanned growth in the City; however, as stated above, this would not result in increases in demand for utilities beyond their current capacity. Therefore, the proposed development project would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to the reduction in the availability of water or the adequate availability of utility services. **(Less than Significant Cumulative Impact)**

3.20 Wildfire

3.20.1 Environmental Setting

3.20.1.1 Regulatory Framework

State

Fire Hazard Severity Zones

CAL FIRE is required by law to map areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. Referred to as Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs), these maps influence how people construct buildings and protect property to reduce risk associated with wildland fires. FHSZs are divided into areas where the state has financial responsibility for wildland fire protection, known as state responsibility areas (SRAs), and areas where local governments have financial responsibility for wildland fire protection, known as local responsibility areas (LRAs). Homeowners living in an SRA are responsible for ensuring that their property is in compliance with California's building and fire codes. Only lands zoned for very high fire hazard are identified within LRAs.

California Fire Code Chapter 47

Chapter 47 of the California Fire Code sets requirements for wildland-urban interface fire areas that increase the ability of buildings to resist the intrusion of flame or burning embers being projected by a vegetation fire, in addition to systematically reducing conflagration losses through the use of performance and prescriptive requirements.

California Public Resources Code Section 4442 through 4431

The California Public Resources Code includes fire safety regulations that restrict the use of equipment that may produce a spark, flame, or fire; require the use of spark arrestors on construction equipment that uses an internal combustion engine; specify requirements for the safe use of gasoline-powered tools on forest-covered land, brush-covered land, or grass-covered land; and specify fire suppression equipment that must be provided onsite for various types of work in fire-prone areas. These regulations include the following:

- Earthmoving and portable equipment with internal combustion engines would be equipped with a spark arrestor to reduce the potential for igniting a wildland fire (Public Resources Code Section 4442);
- Appropriate fire suppression equipment would be maintained during the highest fire danger period, from April 1 to December 1 (Public Resources Code Section4428);
- On days when a burning permit is required, flammable materials would be removed to 10 feet from any equipment that could produce a spark, fire, or flame, and the construction contractor would maintain appropriate fire suppression equipment (Public Resources Code Section 4427); and

- On days when a burning permit is required, portable tools powered by gasoline-fueled internal combustion engines would not be used within 25 feet of any flammable materials (Public Resources Code Section 4431).

California Code of Regulations Title 14

The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection has adopted regulations, known as SRA Fire Safe Regulations, which apply basic wildland fire protection standards for building, construction, and development occurring in a SRA. The future design and construction of structures, subdivisions and developments in SRAs are required to provide for the basic emergency access and perimeter wildfire protection measures discussed in Title 14.

Fire Management Plans

CAL FIRE has developed an individual Unit Fire Management Plan for each of its 21 units and six contract counties. CAL FIRE has developed a strategic fire management plan for the Santa Clara County Unit, which covers the project area and addresses citizen and firefighter safety, watersheds and water, timber, wildlife and habitat (including rare and endangered species), unique areas (scenic, cultural, and historic), recreation, range, structures, and air quality. The plan includes stakeholder contributions and priorities and identifies strategic areas for pre-fire planning and fuel treatment as defined by the people who live and work with the local fire issues.

3.20.1.2 Existing Conditions

The project site is in an urbanized area in of the City of Santa Clara. This area is not located within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone as designated by Cal Fire's Fire and Resource Assessment Program.[110]

3.20.2 Impact Discussion

For the purpose of determining the significance of the project's impact on wildfire, if located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

1) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
2) 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?
3) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

[110] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Find your Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) and local public contacts. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/5065c998b4b0462f9ec3c6c226c610a9. Access October 21, 2025 .

4) 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?

3.20.2.1 Project Impacts

The project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones; therefore, the project would not result in wildfire impacts. **(No Impact)**

3.20.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

The project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones; therefore, the project would not result in cumulative wildfire impacts. **(No Cumulative Impact)**

Section 4.0 Growth-Inducing Impacts

Would the project foster or stimulate significant economic or population growth in the surrounding environment?

The CEQA Guidelines require that an EIR identify the likelihood that a proposed project could "foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment" (Section 15126.2[d]). This section of the Draft EIR is intended to evaluate the impacts of such growth in the surrounding environment. Examples of projects likely to have significant growth-inducing impacts include removing obstacle to population growth, for example by extending or expanding infrastructure beyond what is needed to serve the project. Other examples of growth inducement include increases in population that may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects.

The project proposes to replace a portion of the existing golf course with 316 residential units and a public park dedicated to the City. The project would also result in a General Plan Amendment which would allow residential development on the project site. As discussed in Section 3.19 Utilities and Service Systems of this document, expansion of the existing utility infrastructure is not proposed or required because the existing utilities would have capacity for the growth which could occur under the General Plan Amendment. In addition, the site is an infill location within Santa Clara and would not require new roads to be constructed to access the site. For these reasons, the project would not foster or stimulate substantial economic growth or population growth, or the construction of additional housing in the surrounding environment. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

Section 5.0 Significant and Irreversible Environmental Changes

CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines require that an EIR address "significant irreversible environmental changes which would be involved in the proposed development project, should it be implemented." [§15126(c)]

The project site is currently developed with a golf course. The proposed project would construct 316 residential units and a park along with a new golf course maintenance building. Future development on-site would involve the use of non-renewable resources both during the construction phase and future operations/use of the site. Construction would include the use of building materials, including petroleum-based products and metals that cannot reasonably be re-created. Construction would also involve the significant consumption of energy, usually petroleum-based fuels that deplete supplies of non-renewable resources. Upon completion of new construction on-site, occupants may use non-renewable fuels to heat the buildings.

The City of Santa Clara encourages the use of building materials that include recycled materials and makes information available on those building materials to developers. The new buildings would be built to current codes, which require insulation and design to minimize wasteful energy consumption.

The proposed project would be constructed in compliance with CALGreen requirements and the City's policies and ordinances controlling wasteful energy use. In addition, the project would be constructed consistent with the RWQCB Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit to avoid impacts to waterways. The project site is centrally located in a residential neighborhood near many services and would provide future residents access to existing transportation networks and other services. Therefore, the proposed project would facilitate a more efficient use of resources over the lifetime of the project. The project would not result in significant and irreversible environmental changes to the project site.

Section 6.0 Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

A significant unavoidable impact is an impact that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level if the project is implemented as it is proposed. No significant unavoidable impacts have been identified as a result of the project.

Section 7.0 Alternatives

CEQA requires that an EIR identify and evaluate alternatives to a project as it is proposed. Two key provisions from the CEQA Guidelines pertaining to the discussion of alternatives are included below:

> **Section 15126.6(a).** Consideration and Discussion of Alternatives to the Proposed Project. An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather, it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. An EIR is not required to consider alternatives which are infeasible. The lead agency is responsible for selecting a range of project alternatives for examination and must publicly disclose its reasoning for selecting those alternatives. There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason.
>
> **Section 15126.6(b).** Purpose. Because an EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment (Public Resources Code Section 21002.1), the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or be more costly.

Other elements of the Guidelines discuss that alternatives should include enough information to allow a meaningful evaluation and comparison with the proposed development project. The CEQA Guidelines state that if an alternative would cause one or more additional impacts, compared to the proposed development project, the discussion should identify the additional impact, but in less detail than the significant effects of the proposed development project.

The three critical factors to consider in selecting and evaluating alternatives are:

(1) the significant impacts from the proposed development project that could be reduced or avoided by an alternative,
(2) consistency with the project's objectives, and
(3) the feasibility of the alternatives available. Each of these factors is discussed below.

7.1 Project Objectives

While CEQA does not require that alternatives be capable of meeting all of the project objectives, their ability to meet most of the objectives is considered relevant to their consideration. The objectives of the proposed development project are to:

- Update the current golf course by implementing a new golf course routing plan that continues to provide nine holes of golf with some new fairways, greens and tee boxes.
- Irrigate the updated golf course and existing driving range facility using recycled water where possible.
- Provide a new maintenance building to house course equipment such as lawn mowers, tractors, and other equipment used to maintain the golf course.
- Provide a parkland dedication to the City.
- Provide up to 316 new residential units along Pruneridge Avenue of which 15 percent will be affordable.
- Provide common residential open space which could include an internal courtyard with a pool, and a separate roof deck for gathering.
- Support the long-term sustainability of the golf course by introducing a complementary residential community that generates the economic resources necessary to fund course renovations and ensure ongoing maintenance

7.2 Significant Impacts from the Project

The CEQA Guidelines advise that the alternatives analysis in an EIR should be limited to alternatives that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and would achieve most of the project objectives. Impacts that would be significant include:

Impact BIO-1.1 Project construction could impact nesting birds on or adjacent to the site, if present.

Impact CUL-2.1 Construction of the proposed project would result in excavation in an area which has moderate sensitivity for archeological resources, and could disturb unrecorded archaeological resources.

Impact CUL-3.1 The proposed project could result in the disturbance of human remains during excavation of the project site.

Impact GEO- 6.1 Construction activities could disturb paleontological resources in older Pleistocene sediments at depth under the project site.

Impact HAZ-2.1 The proposed project would expose construction workers to hazardous materials when conducting construction activities around the above ground storage tank in the maintenance yard on site.

7.3 Alternatives

The City considered the following alternatives to the proposed development project:

- Location Alternative

- No Project – No Development Alternative
- Reduced Development Alternative

7.3.1 Considered but Rejected

7.3.1.1 Location Alternative

In considering an alternative location in an EIR, the CEQA Guidelines advise that the key question is "whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location". The project proposes to construct a 316-unit residential building and dedicate a 1.77-acre park. Additionally, the proposed project would redesign the golf course on-site. It is reasonable to assume that there are other sites available within the City of Santa Clara that could be redeveloped to support the proposed residential development portion of the project site.

The other sites that could support the proposed residential development would be located in urban areas and would require soil disturbance and potential excavation. As such, the removal of trees would not be avoidable for any site in the City. Furthermore, due to the known cultural sensitivity of the City, ground-disturbance on most sites in the City would have the potential to uncover unrecorded subsurface resources. Lastly, impacts to nesting birds could occur on any site which has trees or where there are trees nearby.

Santa Clara is not a large geographic area and soil conditions are generally constant in that soils are susceptible to failures due to seismic activity. As such, geologic impacts from seismic activities would be found at any location. Hazardous materials contamination varies by location, but most of Santa Clara has residual soil contamination from historic agricultural activities or previous hazardous uses. Therefore, while contaminants may vary by site, any alternative location would likely have some contamination issues to be remediated. Lastly, air quality and noise impacts resulting from construction would be comparable on any site within the City.

For all these reasons, the impacts of the proposed development project would not be reduced or avoided by constructing the project on a different parcel within the City. Additionally, the support of the golf course is an intended objective of the proposed project. Because of this, and due to the fact that the applicant does not control other parcels in the area, this alternative was not considered further.

7.3.2 Reduced Development Alternative

The reduced development alternative would reduce the size of the proposed residential project to reduce impacts resulting from construction or intensity of project operations. The proposed alternative to reduce the residential component could involve a decrease in building height or smaller building footprint on the project site. The reduced size of the structure would result in an equivalent decrease in impacts related to construction air quality pollutants and construction noise.

Impacts related to ground disturbance, such as geologic hazards, cultural resource discovery, or disturbance of hazardous materials, would remain unchanged because the site would still be similarly impacted regardless of building size. Additionally, the construction would require activity adjacent to trees and would require tree removals which would mean that the biological impacts would not change.

CEQA Guidelines [§15126(b)] states that the EIR shall "focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly." The Reduced Development Alternative would not substantially reduce any of the identified impacts where the EIR determined a significant impact would occur. Therefore, because the Reduced Development Alternative would result in a reduction of impacts from the proposed project but none would change in significance. Additionally, the smaller development would not meet the objective of the project to support the updates to the golf course portion of the site.

7.3.3 No Project Alternative

The CEQA Guidelines [§15126(d)4] require that an EIR specifically discuss a "No Project" alternative, which shall address both "the existing conditions, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project is not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services."

The No Project – No Development Alternative would retain the golf course use as is. If the project site were to remain as is, there would be no significant impacts. This alternative would not meet any of the project objectives because the residential development would not occur, the park would not be dedicated, and the golf course redesign would not commence because the cost would not be supported by current operations. In addition, the City would not have the opportunity to create high density housing on this site to meet the strategies and goals of the City of Santa Clara General Plan and Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

The project site has a General Plan designation of Parks/Open Space and is within a PD – Planned Development zoning district which is intended to provide park and recreation space for the general population. If the site were to be redeveloped under the existing land use designation, the site would continue to provide open space area, park space, or a privately owned open area. These projects would be required to comply with zoning regulations and would have similar impacts related to cultural resources, hazards, and geologic impact areas. Any future development proposals for the site would require review and approval by the City of Santa Clara.

The No Project Alternative would not allow for the new maintenance building, update irrigation, and restructuring of the golf course; because the other portion of the project would need to financially support these improvements. This would be inconsistent with the project objectives of the proposed project. However, this alternative would not result in a residential development

fitting the project objectives because the General Plan and zoning designations for the project site would not allow for residential development.

Impacts	Proposed Project	Reduced Development Alternative	No Project Alternative
Aesthetics	LTS	LTS	NI
Agricultural and Forestry Resources	NI	NI	NI
Air Quality	LTS	LTS	NI
Biological Resources	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Cultural Resources	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Energy	LTS	LTS	NI
Geology and Soils	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LTS	LTS	NI
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Hydrology and Water Quality	LTS	LTS	NI
Land Use	LTS	LTS	NI
Mineral Resources	NI	NI	NI
Noise	LTS	LTS	NI
Population and Housing	LTS	LTS	NI
Public Services	LTS	LTS	NI
Recreation	LTS	LTS	NI
Transportation/Traffic	LTS	LTS	NI
Tribal Cultural Resources			NI
Utilities and Service Systems	LTS	LTS	NI
Wildfire	NI	NI	NI
Meets City's Objectives?	Yes	Yes	No

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The analysis in this Environmental Impact Report is based on the professional judgement and expertise of the environmental specialists preparing this document, based upon review of the site, surrounding conditions, site plans, and the following references:

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Section 9.0 Lead Agency and Consultants

9.1 Lead Agency

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9.2 Consultants

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Section 10.0 Acronyms and Abbreviations

AB	Assembly Bill
ABAG	Association of Bay Area Governments
ACM	asbestos-containing material
ALUC	Airport Land Use Commission
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
ATCM	air toxic control measure
Air District	Bay Area Air District
Bay Area	San Francisco Bay Area
bgs	below ground surface
Btu	British thermal unit
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standard
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Cal/OSHA	California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Occupational Safety and Health
CalARP	California Accidental Release Prevention
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Standards Code
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CFC	chlorofluorocarbon
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGS	California Geological Survey
CH_4	methane
CLUP	Comprehensive Land Use Plan
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide

CO_2e	carbon dioxide equivalents
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DNL	Day/Night Average Sound Level
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EO	Executive Order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FAR	Federal Aviation Regulations
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
GHG	greenhouse gas
GHGRS	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy
GWh	gigawatt hour
GWP	Global Warming Potential
Habitat Plan	Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan
HSWA	Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments
ibid	Same source as previous footnote
L_{eq}	Energy-Equivalent Sound/Noise Descriptor
L_{max}	Maximum A-weighted noise level during a measurement period
LBP	lead-based paint
LOS	Level of Service
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
$MMTCO_2e$	million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
mpg	miles per gallon
MSL	mean sea level

MTC	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standard
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCP	National Contingency Plan
NESHAP	National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NOA	naturally occurring asbestos
NOD	Notice of Determination
NO_x	nitrogen oxides
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O_3	ozone
PCB	polychlorinated biphenyls
PFC	perfluorocarbon
PDA	Priority Development Areas
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM	particulate matter
PM_{10}	particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less
PPV	Peak Particle Velocity
R&D	Research and Development
RAP	Removal Action Plan
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROG	reactive organic gases
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	State Bill
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SF_6	sulfur hexafluoride
SHMA	Seismic Hazards Mapping Act
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SMGB	State Mining and Geology Board

SMP	Site Management Plan
SO_x	sulfur oxides
SR	State Route
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TACs	Toxic Air Contaminants
Title 24	Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations
TSCA	Toxic Substances Control Act
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
Williamson Act	California Land Conservation Act
WUI	wildland-urban interface
ZNE	zero net carbon emission