Draft

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

THE RANCH AT MADISON SPECIFIC PLAN

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

SCH NO. 2025080821

PREPARED FOR:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (referred to herein as the "Specific Plan" or "Project") is a proposed private, master-planned residential golf community on approximately 174 acres in the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa in the Coachella Valley in Riverside County (County). The Project would allow development of up to 85 single-family homes, a centrally located Mixed Use Area with resident-serving recreational and wellness amenities, and a private 9-hole golf course integrated with extensive open space and trails. The Specific Plan establishes the land use regulations, design framework, and supporting infrastructure improvements necessary to guide the orderly development of the community. Detailed information of the Project is further described in **Section 3.0**: **Project Description**.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

This Draft EIR (State Clearinghouse No. 2025080821) has been prepared by the County of Riverside (County), in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Section 15000 et seq.) to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the Project. This Draft EIR identifies and discusses potential Project and cumulative environmental impacts that may result from the Project as proposed. The intent of this EIR is to (1) serve as an informational document that informs public agency decision makers, and the general public, of the potential environmental impacts of the Project; and (2) identify possible ways to minimize or avoid any potential significant impacts either through mitigation or the adoption of alternatives.

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines, public agencies are required to make written findings for each environmental impact of the project identified in the EIR. If the Lead Agency and Responsible Agencies decide that the benefits of the proposed project outweigh any identified unmitigated significant environmental effects, adoption of a statement of overriding considerations is required to document these findings. The discretionary actions involved in the implementation of the Project by the County as well as responsible and trustee agencies are described in **Section 3.0**.

1.2 STANDARDS FOR ADEQUACY

The principal use of an EIR is to provide input and information to the comprehensive planning analysis undertaken for the proposed Project. Given the role of the EIR in this planning and decision-making process, it is important that the information presented in the EIR be factual, adequate, and complete. The standards for adequacy of an EIR, defined in Section 15151 of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, are as follows:

> *"An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental*

effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure."

1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The CEQA Guidelines define a process for environmental review that includes a series of steps that must be completed prior to the Lead Agency's taking action on a project.

1.3.1 Scoping Process

In compliance with Section 15201 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the County has taken steps to provide opportunities for public participation in the environmental process. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was distributed on August 18, 2025, to public agencies and interested parties for a 30-day public review period to solicit comments and to inform agencies and the public of the Project. The County determined an EIR would be required without preparation of an initial study pursuant to Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. A copy of the NOP and responses received are included in **Appendix A: Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Comment Letters** of this Draft EIR.

Topics evaluated in this Draft EIR have been identified based on the responses to the NOP and the review of the Project by County staff. The County determined through this initial review process that impacts related to the following environmental topics are potentially significant and require an assessment in this Draft EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Traffic and Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

Other environmental topics were eliminated or scoped out from detailed review in this Draft EIR because the impacts were determined to be less than significant. These environmental issues are not discussed in detail within this Draft EIR. For a complete discussion of the environmental issues that were scoped out from this Draft EIR, refer to **Section 7.4: Effects Not Found to Be Significant**.

1.3.2 Review and Comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report

CEQA requires that the Lead Agency provide the public and agencies the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EIR. The County is providing a 45-day period for review and comment on this Draft EIR, starting July 27, 2026, and ending September 10, 2026.

Copies of this Draft EIR have been sent to the State Clearinghouse, responsible agencies, other agencies that have commented on the NOP, as well as to all interested parties that have requested notice and copies of the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR is also available for review at the following locations:

- County of Riverside – Transportation and Land Management Agency, Planning Division, 4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor, Riverside, CA 92507
- Indio Public Library, 200 Civic Center Dr, Indio, CA 92201

In addition, the Draft EIR is available at the County's website at:

https://planning.rctlma.org/environmental-notices-ceqa

Interested individuals, organizations, responsible agencies, and other agencies can provide written comments about the Draft EIR addressed to:

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When submitting comments, please note "**Ranch at Madison Specific Plan EIR**" in the subject line and include the name of the contact person within the commenting agency (if applicable).

After completion of the 45-day review period, a Final EIR will be prepared that includes responses to comments submitted on the Draft EIR and any necessary corrections or additions to the Draft EIR. The Final EIR will be made available to agencies and the public prior to the County's determination on the Project. Once the Final EIR is complete, the County may certify the Final EIR, prepare Findings, adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting program, and issue a Notice of Determination, which is the final step in the CEQA process.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE DRAFT EIR

As stated, the principal objective of CEQA is to ensure that the environmental review process is a public one. In meeting this objective, an EIR informs members of the public, reviewing agencies, and decision makers of the physical impacts associated with a project. To this end, specific features have

been incorporated into this Draft EIR to make it more understandable for non-technically oriented reviewers while providing the technical information necessary for the County to proceed with processing the Project. Sections of the Draft EIR are organized as follows:

- **Section 1.0: Introduction** provides information on the background of the Project, the environmental review process, and organization of the Draft EIR.
- **Section 2.0: Executive Summary** presents a concise summary of the environmental information, analysis, and conclusions in this Draft EIR.
- **Section 3.0: Project Description** presents a description of the Project which addresses the location of the Project Site, the objectives of the Project, the characteristics of the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan, and identification of all discretionary actions requiring approval to allow the implementation of the Project.
- **Section 4.0: Environmental Setting** describes the existing physical setting of the Project Site and the surrounding area.
- **Section 5.0: Environmental Impact Analysis** contains information and analysis of the potential for the Project to result in significant environmental effects for each of the topics evaluated in this Draft EIR. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15126.2, 15126.4, and 15130, this section includes the identification and discussion of significant environmental impacts, the consideration and discussion of mitigation measures proposed to avoid or minimize significant effects, and an evaluation of potential cumulative impacts.

  The cumulative analysis considers other approved projects, consistent with the guidance in Section 15125(a)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, which states that an EIR should describe physical environmental conditions as they exist at the time the notice of preparation for an EIR is published. The notice of preparation for the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan EIR was published in August 2025. A list of approved projects identified by the County in August 2025 is provided in Appendix E of the Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**).

  The County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines (December 2020) also state the assessment of the cumulative traffic scenario may include projects that are proposed and in the review process, but not yet approved, consistent with the guidance in Section 15130 (b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines which states that analysis of cumulative effects should consider either a summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, or a list of past, present and probable future projects. The list of approved projects in Appendix E of the Transportation Analysis Report are "past" projects, and proposed projects in the County's review process, but not yet approved, represent "present" projects. In April 2026, the owner of approximately 215 acres of property located east of the Project Site provided information to the County related to preliminary conceptual planning for a development project on this property. A general description of several alternative mixes of land uses under consideration was provided. A formal application for this project has not been submitted to the County and, for this reason, this potential future project is not in the County's review process at this time. However, the County is considering this as a "probable future" project in the local transportation analysis in the Transportation Analysis Report.
- **Section 6.0: Alternatives** discusses alternatives to the Project that have been developed and analyzed to provide additional information on ways to avoid or lessen the impacts of the Project.

- **Section 7.0: Other CEQA Considerations**
  - **Section 7.1: Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided** discusses the environmental impacts that would remain significant and unavoidable with implementation of the Project, even with mitigation incorporated.
  - **Section 7.2: Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes** discusses the significant irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources associated with the implementation of the Project.
  - **Section 7.3: Growth-Inducing Impacts** discusses the growth-inducing impacts of the Project.
  - **Section 7.4: Effects Not Found to Be Significant** discusses the potential impacts of the Project that were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in this Draft EIR.
- **Section 8.0: Organizations and Persons Consulted** lists persons involved in the preparation of this Draft EIR or who contributed information incorporated into this Draft EIR.
- **Section 9.0: References** lists the principal documents, reports, maps, and other information sources referenced in this Draft EIR.
- **Appendices** to this Draft EIR include technical information and other materials used in the preparation of this Draft EIR.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was enacted to inform government decision-makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities, identify the ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced, and prevent significant, avoidable damage to the environment by requiring changes in the project through the use of feasible alternatives or mitigation measures. When it is determined through preliminary review that a proposed project may result in significant impacts to the quality of the environment, preparation of an EIR in accordance with the process defined in CEQA is required.

The County of Riverside, acting as the Lead Agency for the environmental review of this Project, has prepared this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (State Clearinghouse Number [SCH] 2025080821) in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Title 14 Section 15000 et seq.).

This Executive Summary provides the information identified in Section 15123 of the CEQA Guidelines, including a brief summary of the proposed project, the environmental effects of the project as identified in this Draft EIR, proposed mitigation measures, a description of the alternatives to the project evaluated, and areas of controversy and issues to be resolved.

2.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (Project) would allow development of a private master-planned residential community with 85 single-family residential units in six residential neighborhoods and one mixed-use area with amenities for the residents, including a 9-hole private golf course, practice area, clubhouse, and other private facilities on an approximately 174-acre site in the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa in the eastern Coachella Valley in Riverside County. The Project also includes areas of active and passive open space and recreation facilities, including paseos and trails, and a golf cart tunnel under Monroe Street to the Madison Club, located immediately west of the Project Site.

The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Area (Project Site) includes approximately 174 acres, located in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) Area in the County of Riverside, California, and within the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa.

The Project Site includes Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 780-010-012, -013, -014 and 780-020-001, -002, and -003. The Project Site is bordered by Monroe Street on the west and located between 52nd Avenue to the north, Jackson Street to the east, and Avenue 54 to the south. The Cahuilla Desert Academy School (Academy) is located northeast of the Project Site along Arabia Street. The City of

La Quinta is located to the west, the City of Indio to the north, and the City of Coachella to the northeast.

The proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan includes plans, policies, and regulations to guide development of the Specific Plan area in a manner that is consistent with the County of Riverside General Plan and Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan, while maintaining flexibility to respond to changing conditions that factor into any long-term development. The Specific Plan implements all applicable elements of the General Plan and includes detailed information about the site's master plan and infrastructure improvements such as circulation, water, sewer, grading, and drainage design. The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan is included in **Appendix B** to this Draft EIR.

Residential development would occur on approximately 47.5 acres, with the balance of the Project Site consisting of open space, recreation areas, internal circulation, trails, and utility facilities. Residential development would include a combination of Low Density Residential and Medium Density Residential uses, resulting in an average residential density of approximately 1.8 dwelling units (du)/acre while the overall Project average density is 0.5 du/ac.

Planning Areas 2 through 4 would accommodate up to 31 Low Density Residential units at permitted densities ranging from 1.0 to 2.0 du/ac, while Planning Areas 5 through 7 would accommodate up to 34 Medium Density Residential units at permitted densities ranging from 2.0 to 5.0 du/ac, for a combined total of 65 residential units within these Planning Areas. Planning Area 1 is designated as a Mixed Use Area (MUA) and would include up to 20 residential units at a maximum density of 1.7 du/ac, along with non-residential amenities (described as the "Amenity Village" in the Specific Plan), including an Event Barn and Event Lawn (which provide dining), as well as recreational opportunities including a Wellness Center, sports fields and courts, and pools.

The Project Site is currently designated Agriculture and Rural Community – Low Density Residential on the County of Riverside General Plan and is located within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP), as identified in the General Plan. The proposed Specific Plan would establish a cohesive land use framework that transitions from existing agricultural and rural residential uses to a master-planned golf-oriented residential community designed to remain compatible with the surrounding Vista Santa Rosa community and adjacent areas of the Cities of La Quinta and Indio.

Primary vehicular access to the Project Site would be provided from Monroe Street via a gated entrance (Driveway A) along the western boundary of the site, which would allow full turning movements and provide access to residential neighborhoods, the golf course, and the Amenity Village. A secondary gated residential access would be provided at Avenue 53 (Driveway G), also accommodating full turning movements. Additionally, a right-in/right-out access (Driveway D) is proposed along Monroe Street to provide supplemental ingress and egress. A separate emergency and service-only access would be provided from Arabia Street along the northeastern edge of the Project Site.

Off-site roadway improvements proposed as part of the Project include improving Monroe Street adjacent to the Project Site to meet applicable County roadway standards.

Avenue 53 would be reconstructed and improved on the eastern side of the Project Site to required Local Street standards and extended to connect to Arabia Street. The Avenue 53 right-of-way would be vacated only within the interior of the Project Site to facilitate development. Arabia Street, located northeast of the Project Site, would be extended south and improved to meet local street standards to provide access to the Project Site and properties east of the Project Site.

The Project Applicant is requesting approval of the following discretionary actions by Riverside County to implement the proposed Project:

- **Specific Plan No. 00408** is proposed to establish the allowed uses and development standards which guide development of the proposed Project.
- **Foundation General Plan Amendment (FGPA No. 250010)** is proposed to modify the Foundation Component of the Project Site from Agriculture and Rural Community (RC) to Community Development and Open Space, establish corresponding land use designations consistent with the Specific Plan, and reclassify Monroe Street from an Arterial Highway to a Major Highway;
- **Change of Zone No. 2500012** is proposed to modify planning area boundaries, permitted uses, and development standards applicable to the Project Site;
- **Tentative Tract Map (TTM 39179)** is proposed to subdivide the six existing legal lots into new lots to be conveyed for development, open space and roadway purposes;
- **Development Agreement (DA 2500001)** is proposed to identify the obligations of the Project Applicant and County with regard to development of the Project Site in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan; and
- **Design Review Applications** to approve the siting, design, architectural and landscaping standards for the community clubhouse buildings and amenities.

2.3 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Analysis of a reasonable range of alternatives to a proposed project is required by CEQA in an EIR. The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to provide additional information on ways to avoid or minimize the significant effects of a Project. The Alternatives to the Project evaluated in this Draft EIR include:

1. Alternative 1 – No Project/No Development
2. Alternative 2 – Existing General Plan: Agriculture and Low Density Residential
3. Alternative 3 – Residential Project with No Golf Course
4. Alternative 4 – Avenue 53 Realignment

A brief description of each of these Alternatives is provided below with a summary of the evaluation of each.

2.3.1 Alternative 1—No Project/No Development Alternative

The CEQA Guidelines require consideration of a No Project alternative, with the definition of this alternative to be based on several factors, including consideration of what is likely to occur if the Project is not approved. As required by CEQA, the analysis must examine the impacts that might occur if the Project Site is left in its existing condition, as well as what may reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the Project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.

With the No Project/No Development Alternative (Alternative 1), the Project Site would remain in its current vacant, undeveloped condition. This status would continue and the existing environmental conditions would be maintained. None of the impacts associated with construction and operational activities would occur if Alternative 1 was selected. No construction- and operations-related air quality emission impacts would occur.

2.3.2 Alternative 2—Existing General Plan: Agriculture and Low Density Residential

The Existing General Plan: Agriculture and Low Density Residential Alternative (Alternative 2) evaluates development of the Project Site with the uses allowed by the current General Plan land use designations of Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG). RC:LDR allows one to two dwelling units per acre (du/ac), while AG allows one dwelling unit per parcel, provided the parcel is at least 10 acres.

The three RC:LDR-designated parcels (APNs 780-020-001, -002, and -003) total approximately 97 acres, allowing about 96 to 192 dwelling units. The three AG-designated parcels (780-101-012, -013, and -014) are approximately 38.2, 19.4, and 19.41 acres, totaling 77 acres, would allow one dwelling unit on each parcel. Therefore, the existing General Plan land use designations for the Project Site would allow development of up to 195 dwelling units on the Project Site.

Due to an increase in residential development, Alternative 2 would result in incrementally greater impacts when compared to the Project with respect to Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems. Impacts related to Alternative 2 would be similar with respect to Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources. Impacts related to Agricultural Resources would be significantly reduced compared to the Project by maintaining the AG land use designation in the northern portion of the Project Site.

2.3.3 Alternative 3—Residential Project with No Golf Course Alternative

The Residential Project with No Golf Course Alternative (Alternative 3) examines the impacts that would result from the development of a residential community, at the same land use density as the Project (1.8 du/ac). A conservative estimate is that at least 15% of the gross acreage for the Project Site will be dedicated to the roads, dry and wet utilities, water quality and drainage facilities, and landscaping. Therefore, Alternative 3 would have approximately 267 residential units on 148 acres. This represents substantially more than the 85 residential units in the Project (85 units) and exceeds the 195 units currently allowed under the existing General Plan land use designations for the Project Site.

While the southern portion of the Project Site is designated Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR), which allows up to two dwelling units per acre, the northern portion of the site is designated Agriculture (AG). Implementation of Alternative 3 would therefore require a **Foundation General Plan Amendment (FGPA)** to modify the Foundation Component of the AG designated portion of the site, along with a corresponding Zone Change to redesignate the AG portion of the site to a residential designation consistent with RC:LDR and a zoning classification capable of accommodating the proposed density, such as R-1-20000 (Single-Family Residential, 20,000-square-foot minimum lot size).

Due to increased residential development, Alternative 3 would result in incrementally greater impacts when compared to the Project with respect to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems. Impacts related to Alternative 3 would be similar with respect to Agricultural Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources.

2.3.4 Alternative 4—Avenue 53 Realignment

The Avenue 53 Realignment Alternative (Alternative 4) examines the impacts that would result from retaining the existing Project objectives but eliminates the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 through the Project Site. Avenue 53 bisects the Project Site from the western boundary, adjacent to Monroe Street to the eastern boundary of the Project. The vacation portion is approximately 2,617 feet in length and 60 feet wide, resulting in the potential loss of 157,020 sq. ft. (3.6 acres) of land available for single-family homes and recreational amenities. Avenue 53 would eliminate the 7th and 8th tees from the 9-hole golf course, residential lots 4, 5, and 6, within Planning Area 9; 4 multi-family units, in Planning Area 2, lots 13 and 14, within Planning Area 6, and lots 23 and 24, in Planning Area 5. Arabia Street would not be extended and improved with this alternative. The continuation of Avenue 53, through the Project Site, also eliminates ingress and egress from the Project Site, through Driveway G to Arabia Street and eliminates the development of Planning Area 8. This alternative includes 61 residential units, including 55 residential lots and 6 residential condominium units.

Due to a decrease in residential and recreational development, Alternative 4 would result in incrementally less impacts when compared to the Project with respect to Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems. Impacts related to Alternative 4 would be similar with respect to Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, and Tribal Cultural Resources. No significant impacts would be avoided or substantially reduced with Alternative 4.

2.3.5 Environmentally Superior Alternative

Of the Alternatives considered, Alternative 1, the No Project/No Development Alternative, would be considered environmentally superior, because it would result in the greatest incremental reduction of the overall level of impact when compared to the Project.

However, according to the State CEQA Guidelines, if the No Project/No Development Alternative is identified as the environmentally superior Alternative, the Draft EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior Alternative among the other Alternatives. Of the other Alternatives considered, Alternative 2, Existing General Plan: Agriculture and Low Density Residential Alternative, would be considered environmentally superior, because it would result in the greatest incremental reduction of the overall level of impacts when compared to the Project. Alternative 2 would avoid discretionary land use changes. Alternative 2 would continue to allow agricultural operations on the northern parcels of the Project Site, which would substantially lessen impacts to agricultural resources compared to the Project.

2.4 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

During the scoping process conducted by the County of Riverside, as the first step in the preparation of this EIR, comments were received requesting analysis of the potential effects on neighboring properties from the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 within the Project Site.

Comments from the following public agencies were also received by the County in response to the Notice of Preparation of the EIR circulated for review and comment:

Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC):

The NAHC requested that consultation be initiated with Native American Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed Project in order to avoid inadvertent discoveries of Native American human remains and to protect tribal cultural resources.

California Department of Conservation (DOC):

The DOC requested that the EIR address mitigation for the loss or conversion of agricultural land.

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

The DTSC recommended the preparation of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and, if needed, a Phase II ESA to determine the potential for the presence of organochlorine pesticide residue in soil due to the historical agricultural use of the property.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):

The CDFW recommended the preparation of a biological resources assessment to address potential impacts to biological resources within the Project Site.

City of La Quinta:

The City of La Quinta recommended the following analysis to develop a comprehensive EIR:

- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Evaluate construction, operation, and cumulative impacts.
- Traffic and Transportation: Analyze impacts on local and regional traffic circulation, including potential congestion at nearby intersections considering the vacation of Avenue 53 through the project site.
- Noise and Vibration: Evaluate noise impacts from both construction activities and project operations, especially near sensitive receptors such as Cahuilla Desert Academy and nearby residences, including those across Monroe Street within the City of La Quinta.
- Biological Resources: Assess potential impacts on local wildlife including migratory birds and burrowing owls.
- Water Supply and Hydrology: Evaluate the project's demand on local water supplies and infrastructure, and consider the project's scope with regards to potential impacts to site drainage, runoff, and flood risk.
- Aesthetics: Please provide an adequate assessment of the aesthetics of the project. The analysis should consider the potential impact on the viewshed of nearby residences of the proposed project's alternative of a golf cart bridge over Monroe Street.
- Cumulative Impacts: Analyze cumulative impacts in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the area.

2.5 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

A summary of the potential environmental impacts of the Project and the measures identified to mitigate these impacts are provided below for each topic addressed in this Draft EIR. **Table 2.0-1: Summary of Project Impacts** summarizes the significance of the impacts of the Project based on the information and analysis in **Section 5.0: Environmental Impact Analysis** of this Draft EIR.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
Aesthetics			
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
c. In non-urbanized areas, 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?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views of the area?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Agriculture and Forestry Resources			
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	**No feasible mitigation measures have been identified.**	N/A, no feasible mitigation measures have been identified.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
b. Conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve;	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no feasible mitigation measures have been identified.
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g));	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or	No Impact	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use, or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no feasible mitigation measures have been identified.
Air Quality			
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?			
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Biological Resources			
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS?	Potentially Significant	**MM BIO-1 Burrowing Owl Focused Presence/Absence Survey** The Project Site supports suitable foraging habitat and suitable burrows for burrowing owls. In order to ensure no burrowing owls occur on site, focused surveys for burrowing owls shall be conducted during the breeding season. Focused surveys will conform to the protocol detailed in the 2012 CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. The survey will consist of at least four (4) visits, with at least one site visit between February 15 and April 15, with a minimum of three surveys, at least three weeks apart between April 15 and July 15, with at least one survey after June 15. A qualified wildlife biologist will survey the entire Project Site by walking transects in suitable habitat and in areas within 150 meters (500 feet) of the limits of disturbance, as applicable based on topography, access, and site conditions. Walking transects will be spaced	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Project Impacts	Impact without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact with Mitigation
		approximately 10 meters (33 feet) apart or less to ensure 100% visual coverage of all areas. If no burrowing owls are documented on site during the focused survey, a pre-construction clearance survey shall be conducted prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities to ensure burrowing owls remain absent from the Project Site. Although not anticipated, if burrowing owls are found on site during the focused surveys, coordination shall occur with the CDFW to determine if avoidance and minimization measures can be implemented to avoid any direct or indirect impacts to burrowing owls, or if an Incidental Take Permit under Section 2081 of the CESA will be prepared and approved by CDFW. <u>Burrowing Owl Pre-Construction Clearance Survey</u> To ensure burrowing owls are absent from the Project Site, a pre-construction burrowing owl clearance survey shall be conducted following the regulations in the CDFW 2012 Staff report on Burrowing Owl. **MM BIO-2 Pre-Construction Focused Bat Survey** Prior to implementation of Project activities, a qualified biologist shall be retained to determine whether potential roosting sites for bats may be affected. For large	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		ornamental trees and palms suitable for bat roosting/nursery, exit counts and acoustic surveys shall be performed prior to initial ground disturbance, vegetation, or structure removal to determine whether the Project Site and a 300-foot buffer support a nursery or roost, and by which species. This work will occur between late spring and late summer and/or in the fall (generally mid-March through late October). If the results of the bat survey find a total of a single roosting individual of a special-status bat species, or 25 or more individuals of a non-special status bat species with potential to be present in the Project Site (i.e., hoary bat, western yellow bat), a Bat Management Plan shall be developed to ensure mortality to bats does not occur. For each location confirmed to be occupied by bats, the plan shall provide details both in text and graphically where exclusion devices/and or staged tree removal will need to occur, the timing for exclusion work, and the timeline and methodology needed to exclude the bats. The plan shall be reviewed and approved by CDFW prior to disturbance of the roosts. **MM BIO-3 Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Fish and Game Code Compliance** Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (Sections	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 prohibit the take, possession, or destruction of birds, their nests, or eggs). In order to protect migratory bird species, a nesting bird clearance survey shall be conducted prior to any ground disturbance or vegetation removal activities that may disrupt the birds during the nesting season. If construction occurs between February 1st and August 31st, a pre-construction clearance survey for nesting birds shall be conducted within three (3) days of the start of any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities to ensure that no nesting birds will be disturbed during construction. The biologist conducting the clearance survey shall document a negative survey with a brief letter report indicating that no impacts to active avian nests will occur. If an active avian nest is discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey, construction activities shall stay outside of a no-disturbance buffer. The size of the no-disturbance buffer shall be determined by the wildlife biologist and will depend on the level of noise and/or surrounding anthropogenic disturbances, line of sight between the nest and the construction activity, type and duration of construction activity, ambient noise, species habituation, and topographical barriers. These factors will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis when developing buffer distances. Limits of construction to avoid an	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		active nest shall be established in the field with flagging, fencing, or other appropriate barriers; and construction personnel shall be instructed on the sensitivity of nest areas. A biological monitor shall be present to delineate the boundaries of the buffer area and to monitor the active nest to ensure that nesting behavior is not adversely affected by the construction activity. Once the young have fledged and left the nest, or the nest otherwise becomes inactive under natural conditions, construction activities within the buffer area can occur.	
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption, or other means?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as tree preservation policy or ordinance?	Potentially Significant	Refer to **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-3** above.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	Potentially Significant	Refer to **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-3** above.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Cultural Resources			
a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	Less than Significant	No mitigation measures are necessary.	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	Potentially Significant	**MM CUL-1 Unanticipated Resources** The developer/permit holder or any successor in interest shall comply with the following for the life of this permit. If, during ground-disturbance activities, unanticipated cultural resources (see third bullet in list below) are discovered, the following procedures shall be followed: • All ground-disturbance activities within 30 m (100 feet) of the discovered cultural resource shall be halted and the Project Archaeologist (see below) shall call the County Archaeologist immediately upon discovery of the	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		cultural resource. A meeting shall be convened between the developer, the Project Archaeologist (see fourth bullet in list below), the Native American tribal representative, and the County Archaeologist to discuss the significance of the find. At the meeting of the aforementioned parties, a decision is to be made, with the concurrence of the County Archaeologist, as to the appropriate treatment (e.g., documentation, recovery, avoidance) for the cultural resource. Resource evaluations shall be limited to nondestructive analysis. • Further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until the appropriate treatment has been accomplished. • A cultural resource site is defined, for this condition, as being a feature and/or three or more artifacts in close association with each other. Tribal Cultural Resources are also considered cultural resources. • If not already employed by the Project developer, a County-approved archaeologist and a Native American Monitor (see below) from the consulting tribe(s) shall be employed by the Project developer to assess the significance of the cultural resource, attend the meeting described above,	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Project Impacts	Impact without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact with Mitigation
		and continue monitoring of all future site grading activities as necessary. **MM CUL-2 Project Archaeologist/ Archaeological Monitors** Before issuance of grading permits, the applicant/developer shall provide evidence to the County Planning Department that a County-certified professional archaeologist (Project Archaeologist) has been contracted to implement a Cultural Resource Monitoring Program (CRMP). A cultural resource monitoring plan shall be developed that addresses the details of all activities and provides procedures that must be followed in order to reduce the impacts to cultural, tribal cultural, and historic resources to a level that is less than significant as well as to address potential impacts to undiscovered buried archaeological resources associated with this Project. A fully executed copy of the contract and a digitally signed copy of the monitoring plan shall be provided to the County Archaeologist to ensure compliance with this condition of approval. Working directly under the Project Archaeologist, an adequate number of qualified Archaeological Monitors shall be present to ensure that all earthmoving activities are observed. These Archaeological Monitors shall be on site during all grading activities for areas to be	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		monitored, including off-site improvements. Inspections will vary based on the rate of excavation, the materials excavated, and the presence and abundance of artifacts and features. The Project Archaeologist may submit a detailed letter to the County during grading requesting a modification to the CRMP if circumstances are encountered that reduce the need for monitoring. **MM CUL-3 Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report** Before Grading Permit Final Inspection, a Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report shall be submitted that complies with the Riverside County Planning Department's requirements for such reports for all ground-disturbing activities associated with this grading permit. The report shall follow the County of Riverside Planning Department Cultural Resources (Archaeological) Investigations Standard Scopes of Work posted on the Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) website. The report shall include results of any feature relocation or residue analysis required, as well as evidence of the required cultural sensitivity training for the construction staff held during the required pregrading meeting and evidence that any artifacts have been	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		treated in accordance with procedures stipulated in the cultural resource monitoring plan. The report will also include the Tribal Monitoring notes as a confidential appendix. Once approved by the County Archaeologist, the Project Archaeologist shall provide a copy to the consulting tribes and the SCIC. **MM CUL-4 Artifact Disposition** In the event that cultural resources are identified during ground-disturbing activities, the landowner(s) shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources (including sacred items, burial goods, and human remains) and provide evidence to the satisfaction of the County Archaeologist that all archaeological materials recovered during the archaeological investigations (including collections made during an earlier project, such as testing of archaeological sites that took place years ago) have been handled through one of the following methods. • **Historic Resources**: All historic archaeological materials recovered during the archaeological investigations (this includes collections made during an earlier project, such as testing of archaeological sites that took place years ago), shall be curated at the Western Science Center, a Riverside County curation facility that meets	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		State Resources Department Office of Historic Preservation Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Resources ensuring access and use pursuant to the Guidelines. • **Precontact Resources**: A fully executed reburial agreement with the appropriate culturally affiliated Native American tribe(s) or band(s). This shall include measures and provisions to protect the reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloging, analysis, and special studies have been completed on the cultural resources. Details of contents and location of the reburial shall be included in the Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report. The details of any disposition of artifacts shall be documented in the Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report. **Deed Restrictions** At the conclusion of all construction activities, the project proponent and the landowner shall record a deed restriction on the reburial location, if used, with the County to restrict development of these areas in the future. Deed restrictions shall not disclose the nature of the avoidance areas. A copy of the deed restriction(s) shall be submitted to the County planning staff as proof of compliance before the issuance of certificates of occupancy for the project.	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		MM CUL-5 Human Remains If human remains are found on this site, the developer/permit holder or any successor in interest shall comply with State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. Pursuant to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, if human remains are encountered, no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98(b), remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and their disposition has been made. If the Riverside County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the NAHC shall be contacted by the County Coroner within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the NAHC shall identify the Most Likely Descendant. The Most Likely Descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation with the property owner concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in PRC Section 5097.98. Photography of human remains or associated resources shall be prohibited. **MM TCR-1 Native American Monitor** Before the issuance of grading permits, the developer/permit applicant shall enter into Native American Monitor agreement(s) with	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		the consulting tribe(s) for the appropriate number of Native American Monitor(s). In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor(s), the Native American Monitor(s) shall attend the pregrading meeting with the contractors to provide cultural sensitivity training for all construction personnel. In addition, an adequate number of Native American Monitor(s) shall be on site during all initial ground-disturbing activities and excavation of soils in each portion of the Project Site, including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading, and trenching. In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor(s), the Native American Monitor(s) have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt the ground-disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources. Activities will be documented in Tribal Monitoring Notes, which will be required to be submitted to the County Archaeologist before Grading Permit Final Inspection. The developer/permit applicant shall submit a fully executed copy of the agreement(s) to the County Archaeologist to ensure compliance with this condition of approval. Upon verification, the County Archaeologist shall clear this condition. This agreement shall not modify any condition of approval or mitigation measure. **MM TCR-2 Tribal Monitoring Notes**	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		Before Grading Permit Final Inspection, a complete set of Tribal Monitoring Notes shall be submitted to the County Archaeologist. Upon receipt and approval of the notes, the condition will be cleared.	
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	Potentially Significant	Refer to **MM CUL-5** above.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
Energy			
a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Geology and Soils			
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault. Refer to Division of	Potentially Significant	**MM GEO-1 Implementation of Project-Specific Geotechnical Recommendations** Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Project Applicant shall submit to the County of Riverside Building and Safety Department for review and approval of the final project grading and foundation plans demonstrating compliance with all applicable development standards and recommendations identified in the following geotechnical reports:	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Project Impacts	Impact without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact with Mitigation
Mines and Geology Special Publication 42?		• Geotechnical Report (APN 780-010-014), Vista Santa Rosa, California (LandMark Consultants, Inc., April 2022); • Geotechnical Investigation for Proposed Residential Development (APNs 780-020-001, 002, 003 & 780-010-012), Monroe Street, La Quinta Area, Riverside County, California (Sladden Engineering, October 2022); and • Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation for Proposed Ranch at Madison (APN 780-010-013) (Sladden Engineering, December 2025). The final grading plans shall incorporate all site-specific engineering recommendations related to soil preparation, compaction, grading, slope stability, seismic design parameters, foundations, trench backfill, subdrainage, and pavement design contained in these reports, as required by the County of Riverside Grading Ordinance and Building Code. All recommendations shall be implemented during site preparation, grading, and construction. A registered geotechnical engineer shall provide construction-phase observation and testing, as necessary, to verify that all required geotechnical measures have been properly implemented. Documentation of compliance shall be submitted to the County prior to final	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		inspection or issuance of a certificate of occupancy.	
ii. strong seismic ground shaking?	Potentially Significant	Refer to **MM GEO-1** above.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
iii. seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
iv. landslides?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	Potentially Significant	Refer to **MM GEO-1** above.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
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?	Potentially Significant	Refer to **MM GEO-1** above.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks of life or property?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternate wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	No Impact	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
f. Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique	Potentially Significant	**MM GEO-2 Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation**	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		**Program (PRIMP), Monitoring, and Unanticipated Discoveries** Prior to issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist to prepare and implement a Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) in accordance with Riverside County General Plan policies and Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) guidelines. The PRIMP shall include, but not be limited to: (1) a preconstruction review of grading plans and geotechnical data to identify areas of high paleontological sensitivity; (2) development and implementation of a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) to train construction personnel on the identification of paleontological resources and proper notification procedures; (3) protocols for monitoring ground-disturbing activities; (4) procedures for the evaluation, recovery, documentation, and curation of paleontological resources in the event of discovery; and (5) preparation of a final report documenting the results of monitoring and any recovered resources. In accordance with the approved PRIMP, a qualified paleontologist shall conduct monitoring of ground-disturbing activities in native sediments with moderate to high paleontological sensitivity. If any paleontological resources are encountered,	

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
		the monitor shall have the authority to temporarily halt work in the immediate area to evaluate the find. Any significant fossils shall be recovered, documented, and curated in accordance with SVP guidelines and applicable State regulations. Construction may resume once the paleontologist confirms that the resource has been appropriately treated and would not be adversely affected by further ground disturbance.	
Greenhouse Gas Emissions			
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Hazards and Hazardous Materials			
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	No Impact	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	No Impact	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Hydrology and Water Quality			
a. Would the project result in the violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			
b. Would the project result in substantially decreased groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
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 through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; or	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
e. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Land Use and Planning			
a. Physically divide an established community?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Noise			
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Would the project result in the generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	No Impact	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Transportation			
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Tribal Cultural Resources			
a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a	Potentially Significant	Refer to **MM TCR-1** through **MM TCR-2** and **MM CUL-1** through **MM CUL-4**.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Project Impacts	Impact without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact with Mitigation
site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?			
ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	Potentially Significant	Refer to **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-5**.	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.
Utilities and Service Systems			
Water Service and Supply			
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities, the construction or	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS

Project Impacts	Impact without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact with Mitigation
relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?			
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Wastewater Collection and Treatment			
a. Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment, or storm water drainage facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
Dry Utilities (Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications)			
a. Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded power, natural gas or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

TABLE 2.0-1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS			
Project Impacts	**Impact without Mitigation**	**Mitigation Measures**	**Impact with Mitigation**
	Solid Waste		
a. Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.
b. Would the project comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	Less than Significant	**No mitigation measures are necessary.**	N/A, no mitigation is required.

3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15124, this section of the EIR provides the following information for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (Project):

- Project location and boundaries;
- Statement of objectives sought by the proposed Project;
- General description of the Project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics; and
- Intended uses of this EIR.

"Project," as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a), means the whole of an action that has the potential to result in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. It includes various government-related activities, such as the issuance of a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement.

3.2 PROJECT LOCATION

As shown in **Figure 3.0-1: Regional Location**, the approximately 174-acre Project Site is located in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area of western Riverside County (County), east of the City of La Quinta, south of the City of Indio, and west of the City of Coachella, in the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa within the Sphere of Influence of the City of La Quinta. Regional access to the Project Site is provided via Highway 111, located approximately three miles to the north and east, and Interstate 10 (I-10), located approximately five miles to the north. Primary access to the Project Site is provided from Monroe Street via I-10 to the north (**Figure 3.0-2: Project Vicinity**). As shown in **Figure 3.0-3: Project Location**, the Project Site is surrounded by 52nd Avenue to the north, Jackson Street to the east, Avenue 54 to the south, and Monroe Street to the west (Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 780-010-012, 780-010-013, 780-010-014, 780-020-001, 780-020-002, and 780-020-003).

3.3 LAND USE AND ZONING

3.3.1 Existing Site Conditions and Land Use Designations

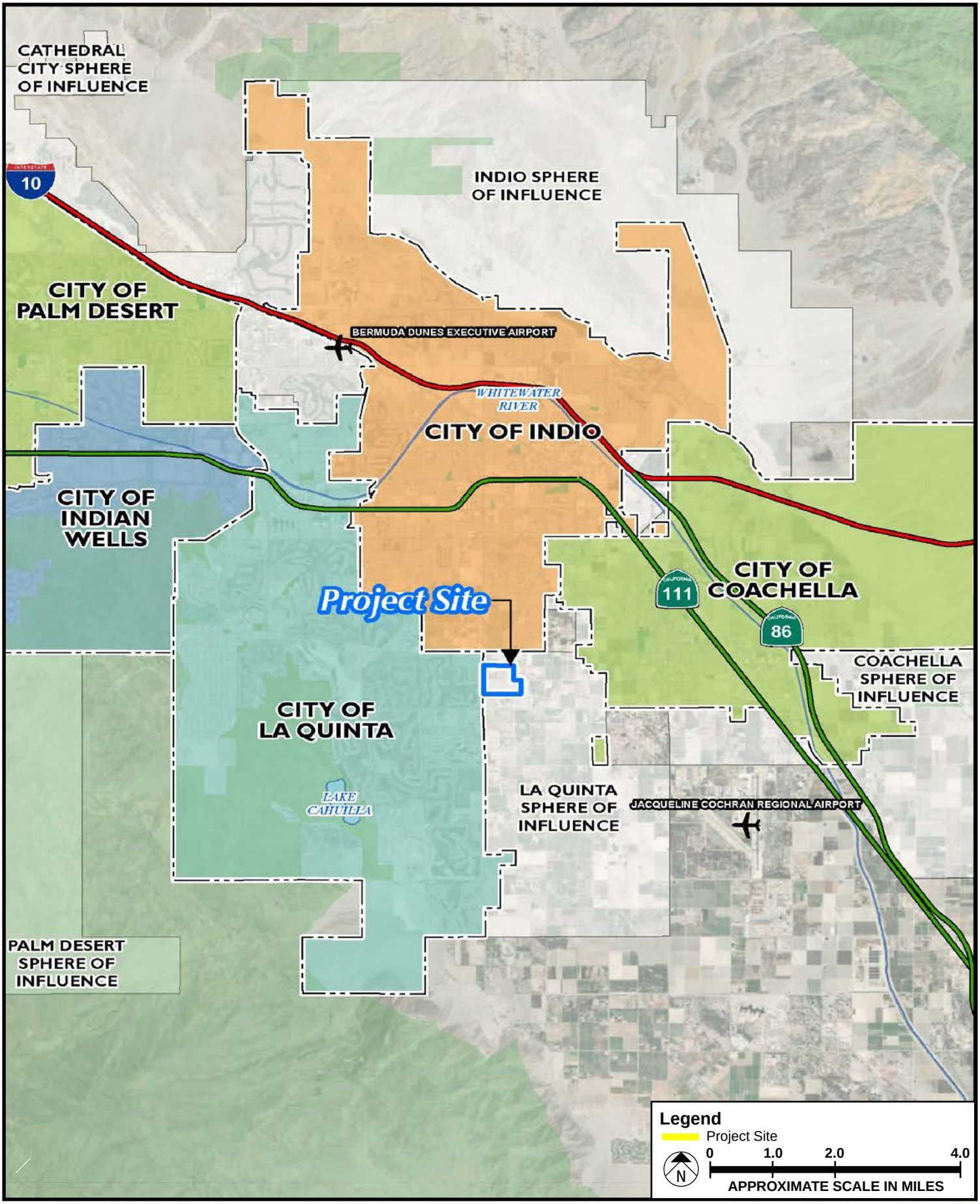
As shown in **Figure 3.0-3**, the approximately 174-acre Project Site consists primarily of fallow agricultural land, agricultural reservoirs, and disturbed desert terrain associated with previous agricultural use. An abandoned date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a former 1970s residence and related structures. The Project Site also contains a small nursery operation, a vacant mobile home, and several nonresidential outbuildings and trailers associated with the abandoned date farm operation.

An existing landscaped parkway, multipurpose path, and sidewalk improvements are located along the western edge of Monroe Street in the City of La Quinta. The existing sidewalk along Monroe Street varies between six and eight feet wide, while the multipurpose path, consisting of compacted and stabilized decomposed granite, is 10 feet wide with PVC rail-style fencing. Pedestrian crosswalks are available at the nearby intersection of Monroe Street and Avenue 54. Existing improvements, including retaining walls and ornamental landscaping, are located on the west side of Monroe Street, adjacent to the existing Madison Club golf course, Carmela, and Rancho Santana communities. There are no street improvements, such as bus stops or signalized intersections, constructed adjacent to the Project Site on the east side of Monroe Street.

As shown in **Figure 3.0-4: Existing General Plan Land Use**, the General Plan Land Use designations for the Project Site are Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG). As shown in **Figure 3.0-5: Existing Zoning Map**, the existing zoning classifications for the Project Site are A-1-20 (Light Agriculture), R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwellings), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture), and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone - Residential Developments). The RC:LDR land use designation allows detached single-family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. The RC:LDR land use designation allows equestrian and animal keeping uses, while agriculture and small-scale commercial uses are also permitted. The density range for RC:LDR ranges from one to two dwelling units per acre (du/ac). The AG land use designation has been established to help conserve productive agricultural lands within the County. These include row crops, nurseries, citrus groves and vineyards, dairies, ranches, poultry and hog farms, and other agricultural-related uses. Areas designated for AG generally lack infrastructure that is supportive of urban development. Residential density is permitted at one dwelling unit per parcel provided that the parcel is 10 acres in size or larger. An additional dwelling unit may be allowed for each additional 10 acres being farmed for use by the owner, operator, or employees, up to a maximum of five total dwelling units per parcel. State law authorizes additional dwellings for farm worker housing.

3.3.2 Surrounding Land Uses

Surrounding uses include the Mirabella Estates and Santa Rosa Ranch to the north; fallow agricultural land, disturbed vacant land, small ranches and estates to the east, including Calhoun Ranch; two ranches (Rancho Ellenita and Cavallo Ranch) and fallow agricultural land to the south; and a residential golf community (Madison Club) and single-family neighborhoods (Carmela and Rancho Santana) to the west. Cahuilla Desert Academy, a middle school, is located northeast of the Project Site on the southeast corner of Avenue 52 and Arabia Street.



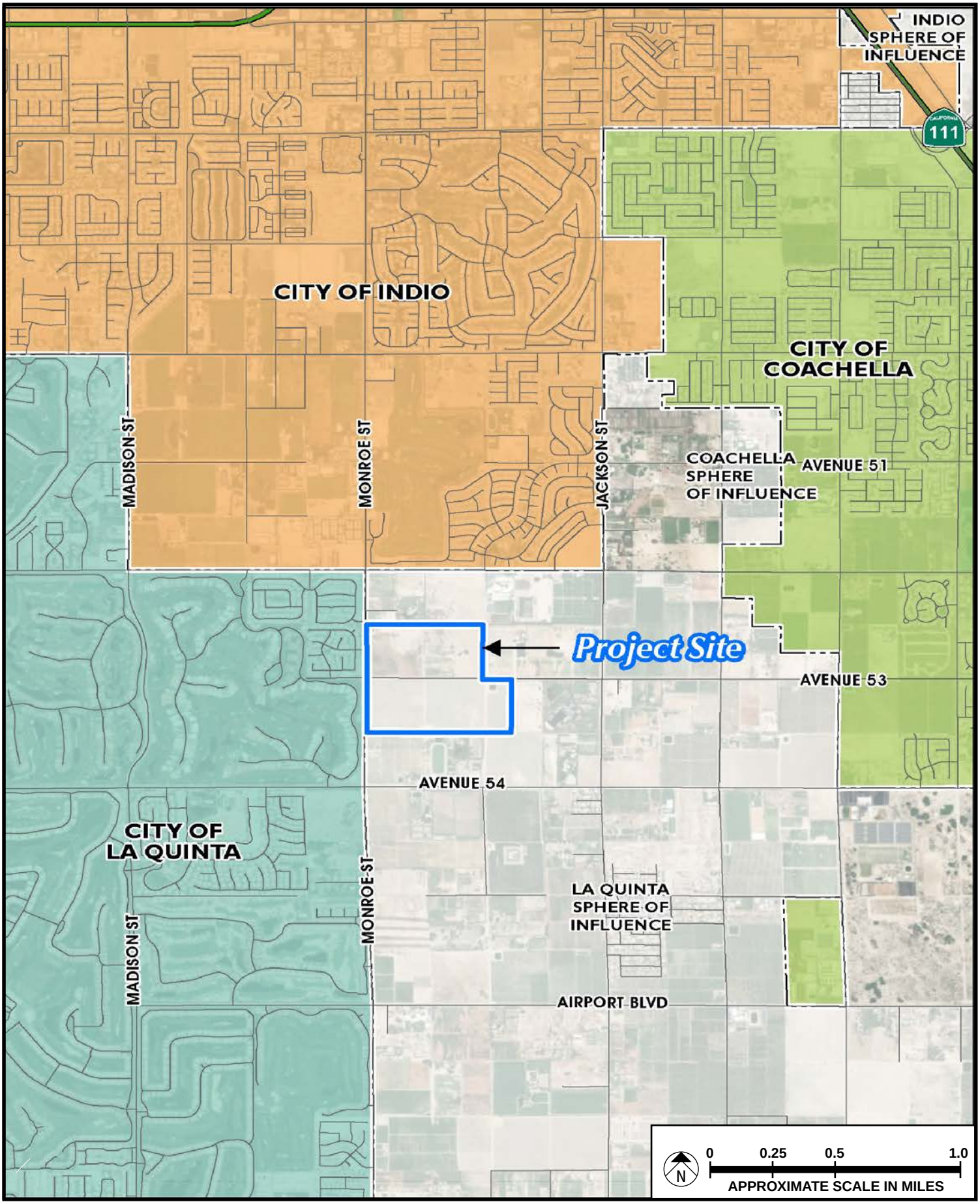
SOURCE: T&B Planning - October 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-1**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Regional Location

427-001-24



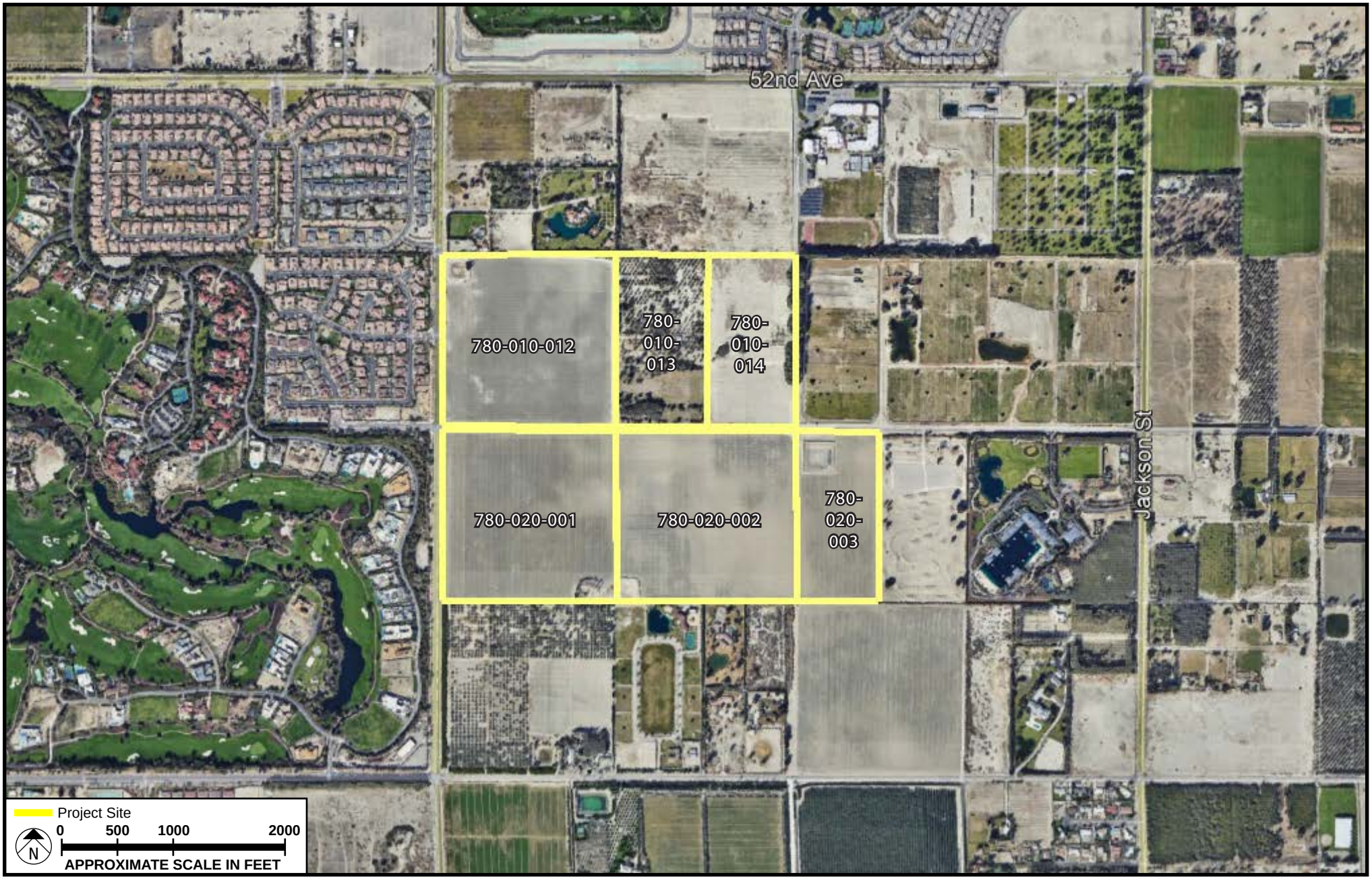
SOURCE: T&B Planning - October 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-2**

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Project Vicinity

427-001-24



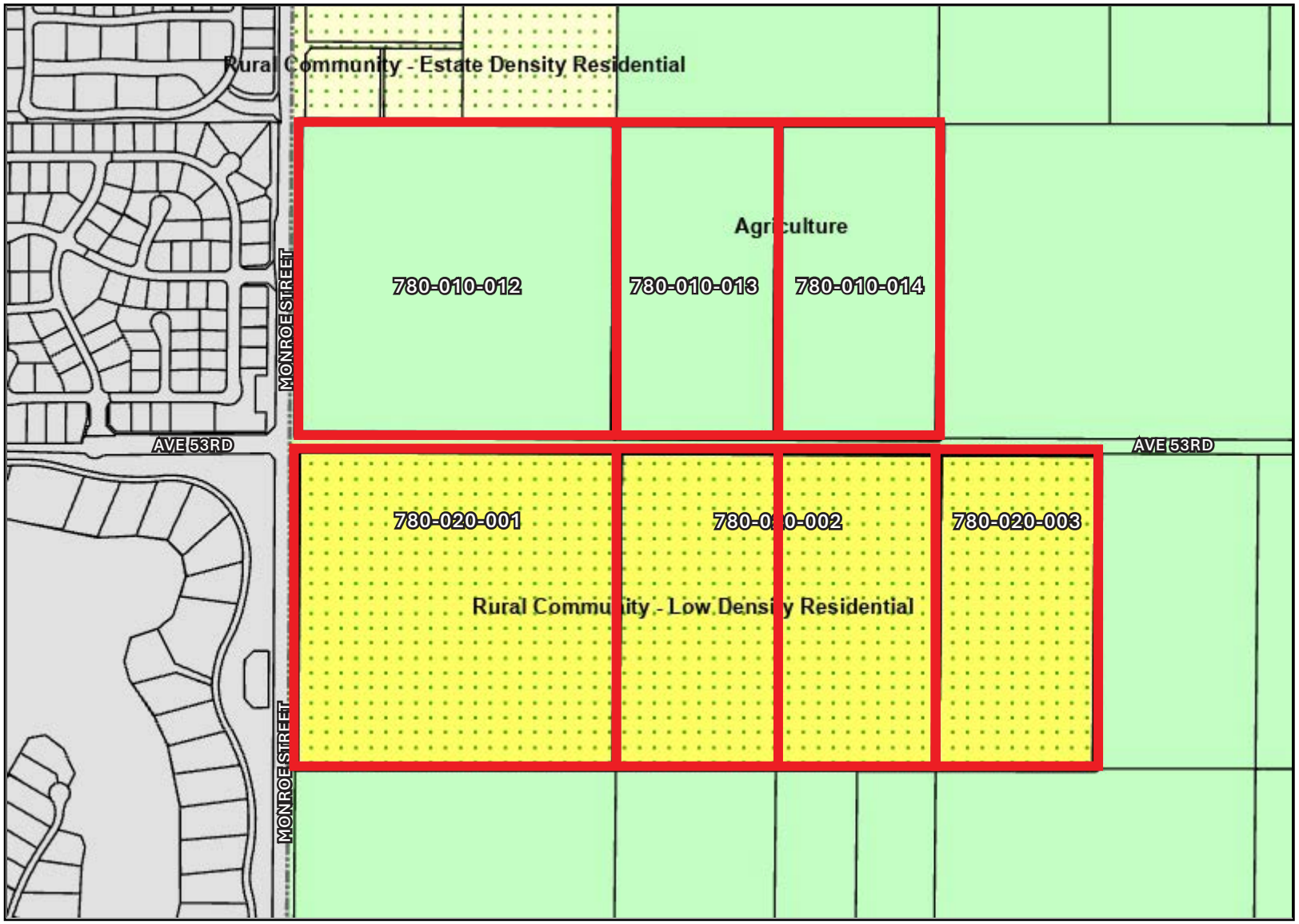
SOURCE: Google Earth – 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-3**

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Project Location

427-001-24



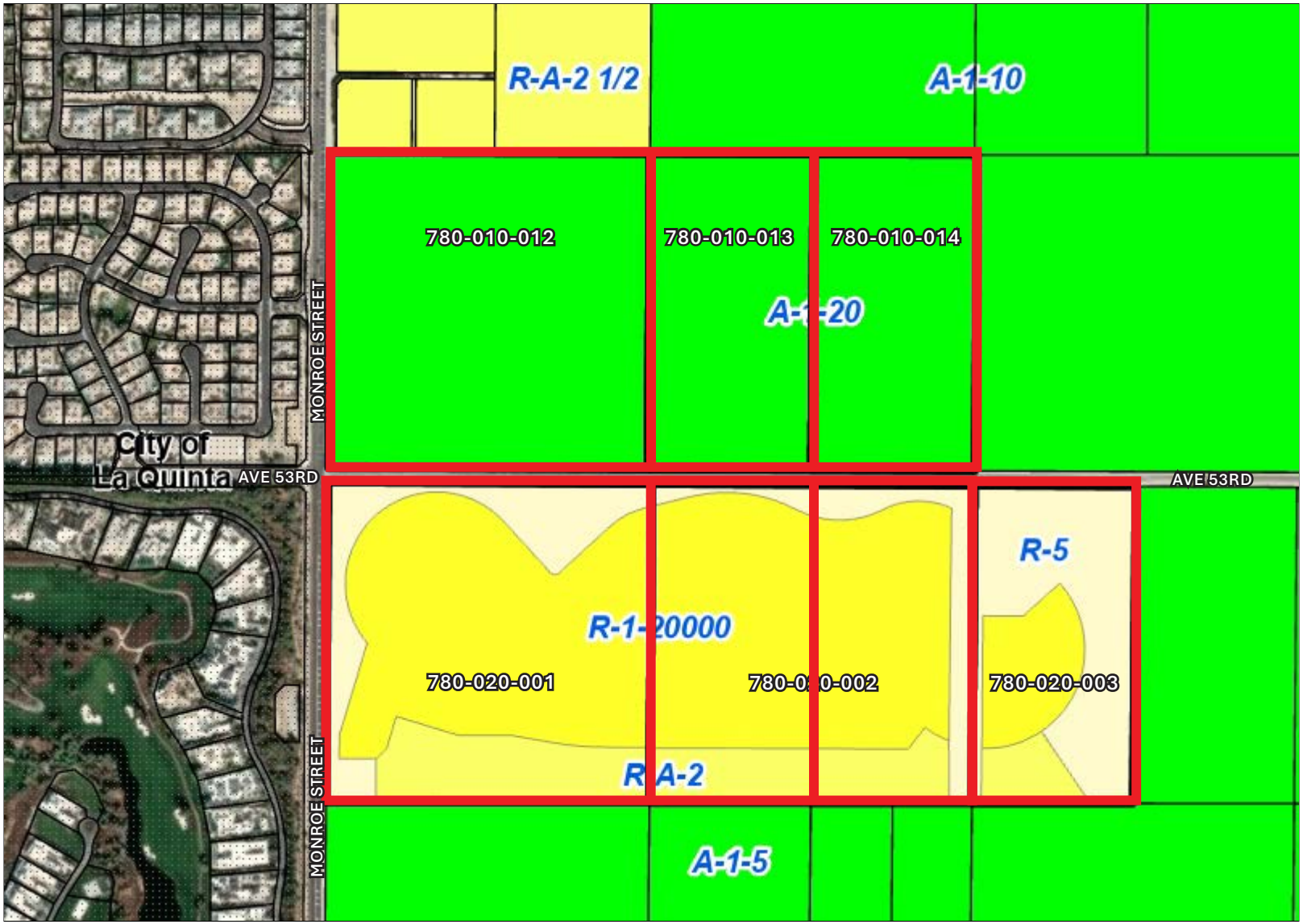
SOURCE: Riverside County Information Technology – 2026.

FIGURE **3.0-4**

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Existing General Plan Land Use

427-001-24



SOURCE: Riverside County Information Technology – 2026.

FIGURE **3.0-5**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Existing Zoning Map

427-001-24

3.4 SPECIFIC PLAN OVERVIEW AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan establishes the regulatory and policy framework for the development of a private, master-planned residential community in the unincorporated Vista Santa Rosa community of Riverside County. The Specific Plan identifies Planning Areas (PAs), permitted uses, development standards, and design guidelines that will govern implementation of the community in a manner consistent with the County's General Plan. The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan is included in the Appendices to this Draft EIR as **Appendix B: Ranch at Madison Specific Plan.**

Under California Government Code §65450 et seq., Specific Plans are authorized as tools for the systematic implementation of a jurisdiction's General Plan. A Specific Plan may be adopted by resolution as a policy document and supported by an implementing zoning ordinance. The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan is adopted by resolution, while the accompanying Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance is adopted by ordinance to ensure consistency between land use policy and regulatory controls.

To implement the Specific Plan, approval of the following discretionary actions is requested:

- Foundation General Plan Amendment to modify the Foundation Component of the Project Site from Agriculture and Rural Community (RC) to Community Development and Open Space, and to establish corresponding General Plan land use designations consistent with the proposed Specific Plan;
- Change of Zone (CZ) to establish Specific Plan zoning and configure Planning Area boundaries;
- Tentative Tract Map (TTM) to create legal lots for subsequent development; and
- Development Agreement (DA) to establish a contractual framework for financing and implementing public and private improvements.

3.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Project objectives include:

- Ensure the orderly and sensitive development of the Project Site as a unified residential development with a private street system.
- Develop Planning Area standards to facilitate the efficient implementation of a planned residential development that creates an attractive design balancing neighborhood compatibility with housing and recreational uses.
- Construct a master-planned resort community containing a variety of land uses, including Mixed Use, Low-Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Open Space Recreation.
- Create high-quality amenity spaces in an Amenity Village, including a Wellness Center, golf course, sports fields, courts, and a pool, that benefit residents and members of the adjacent Madison Club to the west.

- Provide a high-quality 9-hole golf course and related amenities for residents and members of the adjacent Madison Club to the west.
- Provide primary access to the community from Monroe Street aligning with the existing entry to the Carmela residential neighborhood on the west side of Monroe Street, secondary access from Avenue 53 and extension and improvement of Arabia Street, and connection to the adjacent Madison Club to the west via either a golf club tunnel under Monroe Street or a golf cart bridge over Monroe Street.
- Implement classic architectural styles that pull from the surrounding desert landscape.
- Promote an active and healthy atmosphere through the Project design and amenities.
- Provide opportunities for Project residents to connect to existing open space and trail infrastructure near the site via the Project's extensive trail network and mixed-use paths.
- Offer a diverse range of housing options with generously sized units, including Estate Lots and Golf Villas, in addition to more moderately sized Village Units, creating more efficient and affordable products.

3.6 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The Specific Plan would allow development of a residential, golf-oriented, amenity-focused community consisting of up to 85 residential units, a private 9-hole golf course, and associated improvements including open space, recreational facilities, and non-vehicular modes of circulation. As shown in Error! Reference source not found., the Specific Plan would establish 13 Planning Areas (PAs) on the Project Site with land use designations of Mixed Use Area, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Open Space–Recreation. **Figure 3.0-7: Concept Plan** depicts the layout of Project components.

Table 3.0-1: Planning Area Land Use Summary identifies the land uses, unit allocations, acreages, and densities associated with each PA. It should be noted that access to the Project Site and amenities is strictly for the residents/members of the Ranch at Madison and the Madison Club community, which is west of the Project Site across Monroe Street. Detailed development standards for each proposed land use for each PA are provided in the subsections that follow.

TABLE 3.0-1: PLANNING AREA LAND USE SUMMARY

PA	Planning Area Description	Units	Acres	Density
1	**Mixed Use Area (MUA)**	20	11.9	1.7
	MUA Subtotal:	*20*	*11.9*	*1.7*
2	**Low Density Residential (LDR)**	9	7.1	1.3
3	**Low Density Residential (LDR)**	14	10.8	1.3
4	**Low Density Residential (LDR)**	8	6.5	1.2
	LDR Subtotal:	*31*	*24.5*	*1.3*

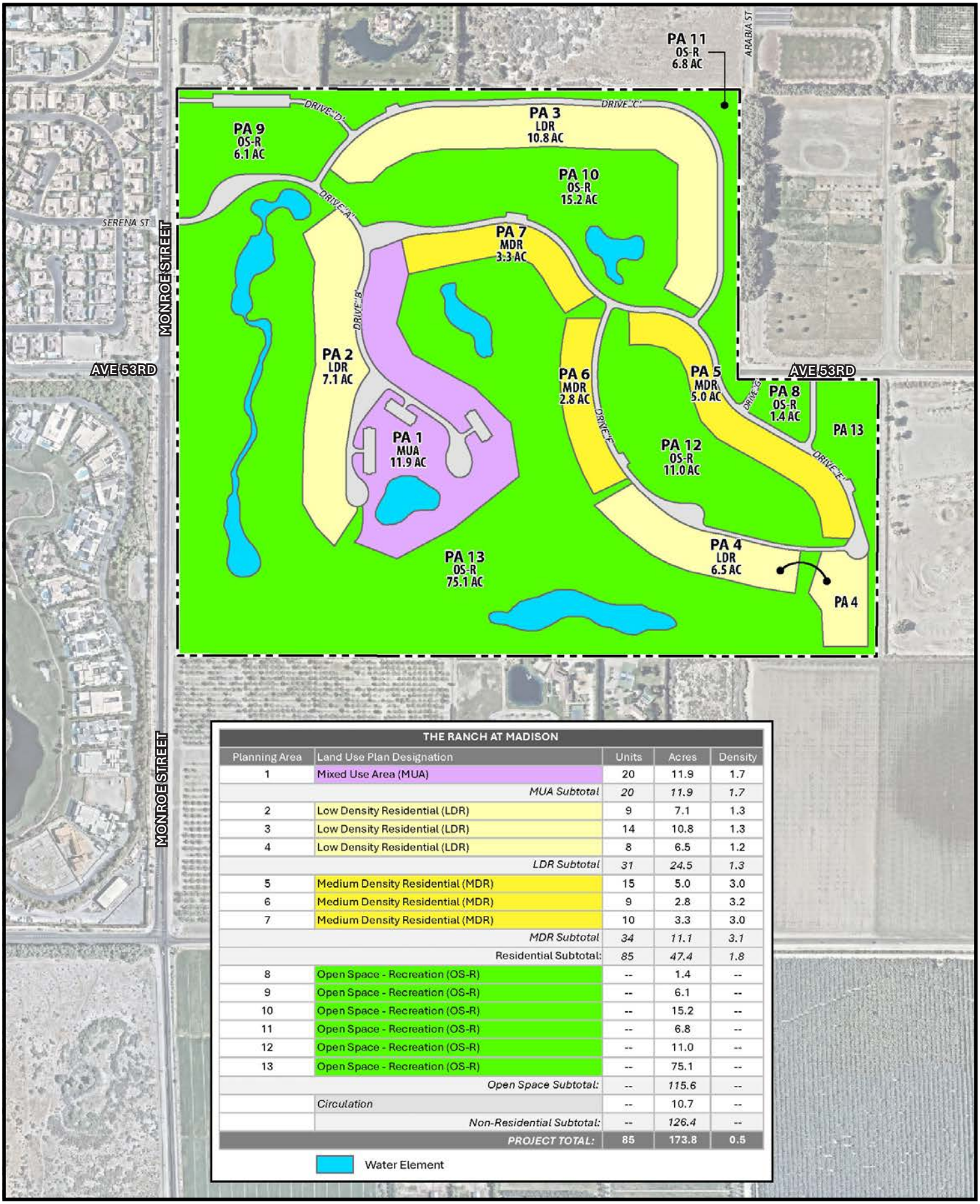
TABLE 3.0-1: PLANNING AREA LAND USE SUMMARY				
PA	Planning Area Description	Units	Acres	Density
5	**Medium Density Residential (MDR)**	15	5.0	3.0
6	**Medium Density Residential (MDR)**	9	2.8	3.2
7	**Medium Density Residential (MDR)**	10	3.3	3.0
	MDR Subtotal:	*34*	*11.1*	*3.1*
	Residential Total:	*85*	*47.5*	*1.8*
8	**Open Space – Recreation (OS-R)**	--	1.4	--
9	**Open Space – Recreation (OS-R)**	--	6.1	--
10	**Open Space – Recreation (OS-R)**	--	15.2	--
11	**Open Space – Recreation (OS-R)**	--	6.8	--
12	**Open Space – Recreation (OS-R)**	--	11.0	--
13	**Open Space – Recreation (OS-R)**	--	75.1	--
	Open Space Total:	--	*115.6*	--
	Circulation	--	10.7	--
	Circulation Total:	--	*10.7*	--
	TOTAL	**85**	**173.8**	**0.5**

3.6.1 Mixed Use Area (MUA) (PA 1)

The MUA designation allows for development of a centrally located Amenity Village within PA 1, planned to serve as the social and recreational hub of the community.

The Amenity Village would include a children's playground, Event Barn, Event Lawn, Activity Lagoon, Fitness Center, and Starter Shack. The Event Barn would be approximately 10,000 square feet (SF) and would include a golf simulator, bar, food and beverage/grill facilities, and a kids' club. The Activity Lagoon would feature nine cabanas of approximately 120 SF and a beach club of approximately 850 SF. The Fitness Center would be approximately 1,500 SF, and the Starter Shack would be approximately 1,000 SF.

This mixed-use area would also include the development of up to 20 Village Residential Units on 11.9 acres, resulting in an overall density of approximately 1.7 du/ac.



THE RANCH AT MADISON				
Planning Area	Land Use Plan Designation	Units	Acres	Density
1	Mixed Use Area (MUA)	20	11.9	1.7
	MUA Subtotal	*20*	*11.9*	*1.7*
2	Low Density Residential (LDR)	9	7.1	1.3
3	Low Density Residential (LDR)	14	10.8	1.3
4	Low Density Residential (LDR)	8	6.5	1.2
	LDR Subtotal	*31*	*24.5*	*1.3*
5	Medium Density Residential (MDR)	15	5.0	3.0
6	Medium Density Residential (MDR)	9	2.8	3.2
7	Medium Density Residential (MDR)	10	3.3	3.0
	MDR Subtotal	*34*	*11.1*	*3.1*
	Residential Subtotal:	*85*	*47.4*	*1.8*
8	Open Space - Recreation (OS-R)	--	1.4	--
9	Open Space - Recreation (OS-R)	--	6.1	--
10	Open Space - Recreation (OS-R)	--	15.2	--
11	Open Space - Recreation (OS-R)	--	6.8	--
12	Open Space - Recreation (OS-R)	--	11.0	--
13	Open Space - Recreation (OS-R)	--	75.1	--
	Open Space Subtotal:	--	*115.6*	--
	Circulation	--	10.7	--
	Non-Residential Subtotal:	--	*126.4*	--
	PROJECT TOTAL:	**85**	**173.8**	**0.5**

Water Element

SOURCE: t&b planning – December 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-6**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Specific Plan Land Use Plan



SOURCE: VITA – 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-7**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Concept Plan

427-001-24

3.6.2 Residential (PAs 2 to 7)

Low Density Residential (LDR) |1.0-2.0 du/ac| PAs 2 to 4

The Specific Plan would allow development of LDR single-family estate lot homes in PAs 2 to 4, with permitted densities ranging from 1.0 to 2.0 du/ac. Up to 31 custom estate lot homes would be developed on approximately 24.5 acres within these Planning Areas, resulting in an overall density of approximately 1.3 du/ac.

Medium Density Residential (MDR) |2.0-5.0 du/ac| PAs 5 to 7

The Specific Plan would allow development of MDR single-family golf cottage homes in PAs 5 to 7, with permitted densities ranging from 2.0 to 5.0 du/ac. Up to 34 golf cottage homes would be developed on approximately 11.1 acres within these Planning Areas, resulting in an overall density of approximately 3.1 du/ac.

Open Space–Recreation (OS-R) | PAs 8 to 13

The Specific Plan would reserve approximately 115.6 acres of the Project Site (PAs 8 to 13) for open space and recreation amenities consisting of 92.7 acres of golf, 14.8 acres of recreation, and 8.1 acres of open space. PA 8 would allow a Farm-to-Table area including an approximately 3,000 SF greenhouse, a 1,500 SF kitchen, a 300 SF bar, 120 SF restrooms, and a 150 SF storage room. PA 9 would include racquet courts consisting of an approximately 2,500 SF entry pavilion, two tennis courts, three padel courts, and 12 pickleball courts. PAs 10 to 13 would include a private 9-hole golf course, walking trail, and water features.

3.6.3 Amenity and Employment Summary

As discussed above, there are amenities spread throughout the PAs. **Table 3.0-2: Amenity Summary** provides the approximate square footage of the amenities. It is estimated that the Project would have 151 employees.[1] Use of the amenity facilities would be limited to the owners of homes in the Ranch at Madison Project and owners of homes in the Madison Club community located directly west of the Project Site. Travel between the Ranch at Madison and Madison Club communities would primarily be by golf cart using the tunnel under, or bridge over, Monroe Street proposed as part of the Project and described further in Section 3.8, Circulation below.

TABLE 3.0-2: AMENITY SUMMARY

PA	Amenities	Projected Size (Square feet)
9	Main Entry Guardhouse	800

[1] 151 employees would consist of 3 for the main guard house; 3 for the secondary guardhouse; 6 for the racquet/courts/admin; 50 for the farm-to-table; 1 for the event barn; 16 for the activity lagoon; 8 for the fitness center; 8 for the wellness spa; 4 for the starter shack; 1 for the back-of-house area; and 51 for the golf course.

TABLE 3.0-2: AMENITY SUMMARY		
PA	**Amenities**	Projected Size (Square feet)
8	Secondary Entry Guardhouse	400
9	Racquet Courts/Admin	2,500
8	Farm to Table	5,070
	Greenhouse	3,000
	Kitchen	1,500
	Bar	300
	Restrooms	120
	Storage	150
1	Event Barn	10,000
1	Activity Lagoon	970
	Cabanas (9)	120
	Beach Club	850
1	Fitness Center	1,500
1	Wellness/Spa	14,000
1	Starter Shack	1,000
13	Back of House Area	7,933
	Commissary	2,000
	Golf Course Maintenance Facility	5,933
	Total	**44,173**

3.7 BUILDING DESIGN

The Specific Plan would allow a variety of architectural styles, including opportunities for both modern and classic styles, and a landscape concept consistent with a desert lifestyle and the surrounding setting. The Project takes a cohesive and comprehensive approach to combining open space and recreation areas within the resort community by identifying areas for outdoor exercise, recreation, trails, and pedestrian pathways. The community design connects the open space and recreation areas throughout the community through private Project trails, and a proposed bridge or tunnel to provide access to the open space and recreation areas in the Madison Club community

located west of the Project Site. The open space environment creates convenient opportunities for residents and encourages a daily active lifestyle.

3.7.1 Residential Architectural Standards

The Ranch at Madison architectural vision relies on the following design principles:

- *Site Context and Integration:* Thoughtfully place buildings to preserve views of the surroundings from the common areas and maximize views for the residents within their homes. Also, site buildings to accommodate sustainable design where feasible.
- *Scale:* Building forms shall be designed and well-proportioned, resulting in a balanced composition of elements along the street scene. Vertical massing and proportion of one-story to two-story elements shall be considered.
- *Proportion:* Each design element of the home should have an inherent proportional relationship to each other and to the overall community design, creating a balanced composition. Exaggerated or overly stylized elements should be avoided.
- *Color:* Architecture shall defer to the palettes consistent with the desert landscape, exhibiting natural textures, tones, and materials complementary to the local environment.
- *Material Authenticity:* Building materials should be used as honest expressions of their function, structural capabilities, or regional context. This means utilizing natural materials over "manufactured" and/or local materials over imported.
- *Rhythm and Balance:* A harmonious recurrence of building forms, elements, materials, or color to create a sense of serenity and balance in the architectural composition is encouraged.
- *Texture:* A rich and varied palette of textures is encouraged to minimize the reflectivity of walls and roofs as long as they are harmonious from house to house.
- *Shade and Shadow:* Large-scale texturing of a building may also be achieved by shade and shadow. A series of transitional spaces, such as trellises, loggias, overhangs, deeply recessed doors and windows, courtyards or outdoor rooms, can help create visually rich compositions, provide weather and sun protection, and establish strong indoor/outdoor relationships throughout the home.
- *Appropriateness:* The degree of individual design expression will be measured relative to the home's landscape context and the overall aesthetic goals for the Ranch at Madison. A design may be considered too individualistic or object-oriented and therefore inappropriate. In essence, homes should not strive to make a statement that competes with the overall aesthetic goals for the Ranch at Madison.

Massing and Scale

Homes should be broken down into smaller components to reduce the massing volume. This can be achieved through a variety of architectural techniques and treatments such as:

- Varied roof forms and heights;
- Variation in materials and color;

- Architectural articulation;
- Courtyards, loggias, trellises, or brise-soleil; and/or
- Clearly defined entry features.

All residences of the Specific Plan shall not exceed a maximum height of 35 feet.

Roof Forms

Rows of homes seen from a distance or along large roads are perceived by their contrast against the skyline or background. The dominant impact is the shape of the building and roofline. Articulate the building base and rooflines to express a variety of conditions and minimize the visual impact of repetitious flat planes, similar building silhouettes, and similar ridge heights. Individual roof plans may be simple but should vary between plans.

Chimneys

Chimneys may be used as an architectural element. Caps on chimneys should have low profiles; they should not be visually distractive. The form and materials shall reflect the architectural theme of the structure.

Windows and Doors

Window details differentiate architectural styles and can provide a high level of architectural enrichment. The selection and proportion of the windows to the façade shall be responsive to the architectural style of the building. Size and shape shall be considered to ensure a balanced relationship with the surrounding roof and walls. In general, windows should enhance, rather than dominate, the overall architectural character.

To withstand the desert heat, high-performance residential windows with responsive passive solar shading strategies are encouraged. Window sash colors shall complement the building.

Large panes or walls of operable glass that allow spaces to flow seamlessly indoor/outdoor may be used at select locations. If trim is used, it shall complement the building.

The style of windows shall be compatible with the architectural style of the residence. The eclectic use of different window styles or shapes on one building plane may be considered appropriate provided the resulting composition remains coherent.

Clerestory windows encouraging a natural stack effect for ventilation and visually allowing the roof to float above the wall plane shall be used as long as they are consistent with the style of the residence.

Garages

Garage doors are an important architectural feature. Thus, the aesthetic of the garage doors is of high design importance and shall be compatible and enhance the home's architectural style. The following are recommendations to enhance the street scene by incorporating garage doors as a design feature:

- Garage doors shall be compatible with the architectural style of the residence.
- Provide different garage door patterns from one home to the next.
- Three-car garages should incorporate a double door and single door or three single doors.
- Where three-car garages are proposed in custom home construction, at least one garage entrance should be offset or detached from the remaining two entrances.

Porches and Entryways

- Porches, loggias, and balconies facilitate seamless indoor/outdoor experiences and provide visual interest, shadow, texture, and shade.
- Second story balconies shall be designed as an integral component of the residence and may be expressed as recessed or additive.
- Railing details will be in harmony with the architectural character of the residence.

Mailboxes

Where common mailbox services are provided for any residential area, they will be required to be located close to the neighborhood entry in clusters throughout the neighborhood. The architectural character shall be similar to the residential architecture.

Materials and Colors

The primary goal of color and materials palettes is to further enhance and define the architectural styles within the Ranch at Madison. Equally important is the composition of color and materials to achieve a harmonious and visually interesting community.

Selected colors and materials should be appropriate to the styles they represent and used to further differentiate from the other styles. Architectural screens and accessory structures should be compatible in material, color, and texture to the main buildings.

The composition of materials and textures contributes to the architectural expression of the residences. Specific materials shall be identified for each architectural style. The chosen materials shall represent the specific architectural style enhancing the community aesthetic.

- Use complementary building materials that promote a harmonious appearance and provide interest and variety consistent with the architectural styles.

- Where using concrete roof tile, use style-appropriate concrete roof tile blends; prohibit overly dramatic blends with extreme contrast.
- Material finishes should express permanence and quality.
- Create a more solid and permanent appearance with stone or other masonry materials, particularly as accents.
- Avoid frequent changes in materials.
- Detail material finishes in a manner consistent with the architectural style.
- Use high-quality, durable, low-maintenance materials.

Stucco

Stucco finishes should project high quality and be appropriate to the architectural style. Heavy Lace and Spanish Texture stucco finishes are prohibited.

- All stucco trim details (such as window surrounds, windowsills, roof eaves, column details, lintels, etc.) must be constructed with a level of precision and accuracy to express the authentic execution of the style.
- Use clean, crisp, and smooth stucco details.
- Use a different trim stucco finish or color from the wall stucco finish.
- No rough trowel or uneven stucco finish.
- Carefully locate stucco control joints if applicable on elevation designs.

Material Wrapping

Architectural elements must not end at the corner of a building and shall wrap around the corner and extend to a logical terminus point that is incorporated into the overall architectural design.

- Wrap columns, tower elements, and pilasters entirely.
- Transition paint at interior corners.

Wood

Wood is a material used in many architectural styles. However, maintenance concerns, a desire for long-term architectural quality, and new high-quality manufactured alternative wood materials make the use of real wood material subject to thoughtful consideration and scrutiny. Where “wood” is referred to in this document, it can also be interpreted as simulated wood trim with style-appropriate wood texture.

Architectural Styles

The Specific Plan establishes a cohesive architectural framework intended to promote visual compatibility while allowing variety in individual home design. Architectural styles within the Ranch at Madison community would draw from regionally inspired themes, including Spanish, Adobe

Ranch, Desert Contemporary, and Mid-Century Modern. These styles emphasize building forms, materials, and colors that reflect the legacy of the surrounding landscape and the desired warmth of the community. Additional architectural styles may be permitted provided they maintain consistency with the design principles, detailing, and overall aesthetic established for Ranch at Madison.

3.8 CIRCULATION

3.8.1 Vehicle Circulation

Street Improvements

Avenue 53, an unimproved two-lane public roadway, currently extends east-west from Jackson Street to Monroe Street through the middle of the Project Site. To develop the proposed Project as planned, the Project includes a request to vacate the segment of Avenue 53 within the Project Site.

Off-site improvements are shown on **Figure 3.0-8: Off-Site Vehicular Circulation Improvements**Error! Reference source not found.. The extension and improvement of Arabia Street from Avenue 52 to Avenue 53 is proposed to provide alternative access for properties located east of the Project Site that currently have access to Avenue 53. In addition, new traffic signals are proposed at the intersections of Avenue 52 and Arabia Street and on Monroe Street at the proposed main entry to the Project on Monroe Street aligned with La Serena Street. Widening of the portion of Monroes Street adjacent to the Project is proposed. Widening and improvement of the existing segment of Arabia Street south of Avenue 52 is proposed with the extension of Arabia Street south to Avenue 53. Further description of these proposed off-site street improvements is provided below.

On-Site Vehicle Circulation

The Specific Plan circulation system, shown in **Figure 3.0-9: Vehicle Circulation Plan**, would consist of private streets providing access to the residential neighborhoods, Amenity Village, and recreation and open space areas within the Project Site.

The internal street network would consist primarily of 28-foot-wide private streets serving residential neighborhoods and recreational areas, supplemented by 20-foot-wide service access routes, 24-foot-wide emergency vehicle access (EVA) lanes, and designated community maintenance access points. The design and configuration of the internal streets are intended to provide efficient vehicle circulation while minimizing grading and preserving the community character. The vehicular system would comply with County engineering standards (as modified under the Specific Plan), Fire Department requirements, and California Streets and Highways Code design criteria.

Primary and secondary access to this internal network is distributed across four distinct points, with all entrances gated:

- **Primary Access (Driveway A):** Located on Monroe Street, aligned with Via La Serena Street. This will be constructed as a fully signalized intersection.

- **Secondary Access (Driveway G):** Located at the southeastern boundary, positioned at the new intersection of the Avenue 53 segment and the proposed Arabia Street extension. This entry will be gated with turning movements controlled by controlled by a stop sign.
- **Service & Emergency Access (Driveway D):** Located at the northwest corner of the Project Site on Monroe Street. This access point will provide access for service, maintenance, and secondary emergency access, with vehicular movements restricted to right-in/right-out only.
- **Maintenance & Emergency Access (Driveway H):** Located on the eastern portion of the site via Avenue 53 to serve community maintenance and emergency vehicles.

Off-Site Vehicle Circulation

Off-site roadway improvements would be constructed to provide safe and adequate access to the Project Site and comply with County roadway standards. Off-site roadway improvements would occur along Monroe Street, Arabia Street, and Avenue 53. The proposed perimeter and parkway landscaping reflect the County's Vista Santa Rosa design guidelines.

Monroe Street

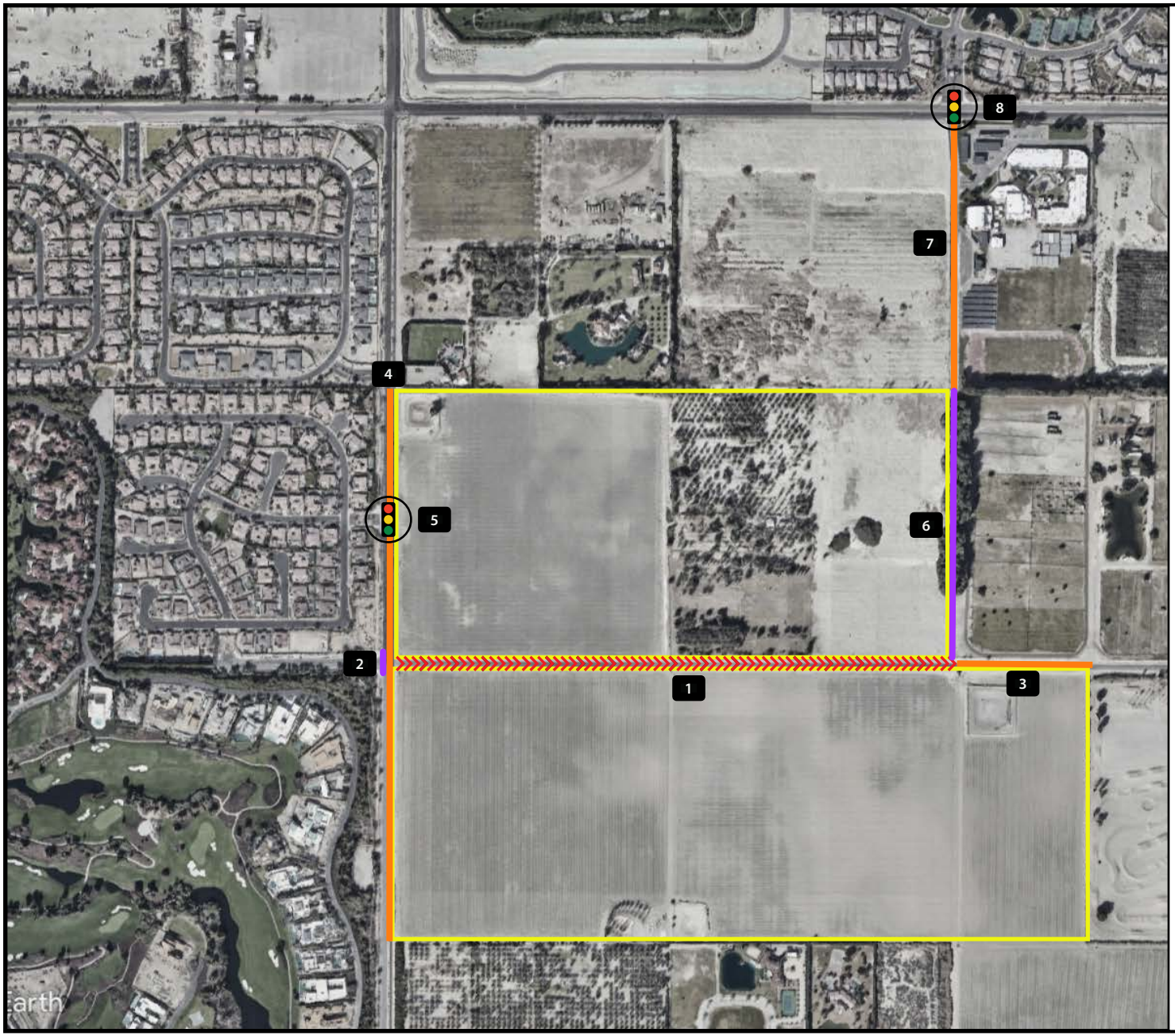
Monroe Street is split between two jurisdictions: the western side is under the jurisdiction of the City of La Quinta, and the eastern side is under the jurisdiction of the County of Riverside. Within the County's Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan Circulation Element, Monroe Street is designated as an Arterial Highway. The eastern frontage of Monroe Street is not yet fully improved to the County's arterial design standards.

As part of the Project, Monroe Street would be improved along the County frontage to meet current County arterial standards with a 119-foot-wide roadway, including an 18-foot raised median, 34 feet of paving on each side, a Class II bike lane, curb and gutter, a five-foot-wide sidewalk, and an eight-foot-wide trail fronting the Project Site. A median extending along Monroe Street, across Avenue 53, is proposed to restrict access to Avenue 53 west of Monroe Street to right-in/right-out only. A new traffic signal is proposed at the intersection of Driveway A with Monroe Street, which aligns with La Serena Street on the west side of Monroe Street.

Arabia Street

Arabia Street is a north–south two-lane roadway located northeast of the Project Site and currently provides access to the Cahuilla Desert Academy, including designated student drop-off and pick-up areas. Arabia Street was constructed in the 1990s in conjunction with the school and is currently a privately maintained roadway that has not been dedicated to the County and does not meet full County local street standards. This roadway is not fully improved to meet applicable Riverside County standards and currently terminates at the northeastern edge of the site.

Extension of Arabia Street south to Avenue 53 and improvements to meet the County's local street standard are proposed. The improvements were designed in coordination with CVUSD facilities and Cahuilla Desert Academy. Arabia Street would be widened to a 66-foot-wide right-of-way consistent



Legend

Project Site Boundary

1. Vacate Avenue 53 within Project Site.
2. Extend median in Monroe Street at intersection with Avenue 53.
3. Widen Avenue 53 at eastern terminus of Project Site to meet County Local Street Standard.
4. Widen Monroe Street along Project frontage to meet County Arterial Highway Standard.
5. Install Traffic Signal at intersection of Monroe Street and La Serena Street/ Project Entry.
6. Extend Arabia Street to Avenue 53.
7. Widen western portion of Arabia Street to meet County Local Street Standard.
8. Install Traffic Signal at intersection of Avenue 52 and Arabia Street.

SOURCE: Meridian; Google Earth – 2026.

FIGURE **3.0-8**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Off-Site Vehicular Circulation

427-001-24



LEGEND

- Monroe Street - 119' ROW
- Local Street - 76' ROW
- Arabia Street Extension 40' ROW
- Private Street - 28' ROW
- Service Access - 20' Wide
- Community Maintenanace Access - 28' Wide
- EVA Access - 24' Wide
- Main Entry
- Secondary Entry
- Community Maintenance Access

N

NOT TO SCALE

SOURCE: t&b planning - 2026

FIGURE **3.0-9**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Vehicle Circulation Plan

427-001-24

with the County's Enhanced Local Street Adjacent to School or Park standard. Improvements would include expanded pedestrian facilities, including widening the existing eastern sidewalk to approximately 11 feet, constructing a new five-foot-wide sidewalk along the western side of the roadway, and providing a two-foot-wide shoulder on the east side. Arabia Street would generally operate with one through travel lane in each direction, with auxiliary queuing lanes provided in areas where school drop-off/pick-up activity is anticipated. Additional improvements would include enhanced signage, pavement markings, bollards, and traffic calming features to improve pedestrian safety near Cahuilla Desert Academy. A traffic signal is proposed at the intersection of Arabia Street and Avenue 52. The Arabia Street extension would provide additional roadway access for emergency response to the Project Site and other nearby properties, as well as circulation enhancements for the Cahuilla Desert Academy.

Avenue 53

Avenue 53 is an existing east–west local street that currently provides one travel lane in each direction with unpaved dirt shoulders on both sides and is not currently improved to meet the County's Local Street standards. Under the Specific Plan, Avenue 53 would be constructed to its required 76-foot Local Street section along the Project frontage and extend east to connect to Arabia Street. The right-of-way would consist of 12 feet of paving, an 18-foot landscaped parkway on the north side, a five-foot parkway-adjacent sidewalk, 20 feet of paving, and a two- to three-foot landscape parkway on the south side. Avenue 53 would terminate at Driveway G, which would serve as the Project's secondary gated entry. Although the Avenue 53 right-of-way would be vacated within the interior of the Project Site, improved connections to Arabia Street would maintain access for surrounding properties and provide continuity to Avenue 52.

3.8.2 Non-Vehicular Circulation

On-Site Non-Vehicle Circulation

As shown in **Figure 3.0-10: Non-Vehicular Circulation Plan**Error! Reference source not found., the Specific Plan contains a comprehensive trail and pedestrian path system that is carefully planned to respect the developed terrain and encourage modes of non-vehicular circulation, by providing connectivity between the recreational facilities, residential areas, open space, and the existing off-site pathways and sidewalks. The Specific Plan's trail and path system are composed of the following:

Multiuse Path

The Multiuse Path is located around the Amenity Village and provides access and connectivity to the amenities within PA 1. In connection with the broader network of trails within the community, this 10-foot-wide concrete/decomposed granite path encourages members, residents, and their guests to circulate without using their vehicles.

Perimeter Trail

The Perimeter Trail is an 8-foot-wide compacted decomposed granite trail within PAs 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13 and encircles and bisects the community.

Public Trail

The Public Trail is a 10-foot-wide compacted and stabilized decomposed granite trail along Monroe Street, Arabia Street, and Avenue 53 that connects on-site trails with off-site trails. The public trail is consistent with the vision for Vista Santa Rosa and associated design guidelines.

Golf Cart Path and Tunnel

A network of approximately 8-foot-wide concrete cart paths would connect golf course holes and extend between residential neighborhoods, creating a multi-loop circulation system throughout the community. To facilitate safe crossing of Monroe Street between the proposed Ranch at Madison and the existing Madison Club community, the Project would include either (1) an underground golf cart tunnel or (2) a grade-separated, low-profile golf cart bridge. Both of these options are evaluated in this Draft EIR.

The underground tunnel option would provide a fully separated crossing beneath Monroe Street to allow golf carts and service vehicles to travel safely between communities. Alternatively, the low-profile bridge option would consist of a grade-separated crossing structure spanning Monroe Street, anticipated to be approximately 225 feet in length and 17 feet in height above Monroe Street to provide adequate vehicular clearance. The bridge would be constructed of durable materials such as reinforced concrete and/or structural steel and would include graded approach ramps and retaining walls (approximately up to 16 feet tall) integrated into the surrounding golf course and cart path system, and screened walls along the bridge for safety. These dimensions are preliminary and provided for planning and environmental analysis purposes only; final bridge design, including structural dimensions, materials, and vertical clearance, would be determined during final engineering and permitting.

3.8.3 Parking and Access

Parking is provided within each single-family dwelling, consistent with the Riverside County Development Code, and within the Amenity Village.

3.8.4 Entry Gates and Walls

The Specific Plan would allow development of a private community, which would include the construction of entry gates and perimeter walls. As shown in **Figure 3.0-11: Wall and Fence Plan**, the Specific Plan would have up to 8-foot-tall concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls surrounding the boundary of the Project Site, and up to 6-foot-tall CMU walls along the entrance driveways and between residential lots.



Trail Legend

Symbol	Description	Material	QTY
	Multi - Use Path 10' Wide	Concrete	3,635 LF
	Golf Cart Path 8' Wide	Concrete	9,599 LF
	Perimeter Trail 8' Wide	COMPACTED DG	11,703 LF
	Public Trail 10' Wide	COMPACTED DG	2,686 LF
	Golf Cart Tunnel	-	-
	Main Entry	-	-
	Secondary Entry	-	-
	Service Access	-	-
	Community Maintenance Access	-	-

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NOT TO SCALE

SOURCE: t&b planning - 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-10**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Non-Vehicular Circulation Plan



Symbol	Description	QTY
	8' HT CMU Perimeter Wall	10,956 lf
	6' HT CMU Wall	21,034 lf
	Column	173

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NOT TO SCALE

SOURCE: t&b planning - 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-11**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Wall and Fence Plan

3.8.5 Lighting

Exterior lighting within the Ranch at Madison community would be designed to follow "dark skies" principles and minimize light spillover onto surrounding areas. Lighting would use low-intensity, downward-directed fixtures that limit glare and reduce skyglow while providing illumination necessary for safety, wayfinding, and functional needs. In common areas, lighting would consist of warm-colored, unobtrusive fixtures, primarily LED, unless alternative lighting is required to meet specific operational objectives. Within landscaped areas, pathways, and paved surfaces, light sources would be shielded or softened to avoid direct views of bulbs and to prevent off-site light trespass. All exterior surface-mounted and above-ground fixtures would be compatible with the Project's architectural character and designed to maintain compliance with dark-sky performance goals.

3.8.6 Landscape Design

The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan establishes a unified landscape concept intended to reinforce the community's desert setting, support the Project's recreational character, and provide a visually cohesive environment across residential neighborhoods, golf areas, and amenity spaces. The overall landscape strategy emphasizes compatibility with the natural Coachella Valley environment, water-efficient plant materials, and a hierarchy of landscape zones that respond to the function and character of different parts of the community. Landscape design throughout the Project Site would utilize drought-tolerant species, desert-appropriate vegetation, and an organized planting palette that aligns with the Project's architectural style and open space framework.

As shown in **Figure 3.0-12: Landscaping Plan**, the Specific Plan organizes landscape treatments throughout the Project Site into four thematic landscape zones. Theme 1: Desert Planting establishes a natural, open desert aesthetic through lower-density drought-tolerant plantings, large drifts of native species, and informal clusters of desert trees and shrubs that require minimal maintenance. Theme 2: Enhanced Desert (Golf) provides a more refined desert landscape within and around golf course areas, incorporating higher-density desert plants, extended canopy tree massing, and mounded grasses to create depth, texture, and visually unified corridors along streets and trails. Theme 3: Desert Oasis is used at entry drives and cul-de-sacs and features lush, identifiable landscaping such as flowering shrubs, ornamental grasses, date palms, citrus trees, and agricultural-type groves that evoke historical farming patterns and create distinct focal points within the community. Theme 4: Amenity Landscape applies to the Amenity Village and core activity areas, where the highest level of landscape detail is provided through structured, patterned groupings of trees and palms, complemented by succulents, accent plants, and colorful ornamental species to create an organized and visually enhanced environment around community facilities.

3.8.7 Utilities

The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) provides water service to the Project Site. Development within the Project Site would be served by a network of lines that would connect to existing public

CVWD water lines located in Monroe Street. As shown in **Figure 3.0-13: Master Water Plan**, the existing 18-inch CVWD water line along Monroe Street would connect to the proposed in-tract 8-inch water lines that run under the private streets. Fire hydrants would be located and developed according to County regulations. Final design of the off-site and in-tract water system is subject to the approval of the CVWD.

The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) also provides sewer service to the Project Site. Development within the Project Site would be served by a network of lines that would connect to existing public CVWD sewer lines located in Monroe Street. As shown in **Figure 3.0- 14: Master Sewer Plan**, the existing 12-inch CVWD sewer line along Monroe Street would connect to the proposed in-tract 8-inch sewer lines that run underground. The exact location and specifications would be determined as part of the final design process.

Some of the lines, where gravity sewer is not technically achievable, may be privately owned and maintained by the homeowners association, subject to approval of the CVWD.

The Project Site is located within the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) electric service area. The proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan includes an Energy Plan that identifies two options to meet the energy needs of the Project. The first option is to obtain power from IID through the IID electrical distribution system serving the area. The second option is to construct an on-site private power generation system (Private Power System) consisting of natural gas-powered linear generators, battery energy storage system (BESS) units to meet peak energy demands and provide reserve power, and on-site solar generation.

The peak estimated energy demands for the Project at full development of the uses allowed by the Specific Plan of approximately 3,324 kilowatts (kW) and approximately 5.89 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of annual energy use. Approximately 990,197 kWh of electricity will be generated by the proposed 580 kW DC community solar photovoltaic (PV) system. The remaining 4,896,567 kWh of required power would be provided by IID or the Private Power System.

The Project incorporates a dual-layered solar and battery storage design to provide energy redundancy. At the residential level, each home is equipped with individual rooftop PV and a 10-kWh battery, which reduces individual household demand on the grid. At the community level, the infrastructure includes a 580-kW community solar array, central battery energy storage, microgrid controls, and dispatchable generators. Combining both distributed and centralized generation and storage capacities allows the system to provide power redundancy that exceeds minimum code requirements. The Project will exceed the goals of 20 percent of energy demand met by renewable energy for nonresidential buildings and 30 percent of energy demand met by renewable energy for single-family residential buildings.

As power from IID may not be available at the time development of the Project begins, initial energy needs may be met by constructing a portion of the on-site power generation system designed for the



Theme 1 - Desert Native

Shrubs	Scientific Name / Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Bougainvillea sp. / Bougainvillea	5 Gal.	Moderate	60" o.c.
	C. pulcherrima / Mexican Bird of Paradise	5 Gal.	Low	96" o.c.
	Calliandra californica / Baja Fairy Duster	5 Gal.	Low	60" o.c.
	Cordia parvifora / Little Leaf Cordia	5 Gal.	Low	96" o.c.
	Eremophila maculata / Valentine Bush	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Fallugia paradoxa / Apache Plume	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Larrea tridentata / Creosote	5 Gal.	Low	96" o.c.
	Ruellia peninsularis / Desert Ruellia	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Salvia leucantha / Mexican Bush Sage	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Simmondsia chinensis / Jojoba	5 Gal.	Low	60 o.c.
	Tecoma stans / Yellow Bells	5 Gal.	Moderate	24" o.c.

Cacti & Accents	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Agave sp. / Agave	5 Gal.	Very Low	72" o.c.
	Aloe / Aloe sp.	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Carnegiea gigantea / Saguaro	24" Box	Low	Specimen
	Dasylirion sp./ Desert Spoon	15 Gal.	Low	84" o.c.
	Echinocactus grusonii / Golden Barrel	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Euphorbia rigida / Gopher Spurge	5 Gal.	Low	24" o.c.
	Euphorbia tirucalli / Firestick	15 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Fouquieria splendens / Ocotillo	Bare Root	Very Low	Specimen
	Hesperaloe funifera / Giant Hesperaloe	5 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Hesperaloe parviflora / Red Yucca	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Stenocereus thurberi / Organ Pipe Cactus	15 Gal.	Very Low	Specimen
	Yucca faxoniana / Spanish Dagger	24" Box	Low	Specimen
	Yucca pallida / Pale Yucca	15 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Yucca rostrata / Beaked Yucca	24" Box	Low	Specimen
	Yucca rupicola / Twisted Yucca	15 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.

Vines	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Antigonn leptopus / Queen's Wreath	1 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Bougainvillea sp. / Bougainvillea	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Campsis radicans / Trumpet Creeper	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Gelsemium sempervirens / Carolina Jasmine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Trachlospermum jasminoides / Star Jamsine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.

Grasses	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Muhlenbegia rigens / Deer Grass	5 Gal.	Moderate	48" o.c.

Groundcovers	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Dalea greggii / Trailing Indigo Bush	1 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.

Theme 2 - Enhanced Desert (Golf)

Shrubs	Scientific Name / Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Calliandra californica / Baja Fairy Duster	5 Gal.	Low	60" o.c.
	Cordia parvifora / Little Leaf Cordia	5 Gal.	Low	96" o.c.
	Eremophila maculata / Valentine Bush	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Lavendula angustifolia / English Lavendar	5 Gal.	Moderate	36" o.c.
	Larrea tridentata / Creosote	5 Gal.	Low	96" o.c.
	Leucophyllum sp. / Sage Bush	5 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Salvia leucantha / Mexican Bush Sage	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Simmondsia chinensis / Jojoba	5 Gal.	Low	60 o.c.
	Sphaeralcea ambigua / Globe Mallow	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Tecoma stans / Yellow Bells	5 Gal.	Moderate	24" o.c.

Cacti & Accents	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Agave sp. / Agave	5 Gal.	Very Low	72" o.c.
	Aloe / Aloe sp.	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Carnegiea gigantea / Saguaro	24" Box	Low	Specimen
	Dasylirion sp./ Desert Spoon	15 Gal.	Low	84" o.c.
	Euphorbia rigida / Gopher Spurge	5 Gal.	Low	24" o.c.
	Euphorbia tirucalli / Firestick	15 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Fouquieria splendens / Ocotillo	Bare Root	Very Low	Specimen
	Hesperaloe funifera / Giant Hesperaloe	5 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Opuntia basilaris / Spanish Dagger	24" Box	Low	Specimen
	Dasylirion sp./ Desert Spoon	15 Gal.	Low	84" o.c.
	Euphorbia rigida / Gopher Spurge	5 Gal.	Low	24" o.c.
	Euphorbia tirucalli / Firestick	15 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Yucca faxoniana / Spanish Dagger	24" Box	Low	Specimen
	Yucca pallida / Pale Yucca	15 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Yucca rostrata / Beaked Yucca	24" Box	Low	Specimen
	Yucca rupicola / Twisted Yucca	15 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.

Vines	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Antigonn leptopus / Queen's Wreath	1 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Bougainvillea sp. / Bougainvillea	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Campsis radicans / Trumpet Creeper	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Gelsemium sempervirens / Carolina Jasmine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Trachlospermum jasminoides / Star Jamsine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.

Grasses	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Muhlenbegia rigens / Deer Grass	5 Gal.	Moderate	48" o.c.

Groundcovers	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Dalea greggii / Trailing Indigo Bush	1 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.

Theme 3 - Desert Oasis

Shrubs	Scientific Name / Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Bougainvillea sp. / Bougainvillea	5 Gal.	Moderate	60" o.c.
	C. pulcherrima / Mexican Bird of Paradise	5 Gal.	Low	96" o.c.
	Calliandra californica / Baja Fairy Duster	5 Gal.	Low	60" o.c.
	Eremophila maculata / Valentine Bush	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Rosmarinus officianlis / Rosemary	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Salvia leucantha / Mexican Bush Sage	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Tecoma stans / Yellow Bells	5 Gal.	Moderate	24" o.c.

Cacti & Accents	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Agave sp. / Agave	5 Gal.	Very Low	72" o.c.
	Aloe / Aloe sp.	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Carnegiea gigantea / Saguaro	24" Box	Low	Specimen
	Dasylirion sp./ Desert Spoon	15 Gal.	Low	84" o.c.
	Euphorbia rigida / Gopher Spurge	5 Gal.	Low	24" o.c.
	Euphorbia tirucalli / Firestick	15 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Fouquieria splendens / Ocotillo	Bare Root	Very Low	Specimen
	Hesperaloe funifera / Giant Hesperaloe	5 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Hesperaloe parviflora / Red Yucca	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.

Vines	Scientific Name Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Antigonn leptopus / Queen's Wreath	1 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Bougainvillea sp. / Bougainvillea	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Campsis radicans / Trumpet Creeper	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Gelsemium sempervirens / Carolina Jasmine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Trachlospermum jasminoides / Star Jamsine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.

Theme 4 - Amenity Landscape

Shrubs	Scientific Name / Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Angiocanthos / Kangaroo Paw	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Bougainvillea sp. / Bougainvillea	5 Gal.	Moderate	60" o.c.
	Dianella revoluta / Flax Lily	5 Gal.	Moderate	36" o.c.
	Eremophila hygrophana / Blue Bells	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Eremophila maculata / Valentine Bush	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Lavendula angustifolia / English Lavendar	5 Gal.	Moderate	36" o.c.
	Leucophyllum sp. / Sage Bush	5 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Rex vomitoria / Dwarf Yaupon Holly	5 Gal.	Moderate	60" o.c.
	Olea e. 'Montra' Dwarf Olive	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Myrtus communis 'boetica' / Twisted Myrtle	15 Gal.	Moderate	60" o.c.
	Perovskia atriplicifolia / Russian Sage	1 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Rosa 'Iceberg' / Iceberg Rose	5 Gal.	Moderate	36" o.c.
	Rosmarinus officianlis / Rosemary	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Ruellia brittoniana / Mexican Petunia	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Salvia leucantha / Mexican Bush Sage	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Tecoma stans / Yellow Bells	5 Gal.	Moderate	24" o.c.

Cacti & Accents	Scientific Name / Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Agave sp. / Agave	5 Gal.	Very Low	72" o.c.
	Aloe / Aloe sp.	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Echinocactus grusonii / Golden Barrel	5 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Euphorbia rigida / Gopher Spurge	5 Gal.	Low	24" o.c.
	Euphorbia tirucalli / Firestick	15 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Yucca pallida / Pale Yucca	15 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.
	Yucca rupicola / Twisted Yucca	15 Gal.	Low	36" o.c.

Vines	Scientific Name / Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Antigonn leptopus / Queen's Wreath	1 Gal.	Low	72" o.c.
	Bougainvillea sp. / Bougainvillea	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Campsis radicans / Trumpet Creeper	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Gelsemium sempervirens / Carolina Jasmine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Jasminum sambac / Arabian Jasmine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.
	Trachlospermum jasminoides / Star Jamsine	5 Gal.	Moderate	72" o.c.

Grasses	Scientific Name / Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	Stipa tenuissima / Mexican Feather Grass	1 Gal.	Moderate	18" o.c.
	Muhlenbegia capillaris / Pink Muhly Grass	5 Gal.	Moderate	36" o.c.

Groundcovers	Scientific Name / Common Name	Container Size	WUCOLS Zone	Spacing
	E. glabra 'mojnew' / Outback Sunrise Emu Bush	5 Gal.	Low	48" o.c.
	Tradescantia pallida / Purple Heart	5 Gal.	Moderate	24" o.c.

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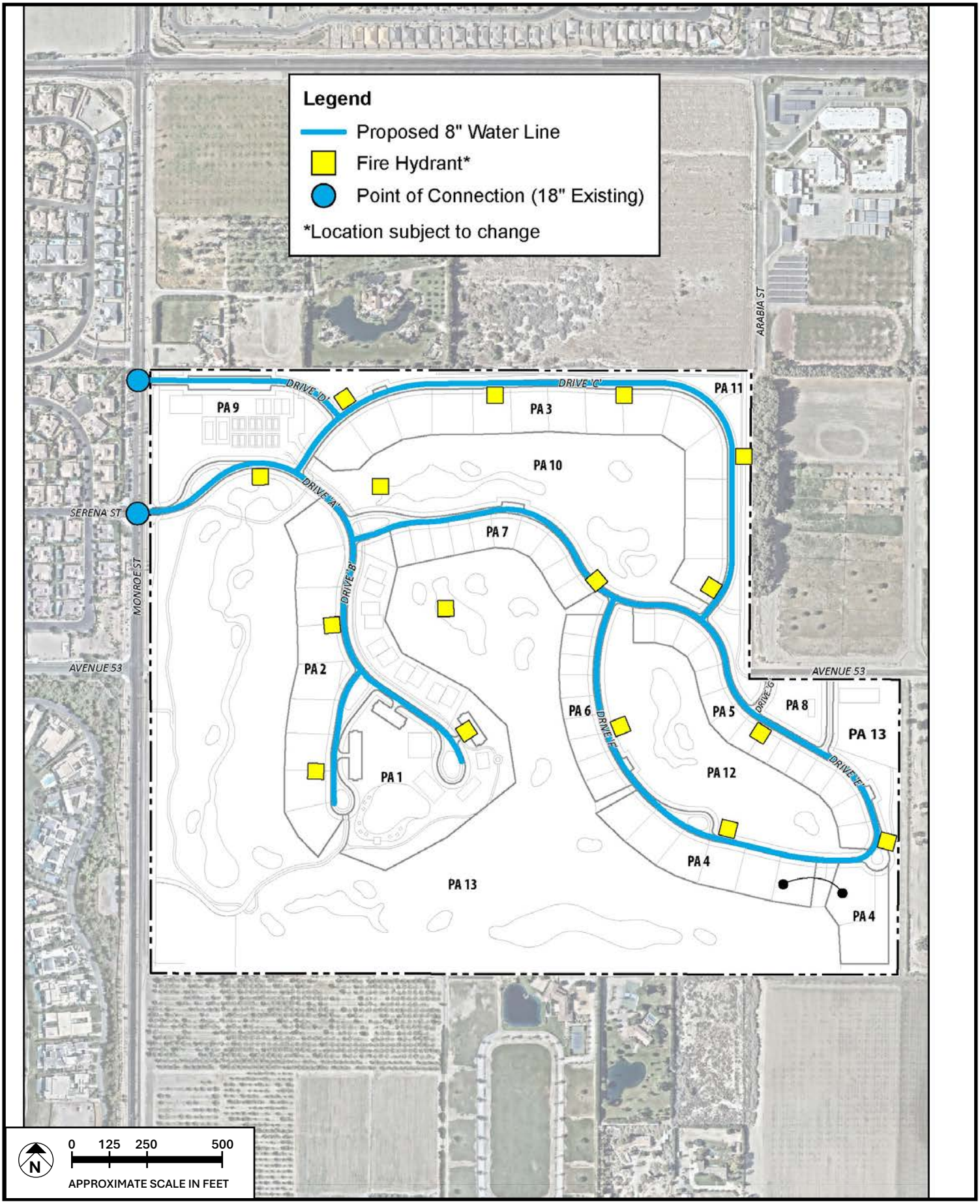
SOURCE: t&b planning - 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-12**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Landscaping Plan

427-001-24



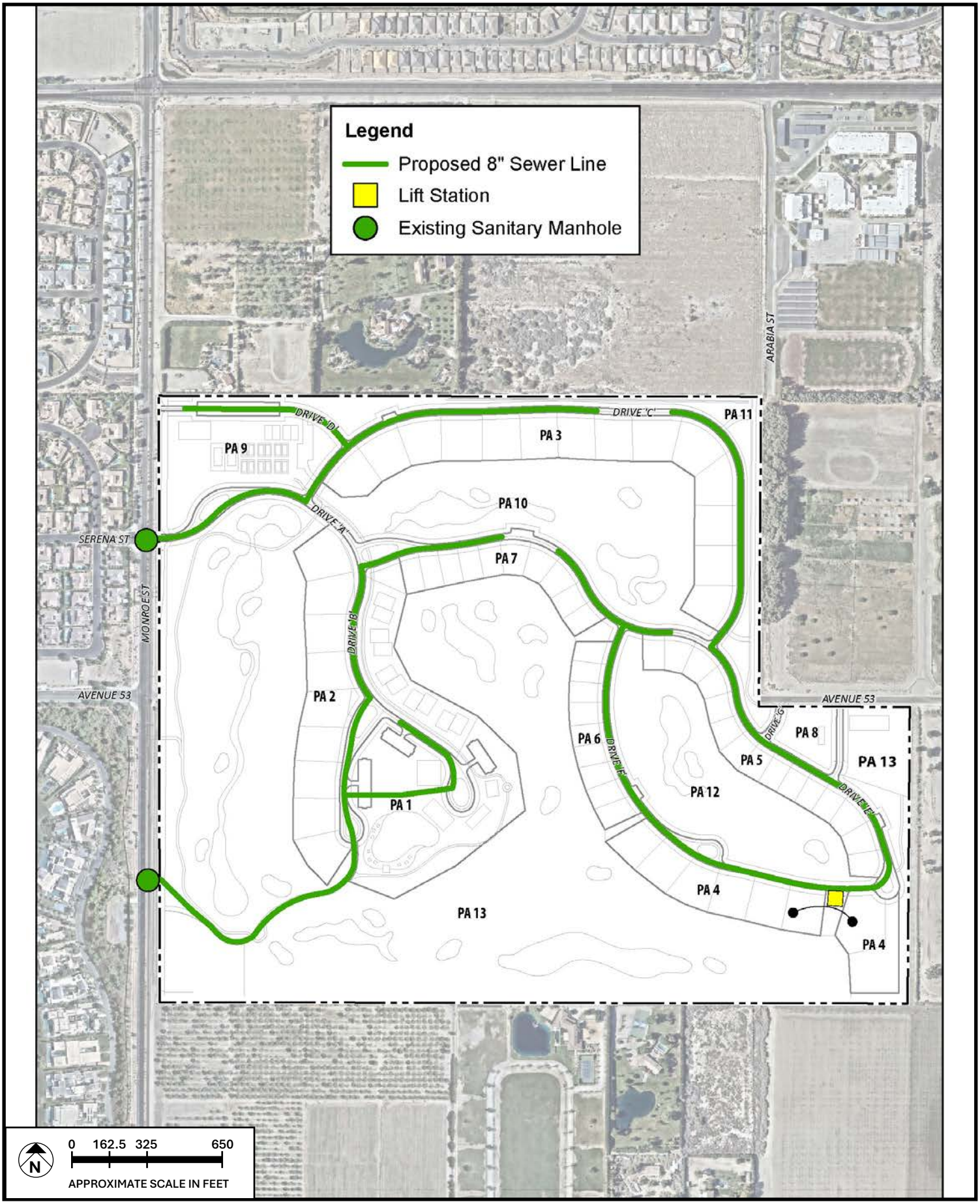
SOURCE: t&b planning - 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-13**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Master Water Plan

427-001-24



SOURCE: t&b planning - 2025.

FIGURE **3.0-14**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Master Sewer Plan

427-001-24

Project in either of the scenarios outlined below. As the Project develops, energy needs may be met with power from IID, if available, or expansion of the Private Power System. Both of these options, obtaining power from IID or generating power on site, as described below, are analyzed in this Draft EIR.

IID Power Option

IID issued a Will Serve Letter (**Appendix AA**) indicating that electrical service can be extended to the Project, subject to preparation and approval of a Customer Service Proposal (CSP) including detailed load analysis and final engineering design. To accommodate the Project's electrical demand, IID construction of off-site and on-site utility infrastructure improvements would be required. These improvements are anticipated to include expansion of IID's existing Avenue 58 Substation through installation of additional transformer capacity, substation switchgear, and associated facilities, as well as construction of new distribution feeders, backbone lines, and conduit systems to connect the Project Site to the IID electrical grid.

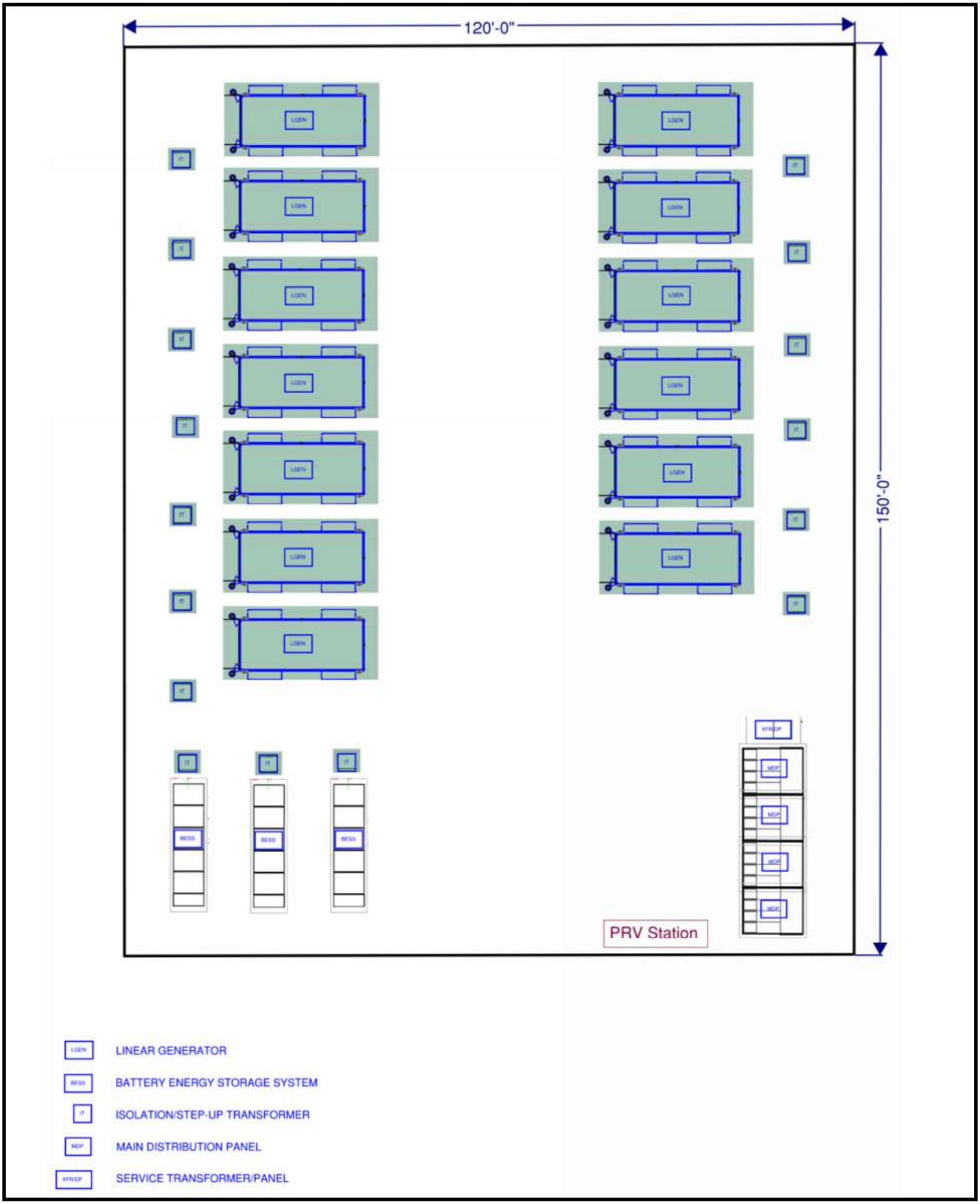
The Will Serve Letter identifies the need for a new substation on or near the Project Site. An area in the southwest corner of the Property on Monroe Street will be reserved for IID to construct, operate, and maintain a potential future electric substation (Potential Future IID Substation) that would serve the Project and surrounding area. IID may only use the Potential Future IID Substation site to provide electrical services to the Project and potentially other properties in the vicinity of the Project with pro-rata contributions from those property owners.

In addition, the installation of on-site electrical infrastructure, including distribution lines, transformers, conduit and vault systems, and related appurtenances would also be required. All required improvements, including substation upgrades, transmission and distribution facilities, and associated easements or right-of-way dedications, would be designed and constructed in accordance with IID standards. Consistent with IID requirements, the Project applicant would be responsible for the costs associated with these improvements.

On-Site Power System Option

In the event IID is unable to construct the facilities needed to provide electrical service to the Project Site, the Private Power System would be constructed in an area in the southwest corner of the Property on Monroe Street to provide electrical service to the Project. This Private Power System would be operated and maintained in perpetuity by a qualified third-party operator to be chosen by the homeowners' association established in connection with the Project (Project HOA).

Error! Reference source not found. depicts the layout of the proposed on-site power generation system which would include natural gas-powered linear generators, battery energy storage system (BESS) units to meet peak energy demands and provide reserve power, and on-site solar generation.



SOURCE: Secure Energy Sources – June 2026.

FIGURE **3.0-15**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Conceptual On-Site Energy Generation and Storage System Layout

3.8.8 Construction

Mass grading of the Project Site is anticipated to begin in the second quarter of 2027 and occur over approximately 180 days, ending in September 2027. The mass grading operations do not require either the import or export of engineered fill or remnant soil; as such, grading activities are balanced on site. Construction of the golf course would commence in the middle stages of mass grading, with backbone infrastructure improvements to follow, as shown in **Table 3.0-3: Project Construction Schedule**. The total construction timeline is anticipated to last approximately 30 months, beginning in April 2027 and ending in September 2029. During the Building Construction stage it is anticipated that PAs 1, 2, 4 (portion) 10, 12, and 13 would be developed first; followed by PA 3 (portion); then by PAs 3 (remaining portion), 4 (remaining portion), 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11; and finally by PA 9. It should be noted that phases are dependent on market conditions and may occur simultaneously or even out of sequence, subject to meeting regulatory requirements.

Construction-related activities typically occur Monday through Friday, between 7 AM and 7 PM.

TABLE 3.0-3: PROJECT CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Activity	Start Date	End Date
Mass Grading	4/1/2027	9/30/2027
Building Construction	7/1/2027	6/30/2029
Paving	7/1/2029	8/14/2029
Architectural Coating	8/15/2029	9/30/2029

3.9 INTENDED USES OF EIR

This EIR evaluates the proposed Project's environmental effects, as described herein, in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, as amended. The County of Riverside is the CEQA Lead Agency for the proposed Project.

Section 15124(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR project description includes a list of permits and other approvals required to implement a proposed project, the agencies expected to use the EIR in their decision-making, and related environmental review and consultation requirements. This Draft EIR assesses the potential environmental effects of the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan. This Draft EIR has been prepared to inform the County of Riverside, any responsible and trustee agencies, and interested parties of the potential for significant environmental impacts and identify measures to mitigate any significant effects if feasible.

The CEQA Guidelines require an EIR to include a statement briefly describing the intended uses of the EIR, including a list of agencies expected to use the EIR in their decision-making and the list of the permits and other approvals required to implement the project.

The County will use this Draft EIR to provide information on the potential environmental effects of the following proposed actions:

- Approval of a Foundation General Plan Amendment (FGPA No. 250010) to modify the Foundation Component of the Project Site from Agriculture and Rural Community (RC) to Community Development and Open Space, and establish corresponding General Plan land use designations consistent with the Specific Plan;
- Approval of a Change of Official Zoning Map (CZ 2500012);
- Approval of a Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment (CZ 2500012);
- Approval of the vacation of Avenue 53 within the boundaries of the Project Site;
- Approval of a Development Agreement (DA 2500001);
- Approval of the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (SP 00408);
- Approval of Tentative Tract Map (TTM 39179);
- Approval of two separate Design Review Applications to allow the siting, design, architecture, and landscaping of the community clubhouse buildings and amenities, subsequent to the adoption of the Specific Plan; and
- Other discretionary and ministerial approvals necessary to fully develop the Project as described herein.

3.9.1 Responsible Agencies

Section 15124(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR project description includes a list of permits and other approvals required to implement a proposed project, the agencies expected to use the EIR in their decision-making, and related environmental review and consultation requirements. The following are anticipated responsible agencies that may rely on this Draft EIR for their discretionary approvals required to implement the Project:

Coachella Valley Water District

- Review and approval of the design and plans for the Project's domestic water, recycled water, and wastewater systems.

Imperial Irrigation District (IID)

- Issuance of a permit to construct in accordance with IID regulations related to the necessary modification, alteration, or addition to electric transmission/power/distribution line facilities; or of new, upgraded, or modified substations; and
- Approval or certification related to any other applicable rule or regulation concerning utility modification, conveyance, or delivery.

Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 7)

- Approvals may include, but are not limited to: (1) General Construction Stormwater Permit; (2) Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan; and (3) Submittal of a Recycled Water Report for the use of recycled water as a dust control measure for construction; and
- Approval of a Water Quality Certification under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.
- Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 7)Approval of a Fugitive Dust Control Plan for construction activities.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) provides a general overview of the existing environmental setting of the Project Site including related projects that are considered in evaluating potential cumulative environmental impacts. The County of Riverside, acting as Lead Agency for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (referred to herein as the "Specific Plan" or "Project"), is preparing this Draft EIR in compliance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 15125 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the environmental impact analysis of a proposed project to include a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of a proposed project at the time the Notice of Preparation of an EIR is published. The NOP for this EIR was released for public review on August 18, 2025. Section 15125 further states this environmental setting will normally constitute the baseline physical conditions used to determine if an impact is significant. The environmental setting defines the baseline physical conditions used to determine the significance of environmental impacts resulting from the Project

4.1 REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

4.1.1 Regional Location

As shown in **Figure 3.0-1: Regional Location**, the approximately 174-acre Project Site is in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) of western Riverside County, within the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa and inside the Sphere of Influence of the City of La Quinta. The Project Site lies east of the City of La Quinta, south of the City of Indio, and west of the City of Coachella. Regional access to the site is provided by Highway 111, located approximately three miles to the north and east, and Interstate 10 (I-10), located approximately five miles to the north. The Project Site is generally accessed from Monroe Street, which extends south from I-10.

4.1.2 Regional Planning Considerations

Air Quality Management Plan

The Project Site lies within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), which spans the Coachella Valley portion of the County of Riverside and the entire County of Imperial. Air quality management of the Riverside County portion of the SSAB is overseen by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The Riverside County portion of the SSAB is bound by the San Jacinto Mountains to the west and spans eastward up to the Palo Verde Valley, which lies along the California-Arizona border. The SSAB, and the adjacent Mojave Desert Air Basin, were previously included in a single large air basin known as the Southeast Desert Air Basin. However, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has subdivided this larger basin into the two separate air basins that are in place today.

Coachella Valley PM_{10} State Implementation Plan

The 2003 PM10 Coachella Valley State Implementation Plan (CVSIP) was jointly developed by the SCAQMD, Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) and its member cities and was approved by the USEPA. The 2003 PM10 CVSIP updated the 1990 plan, which was drafted as a requirement of the federal Clean Air Act to demonstrate expeditious attainment of PM10 standards.[1] On April 18, 2003, the USEPA approved the updated CVSIP.

Historically, PM10 levels in the Coachella Valley are elevated due to fugitive dust emissions from grading and construction activities, agricultural practices, and strong winds. The finer materials, including sand and silt, can be picked up and transported by the wind and are referred to as "blowsand." PM10 particles associated with blowsand are of two types: (1) natural PM10 produced by direct particle erosion and fragmentation, and (2) secondary PM10 whereby sand deposited on roadways is further pulverized by motor vehicles and then resuspended in the air by those vehicles. The Project area is located in a PM10 nonattainment area for the State and federal PM10 standards.

The Coachella Valley was eligible for redesignation as attainment in 2009–2010 due to the annual average PM10 concentrations meeting the revoked federal standard. On February 25, 2010, the California Air Resources Board approved the Coachella Valley PM10 Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan from serious nonattainment to attainment for the PM10 National Ambient Air Quality Standard under Federal CAA Section 107. However, the Coachella Valley began exceeding thresholds for PM10 shortly after the redesignation request and continues to exceed thresholds today. The Coachella Valley continues to be in nonattainment for PM10. The closest SCAQMD air station is the Indio Station, located at 46990 Jackson Street within the City of Indio, four miles northeast of the Project Site.

SCAQMD employs measures to reduce particulate matter in the basin, sets forth new measures that could further reduce particulate matter, and lists those new measures that need further evaluation prior to implementation. In addition, applicable State code and AQMD Rules, including Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), enforce fugitive dust compliance for all activities within the SSAB.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The Project Site lies within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), and compliance with SCAQMD rules and guidelines is required. SCAQMD is responsible for regulating emissions primarily from stationary sources. SCAQMD, in coordination with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), is also responsible for developing, updating, and implementing the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) for the Basin. An AQMP is a

1 South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). *Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan*. August 1, 2003. Accessed May 2019. Accessed February 2025. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/clean-air-plans/pm10-plans/final-2003-coachella-valley-pm10-state-implementation-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=2.

plan prepared and implemented by an air pollution district for a county or region designated as "nonattainment" of the national and/or California AAQS. The term "nonattainment area" is used to refer to an air basin in which one or more AAQS are exceeded.

The SCAQMD adopted the Final 2022 AQMP on December 2, 2022.[2] The 2022 AQMP includes transportation control measures developed by SCAG from the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), as well as the integrated strategies and measures needed to meet the NAAQS. The 2022 AQMP includes strategies to meet the 8-hour ozone NAAQS as well as the latest 24-hour and annual PM2.5 standards.

Under the Federal CAA, SCAQMD has adopted federal attainment plans for O3 and PM10. The SCAQMD reviews projects to ensure that they would not (1) cause or contribute to any new violation of any air quality standard; (2) increase the frequency or severity of any existing violation of any air quality standard; or (3) delay the timely attainment of any air quality standard or any required interim emission reductions or other milestones of any federal attainment plan.

The SCAQMD is responsible for limiting emissions that can be generated throughout the Basin by various stationary, area, and mobile sources. Specific rules and regulations have been adopted by the SCAQMD Governing Board. These rules and regulations limit the emissions that can be generated by various uses or activities and identify specific pollution reduction measures, which must be implemented in association with various uses and activities. These rules not only regulate the emissions of the federal and State criteria pollutants, but also toxic air contaminants and acutely hazardous materials. The rules are also subject to ongoing refinement by SCAQMD.

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial Counties, and serves as a forum for the discussion of regional issues related to transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. As the federally designated MPO for the Southern California region, SCAG is mandated by the federal government to research and develop plans for transportation, hazardous waste management, and air quality. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 40460(b),[3] SCAG has the responsibility for preparing and approving the portions of the AQMP relating to regional demographic projections and integrated regional land use, housing, employment, and transportation programs, measures, and strategies. SCAG is also

2 SCAQMD. *Final 2022 Air Quality Management Plan*. Adopted December 2, 2022. Accessed January 2024. http://www.aqmd.gov/home/air-quality/clean-air-plans/air-quality-mgt-plan.

3 California Health and Safety Code, Division 26. Air Resources, PART 3. Air Pollution Control Districts, Chapter 5.5. South Coast Air Quality Management District, ARTICLE 5. Plan, Section 40460(b). Accessed February 2025. https://law.justia.com/codes/california/2014/code-hsc/division-26/part-3/chapter-5.5.

responsible under the CAA for determining conformity of transportation projects, plans, and programs with applicable air quality plans.

With regard to air quality planning, SCAG has prepared and adopted the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS,[4] which includes a SCS that addresses regional development and growth forecasts. The SCAG 2020–2045 RTP/SCS is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals, with a specific goal of achieving an 8 percent reduction in passenger vehicle GHG emissions on a per capita basis by 2020, 19 percent reduction by 2035, and 21 percent reduction by 2040 compared to the 2005 level. Although the RTP/SCS is not technically an air quality plan, consistency with the RTP/SCS has air quality implications, including the reduction of VMT which reduces air quality emissions.

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

SCAG is the authorized regional agency for intergovernmental review of programs proposed for federal financial assistance and direct development activities. SCAG consists of local governments from Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial counties. SCAG is also responsible for the designated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) including its Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) component pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 375. The Sustainable Communities Strategy has been formulated to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from passenger vehicles by 8 percent per capita by 2020 and by 13 percent per capita by 2035 compared to 2005 targets set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS links the goal of sustaining mobility with the goals of fostering economic development, enhancing the environment, reducing energy consumption, promoting transportation-friendly development patterns, and encouraging fair and equitable access to residents affected by socioeconomic, geographic, and commercial limitations. The Project's consistency with the applicable RTP/SCS policies is analyzed further in **Section 5.11**: **Land Use and Planning** of this Draft EIR.

Coachella Valley Association of Governments

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) is a sub-regional organization within SCAG. CVAG operates as a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that includes 15 member jurisdictions representing the transportation, conservation, and economic development of the Coachella Valley. The CVAG membership includes all ten cities in the Coachella Valley, the County of Riverside, and three Native American Tribal Governments: (1) Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians, (2) Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, (3) and Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians. CVAG comprises several departments, including an Energy and Environmental Resources Department that monitors

4 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). *Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategies Draft*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.connectsocal.org/Pages/Connect-SoCal-Draft-Plan.aspx.

and implements both regional and local plans related to energy and air quality issues, waste management, water quality, habitat conservation planning, and trails issues.

4.2 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

4.2.1 Location and Land Use

As shown in **Figure 3.0-3**: **Project Location**, the approximately 174-acre Project Site consists primarily of fallow agricultural land, agricultural reservoirs, and disturbed desert terrain associated with previous agricultural use. An abandoned date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a former 1970s residence and related structures. The Project Site also contains a small nursery operation, a vacant mobile home, and several nonresidential outbuildings and trailers associated with the abandoned date farm operation are located within APN 780-010-013.

As shown in **Figure 3.0-4**: **Existing General Plan Land Use**, the General Plan Land Use designations for the Project Site are Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG). As shown in **Figure 3.0-5**: **Existing Zoning Map**, the existing zoning designations of the Project Site are A-1-20 (Light Agriculture), R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwellings), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture), and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone - Residential Developments).

4.2.2 Environmental Resources and Infrastructure

Aesthetics

The Project Site is located within the eastern Coachella Valley Area of western Riverside County, in the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa, east of the City of La Quinta, south of the City of Indio, and west of the City of Coachella. The approximately 174-acre site consists primarily of fallow agricultural land, disturbed desert terrain associated with previous agricultural use, unopened infiltration basins, and limited agricultural groves, including a date palm grove located in the northeastern portion of the site. Remnants of previously existing development are present in the southern portion of the Project Site, including concrete foundations from a former residence and related structures, as well as ornamental landscaping, lawns, shade trees, and palms associated with a modern mobile home and nonresidential outbuildings. The Project Site is generally flat with minimal topographic variation.

The broader visual setting is characterized by expansive desert landscapes and long-range views toward surrounding mountain features. The rolling foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains are located approximately four miles west of the Project Site, with the Santa Rosa Wilderness providing a prominent scenic backdrop to the south and west. Views of these natural scenic resources from within the Project Site are partially filtered by existing vegetation and surrounding development. Existing development adjacent to the Project Site includes the Madison Club residential golf course community and the Carmela neighborhood to the west; rural residential, equestrian, and fallowed

agricultural uses to the north, east, and south; and scattered event venues within the Vista Santa Rosa community. Existing visual elements along Monroe Street include roadway improvements, sidewalks, street lighting, landscaped parkways, and ornamental landscaping associated with adjacent residential development. Further description of the aesthetic resource setting of the Project Site is provided in **Section 5.1**: **Aesthetics** of this Draft EIR.

Agricultural Resources

The Project Site consists primarily of fallow agricultural land, infiltration basins, and desert terrain disturbed by previous agricultural use. A date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a home built in the 1970s and related structures. The Project Site also contains ornamental landscaping, including lawns, shade trees, and palms; a modern mobile home, and several modern, nonresidential outbuildings and trailers. The Project Site is not currently under active cultivation.

According to the Department of Conservation (DOC), important farmlands include the following classifications on the State Important Farmland Maps prepared by the DOC: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland. The Project Site contains approximately 138 acres of land designated as Prime Farmland within the central and southern portion of the site. A small portion of Farmland of Local Importance, consisting of approximately 32 acres) is present in the northeastern and eastern portions of the Project Site. Other Land, consisting of approximately 3 acres, occurs in limited areas within the Project Site, along the mid- to southern boundary of the site.[5]

No portion of the Project Site is subject to any active Williamson Act or Farmland Security Act contract.[6] Further analysis of the impacts to agricultural resources within the Project Site is provided in **Section 5.2**: **Agricultural Resources** of this Draft EIR.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Project Site lies within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), which spans the Coachella Valley portion of the County of Riverside and the entire County of Imperial. Air quality management of the Riverside County portion of the SSAB is overseen by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The Riverside County portion of the SSAB is bound by the San Jacinto Mountains to the west and spans eastward up to the Palo Verde Valley, which lies along the California-Arizona border. The SSAB, and the adjacent Mojave Desert Air Basin, were previously included in a single large air

5 California Department of Conservation (DOC). "Important Farmland Finder." Accessed June 2025. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/.

6 DOC. "Williamson Act Enrollment Finder." Accessed June 2025. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/WilliamsonAct/App/index.html#data_s=id%3Awidget_22_output_config_default_geocode_0_0%3A0.

basin known as the Southeast Desert Air Basin. However, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has subdivided this larger basin into the two separate air basins that are in place today.

The SSAB is classified as having a desert climate, characterized by low precipitation, hot summers, mild winters, low humidity, and strong temperature inversions. The annual average temperature varies little throughout the SSAB, ranging from the low 40s to the low 100s, measured in degrees Fahrenheit (°F). The Western Regional Climate Center (WRCC) maintains historical climate information for the western United States (US), including the City of Indio, which contains the closest meteorological monitoring station to the Project Site (Station ID No. 044259). According to this Station, the annual maximum temperature in the local vicinity is 106.9°F in July, while the annual minimum temperature reported is 39.2°F in January. The average annual rainfall for the Project area is about 3.3 inches.[7]

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) designate air basins where air pollution levels exceed the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) or National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) as "nonattainment" areas. These pollutants are referred to as "criteria air pollutants" as a result of the specific standards, or criteria, which have been adopted for them. The federal and State standards have been set at levels considered safe to protect public health, including the health of "sensitive" populations, such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly with a margin of safety; and to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility and damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings.

Ambient air pollution can cause public health concerns and can contribute to increases in respiratory illness and death rates. Air pollution can affect the health of both adults and children. The adverse health effects associated with air pollution are diverse and include cardiovascular effects, premature mortality, respiratory effects, cancer, reproductive effects, neurological effects, and other health outcomes.[8]

The Project Site is located within an area designated as nonattainment for State and federal particulate matter (PM10) standards, primarily due to fugitive dust emissions from windblown desert soils, agricultural operations, grading activities, and unpaved surfaces common in the Eastern Coachella Valley. As a result, projects within the SSAB are subject to SCAQMD rules and regulations intended to minimize criteria pollutant emissions, including Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust).

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the region are generated primarily from mobile sources, including vehicle travel, as well as energy consumption associated with residential, commercial, and recreational land uses. The Project Site is largely undeveloped and does not support ongoing urban

7 Western Regional Climate Center. "Indio Fire Station, Period of Record Monthly Climate Summary." Accessed February 2025. https://wrcc.dri.edu/cgi-bin/cliMAIN.pl?ca4259.

8 SCAQMD. *Final 2022 Air Quality Management Plan*.

land uses that would generate substantial operational GHG emissions, with existing emissions limited to periodic agricultural activities, maintenance operations, and vehicle travel associated with surrounding rural residential and recreational uses. Further description and evaluation of existing air quality and GHG within the Project Site is provided in **Section 5.3**: **Air Quality** of this Draft EIR.

Cultural Resources

The Project Site is located along the far-northwestern end of the Coachella Valley, within the Colorado Desert geomorphic province. The Coachella Valley is a fault-bounded depression situated between the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south and southeast and the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north. The valley forms the northern extent of the Salton Trough, a northwest-southeast trending structural depression shaped by tectonic activity associated with the San Andreas Fault system.[9] These geological and geomorphic conditions have historically influenced the distribution of water resources, vegetation, wildlife, and human settlement patterns in the region.[10]

Folding and faulting within the valley blocked subsurface groundwater flow, resulting in the formation of springs and wetlands that served as important water sources for prehistoric populations. Additionally, periodic inundation of ancient Lake Cahuilla, caused by fluctuations in the course of the Colorado River, created a dynamic environmental setting that strongly influenced prehistoric occupation, subsistence strategies, and settlement locations throughout the Coachella Valley. The Project Site lies along the maximum shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla, an area that has been associated with prehistoric activity during periods when the lake was present.

The Project Site is located within the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa in Riverside County. The surrounding cultural landscape reflects a long history of Indigenous occupation, followed by historic-period agricultural development and infrastructure expansion. Prehistoric use of the region is associated with Desert Cahuilla ancestors, whose settlement patterns were closely tied to the lake, spring, and desert resource availability. Ethnographic accounts indicate that plant and animal resources within the Coachella Valley supported subsistence, medicinal, and ceremonial practices for Cahuilla groups.[11]

Historic-period development within the broader Coachella Valley accelerated during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with the introduction of irrigation infrastructure, railroad corridors, and regional transportation routes. Agricultural land uses became widespread following construction of the Coachella Canal and related water conveyance systems, shaping much of the modern landscape. Within the Project Site, historic land use has primarily consisted of agricultural

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9 Wilke, Philip J. "Late Prehistoric Human Ecology at Lake Cahuilla, Coachella Valley, California." *Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility 38* (May 1, 1978): 1–40.

10 Harden, Deborah R. *California geology. 2nd ed*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2004.

11 Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI). *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment of a 71-Ha (175-Acre) Cultural Resource Study within Vista Santa Rosa, Riverside County, California*. May 15, 2025. See **Appendix G**.

activity, with limited residential development and associated infrastructure occurring during the mid-to-late twentieth century. As discussed in the Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment prepared for the Project, the Project Site has been subject to prior agricultural grading and disturbance; however, regional environmental conditions and proximity to ancient Lake Cahuilla indicate a moderate sensitivity for buried cultural resources within the broader area.[12] Further description of the cultural resource setting of the Project Site is provided in **Section 5.5**: **Cultural Resources** of this Draft EIR.

Energy

Energy in the State of California (State) is regulated by Title 24, Part 6, of California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings. The Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings were established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. The Building Energy Efficiency Standards are updated every three years by the California Energy Commission. The most recent standards went into effect on January 1, 2026. Energy providers for electricity and natural gas in the County include the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) and the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), respectively. Further description of existing energy use at the Project Site is provided in **Section 5.6**: **Energy** of this Draft EIR.

Geology and Soils

The Project Site is located within the Colorado Desert Physiographic Province, also known as the Salton Trough, a northwest-southeast trending structural depression extending from the Gulf of California northward through the Coachella Valley. The Salton Trough is bounded by the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains to the southwest, the San Bernardino Mountains to the north, and the Little San Bernardino, Chocolate, and Orocopia Mountains to the east. The region is characterized by high seismicity associated with the San Andreas Fault system and related regional fault zones.[13]

Regionally, the Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Trough is underlain by thousands of feet of Quaternary-age alluvial, lacustrine, and fluvial deposits, derived primarily from sedimentation by the Colorado River and surrounding mountain ranges. Ancient Lake Cahuilla inundated much of the eastern Coachella Valley multiple times between approximately 300 AD and 1700 AD, resulting in widespread deposition of fine-grained lacustrine sediments across the Project Site vicinity.[14] Based on regional geologic mapping, the Project Site is underlain by undifferentiated Quaternary-age lake deposits and alluvium (Ql-Qal). No bedrock outcrops are present at or near the site, and geologic conditions are typical of the eastern Coachella Valley floor.

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12 SRI. *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment of a 71-Ha (175-Acre) Cultural Resource Study within Vista Santa Rosa, Riverside County, California*. See **Appendix G**.

13 Sladden Engineering. *Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation Proposed Ranch at Madison*. See **Appendix K**.

14 Sladden Engineering. *Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation Proposed Ranch at Madison*. See **Appendix K**.

Subsurface soils encountered during field exploration conducted for the Project Site consist of a shallow mantle of approximately 2 to 3 feet of disturbed or artificial fill soils, underlain by interbedded silty sand, sand, sandy silt, and sandy clay. These materials are generally dry to slightly moist, with granular soils ranging from loose to dense and cohesive soils exhibiting low plasticity.[15] Groundwater was not encountered during geotechnical explorations, and regional groundwater data indicate that groundwater depths in the Project vicinity generally exceed 25 feet below ground surface, with many wells reporting depths substantially greater.[16]

The Project Site is located in a seismically active region of Southern California, and strong ground shaking is anticipated during the life of the Project. However, no known active or potentially active faults traverse the Project Site, and the site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The nearest active fault is the San Andreas Fault, located approximately 5 miles northeast of the Project Site.[17] Other geologic hazards, including surface fault rupture, landsliding, rock fall, debris flows, tsunamis, and seiches, are considered low to negligible due to the site's flat topography, inland location, and lack of nearby slopes. Further description of the geologic setting of the Project Site is provided in **Section 5.7**: **Geology and Soils** of this Draft EIR.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are defined by the California Health and Safety Code as substances that, because of their physical or chemical characteristics, may pose a risk to human health or the environment. Historical agricultural uses of the Project Site represent the primary potential source of hazardous materials, primarily related to the historic application of pesticides and herbicides commonly associated with farming operations.

Multiple Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) have been prepared for the site, including studies completed in September 2022 and October 2025. These assessments included regulatory database reviews, site reconnaissance, historical aerial photograph review, and interviews. The Phase I ESAs did not identify any recognized environmental conditions (RECs) related to hazardous materials releases, underground storage tanks, landfills, or methane-generating sources on or adjacent to the Project Site.[18,19]

Phase II ESAs, prepared for the Project Site in May 2023 and October 2025, included shallow soil sampling within the Project Site, which were then analyzed for arsenic and organochlorine

15 Sladden Engineering. *Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation Proposed Ranch at Madison*. See **Appendix K**.

16 LandMark Consultants, Inc. *Geotechnical Report APN 780-010-014*. April 2022. See **Appendix I**.

17 LandMark Consultants, Inc. *Geotechnical Report APN 780-010-014*. See **Appendix I**.

18 Sladden Engineering. *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (APNs 780-020-001, 002, 003 & 780-010-012), La Quinta California*. September 2022. See **Appendix M**.

19 Sladden Engineering. Results of Shallow Soil Sampling (APNs 780-010-013 & 014). October 2025. See **Appendix O**.

pesticides. Results indicated that arsenic was not detected above applicable reporting limits in any samples tested. Organochlorine pesticides were either not detected or detected at concentrations substantially below applicable residential soil screening levels established by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the State Water Resources Control Board.

California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the identification of sites listed on State hazardous materials databases. The Project Site is not listed on any hazardous materials site databases, including the Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor database or the State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker database. One off-site leaking underground storage tank (LUST) site was identified approximately 0.5 mile from the Project Site. However, the case was closed in 1998 and would not pose a hazard to the Project Site.

The Project Site is not within a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The nearest mapped High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone is located approximately 9.5 miles southwest of the Project Site, in the Santa Rosa Mountains.

The Cahuilla Desert Academy is located immediately northeast of the Project Site. Existing conditions at the Project Site do not include the routine use, storage, or transport of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials. No existing hazardous emissions sources are present on the Project Site. Further description of the hazards and hazardous materials within the existing Project Site is provided in **Section 5.9**: **Hazards and Hazardous Materials** of this Draft EIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The Project Site is within the eastern Coachella Valley, a region characterized by arid desert climate conditions, low annual precipitation, and storm events that can generate short-duration, high-intensity runoff. Average precipitation in the vicinity of the Project Site is approximately 3 inches, with the majority occurring during winter storm events and occasional summer monsoonal activity.

The Project Site consists of predominantly flat terrain, with ground surface elevations ranging from approximately 965 to 990 feet above mean sea level and generally slopes from the northwest toward the southeast. Stormwater runoff flows primarily as sheet flow across the site, and no formal drainage facilities or defined channels are present.[20]

The Project Site has been historically utilized for agricultural purposes, and existing land cover alternates seasonally between vegetated and bare soil conditions, depending on farming activity. An inactive agricultural retention basin is located near the northwestern portion of the Project Site, adjacent to Monroe Street. Subsurface agricultural drainage features, including underground tile drain lines operated by the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), are within the Project Site.

20 RTM Engineering Consultants. *Madison Club Ranch Expansion Preliminary Hydrology Report*. March 2026. See **Appendix P**.

Surface drainage in the surrounding area generally follows regional topographic gradients towards the southeast, consistent with the eastern Coachella Valley drainage pattern. Off-site runoff from vacant land located north of the Project Site also drains toward the southeast, and currently flows toward the Project Site through sheet flow conditions.[21]

The Project Site contains no stream or river features. The Project Site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area or within a 500-year flood hazard area.[22]

Groundwater conditions within the Project vicinity are influenced by regional alluvial aquifers within the Salton Trough. Groundwater was not encountered during the Project Site's investigations and regional groundwater data indicates that groundwater depths generally exceed 25 feet below ground surface in the area. Thus, groundwater is not anticipated to influence existing hydrologic surface conditions on the Project Site. Surface water quality in the Project area is influenced by stormwater runoff from agricultural and development lands. The Project Site does not contain any surface water bodies, and stormwater currently infiltrates or dissipates across the Project Site. Further description of the hydrology and water quality of the Project Site is provided in **Section 5.10**: **Hydrology and Water Quality** of this Draft EIR.

Land Use and Planning

As described above, the Project Site is located in unincorporated Riverside County, within the Vista Santa Rosa area of the eastern Coachella Valley, and within the Sphere of Influence of the City of La Quinta.

The Project Site is designated Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG) under the Riverside County General Plan. Applicable uses include agricultural and low-density rural residential development. Existing zoning classifications for the Project Site are A-1-20 (Light Agriculture), R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwellings), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture), and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone - Residential Developments) under the Riverside County Zoning Ordinance. The existing zoning is consistent with the General Plan land use designations and surrounding rural development pattern.

Surrounding land uses include the Mirabella Estates and Santa Rosa Ranch to the north; fallow agricultural land, disturbed vacant land, and the Tahquitz Equestrian Facility to the east; two ranches (Rancho Ellenita and Cavallo Ranch) and fallow agricultural land to the south; and a residential golf neighborhood (Madison Club) and single-family neighborhood (Carmela) to the west. A private school campus, Cahuilla Desert Academy, is located immediately northeast of the Project Site.

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21 RTM Engineering Consultants. *Madison Club Ranch Expansion Preliminary Hydrology Report*. See **Appendix P**.

22 RTM Engineering Consultants. *Madison Club Ranch Expansion Preliminary Hydrology Report*. See **Appendix P**.

The Project Site is not within an adopted Specific Plan area or redevelopment area and no land use plans specific to the Project Site have been adopted. Refer to **Section 5.11**: **Land Use and Planning** of this Draft EIR for further information on existing land use conditions in the vicinity of the Project Site.

Noise

Noise is commonly defined as unwanted or objectionable sound that can interfere with normal activities or diminish the quality of the environment. Sound levels are typically measured in A-weighted decibels (dBA), which approximate the frequency response of the human ear. Because sound levels fluctuate over time, environmental noise is often described using time-average noise descriptors, including the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL).

The Project Site is located in a semi-rural area characterized by a mix of agricultural, residential, and recreational land uses, where ambient noise levels are influenced by local roadway traffic, agricultural activities, recreational uses, and periodic maintenance operations associated with nearby residential and golf communities. Noise-sensitive land uses in the vicinity of the Project Site include existing single-family residential neighborhoods, estate residential uses, and educational facilities, including the Cahuilla Desert Academy located immediately northeast of the Project Site.

Existing noise sources near the Project Site include vehicular traffic along Monroe Street, local residential activity, agricultural equipment associated with ongoing or intermittent farming operations, and recreational noise generated by nearby golf course and equestrian uses. Ambient noise levels in the area vary, depending on the time of day and seasonal activity, with generally lower noise levels during nighttime hours.

No major stationary industrial noise sources are adjacent to the Project Site, and the site is not located near active rail lines, airports, or other regionally significant noise generators. The nearest public-use airport, Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport, is located 4 miles southeast of the Project Site, and overflight noise is not a dominant contributor to existing ambient noise conditions.

Noise regulation in the Project area is governed by the Riverside County Noise Ordinance, which establishes allowable noise exposure standards for various land use categories, including residential and institutional uses. The Riverside County General Plan Noise Element provides guidance on acceptable exterior noise levels, expressed in CNEL, to protect noise sensitive receptors. Refer to **Section 5.12**: **Noise** of this Draft EIR for further information on existing noise conditions in the vicinity of the Project Site.

Traffic and Transportation

Existing Transportation Setting

The Project Site is located within the unincorporated Vista Santa Rosa area of Riverside County, within the eastern Coachella Valley. Transportation facilities in the area include a network of regional highways, arterial roadways, and local streets.

Regional Access

Regional roadway facilities serving the Project vicinity include Interstate 10 (I-10), State Route 111 (SR-111), and State Route 86 (SR-86). These regional roadways serve as the primary regional circulation system within the Coachella Valley, between Riverside County, adjacent cities, and the broader Southern California region.

Local Street Network

Local and arterial roadways in the Project vicinity include Monroe Street, 52nd Avenue, Avenue 53, Arabia Street, Jackson Street, and Avenue 50. Monroe Street is classified as an arterial roadway and runs north-south along the western boundary of the Project Site. 52nd Avenue and Avenue 50 function as east-west arterials serving the surrounding area. Arabia Street provides local access to the Cahuilla Desert Academy, located northeast of the Project Site. Avenue 53 bisects the Project Site in an east-west direction.

Site Access

Existing access to the Project Site is provided via Monroe Street and Avenue 53, with driveways currently serving agricultural uses. No signalized intersections are located immediately adjacent to the Project Site, and traffic control in the vicinity primarily consists of stop-controlled intersections.

Public Transit

Public transit service is provided by the SunLine Transit Agency, which operates fixed-route bus service throughout the Coachella Valley. The nearest bus route services would be Route 6, which has a stop at Monroe Street and Avenue 48, and Route 8, which has a stop at Avenue 50 and Calhoun Street, approximately 2.2 miles to the northeast. No bus stops are currently located on or immediately adjacent to the Project Site.

Bicycle Facilities

The County follows Caltrans bicycle facility design standards, which identify Class I, II, III, and IV bikeways. There are three (3) Class II bike lanes located near the Project Site. There is a Class II bike lane on the west side of Monroe Street, between 52nd Avenue and Avenue 54. There is a Class II bike lane on the north side of 52nd Avenue, between Monroe Street and Jackson Street. There are Class II bike lanes present on both sides of the Avenue 53 roadway, between Monroe Street and Palazo.

Pedestrian Facilities

Pedestrian facilities include sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals, and multi-use trails. There are pedestrian facilities located near the Project Site, although some roadway segments do not include pedestrian facilities. Sidewalks are present along portions of Monroe Street, 52nd Avenue, Avenue 50, Jackson Street, and Arabia Street, while gaps exist along other roadway frontages. A trail is located along the west side of Monroe Street between Avenue 54 and Mountain Spur Drive.

Traffic Operations

Traffic operations in the Project vicinity are described in terms of Level of Service (LOS), which characterizes roadway intersection performance based on vehicle delay and operating conditions.[23] Under existing (2025) conditions, traffic operations at key intersections in the Project vicinity range from LOS B to LOS F during peak hours, with localized congestion observed at select stop-controlled intersections, particularly near 52nd Avenue and Arabia Street, due to school-related traffic activity.

A full discussion of the Project's existing traffic conditions and potential impacts is presented in **Section 5.13**: **Transportation** of this Draft EIR.

Utilities and Service Systems

Utilities and service systems in the Project area are provided by a combination of public agencies and private utility providers. Major utility providers servicing the Project vicinity include the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), Imperial Irrigation District (IID), Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), Frontier Communications, and Charter Communications (Spectrum).

Water Service and Supply

The Project Site is located within the service area of CVWD, which provides potable water, wastewater, recycled water, drainage, stormwater management, and groundwater replenishment services throughout the eastern Coachella Valley. The Project Site is served by CVWD's Cove communities domestic water distribution system.

CVWD's potable water supply is derived primarily from groundwater within the Indio Subbasin of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin, supplemented by imported Colorado River water, State Water Project supplies, and recycled water. Groundwater is the principal source of potable water for the Project area.

23 Although CEQA transportation impacts are evaluated using Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 743, LOS standards remain part of the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and are used for informational and planning purposes.

The Project Site is currently undeveloped and does not contain existing potable water infrastructure. An existing 8-inch potable water main is located near the intersection of Via La Serena Street and Monroe Street, north of the Project Site.

CVWD prepares and updates an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) every five years pursuant to the Urban Water Management Planning Act. The 2020 Coachella Valley Regional UWMP concludes that CVWD has sufficient water supplies to meet existing and projected future demands under normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year conditions through the planning horizon.[24]

Wastewater Service

Wastewater collection and treatment for the Project Site is provided by CVWD, which operates an extensive regional wastewater conveyance and treatment system serving the eastern Coachella Valley.

The Project Site is located within the service area of CVWD's Water Reclamation Plant No. 7 (WRP-7), located at Avenue 38 and Madison Street. WRP-7 provides secondary and tertiary wastewater treatment and distributes recycled water for landscape irrigation uses. An existing 12-inch sewer trunk line is located within the raised median of Monroe Street, with available access near the Via La Serena Street/Monroe Street intersection. The Project Site is currently undeveloped and does not generate wastewater flows.

Stormwater and Drainage

Stormwater and flood control services in the Project area are provided by CVWD, in coordination with the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCF&WCD). These agencies are responsible for regional drainage planning, flood control facilities, and compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements.

The Project Site currently drains via sheet flow from the northwest toward the southeast, and no formal on-site storm drain infrastructure is present. Underground agricultural tile drain lines are located within and adjacent to the Project Site and are maintained by CVWD.[25]

Solid Waste

Solid waste management services in the Project Area are overseen by the Riverside County Waste Management Department (RCWMD). Solid waste collection services in unincorporated Riverside County are provided by Burrtec Waste Industries, under contract with the County. RCWMD operates

24 Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD). "Urban Water Management Planning." Accessed December 2025. https://www.cvwd.org/543/Urban-Water-Management-Planning.

25 RTM Engineering Consultants. *Madison Club Ranch Expansion Preliminary Hydrology Report*. See **Appendix P**.

multiple Class III landfills and transfer stations throughout Riverside County. The Project Site contains vacant agricultural land and does not generate solid waste.

Dry Utilities (Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications)

Electricity

Electrical service in the Project area is provided by the IID, which supplies electricity to portions of Riverside County, including the eastern Coachella Valley. The Project Site is within the IID service area and is currently undeveloped, with no existing on-site electrical infrastructure. Two existing 92-kV transmission lines are located along Monroe Street adjacent to the Project Site, extending north from the Avenue 58 Substation.

Natural Gas

Natural gas service in the Project area is provided by the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), a publicly regulated utility overseen by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The Project Site is located within the SoCalGas service area but is currently undeveloped and does not contain on-site natural gas facilities.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications services in the Coachella Valley are provided by various companies. Spectrum provides cable service, and telephone service, formerly provided by Verizon, is now offered by Frontier Communications. Both companies are regulated by CPUC and provide various telecommunications services for residential and commercial uses, including broadband, wireless, and television. Both companies implement technology utilizing digital fiber optic and satellite. The Project Site is currently undeveloped and does not contain existing telecommunications infrastructure.

Please refer to **Section 5.15**: **Utilities and Service Systems** of this Draft EIR for further discussion on the Project's potential impacts to existing infrastructure.

4.3 RELATED PROJECTS

Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that cumulative impacts be discussed where they are considered significant. It further states that the discussion of cumulative impacts reflects the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but that it does not need to be in as great level of detail as provided for the Project alone. Cumulative impacts are defined by Section 15355 to be "...two or more individual effects which, when considered together are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." Cumulative impacts represent the change caused by the incremental impact of a project when added to other proposed or committed projects in the vicinity.

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15130 (b)(1)) further state that the information utilized in an analysis of cumulative impacts should come from one of two sources, either:

(A) A list of past, present and probable future projects producing related cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or

(B) A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions.

The cumulative impact analyses contained in the various topical sections of **Section 5.0**: **Environmental Impact Analysis**, considers related projects in the County. In addition, the projections in the County's General Plan are used in the assessment of potential cumulative impacts, where appropriate, as well as related projects in proximate jurisdictions such as the City of La Quinta, City of Coachella, City of Indio, and Riverside County.

The analysis of traffic impacts in the study area was conducted using the Riverside County Transportation Model (RIVCOM). The Riverside County TLMA developed this model in order to simplify the complex traffic patterns and public road networks as they relate to socioeconomic data, driver behavior, and goods movement. RIVCOM is used to predict where traffic flow will occur as the population grows and changes. RIVCOM includes the 2020 SCAG RTP/SCS growth projections with updated 2019 base year and 2045 future year land use assumptions.

The following pending and approved development projects in a 2-mile radius of the Project Site are not included in RIVCOM assumptions and were added to the future year socioeconomic dataset for future forecasting. Approved projects within a 2-mile radius of the Project Site are presented in **Table 4.0-1: Related Projects**, below.

TABLE 4.0-1: RELATED PROJECTS

CASE #	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	STATUS
TR33045	A proposed subdivision of 113 acres into 270 residential lots	Approved
TR28983	A proposed subdivision of 46.4 acres into 96 residential lots	Approved
TR32417	A proposed subdivision of 103 acres into 235 lots	Approved
TR33559	A proposed subdivision of 97 acres into 70 lots	Approved
PM29145	A proposed subdivision of 88.85 acres into 4 lots	Approved
TR32861	A proposed subdivision of 77.60 acres into 158 lots	Approved
PM30095	A proposed subdivision of 80 acres into 4 lots	Approved
TR29423	A proposed subdivision of 45 acres into 22 lots	Approved
TR30399	A proposed subdivision of 40 acres into 77 lots, 1 well lot, 1 retention	Approved
TR36902	A proposed subdivision to divide 40 gross acres into 80 lots	Approved
TR35758	A proposed subdivision of 40 acres into 20 lots	Approved

TABLE 4.0-1: RELATED PROJECTS		
CASE #	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	STATUS
CUP190030	A proposed for the V*ista Santa Rosa Gateway Village* with a gas station, multi-tenant building, drive-thru restaurant, pharmacy store, and senior living facility.	Approved
TPM37801	A proposed subdivision with seven parcels ranging from 1.13 acres to 6.48 acres for the *Vista Santa Rosa Gateway Village*.	Approved
PPT240045	A proposal for the Ranchos Event Center with a maximum floor space of 289,755 sq. ft., to host the following activities: An outdoor open air event venue with up to 500 guests, on a 20-acre parcel. The project includes cancellation of Coachella Valley Agricultural Preserve No. 70.	Approved
PM33971	A proposed subdivision of 20.95 acres into 3 lots	Approved
PM32212	A proposed subdivision of 20 acres into 4 lots	Approved
TR28185	A proposed subdivision of 19.84 acres into 37 lots	Approved
TR25145	A proposed subdivision of 20 acres into 71 lots	Approved
PPT240006	The proposed project includes development of 158 multifamily units on 18.22 acres.	Approved
TTM38957	A proposed 18.39-acre subdivision, for condominium purposes	Approved
TR31278	A proposed subdivision of 19 acres into 28 lots	Approved
TR31279	A proposed subdivision of 19 acres into 41 lots	Approved
TR23732	A proposed subdivision of 19.4 acres into 60 lots	Approved
PP17669	Children church w/accessory classroom & gym builds.	Approved
TR29316	Revise 16 lots from Tract 28983	Approved
PM30346	A proposed subdivision of 10 acres into 4 lots	Approved
PPT240077	Plot plan for the *Ranchos Alvarado Community* event facility.	Approved
PM32837	A proposed subdivision of 8.75 acres into 4 lots	Approved
TPM37783	A proposed subdivision of 1 lot totaling 8.75 acres into 4 lots.	Approved
PPT200025	A proposed training center for *Jordan Ministries Church* for religious outreach consisting of development of offices, classrooms, dormitories, a dining hall, distribution center, maintenance building, media room, outdoor amphitheater, retention basin, a caretaker's unit, and a 58-space parking lot.	Approved
PPT240009	A Plot Plan to establish the *Rancho 51 Date Garden* as an official rancho community event facility to host quinceañeras, weddings, baptisms, anniversaries, farm-to table events and other similar private events. Date harvesting will continue on site. The events will host a maximum of 200 guests with a manager on site, traffic management, security, restrooms, and work with Riverside County-approved food vendors and follow all the Rancho Community event facility ordinances.	Approved
CUP03290	A Conditional Use Permit for the construction of a mausoleum and columbarium, expansion of parking facilities, and conversion of existing caretakers' residence to office space	Approved
PM33363	A proposed subdivision of 1.58 acres into 4 lots	Approved
TR29317	A proposed subdivision of 46.4 acres into 4 lots	Approved

TABLE 4.0-1: RELATED PROJECTS		
CASE #	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	STATUS
CUP240012	A proposal to convert an existing two-story market with attached residence to market & deli, with administrative office space on second floor. Additional building to convert from storage to commercial support kitchens.	Approved

5.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) evaluates the potential for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (Project) to result in impacts to aesthetic, visual, and scenic resources, including potential effects on scenic vistas, visual character, and nighttime lighting and glare.

5.1.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.1.1.1 Federal

There are no applicable federal regulations related to aesthetics that apply to the proposed Project.

5.1.1.2 State

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Scenic Highway Program

The California Scenic Highway Program was created in 1963 to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would reduce the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. Caltrans defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way (ROW), that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality. Suitability for designation as a State Scenic Highway is based on vividness, intactness, and unity. The status of a proposed State Scenic Highway changes from eligible to officially designated when the local governing body applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, adopts a Corridor Protection Program, and receives notification that the highway has been officially designated a Scenic Highway.

5.1.1.3 Regional and Local

Riverside County General Plan

Scenic resources are an important quality of life component for residents of Riverside County (County). In general, scenic resources include areas that are visible to the general public and considered visually attractive. The following are the applicable aesthetic policies related to the proposed Project:

Circulation Element

Policy C 19.1 *Preserve scenic routes that have exceptional or unique visual features in accordance with Caltrans' Scenic Highways Plan.*

Land Use Element

Policy LU 3.3 *Promote the development and preservation of unique communities in which each community exhibits a special sense of place and quality of design.*

Policy LU 4.1 *Require that new developments be located and designed to visually enhance, not degrade the character of the surrounding area through consideration of the following contexts:*

a) Compliance with the design standards of the appropriate area plan land use category

b) Require that structures be constructed in accordance with the requirements of Riverside County's zoning, building, and other pertinent codes and regulations.

c) Encourage innovative and creative design concepts.

d) Locate site entries and storage bays to minimize conflicts with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

e) Mitigate noise, odor, lighting, and other impacts on surrounding properties.

Policy LU 7.3 *Consider the positive characteristics and unique features of the project site and surrounding community during the design and development process.*

Policy LU 7.4 *Retain and enhance the integrity of existing residential, employment, agricultural, and open space areas by protecting them from encroachment of land uses that would result in impacts from noise, noxious fumes, glare, shadowing, and traffic.*

Policy LU 7.5 *Require buffering to the extent possible between urban uses and adjacent rural/equestrian oriented land uses.*

Policy LU 14.1 *Preserve and protect outstanding scenic vistas and visual features for the enjoyment of the traveling public.*

Policy LU 14.3 *Ensure that the design and appearance of new landscaping, structures, equipment, signs, or grading within Designated and Eligible State and County scenic highway corridors are*

compatible with the surrounding scenic setting or environment.

Policy LU 28.10 *Require that residential units/projects be designed to consider their surroundings and to visually enhance, not degrade, the character of the immediate area.*

Policy LU 29.9 *Require that commercial development be designed to consider their surroundings and visually enhance, not degrade, the character of the surrounding area.*

Multipurpose Open Space Element

Policy OS 21.1 *Identify and conserve the skylines, view corridors, and outstanding scenic vistas within Riverside County.*

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP)

Policy ECVAP 4.1 *Require the inclusion of outdoor lighting features that would minimize the effects on the nighttime sky and wildlife habitat areas.*

Policy ECVAP 4.2 *Adhere to Riverside County's lighting requirements for standards that are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may interfere with the operations of the Palomar Observatory.*

Policy ECVAP 15.1 *Protect the scenic highways in the Eastern Coachella Valley from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors section of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.*

Policy ECVAP 16.1 *Protect visual and biological resources in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Preservation section of the Multipurpose Open Space Element, as well as policies in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.*

Riverside County Code of Ordinances

Ordinance No. 348 – Land Use Ordinance

This ordinance established allowable uses of land and sets standards for how allowable uses are developed.

Ordinance No. 457 – Building Codes and Fees Ordinance

The purpose of this ordinance is to adopt the (most recent) California Building Standards Code, California Code of Regulations, Title 24, to establish the minimum buildings standards for buildings, structures, and improvements, which are necessary to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare.

County of Riverside Ordinance No. 655

The intent of this ordinance is to restrict the permitted use of certain light fixtures emitting into the night sky undesirable light rays which have a detrimental effect on astronomical observation and research. This ordinance is not intended to restrict the use of low-pressure sodium lighting of single-family dwellings for security purposes. This ordinance does not require any replacement of light fixtures already installed and operating. Ordinance No. 655 defines lighting sources, establishes the type and manner of installation and operation of lighting, and details lighting prohibitions.

County of Riverside Ordinance 915 – An Ordinance of the County of Riverside Regulating Outdoor Lighting

Inadequately shielded outdoor lighting results in a waste of natural resources and light trespass. The intent of this chapter is to provide minimum requirements for outdoor lighting in order to reduce light trespass, and to protect the health, property, and well-being of residents in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Vista Santa Rosa Design Guidelines

The Vista Santa Rosa community was recognized by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors in 2001, with boundaries extending to Avenue 50 on the north, Monroe Street on the west, State Route 86 (Harrison Street) on the east, and Avenue 66 on the south. Vista Santa Rosa is described in these guidelines as a special community where country club and residential development interface with agricultural and rural, equestrian-oriented lifestyles. The area also supports significant date production and is characterized by rural residential and community uses, including a strong equestrian presence.

The Design Guidelines for Vista Santa Rosa (VSR) community were created to preserve the special character, lifestyle, and agricultural history of the community while accommodating future growth and development. The guidelines include recommendations for architectural styles, materials, and colors that are consistent with the area's character. The VSR character includes, but is not limited to, rural, open, natural, and desert lifestyle features. Some common design features within the VSR community include, but are not limited to, white agricultural or equestrian fencing, date palms, and simple, agrarian-style street lights.

5.1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Coachella Valley and the area surrounding the proposed Project are located in the low-lying desert valley floor surrounded by the high terrain of the San Jacinto, San Bernardino, Little San Bernardino, and Santa Rosa Mountains. These contrasting viewsheds result in a combination of open space and mountain scenery that is a major component of the aesthetic quality of the area. The mountainous areas that ring the Coachella Valley are comprised of a variety of rock formations including darkly varnished rock that contrasts with large expanses of light gray granite, and a diversity of vegetation.

The two highest peaks in the mountains surrounding the Coachella Valley are San Jacinto Peak in the San Jacinto Mountains located to the northwest of the Project Site at an elevation of 10,804 feet, and San Gorgonio Peak in the San Bernardino Mountains, also northwest of the Project Site with an elevation of 11,502 feet. The rise of Mt. San Jacinto, from the desert floor to the peak, is the steepest gradient in North America. The Santa Rosa Mountains are located approximately 2.25 miles west and southwest of the planning area, with the highest peaks being Toro Peak at 8,717 and Santa Rosa Peak at about 8,000 feet.

To the north and northeast of the Project Site are the Indio Hills and Mecca Hills, with elevations rising to about 1,600 feet, with the Little San Bernardino Mountains bounding the valley to the northeast. The lowest portions of the project area are also a result of tectonic forces associated with the San Andreas Fault Zone. The Coachella Valley is the northwestern extension of a fault-controlled spreading zone, which extends from the Gulf of California. The spreading and subsidence has created a terminal lake, the Salton Sea, which has no outlet and currently stands at a surface elevation of approximately 228 feet below mean sea level. The proposed Project is surrounded by natural vistas including the surrounding mountains and the expanse of cultivated fields and native desert lands.

5.1.2.1 Existing Conditions

Visual Character

Riverside County

The San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains divide the County into eastern and western halves at the San Gorgonio Pass, while additional mountain ranges, the San Bernardino, Little San Bernardino, and those within the Santa Rosa Wilderness and Cleveland National Forest, define much of its northern, southern, and western boundaries of the County.

The County contains an array of diverse geographical features, including deserts, mountains and hills, deep valleys, forests, and rich agricultural lands. Set among these diverse landscapes are a variety of established and/or growing urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Mt. Palomar Observatory

Mt. Palomar Observatory is a major scientific resource located in San Diego County approximately 5.5 miles south of the Riverside County border and approximately 42 miles southwest of the Project Site. In general, astronomic observatories need to be sites at least 30 to 40 miles away from large, brightly lit areas, such as cities and other urban concentrations to ensure adequate dark skies for observing. To minimize nighttime light pollution within the region surrounding the observatory, the County of Riverside enforces Ordinance No. 655 (Regulating Light Pollution). This ordinance established two zones for specific lighting controls based on distance from the Observatory: Zone A encompasses a sphere with a 15-mile radius; Zone B encompasses a 45-mile radius from the Observatory. The intent of the ordinance is to restrict urban lighting that could interfere with operations at the observatory. The Project Site is located approximately 42 miles from the Mt. Palomar Observatory and falls within Zone B as defined by Riverside County Ordinance No. 655 (Regulating Light Pollution). Zone B regulations are intended to minimize sky glow and glare that could interfere with astronomical observations while allowing for urban and suburban development. Development within Zone B is required to incorporate lighting design measures such as fully shielded and downward-directed fixtures, limitations on light intensity, and controls to reduce unnecessary nighttime illumination. Prohibited or restricted lighting includes searchlights, laser lighting, and other skyward-directed light sources. Nonessential lighting is also subject to operational controls such as timers or automatic shutoff devices.

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) addresses the southeast portion of the Coachella Valley, south and east of the City of Indio, and east of the City of La Quinta and the Santa Rosa Mountains, stretching to the Imperial County line on the south.

The ECVAP Area extends east of the All American Canal across both sides of I-10, including Chiriaco Summit. The Colorado River Aqueduct parallels I-10 through most of the area. Its southeastern boundary is the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range, and its southwestern portion includes large checkerboard-patterned areas of the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians Reservation. The Eastern Coachella Valley encompasses a variety of man-made and natural environments, consisting of agricultural areas, mountains ranges, the Colorado Desert, the Salton Sea, and numerous special communities.

The segment of Highway 111 that starts from 66th Avenue in Mecca and extends southeasterly down towards Bombay Beach is designated as a local highway scenic corridor and eligible for designation as a State-Designated Scenic Highway. State Route 86, east of the Project Site and runs in a generally north to south direction, is also a local highway scenic corridor.

Project Site

As shown in **Figure 3.0-3: Project Location** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the Project Site is bordered by 52nd Avenue to the north; Jackson Street to the east; Avenue 54 to the south; and Monroe Street to the west. The Project Site consists primarily of fallow agricultural land, infiltration basins, and desert terrain disturbed by previous agricultural use. Date palms are located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a home built in the 1970s and related structures. The Project Site also contains ornamental landscaping, including lawns, shade trees, and palms; a modern mobile home, and several modern, non-residential outbuildings and trailers.

As shown in **Figure 3.0-2: Project Vicinity** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, uses surrounding the Project include vacant and fallow land, date farming, estate density residential, and suburban level development to the west. The Project Site is bordered by the Santa Rosa Ranch, Mirabella Estates, Plantation Golf Club and single-family homes to the north; the Cahuilla Desert Academy, the Tahquitz Equestrian facility, and the Zenyara Luxury Estate (a private event facility) are located to the east; single-family homes, the Cavallo Ranch, date groves estate-density residential lots and vacant land are located to the south, and The Madison Club, Carmela, and Rancho Santana neighborhoods to the west of Monroe Street. The surrounding development is generally 1-2 stories in height. Structures within Mirabella Estates and the Madison Club to the north and west are approximately 1-3 stories; structures within the Santa Rosa Ranch and Carmela Community are approximately 1-2 stories; and development to the south within Cavallo Ranch and Rancho Ellenita ranges from 1-3 stories.

As shown in **Figure 5.1-1: Surrounding Viewsheds from the Project Site**, views are available of the foothills and elevated terrain of the Santa Rosa Mountains to the northwest, west and southwest, partially obstructed by existing development, vegetation, and utility poles. The area also has distant views of Mt. San Jacinto to the east and the San Bernardino Mountains further north of the Project Site. The Little San Bernardino mountains to the north and northeast lie low on the horizon.

Nighttime lighting sources within the Project vicinity include residential uses in the Madison Club and the single-family neighborhoods, Carmela and Rancho Santana, to the west. Primary nighttime lighting sources in residential areas consist of streetlights, household fixtures, and vehicle headlights.

5.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.1.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

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

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

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

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

5.1.4 METHODOLOGY

The documentation of aesthetics involves defining the existing visual character, including resources and scenic vistas unique to the Project Area. Visual resources are identified by evaluating existing landforms, views of scenic resources, including natural features and urban characteristics, viewing points/locations, and existing light and glare (e.g., nighttime illumination). Guidance provided by the Riverside County General Plan, Riverside County Municipal Code, and Riverside County Design Standards and Guidelines are used to assess the changes to the visual environment caused by the implementation of the proposed Project.

The following discussion analyzes the impact of the proposed Project on scenic resources, scenic vistas, and the overall visual quality and character of the surrounding areas. The visual setting is characterized by the natural, agricultural, and built landscape features that may be viewed from publicly accessible vantage points, primarily the public streets in the area. For analysis purposes, scenic resources are categorized as the built or natural environment that contributes to a scenic public setting. This includes but is not limited to trees and rock outcroppings. Scenic vistas are considered any publicly accessible viewpoints that provide expansive views of a highly valued landscape view. Impacts are assessed based on the Project's potential to have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas, substantially damage scenic resources, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or overall quality of the site and its surroundings, including through the potential creation of light and glare and adversely impacting the night sky, including astronomical instruments located at the Mt. Palomar Observatory located to the southwest.



North



West



South



East

SOURCE: Google Earth – 2025.

FIGURE **5.1-1**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Surrounding Viewsheds from the Project Site

427-001-24

5.1.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Scenic vistas are publicly accessible views that offer notable or memorable visual qualities, such as natural landforms, open space areas, or valued built features. These views can either be focused on a single element or broad and panoramic, encompassing distant mountains, ridgelines, or other landscape features.

As shown in **Figure 5.1-1**, views from the Project Site include partially obstructed views of the Santa Rosa Mountains to the west; the Mirabella Estates and partially obstructed views of the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north; agricultural uses and partially obstructed views of the San Jacinto Mountains to the east; and agricultural uses to the south and partially obstructed views of the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south. The tallest structures within the Project area consist of existing electrical poles of approximately 50-60 feet in height, which are visible along Monroe Street, 52nd Avenue, Jackson Street, and Avenue 54.

The proposed Project would develop a residential, golf-oriented, amenity-focused community and associated improvements including open space, recreation facilities and supporting infrastructure, including potentially an on-site power generation system composed of generator units and battery energy storage system units.

The existing zoning designations for the Project Site include A-1-20 (Light Agriculture), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture) zones, R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwelling), and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone - Residential Developments). **Table 5.1-1: Building Height Limits—Existing Zoning vs. Proposed Project** below shows building heights permitted in these existing zoning designations. The Project includes a proposed General Plan Amendment and zone change to adopt the proposed Specific Plan to develop the Project as proposed. All residential structures would be developed with a maximum height of 35 feet tall, which would be consistent with the existing development standards. No proposed buildings would exceed a maximum height of 35 feet.

TABLE 5.1-1: BUILDING HEIGHT LIMITS—EXISTING ZONING VS. PROPOSED PROJECT

Zoning / Project	Height Limit	Notes
A-1-20	40 ft (single-family) / 50 ft (other structures) unless a greater height with approval under County Code Section 17.172.230	Agricultural zone
R-A-2	40 ft (single-family) / 50 ft (other structures) with approval under County Code Section 17.172.230	Residential-Agricultural

TABLE 5.1-1: BUILDING HEIGHT LIMITS—EXISTING ZONING VS. PROPOSED PROJECT		
Zoning / Project	**Height Limit**	**Notes**
R-1-20000	40 ft / up to three stories	Single-family Residential
R-5	50 ft (standard) / up to 75 ft with approval under County Code Section 17.172.220	Open Area Combining Zone – Residential Developments
Proposed Project	35 ft max	All proposed structures would not exceed 35 feet in height

As shown above, while the Project includes a proposed General Plan Amendment and Zone Change, all proposed structures would be limited to a maximum height of 35 feet, which is lower than the maximum heights currently permitted under any of the existing zoning designations. In addition, surrounding development within the Project vicinity ranges from 20 to 40 feet in height, with most residential buildings reaching one to two stories. The maximum proposed building height of 35 feet falls within this established range and is comparable to existing development to the north, south, east, and west of the Project Site. Further, the Project would include varied roof forms and heights to minimize the visual impact of repetitious flat planes, similar building silhouettes, and similar ridge heights.

In addition to residential structures, the Project would include either an underground tunnel or an above-grade bridge. The bridge option would be a low-profile golf cart bridge approximately 225 feet in length and up to 17 feet in height above Monroe Street. The bridge would be constructed of durable materials such as reinforced concrete and/or structural steel and would include graded approach ramps and retaining walls (approximately up to 16 feet tall) integrated into the surrounding golf course and cart path system, and screened walls along the bridge for safety. These dimensions are preliminary and provided for planning and environmental analysis purposes only; final bridge design, including structural dimensions, materials, and vertical clearance, would be determined during final engineering and permitting. The design of the bridge would be more low-profile than a normal bridge for automobiles, which typically requires greater structural massing, clearance, and width.

While the bridge would introduce a new above-ground element, its height would remain similar to the two-story, 20-feet-tall housing in the surrounding area. As such, the bridge would not substantially obstruct or degrade existing scenic vistas. The tunnel option would not introduce any above-ground visual features and would not affect scenic views. Therefore, the Project would not introduce structures that would result in a substantial adverse intrusion into or obstruction of any existing scenic vistas.

As detailed above, the Project Site has distant views of scenic vistas of the San Jacinto, San Bernardino, Little San Bernardino, and Santa Rosa Mountains. However, these mountains can be

viewed over the proposed buildings, and the building envelope only covers a portion of the 174 acres. Accordingly, Project impacts to existing scenic vistas would be less than significant.

The Project would also be developed in accordance with the Riverside County Development Code, which would ensure that the scale of new buildings would be consistent in form, scale, and character with the existing structures within the vicinity of the Project Site, and would maintain consistency of visibility to scenic vistas from the Project Site and surrounding area. Therefore, the Project would not substantially alter existing views or scenic vistas identified in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan or General Plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Generally, scenic resources include areas that are visible to the general public and considered visually attractive. In addition to scenic corridors, scenic resources include natural landmarks and prominent or unusual features of the landscape, as well as scenic backdrops such as hillsides and ridges which rise above urban or rural areas or highways. Scenic vistas are also considered visual resources in the County.

Scenic highways and scenic corridors are arterial roadways which provide views of prominent scenic vistas in the County. There are no official State-designated routes or eligible State scenic highways, nor any locally designated scenic corridors, in the Project area or within the Project Site.[1] According to the State Scenic Highway System, the nearest officially designated State scenic highway is State Route 74, located approximately 9.5 miles west of the Project Site.[2] The nearest scenic or eligible scenic highway is the Interstate 10 (I-10) freeway and Highway 111. The I-10 is a County Eligible Scenic Highway between the City of Palm Springs and City of Coachella, located approximately five miles northeast of the Project. The segment of Highway 111 that starts from 66th Avenue in Mecca and extends southeasterly down towards Bombay Beach is eligible for designation as a State-Designated Scenic Highway and is located approximately 9.4 miles southeast of the Project Site.[3] The nearest local scenic corridors include Highway 111 and SR-86.[4] SR-86 is located approximately 4.1 miles east of the Project Site and runs in a generally north to south direction. Due to the relative distance of the Project Site and existing development and vegetation, views of the Project Site are fully obstructed from the SR-74, I-10, Highway 111, and SR-86. Therefore, the Project would not result

1 Caltrans. "California State Scenic Highway System Map." Accessed December 2025. https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa.

2 Caltrans. "California State Scenic Highway System Map." Accessed March 2026. https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa.

3 County of Riverside. *Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan*. September 2021. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-genplan-general-plan-2015-GPA-20960-Area-20Plans-ECVAP-6-2013-202014-01-20.pdf.

4 County of Riverside. *Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan*. September 2021.

in significant adverse impacts to scenic resources along scenic highways or scenic corridors. For these reasons, Project impacts to scenic resources within a State scenic highway or scenic corridor would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project Site consists primarily of fallow agricultural land, infiltration basins, and desert terrain associated disturbed by previous agricultural use. As shown in **Figure 3.0-2: Project Vicinity** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the Project Site is surrounded by the Cahuilla Desert Academy, Mirabella Estates and Santa Rosa Ranch to the north; fallow agricultural land, disturbed vacant land and the Tahquitz Equestrian Facility to the east; two ranches and fallow agricultural land to the south; and a residential golf neighborhood and single-family neighborhood to the west.

For purposes of aesthetics, the Project Site consists of previously disturbed and fallow agricultural land surrounded by a mix of residential, golf course, and rural uses. While the Project would result in the conversion of agricultural land to residential and recreational uses, the site does not exhibit a high-quality scenic landscape and is not characterized by unique or visually sensitive features. As such, the conversion of agricultural land would not substantially degrade the overall visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings.

The visual character of the Project would be similar to the visual character of the existing development in the area. Development of the Project would introduce urban features consistent with the planned land use pattern for the area and surrounding residential and golf-oriented communities. As described previously, surrounding development within the Project vicinity ranges from 20 to 40 feet in height, with most residential buildings reaching one to two stories. No proposed buildings would exceed a maximum height of 35 feet, consistent with typical residential height thresholds and comparable to surrounding residential development. While the Project would modify the underlying land use designation, it would not introduce building heights or massing that would be incompatible with the existing zoning and would not result in a conflict with applicable zoning or land use regulations intended to protect visual character or scenic resources.

The Project would also include a grade-separated golf cart crossing of Monroe Street, which may consist of either an underground tunnel or an above-grade bridge. Should the underground tunnel option be chosen, it would be out of view from the surrounding area and not cause significant visual impacts to the surrounding area. The bridge option would span approximately 225 feet in length and approximately 17 feet above Monroe Street to provide adequate vehicular clearance. The bridge

would also include graded approach ramps and associated retaining walls up to approximately 16 feet in height. As such, the total vertical profile of the bridge structure, including retaining walls, would be greater than the bridge deck height alone; however, the overall massing would remain consistent with the scale of surrounding built development.

As an above-ground structure, the bridge would introduce a new visual element within the Project area and would be visible from Monroe Street and surrounding viewpoints. However, when compared to nearby residential and clubhouse structures, which typically range from one to two stories (approximately 20 to 40 feet in height), the bridge and associated features would be comparable in scale and would not appear visually dominant within the existing built environment. Additionally, the structure would be integrated into the golf course and community design through the use of compatible materials, finishes, and landscaping.

In contrast, the tunnel option would not introduce a visible above-ground feature and would maintain the existing visual character of the site. Therefore, the introduction of the golf cart crossing would not substantially degrade the overall visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

The Project would also include varied roof forms and heights to minimize the visual impact of repetitious flat planes, similar building silhouettes, and similar ridge heights, thereby reducing visual monotony and ensuring compatibility with the existing visual character of the surrounding area.

In addition, the Project would be visually compatible with surrounding golf-oriented residential communities through adherence to the proposed Specific Plan's architectural framework. Residential design would incorporate regionally inspired architectural styles, including Spanish, Adobe Ranch, Desert Contemporary, and Mid-Century Modern, implemented through complementary building materials, durable high-quality finishes, and color palettes that promote a harmonious and cohesive community aesthetic. Materials would include stucco with clean, precise detailing, stone or masonry accents, and wood or simulated wood elements, with materials and architectural elements wrapped consistently around building corners. Therefore, the Project would blend with adjacent golf-oriented residential communities by avoiding abrupt material changes, excessive contrast, and incompatible finishes, and would not result in significant adverse impacts to the visual character of the surrounding area.

Further, **Table 5.1-2: Consistency with General Plan**, **Table 5.1-3: Consistency with Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan**, and **Table 5.1-4: Consistency with Vista Santa Rosa Design Guidelines** analyze the consistency of the Project with applicable policies in the General Plan, ECVAP, and the VSR Design Guidelines.

TABLE 5.1-2: CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN	
Goals and Policies	**Consistency Analysis**
Land Use Element	
Policy LU-14.1: Preserve and protect outstanding scenic vistas and visual features for the enjoyment of the traveling public.	**Consistent.** The Project is consistent with the policy to preserve and protect outstanding scenic vistas and visual features for the enjoyment of the traveling public. All structures would be limited to a maximum height of 35 feet, which is consistent with surrounding development and within or below existing zoning allowances, and would comply with the Riverside County Development Code to minimize visual massing and avoid substantial obstruction of publicly accessible scenic vistas along adjacent roadways as analyzed in Threshold a) above.
Policy LU-14.8: Avoid the blocking of public views by solid walls.	**Consistent.** Although the Project includes an 8-foot perimeter CMU wall and 6-foot entry walls, these features do not block public views of scenic resources because views toward surrounding mountain ranges and open space are already partially or fully obstructed by existing development and vegetation. The walls will be softened with desert-appropriate landscaping, preventing the creation of a solid visual barrier along public roadways and maintaining the intent of Policy LU-14.8 to avoid obstructing public scenic views.
Policy LU-21.1: Require that grading be designed to blend with undeveloped natural contours of the site and avoid an unvaried, unnatural, or manufactured appearance.	**Consistent.** The Project would follow existing site contours to the extent feasible and balance all earthwork on-site, avoiding large, manufactured slopes. Therefore, the Project would be designed to blend with the natural contours of the site and the Project would be consistent with the intent of this policy.
Policy LU-21.3: Ensure that development does not adversely impact the open space and rural character of the surrounding area.	**Consistent.** The Project maintains the area's open space and rural character by providing open space areas, including the golf course, trails, and naturalized landscape areas; and by implementing low-density residential development that is visually compatible with surrounding rural uses. Desert-appropriate landscaping and dark-sky lighting further ensure that the community blends with its surroundings and avoids adverse effects on the area's existing rural character.
Multipurpose Open Space Element	
Policy OS 21.1: Identify and conserve the skylines, view corridors, and outstanding scenic vistas within Riverside County.	**Consistent.** All proposed structures would be limited to a maximum height of 35 feet, which is consistent with surrounding development and within or below existing zoning allowances. Compliance with the Riverside County Development Code and incorporation of varied building forms would minimize visual massing and avoid substantial obstruction of skylines, view

TABLE 5.1-2: CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN	
Goals and Policies	**Consistency Analysis**
	corridors, and publicly accessible scenic vistas in the Project vicinity.

Source: Riverside County Planning Department. Riverside County General Plan. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/riverside-county-general-plan.

TABLE 5.1-3: CONSISTENCY WITH EASTERN COACHELLA VALLEY AREA PLAN	
Goals	**Consistency Analysis**
General	
Policy ECVAP 15.1: Protect the scenic highways in the Eastern Coachella Valley from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors section of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	**Consistent.** The Project would not alter the visual quality of nearby eligible scenic highways, including I-10 and Highway 111, or locally designated scenic corridors, including SR-86 and Highway 111, due to the relative distance screening by intervening development. In addition, low building heights, extensive open space, desert-appropriate landscaping, and dark-sky lighting ensure that the Project would not introduce visual changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of properties along these scenic corridors.
Policy ECVAP 1.1: a. Prepare a detailed land use plan, with community development policies, for the Vista Santa Rosa Community that will: provide for a harmonious blend of country club, residential, commercial, rural, agricultural, and equestrian uses and community facilities in this area, and promote unifying community themes through signs, landscaping, scale of development, and trail and road facilities, etc. for the community. b. Establish an Incentive Program to encourage development to occur that is consistent with the plan. c. Within the Vista Santa Rosa Policy Area, the minimum lot size in the Agriculture designation is five acres, not 10 acres, and the allowable intensity of land use is 0.2 dwelling units per acre, not 0.1 dwelling units per acre. d. Several portions of the Vista Santa Rosa community, including a large area generally between Avenue 55 and Avenue 62, and smaller areas located along Avenue 66, Harrison Street, and Van Buren Street, are	**Consistent.** The proposed Specific Plan includes a detailed land use plan that blends residential, recreational, and open space uses in a manner compatible with the surrounding rural and country-club character. It incorporates unifying community elements such as cohesive landscaping, low-intensity architectural design, and an integrated network of internal and public trails that link to the Countywide system. Although not located within the Community Development Overlay, the Project maintains substantial open space and provides appropriate buffering through large setbacks and golf-course open areas, thereby supporting the Area Plan's objectives for orderly, visually compatible development in Vista Santa Rosa. Although the Project would introduce 8-foot-tall walls in the edges of the Project Site, other similar residential communities located west of and north of the Project Site also contain similar perimeter walls. The proposed Project is consistent with the overall intent of this policy.

TABLE 5.1-3: CONSISTENCY WITH EASTERN COACHELLA VALLEY AREA PLAN

Goals	Consistency Analysis
designated as Agriculture, 5-acre minimum parcel size, with a Community Development Overlay. It is the intent of these designations to encourage agricultural uses to remain in the area as long as area landowners desire, while providing for a gradual, orderly transition to other land use types. When conversion of farmland to other uses occurs, adequate buffering shall be incorporated into development proposals to ensure that there will be adequate land use compatibility protection for other nearby landowners who desire to continue farming indefinitely. The overall density range of the Community Development Overlay area shall be 1-3 dwelling units per acre. Continuous buffer areas of minimum one-acre, rural residential lifestyle parcels shall be provided within all residential development proposals located within the Community Development Overlay area, where such development proposals would be adjacent to areas located outside the Community Development Overlay area and designated Agriculture, Rural Residential, or Estate Density Residential, in the following locations: 1) the east side of Monroe Street, between Avenues 55 and 62, 2) Avenue 55 between Monroe Street and a point located one-quarterly mile west of Van Buren Street, and protrusions of the Community Development Overlay located to the north of this segment along the west side of Jackson Street and between Jackson and Calhoun Streets, and 3) Avenues 60 and 62, Calhoun Street between Avenues 60 and 61, and the north-south midsection line of Section 35, Township 6 South, Range 7 East, between Avenues 60 and 62, all of which are located between Monroe and Harrison Streets. Except where significant environmental effects would occur due to road noise, and no other feasible mitigation measures are available, walls, earthen berms, and similar types of project elements that present barriers to a general open, rural-in-character view into a development when the development is viewed from the street, shall not be permitted along the following roads where they are classified by a Circulation Element designation: Airport Boulevard, Avenues 50, 52, 54, 58, 60, 62, and 66, and Monroe, Jackson, Van Buren, and Harrison Streets. Split-rail fences and other edge features that allow for an open view and evoke a rural character are encouraged.	

TABLE 5.1-3: CONSISTENCY WITH EASTERN COACHELLA VALLEY AREA PLAN

Goals	Consistency Analysis
e. All development proposals within the Vista Santa Rosa Policy Area shall include multi-purpose recreational trails and shall provide for potential linkages of such trails to Riverside County's planned trail system as shown in the Non-motorized Transportation section of the Circulation Element.	
Policy ECVAP: 2.3: The General Plan Vision and Principles recognize that the new towns and planned self-sustaining communities will play a role in the growth and development of Riverside County. These development proposals will require vigorous reviews to ensure compatibility with surroundings, consistency with environmental policies, a full range of public services, and fiscal stability. Lands adjacent to Interstate 10, from the easterly edge of the Coachella Valley to the Chiriaco Summit, also known as the Shavers Valley, offer unique opportunities for self-sustaining development provided that such development is limited and can provide for a full complement of infrastructure and services. Clearly the availability and assurance of a long-term and reliable water supply will be the pivotal issue for development in this area. Proposed planned communities in this area are not subject to the eight-year limit and other procedural requirements applicable to Foundation Component amendments as provided above, provided that: a. Planned community proposals may have urban characteristics with thematic elements (i.e., golf, equestrian opportunities, etc.), but also will have a rigid and permanent urban boundary. b. The plan must include a comprehensive water service program that addresses the long-term requirements of the project, conservation, and reliability. c. The proposed community must be located within a district that provides water and sewer services or a water and sewer district has agreed to annex and serve the project; and there is an agreement that such services will not be expanded beyond the limits of the proposed community. d. The proposed community must provide for all relevant public facilities and services, including public protection, road maintenance, library services, education facilities, and waste disposal;	**Consistent.** The Project would function as a self-sustaining, master-planned community with a defined boundary, extensive open space, a golf-oriented amenity core, with water and sewer service provided by Coachella Valley Water District and electrical service provided by an on-site power generation system and/or the Imperial Irrigation District. The Project would provide the necessary infrastructure, internal circulation, emergency access, recreational facilities, and pedestrian-oriented design features, while incorporating water-efficient landscaping and energy-efficient building practices. The Specific Plan supports County housing goals by providing varied unit types, integrating pedestrian and non-vehicular mobility, and incorporating energy-efficient design, dark-sky lighting, and water-efficient landscaping consistent with new-urbanism and sustainability principles. Together, these features demonstrate that the Project meets the intent of this policy by ensuring that planned communities are environmentally compatible, adequately serviced, and developed as cohesive, sustainable community frameworks.

TABLE 5.1-3: CONSISTENCY WITH EASTERN COACHELLA VALLEY AREA PLAN

Goals	Consistency Analysis
and it must be demonstrated that such service can be efficiently delivered within the proposed community. e. The proposed community must provide a full range of parks and if necessary, parks large enough to accommodate organized sports activities. f. The proposed community must be consistent with, and advance the goals of, the Riverside County Housing Element and provide for a range of housing opportunities including low and moderate-income housing. g. At least 50% of the proposed community must be devoted to open space and recreation. h. The proposed community must be compatible with the achievement of the goals of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, as determined by the County of Riverside in consultation with the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. i. The plan must be based on "new urbanism" principles, and include elements that facilitate internal transit programs and encourage pedestrian mobility. j. The plan, to the extent feasible, must contain provisions for the use of innovative and state-of-the-art technology to reduce energy and resource consumption.	
Policy ECVAP 4.1: Require the inclusion of outdoor lighting features that would minimize the effects on the nighttime sky and wildlife habitat areas.	**Consistent.** The Project incorporates dark-sky–compliant lighting throughout the community, using low-intensity, downward-directed, and shielded fixtures that minimize glare, skyglow, and spillover into surrounding areas. These lighting standards reduce nighttime illumination impacts on both the night sky and nearby wildlife habitat, consistent with Policy ECVAP 4.1.
Policy ECVAP 4.2: Adhere to Riverside County's lighting requirements for standards that are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may interfere with the operations of the Palomar Observatory.	**Consistent.** The Project is located approximately 42 miles northeast of the Palomar Observatory. All exterior lighting would comply with Riverside County lighting standards, including requirements for shielding, downward direction, and low-intensity illumination to limit light leakage and spillage. These measures ensure the Project does not contribute to skyglow or interfere with Palomar Observatory operations, consistent with Policy ECVAP 4.2.

TABLE 5.1-3: CONSISTENCY WITH EASTERN COACHELLA VALLEY AREA PLAN

Goals	Consistency Analysis
Policy ECVAP 5.1: Retain and protect agricultural lands through adherence to the policies contained in the Agriculture section of the General Plan Land Use Element.	**Consistent.** As detailed in **Section 5.2: Agricultural and Forestry Resources**, the Project Site contains designated farmland, with portions designated for agricultural use and portions designated for residential use. The Project has been evaluated for consistency with the agricultural land use policies of the County of Riverside General Plan Land Use Element, which promote the retention of agricultural lands, discourage premature conversion, and require compatibility between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. While the Project would convert agricultural land to urban uses, such conversion is consistent with the County's long-term land use planning framework, as the Project Site is designated and planned for development under the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan. Accordingly, the Project does not represent premature or unplanned conversion of agricultural land, but rather implements the County's planned land use pattern for the area. For purposes of aesthetics, the Project Site consists of previously disturbed and fallow agricultural land surrounded by a mix of residential, golf course, and rural uses. Development of the Project would introduce urban features consistent with the planned land use pattern for the area, including residential golf neighborhoods, and would not substantially degrade the overall visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings. In addition, the Project incorporates site planning and design features that minimize land use conflicts and promote compatibility with surrounding uses. As such, the Project is consistent with applicable General Plan policies related to agricultural land preservation, conversion, and land use compatibility

Source: Riverside County. *Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan.* September 2021. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/2024-12/Portals-14-genplan-GPA-2022-Compiled-ECVAP-4-2022-rev.pdf.

TABLE 5.1-4: CONSISTENCY WITH VISTA SANTA ROSA DESIGN GUIDELINES

Goals	Consistency Analysis
General	
Key Design Features: 1. VSR Logo 2. Painted and Wrapped Pressure Regulator Pipe 3. Custom Street Signs 4. Simple, Agrarian-Style Street Lights	**Consistent.** The Project incorporates design elements compatible with Vista Santa Rosa's key community features, including display of the VSR logo, street signs, and simple, agrarian-style street lights. These elements reinforce the visual identity of the community and support the intent of the identified design features.

TABLE 5.1-4: CONSISTENCY WITH VISTA SANTA ROSA DESIGN GUIDELINES	
Goals	**Consistency Analysis**
5. Date Palms 6. White Rail Equestrian Fencing **7.** White Agricultural Fencing	

Source: Vista Santa Rosa Community. *Vista Santa Rosa Design Guidelines*.

As described and discussed in **Tables 5.1-2** through **5.1-4** above, the Project would not conflict with the applicable zoning and other policies regulating scenic quality in the County, ECVAP, and Vista Santa Rosa community. The Project would conform to the design and visual character of the surrounding area through implementation of planned land uses and architectural features that are compatible with the existing rural-residential and golf course setting.

Although the Project would convert agricultural land, it would not introduce features that are visually incompatible with the surrounding environment or substantially alter existing public views. Consistency with applicable policies and design guidelines would further ensure protection of scenic quality. Therefore, the Project would not substantially degrade the visual character of the site or its surroundings, and aesthetic impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Urban development commonly introduces new sources of light and glare, including street and area lighting, architectural lighting, illuminated signage, and wall-mounted fixtures, as well as residential lighting from porches, patios, and driveways. Collectively, these sources have the potential to increase ambient nighttime illumination and glare impacts.

The Project vicinity contains urban development that contributes existing sources of artificial lighting to the area. Nearby sources include indoor and outdoor lighting from the existing Madison Club residential and golf course community immediately west of the Project Site in La Quinta, ambient lighting on the ranch estates to the north and south, the Plantation residential and golf community north of Avenue 52 in Indio, and illumination from the Cahuilla Desert Academy school to the northeast. Additionally, vehicular traffic along Monroe Street, Avenue 53, and Arabia Street generate transient mobile lighting.

The proposed Project would introduce new interior and exterior lighting for residential structures and community amenities to ensure adequate visibility and security. To minimize spillover, outdoor

recreation courts and golf courses would be oriented away from adjacent properties and largely screened from view by the 8-foot-tall perimeter wall.

Within the Ranch at Madison community, exterior lighting would follow "dark sky" principles, using low-intensity, downward-directed fixtures to minimize glare, skyglow, and light spillover. Common areas would feature warm-colored, unobtrusive LED lighting. Pathway and landscape lighting would be shielded or softened to prevent direct bulb visibility and off-site light trespass. All fixtures would be compatible with the Project's architectural character and designed to meet dark-sky performance standards. Therefore, the Project would promote low-level outdoor lighting and would not result in a significant adverse impact on light and glare in the Project area.

Additionally, according to the General Plan, observatories need to be sited approximately 30 to 40 miles from large lighted areas to ensure that nighttime skies will not be brightened. The Palomar Observatory is located approximately 42 miles from the Project to the southwest. Although the Project Site is located beyond 40 miles of the Palomar Observatory, the Project would also adhere to the requirements of Ordinance No. 655, regulating light pollution, and Ordinance 915, regulating outdoor lighting, which would ensure that Project impacts to the Palomar Observatory and nighttime skies would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

5.1.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

As defined in Section 15130 of the State CEQA Guidelines, cumulative impacts are the incremental effects of an individual project when viewed in connection with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects within the cumulative impact area for aesthetics. Cumulative projects in the County would have the potential to result in a cumulative impact to aesthetic resources if, in combination, they would result in the removal or substantial adverse change of one or more features that contribute to the valued visual character or image of a neighborhood, community, State scenic highway, or localized area, such as a designated landmark, historic resource, trees, or rock outcroppings.

The analysis of cumulative impacts is based on an assessment of reasonably foreseeable growth associated with a list of past, present, and anticipated future projects**.** Each of these projects, as well as all proposed projects in the County, would be subject to their own consistency analysis for policies and regulations governing scenic quality and would be reviewed for consistency with any applicable specific plan goals and policies and Zoning Code development standards. If there were any potential for significant impacts to aesthetics, appropriate mitigation measures would be identified to reduce and/or avoid impacts related to aesthetics.

As described in this section, implementation of the proposed Project would not result in significant impacts related to aesthetics. The proposed Project and all related projects are required to adhere to County and State regulations designed to reduce and/or avoid impacts related to aesthetics. Additionally, projects within the County and the proposed Project would be subject to the County's

approval to avoid impacts related to aesthetics. Because the Project and related projects would be required to comply with applicable policies and regulations governing scenic quality, light, and glare, the Project and related projects would not cumulatively conflict with policies and regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, with compliance with applicable regulations, the proposed Project, related projects, and other growth would not result in substantial adverse cumulative effects related to aesthetics, and the proposed Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

5.1.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.1.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

No mitigation is required. Impacts would remain less than significant.

5.2 AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This section describes the existing agricultural resources located on and surrounding the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project Site. A background discussion of agricultural and soils classification systems and programs is provided, and existing agricultural activities within the Project Site and surrounding area are characterized. The impact analysis addresses the potential direct and indirect conversion of land that constitutes agriculture, the potential for significant environmental impacts from the proposed conversion of the agricultural land within the Project Site to non-agricultural uses as well as potential conflicts with existing zoning for agriculture.

In addition, this section evaluates the potential for the Project to result in significant impacts to forestry resources, consistent with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Forestry resources generally include land designated for the production of timber and forest products, timberland and timber harvest plans regulated by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), and forested lands subject to conservation or management policies. The analysis below describes existing forestry conditions in the Project Area and evaluates whether implementation of the Project would directly or indirectly affect forestry resources or forest land uses.

Information used in the preparation of this section was obtained from the California Department of Conservation (DOC), the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Riverside County General Plan.

5.2.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.2.1.1 State

California Department of Conservation

The Department of Conservation (DOC) – Division of Land Resource Protection, administers the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) and produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status; the best quality land is called Prime Farmland. The maps are updated every two years with the use of a computer mapping system, aerial imagery, public review, and field reconnaissance.

A classification system that combines soil survey information developed by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and current land use is the basis for the Important Farmland Maps. Most public land areas, such as National Forests and Bureau of Land Management holdings, are not mapped. The minimum land use parcel size is 10 acres unless otherwise specified. Smaller units of land are incorporated into the surrounding map classifications. In order to most accurately represent the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) digital soil survey, soil units of one acre or larger are depicted in Important Farmland Maps.

The following categories are identified in the FMMP:[1]

- **Prime Farmland (P)**: Irrigated land with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance (S)**: Irrigated land similar to Prime Farmland that has a beneficial combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of agricultural crops. This land has minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture than Prime Farmland. Land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Unique Farmland (U)**: Lesser quality soils used for the production of the State's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Local Importance (L)**: Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.
- **Grazing Land (G)**: Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category is used only in California and was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.
- **Urban and Built-up Land (D)**: Urban and Built-Up land is occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. Common examples include residential, industrial, commercial, institutional facilities, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, and water control structures.
- **Other Land (X)**: Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than forty acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.
- **Water (W)**: Water areas with an extent of at least 40 acres.
- **Area Not Mapped (Z)**: Area which falls outside of the NRCS soil survey. Not mapped by the FMMP.

For environmental review purposes under CEQA, the categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land

1 California Department of Conservation (DOC). "California Important Farmland Finder." Accessed December 2025. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/.

constitute "agricultural land" (Public Resources Code Section 21060.1). The remaining categories are used for reporting changes in land use in the FMMP biennial farmland conversion report.

California Land Conservation Act

The California Land Conservation Act,[2] also known as the Williamson Act, was established with the basic intent of encouraging the preservation of the State's agricultural lands in view of increasing trends toward their "premature and unnecessary" urbanization. The act enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners to restrict specific parcels of land to agricultural and open space uses. In return, landowners receive reduced property tax assessments. These reduced rates are much lower than normal as they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value of the land. Local governments receive an annual subvention of forgone property tax revenues from the State via the Open Space Subvention Act.[3]

The California Department of Conservation, under the Farmland Security Zone Act passed in 1998,[4] allows individual counties to establish an additional program for farmlands to enter into contract with the State to receive a benefit similar to Williamson Act contracts. The Farmland Security Act is a 20-year self-renewing contract that allows property owners with qualifying parcels to receive an additional 35 percent in tax savings above that received under the Williamson Act contract.

5.2.1.2 Riverside County General Plan

The County of Riverside General Plan provides the following policies relevant to agricultural resources and forestry resources:

Land Use Element

Policy LU 20.1 *Encourage retaining agriculturally designated lands where agricultural activity can be sustained at an operational scale, where it accommodates lifestyle choice, and in locations where impacts to and from potentially incompatible uses, such as residential uses, are minimized, through incentives such as tax credits.*

Policy LU 20.5 *Continue to participate in the California Land Conservation Act (the Williamson Act) of 1965.*

2 California Government Code. Sections 51200 to 51297.

3 California Government Code. Sections 16140 through 16154.

4 Farmland Security Zone program enacted by the State Legislature in 1998 at Article 7 commencing with Section 51296 of the Williamson Act.

Policy LU 20.6 *Require consideration of state agricultural land classification specifications when a 2.5-year Agriculture Foundation amendment to the General Plan is reviewed that would result in a shift from an agricultural to a non-agricultural use.*

Policy LU 20.7 *Adhere to Riverside County's Right-to-Farm Ordinance.*

Policy LU 20.11 *The County of Riverside shall pursue the creation of new incentive programs, such as tax credits, that encourage the continued viability of agricultural activities.*

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP)

Policy OS 8.1 *Cooperate with federal and state agencies to achieve the sustainable conservation of forest land as a means of providing open space and protecting natural resources and habitat lands included within the MSHCPs.*

The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan identifies the following policies relevant to agricultural resources:

Policy ECVAP 5.1 *Retain and protect agricultural lands through adherence to the policies contained in the Agriculture section of the General Plan Land Use Element.*

Policy ECVAP 5.2 *Refer to the General Plan Certainty System in the General Plan Administration Element. An exception is provided allowing limited changes from the Agriculture designation to be processed and approved.*

The Riverside County General Plan Land Uses are organized into five (5) separate groups, called Foundations, including Agriculture, Rural, Rural Community, Open Space, and Community Development. Within each Foundation are the traditional General Plan Land Use categories.

The Administration Element of the Riverside County General Plan sets forth the rules and procedures governing General Plan Amendments and includes special rules related to Land Use Amendments. Changing from one Land Use Foundation to a different Foundation requires first that the Foundation General Plan Amendment (FGPA) be initiated by the Board of Supervisors. The purpose of this Foundation change initiation process is to prevent spot land use changes, speculation, and ensure conservation by slowing sprawl and development into areas not suitable for more intensive uses. As part of the Foundation change application process, the applicant needs to describe how the proposed change will meet defined eligibility requirements, necessary for initiation consideration. These requirements include the proximity of other existing or under review development, the

availability of sufficient utilities to support the proposed uses, consideration of the fire hazard severity zone the project site is in and if the project site is located within a Coachella Valley Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) conservation area.

The County General Plan Administration Element establishes procedures governing Foundation Component changes, including those involving conversion of land from the Agriculture Foundation Component to another Foundation Component. These changes are processed through a Foundation General Plan Amendment (FGPA) and are subject to limitations on the amount of agricultural land that may be converted during each 2.5-year cycle.[5] One of these three designated areas is the area covered by the Eastern Coachella Valley and Western Coachella Valley Area Plans.

To further ensure feasibility of a proposed Foundation change, an implementing project such as a Tentative Subdivision Map, Conditional Use Permit, or Plot Plan, is required to be submitted within six (6) months of the General Plan Foundation change initiation.

5.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.2.2.1 Existing Conditions

Riverside County

Agriculture provides significant socioeconomic value to Riverside County. According to the County General Plan, four mapped classifications of important farmland are: Prime Farmlands, Statewide Important Farmlands, Unique Farmlands, and Local Important Farmlands. According to the General Plan EIR, the total amount of land designated for agricultural uses is less than the amount of agricultural land currently designated as Prime, Unique, and Statewide Important Farmland and, for this reason, implementation of the General Plan would result in the loss of Prime, Unique, or Statewide Important Farmland.[6]

Major forests in the Riverside County consist of the Cleveland and San Bernardino National Forests, which are part of the Sierra Mountain range. These forests occur on all of the higher mountain ranges of the Pacific Coast region, from southern Oregon to northern Baja California. At lower elevations, these forests commonly border mixed evergreen forest, oak woodland, and chaparral.[7]

5 Riverside County Planning Department. *Chapter 11, Administration Element*. In *General Plan*. Revised December 8, 2015. https://planning.rctlma.org/riverside-county-general-plan.

6 Riverside County Planning Department. *General Plan EIR*. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/general-plan-environmental-impact-report-volume-i#4.2.

7 Riverside County Planning Department. *Chapter 5, Multipurpose Open Space Element*. In *General Plan*. Revised December 8, 2015. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/riverside-county-general-plan.

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

The Eastern Coachella Valley is one of California's most important agricultural producing areas. The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) seeks to protect agricultural lands not only because of their economic value, but also because of their cultural and scenic values. The Project Site is located within the Vista Santa Rosa community within the ECVAP Area, which extends from Avenue 50 on the north to Monroe Street to the west, to State Route 86 (Harrison Street) on the east, and to Avenue 66 on the south. Specifically, the Vista Santa Rosa community is an important producer of date crops. Rural residential uses are also prevalent within the community.[8]

Project Site

The existing zoning designations for the Project Site include A-1-20 (Light Agriculture), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture), R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwellings) and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone – Residential Developments). The Project Site consists primarily of fallowed agricultural land, infiltration basins, and desert terrain disturbed by previous agricultural use. A date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a home built in the 1970s and related structures. The Project Site also contains ornamental landscaping, including lawns, shade trees, and palms; a modern mobile home, and several modern, nonresidential outbuildings and trailers. The Project Site has been previously graded and does not support existing agricultural operations.

According to the Department of Conservation (DOC), important farmlands include the following classifications: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland. As shown in **Figure 5.2-1: Important Farmland Categories**, the Project Site contains approximately 138 acres of land designated as Prime Farmland within the central and southern portion of the site. A small portion of Farmland of Local Importance, consisting of approximately 32 acres) is present in the northeastern and eastern portions of the Project Site. Other Land, consisting of approximately 3 acres, occurs in limited areas within the Project Site, along the mid- to southern boundary of the site.

No portion of the Project Site is subject to any active Williamson Act or Farmland Security Act contract.[9]

The Project Site is surrounded by urban development including the Madison Club residential neighborhood to the west, ranch estates to the north and south, and graded and disturbed land to the east. No active agricultural operations currently exist within or adjacent to the Project Site.

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8 Riverside County Planning Department. *Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan*. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/riverside-county-general-plan.

9 DOC. "Williamson Act Enrollment Finder." Accessed June 2025. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/WilliamsonAct/App/index.html#data_s=id%3Awidget_22_output_config_default_geocode_0_0%3A0.



SOURCE: Department of Conservation - 2020.

FIGURE **5.2-1**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Important Farmland Categories

427-001-24

5.2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.2.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

Based on the Riverside County CEQA Guidelines and Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to agricultural and forestry resources would be significant if the Proposed Project would:

a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;

b. Conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve;

c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12229(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g));

d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or

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

5.2.4 METHODOLOGY

Agricultural impacts are evaluated based upon the designation of important farmland on the Project Site. The analysis is based on a review of available mapping, review of the Riverside County General Plan and Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan, and site-specific conditions.

Farmland classifications were identified using the most recent Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) maps prepared by the Department of Conservation. FMMP designations – including Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, Grazing Land, Urban and Built-Up Land, and Other Land – were reviewed for the Project Site and surrounding area. For analysis purposes, important farmlands include the following classifications: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Local Important Farmlands.

The analysis also considered the presence of Williamson Act contracts and whether the Project would result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses or indirectly affect the long-term viability of surrounding agricultural lands. Further, the analysis evaluated if the Project Site contains forest land, timberland, or land zoned for timber production, using information from the Riverside County General Plan and aerial imagery.

5.2.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and

Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?

Significant Impact.

The FMMP, administered by DOC, classifies land based on soil quality, land use, and agricultural productivity, including Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance. Under CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, conversion of these farmland categories to non-agricultural use may constitute a significant environmental impact.

As shown in **Figure 5.2-1**, the Project Site includes areas classified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance, along with a portion along the mid- to southern boundary of the site classified as Other Land. Surrounding land uses of the site consist primarily of residential development, agricultural lands, golf course uses, and disturbed vacant parcels. Implementation of the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan would result in the conversion of approximately 138 acres of Prime Farmland and 32 acres of Farmland of Local Importance from agricultural to urban uses.

Existing land use designations of the Project Site are Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG). While the AG designation is intended to preserve agricultural lands, the RC:LDR designation allows for low-density residential development and non-agricultural uses, reflecting long-range planning provisions that portions of the Project Site are appropriate for residential development rather than exclusive agricultural production.

In accordance with the provisions of the Riverside County General Plan, an application for a Foundation General Plan Amendment (FGPA) was filed in 2024, reviewed by the Riverside County Planning Commission in November 2024 and by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors in March 2025. The Board of Supervisors determined the request met the eligibility requirements necessary for initiation of the FGPA and adopted an order initiating Foundation Component General Plan Amendment No. 240010 for the Project to change the General Plan Foundation Component for the six (6) parcels that constitute the Project Site from Rural Community: Low Density Residential & Agriculture (RC:LDR & AG) to Community Development: Specific Plan (CD:SP). As required by the General Plan, applications for a Tentative Subdivision Map and Specific Plan were submitted within six (6) months of the initiation of this General Plan Foundation change in March 2025. This review process does not need to be completed prior to certification of the EIR; however, it will be completed before the GPA and other associated project approvals are considered by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Agricultural land conversion under the Riverside County General Plan is evaluated cumulatively across the Eastern and Western Coachella Valley Area Plans. The Riverside County General Plan allows for conversion of up to 7 percent of all land designated Agriculture within the Eastern and Western Coachella Valley Area Plan during each 2.5-year Agriculture Foundation Amendment Cycle. The Western Coachella Valley Area Plan does not designate agricultural land; therefore, the Eastern

Coachella Valley Area Plan represents the entirety of agricultural land subject to the 7 percent conversion threshold within the applicable geographic area.[10]

The current Agriculture Foundation Amendment Cycle began in February 2024, following approval by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan designates approximately 42,000 acres of land as agriculture; therefore, conversion of up to approximately 2,900 acres during the current cycle would be consistent with this policy. County records indicate that four (4) Foundation General Plan Amendments have been approved for initiation within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan during the current Agriculture Foundation Amendment Cycle, with one (1) additional amendment withdrawn. Collectively, the acreage associated with these initiated Foundation General Plan Amendments is approximately 252.06 acres as shown below in **Table 5.2-1: 2024 General Plan Foundation Amendment Cycle within ECVAP**, which represents substantially less than the approximately 2,900 acres permitted for conversion during the current Agriculture Foundation Amendment Cycle. The cumulative total, including the Project, would remain substantially below the allowable 7 percent threshold for agricultural land conversion.

The northern portion of the approximately 174-acre Project Site is currently designated Agriculture under the General Plan, while the southern portion is designated Rural Community. The Project Site contains 170.35 acres of Agricultural land, as shown in **Figure 5.2-1**. Approval of the Project's Foundation General Plan Amendment would be consistent with the General Plan policy for the conversion of agricultural lands and would not exceed the allowable Agriculture Foundation conversion permitted during the current Agricultural Foundation Amendment Cycle, as shown in **Table 5.2-1** below. The approximate total of 425.91 acres of land within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan, representing the cumulative acreage considered under the current Agriculture Foundation Amendment Cycle, would be approximately 1 percent of agricultural land, which is well below the Riverside County General Plan's allowed conversion of up to 7 percent.[11]

TABLE 5.2-1: 2024 GENERAL PLAN FOUNDATION AMENDMENT CYCLE WITHIN ECVAP

Area Plan[a]	General Plan Amendment No.	Acres[c]	FGPA Status
ECVAP	GPA240007	18.39	*Initiation Approved*
ECVAP	GPA 240010[b]	173.85	*Initiation Approved*
ECVAP	GPA 240033	216.22	*Initiation Approved*
ECVAP	GPA 240034	17.45	*Initiation Approved*
ECVAP	GPA 240079	102.82[d]	*Withdrawn*

10 County of Riverside. *Western Coachella Valley Area Plan.* "General Plan." Accessed March 2026. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-genplan-GPA-2022-Compiled-WCVAP-4-2022-rev.pdf.

11 This estimate is conservative as the 425.91 acres consists of each project's total gross acreage, consisting of both agricultural and non-agricultural land.

TABLE 5.2-1: 2024 GENERAL PLAN FOUNDATION AMENDMENT CYCLE WITHIN ECVAP

Area Plan[a]	General Plan Amendment No.	Acres[c]	FGPA Status
	Total	**425.91**	

Notes:

[a] *The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan designates approximately 42,000 acres of land as agriculture; therefore, conversion of up to approximately 2,900 acres during the current cycle would be consistent with this policy.*

[b] *GPA 240010 is the proposed Project.*

[c] *The acreage of the General Plan Amendments consists of each project's total gross acreage, including both agricultural and non-agricultural land. Thus, the total acreage of 425.91 is a conservative estimate as it contains both agricultural and non-agricultural land.*

[d] *The acreage of GPA240079 is not considered in the total acreage within ECVAP as GPA240079 was withdrawn.*

Source: Riverside County Planning Department. *2024 General Plan Foundation Amendment Cycle*. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/2024-general-plan-foundation-amendment-cycle#2741959481-4202596112.

While the Project would result in the conversion of approximately 170 acres of land designated as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Local Significance to non-agricultural uses, the southern portions of the Project Site are already designated for non-agricultural use by the existing General Plan Land Use designation for this portion of the site. The proposed Project would represent continued implementation of current General Plan policies, rather than the introduction of an unplanned or isolated conversion of designated farmland in a predominantly agricultural area. Additionally, the Project would convert agricultural land consistent with the Agriculture Foundation Amendment Cycle. However, the Project would still convert agricultural land to urban use. Therefore, the Project's conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Significance to non-agricultural uses result in a significant impact.

b. Conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve;

Significant Impact.

Agricultural land use in Riverside County is regulated through General Plan land use designations, zoning classifications, and participation in the California Land Conservation Act of 1965. Williamson Act contracts are entered into by a county or city and a landowner to restrict specific parcels to agricultural or open space uses.

The Project Site is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract,[12] therefore, the Project would not conflict with a Williamson Act Contract. The Project is also not within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve.

The Project Site includes six parcels. The three designated parcels (780-101-012, -013, and -014) located north of Avenue 53, totaling 77 acres, are currently zoned A-1 (Light Agriculture). The A-1 Zone allows nurseries, greenhouses, orchards, aviaries, apiaries, field crops, tree crops, berry and bush

12 DOC. "Williamson Act Enrollment Finder."

crops, vegetable, flower, and herb gardening on a commercial scale. The A-1 Zone is not an exclusively agricultural zone. Other allowed uses include one single family home on each parcel, public parks and playgrounds, golf courses with standard length fairways, and country clubs. Additional uses allowed with approval of a Plot Plan as defined by the County Zoning Ordinance, include fraternal lodge halls, including grange halls, churches, temples, or other structures used primarily for religious worship, private schools, libraries, and public utility facilities. Additional uses allowed with approval of a Conditional Use Permit, as defined by the County Zoning Ordinance, include commercial stables and riding academies, mobile home parks, and solar power plants on a parcel 10 acres or larger. As the northern 77 acres of the 174-acre site is currently zoned for agricultural use, development of the Project would conflict with the Project Site's existing agricultural zoning. As shown in **Figure 5.2-1**, the Project includes areas classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Other Land. Therefore, the Project would conflict with the existing agricultural zoning for the Project Site, resulting in a significant impact.

c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?

Less than Significant Impact.

Forest land, timberland, and Timberland Production Zones are regulated under the California Public Resources Code and Government Code to protect lands capable of supporting commercial timber production. Under CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, a project would have a significant impact if it would conflict with existing zoning for forest land or timberland or require rezoning of such lands to non-forest uses.

The Project would develop a master-planned residential golf community with associated recreational amenities, including a private golf course and substantial open space areas. The Project Site is located in an area characterized by previously disturbed land associated with historical agricultural use and rural development. Existing zoning designations include A-1-20 (Light Agriculture), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture), R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwellings) and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone – Residential Developments). The Project includes a proposed General Plan Amendment, zone change, and Specific Plan approval to allow the Project to be developed as proposed.

No portion of the Project Site is zoned or managed for forest resource reproduction. Implementation of the Project would not conflict with forest land zoning or result in the rezoning of forest land to non-forest uses. Further, no timberland is present on the Project Site, and the Project would not remove, convert, or rezone timberland, nor would it interfere with timber production or forest management activities. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production Zones, nor would it result in the rezoning of such lands. Accordingly, impacts related to forestry rezoning conflicts would be less than significant.

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

No Impact.

The Project would develop a master-planned residential golf community with associated recreational amenities, including a private golf course and substantial open space areas, within land that has been previously disturbed and graded. The Project Site consists primarily of fallowed agricultural land, infiltration basins, and desert terrain disturbed by previous agricultural use, along with limited ornamental landscaping, a date palm grove, and concrete foundations from a home built in the 1970s and related structures. Existing vegetation on the Project Site includes non-native grasses, palms, ornamental trees, and agricultural plantings that are not managed for, nor capable of supporting timber production. The existing zoning designations include A-1-20 (Light Agriculture), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture) zones, R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwelling), and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone – Residential Developments). The Project includes a proposed General Plan Amendment, zone change, and Specific Plan approval to allow the Project to be developed as proposed.

The Project Site is not zoned for timber production or forest resource management. No forest land or timberland is present on the site. Further, no forest management activities occur on or adjacent to the Project Site. Although the Project would involve grading and vegetation removal, such activities would be limited to non-forest land and would not result in the removal or conversion of forest land or timberland. Accordingly, there would be no impact related to the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

e. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use, or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?

Significant Impact.

The Project Site is bordered by residential communities to the north and west, and by a mix of fallow agricultural land, ranches, and equestrian and disturbed uses to the east and south. The Project Site consists of fallow agricultural land with portions of the site designated and zoned for agricultural and rural residential uses. As shown in **Figure 5.2-1**, the Project includes areas classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Other Land. No forest land or timberland, as defined by the California Public Resources Code, is present on or adjacent to the Project Site, and the site is not zoned Timberland Production. Accordingly, Project implementation would not result in direct or indirect conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

The Project would develop a residential, golf-oriented, amenity-focused community consisting of single-family residential units, a private golf course, and associated improvements, which would convert existing farmland land to urban uses, resulting in a significant impact.

5.2.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The proposed Project combined with other planned and pending projects would contribute to the conversion of agricultural land in the County and Eastern Coachella Valley planning area to non-agricultural uses.

The Project would contribute to cumulative impacts on agricultural resources through the permanent conversion of farmland-designated lands to non-agricultural uses. When combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable development projects in the area, the Project would incrementally contribute to the ongoing reduction of the regional agricultural land base. Although the Project Site is located within an area that already includes residential development, fallowed farmland, and other non-agricultural uses, the proposed Project would further reduce the amount of land available for agricultural production. This incremental loss, when viewed in combination with other development projects approved or planned within the region, would contribute to cumulative farmland conversion and fragmentation, which can reduce the long-term viability of remaining agricultural operations. However, when combined with other Foundation General Plan Amendment conversion projects approved for initiation within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan, the Project would not cause the total acreage converted during the current Agriculture Foundation Amendment Cycle to exceed the General Plan's 7 percent conversion target.

As the Project would permanently remove agricultural land from potential future production, and because similar conversions are occurring throughout the region under adopted land use plans, the Project's contribution to cumulative agricultural impacts would be considerable. No feasible mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce the Project's contribution to cumulative agricultural land loss. Therefore, the Project would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact on agricultural resources.

The Project Site does not contain forest land, timberland, or land zoned for Timberland Production, as defined by the California Public Resources Code, and is not located adjacent to forested lands. Project implementation would not involve the removal or conversion of forest land or timberland, nor would it interfere with forest management or timber production activities. Therefore, the Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts related to forestry resources.

5.2.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

Approval and implementation of the proposed Project would result in the conversion of land zoned as agricultural and identified as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Local Importance on the State Important Farmland Map for Riverside County to non-agricultural use. The conversion of this land to non-agricultural use would be a significant impact of the Project.

The California Department of Conservation submitted a letter in response to the Notice of Preparation of this Draft EIR recommending that the County of Riverside consider agricultural conservation easements as mitigation for this significant impact. However, permanently preserving

agricultural land elsewhere in the County will not reduce or avoid the conversion of the 170 acres of land within the Project currently used for agricultural production, and therefore, would not be effective at mitigating the conversion of agricultural resources to a less-than-significant level. Specifically, a recent California Court of Appeal determined that agricultural conservation easements "were not effective at reducing the project's conversion of agricultural land to a less than significant level for purposes of CEQA." (See *King & Gardiner Farms, LLC v. County of Kern* (2020) 45 Cal.App.5th 814, 875-876.) A subsequent Court of Appeal decision did hold that while agricultural conservation easements do not reduce the project's impacts to a level of less than significant, they may still be used as an effective way to partially reduce impacts from the conversion of agricultural land. (See *V Lions Farming, LLC v. County of Kern* (2024) 100 Cal.App.5th 412, 437). Additionally, agricultural conservation easement interest letters were distributed to farmers in the nearby agricultural area of Thermal. Of the responses received, three farmers, representing approximately 6,800 acres of farmland, responded they had no interest in establishing conservation easements on their properties. Copies of the outreach letters and the farmers' responses are compiled in **Appendix C: Agricultural Conservation Easement Interest Letter and Responses**.

Furthermore, in this case, the County General Plan expressly allows for the conversion of up to 7 percent of all land designated as Agriculture to other Foundation and land use designations during each 2.5-year cycle in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan, which reflects the County's balancing of the policy favoring the preservation of agricultural resources with the policies favoring additional housing and economic development, and imposing an additional requirement of preserving agricultural land through conservation easements may be considered infeasible on policy grounds as inconsistent with the County's balancing of these competing interests. Based on the County's records, the Project combined with other Foundation General Plan Amendment conversion projects approved or pending within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan area would result in conversion of agricultural land that remains well below the General Plan's 7 percent conversion limit for the current Agricultural Foundation Amendment Cycle.

The considerations above support the conclusion that requiring an agricultural conservation easement over an equal number of acres of agricultural land would not be effective or feasible mitigation in this case, particularly in light of the Project's consistency and compliance with the amount of prime agricultural land permitted to be converted by the General Plan this cycle within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan area, the previously approved conversion of agricultural land in the immediate vicinity of the Project and the need for housing and further economic development opportunities in the Project area. In addition, there is no information available that indicates there are agricultural conservation easements available for purchase.

5.2.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The impacts resulting from the proposed conversion of land zoned as agricultural and identified on the State Important Farmland Map for Riverside County to nonagricultural uses would be a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.3 AIR QUALITY

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) evaluates the potential for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (Project) to impact air quality on a local and regional context. More specifically, this section evaluates impacts associated with the Project that may potentially affect regional and local air quality. Various federal, State, regional, and local programs and regulations related to anticipated air quality impacts are also discussed in this section. Emission calculations and air quality modeling completed for the Project are contained in **Appendix D: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study** of this Draft EIR. Operational air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed on-site power generation system were estimated based on information provided in a technical memorandum describing the proposed linear generator technology, provided in **Appendix D.**

Impacts found to be less than significant are further discussed in **Section 7.4: Effects Not Found to Be Significant** of this Draft EIR.

5.3.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.3.1.1 Federal

Clean Air Act

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is responsible for the implementation of portions of the CAA[1] of 1970, which regulates certain stationary and mobile sources of air emissions and other requirements. Charged with handling global, international, national, and interstate air pollution issues and policies, the USEPA sets national vehicle and stationary source emission standards, oversees the approval of all State Implementation Plans,[2] provides research and guidance for air pollution programs, and sets NAAQS.[3] NAAQS for the six common air pollutants (O_3, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$, NO_2, CO, Pb, and SO_2) are identified in the CAA.

The 1990 amendments to the CAA identify specific emission reduction goals for areas not meeting the NAAQS. These amendments require both a demonstration of reasonable further progress toward attainment and incorporation of additional sanctions for failure to attain or to meet interim

1 United States Code Title 42, Section 7401, et seq. Accessed February 2025. https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/7401.

2 A State Implementation Plan (SIP) is a document prepared by each state describing existing air quality conditions and measures that will be followed to attain and maintain National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

3 The NAAQS were established to protect public health, including that of sensitive individuals; for this reason, the standards continue to change as more medical research becomes available regarding the health effects of the criteria pollutants. The primary NAAQS define the air quality conditions considered necessary, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health.

milestones. The sections of the CAA that are most applicable to the Basin include Title I, Nonattainment Provisions, and Title II, Mobile Source Provisions.

The NAAQS were also amended in July 1997 to include an 8-hour standard for O_3 and to adopt a NAAQS for $PM_{2.5}$. The NAAQS were amended in September 2006 to include an established methodology for calculating $PM_{2.5}$ and to revoke the annual PM_{10} threshold. The CAA includes the following deadlines for meeting the NAAQS within the Basin: (1) 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ by the year 2019, which has not been updated since the adoption of the 2016 AQMP and (2) 8-hour O_3 by the year 2024. In addition, more stringent area requirements now apply including implementation of Best Available Control Measures/Best Available Control Technology (BACM/BACT), a lower major source threshold (from 100 tons per year to 70 tons per year), and an update to the reasonable further progress (RFP) analysis.[4]

5.3.1.2 State

California Clean Air Act

The California CAA, signed into law in 1988, requires all areas of the State to achieve and maintain the California AAQS by the earliest practicable date. CARB, a part of the CalEPA, is responsible for the coordination and administration of both State and federal air pollution control programs within California. In this capacity, CARB conducts research, sets State AAQS, compiles emission inventories, develops suggested control measures, and provides oversight of local programs. CARB establishes emissions standards for motor vehicles sold in California, consumer products, and various types of commercial equipment. It also sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions and the CAAQS currently in effect for each of the criteria pollutants, as well as other pollutants recognized by the State. The CAAQS include more stringent standards than the NAAQS.

California Air Toxics Program

The California Air Toxics Program was established in 1983, when the California Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 1807 to establish a two-step process of risk identification and risk management to address potential health effects from exposure to toxic substances in the air. In the risk identification step, CARB and the OEHHA determine if a substance should be formally identified, or "listed," as a TAC. Since inception of the program, a number of such substances have been listed. In 1993, the California Legislature amended the program to identify the 189 federal hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) as TACs. In 1999, CARB completed the final staff report, Update to the Toxic Air Contaminant List. The list represented the priorities for identifying and regulating substances as

4 South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). *Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan*. March 2017. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/clean-air-plans/air-quality-management-plans/2016-air-quality-management-plan/final-2016-aqmp/final2016aqmp.pdf?sfvrsn=15.

directed by State law. The report described the process followed by CARB in reviewing and revising the TAC List and presented changes to the list.

In the risk management step, CARB reviews emission sources of an identified TAC to determine whether regulatory action is needed to reduce risk. Based on results of that review, CARB has promulgated a number of airborne toxic control measures (ATCMs), both for mobile and stationary sources. In 2004, CARB adopted an ATCM to limit heavy-duty diesel motor vehicle idling in order to reduce public exposure to DPM and other TACs (see below under "California Code of Regulations," "California Motor Vehicle Code," and "CARB *Rule 2449*, General Requirements for In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets" for additional information).

Air Toxics "Hotspots" Program (AB 2588)

AB 2588 was enacted in 1987 and requires stationary sources to report the types and quantities of certain substances routinely released into the air. The Air Toxics program's goals include collecting emission data, identifying facilities having localized impacts, ascertaining health risks, notifying nearby residents of significant risks, and reducing those significant risks to acceptable levels. The Air Toxics program provides direction and criteria to facilities on how to compile and submit air toxic emission data required by the "Hot Spots" Program and requires the local air district to prioritize facilities to determine which facilities must perform a health risk assessment. Facilities identified as high risk are required to reduce their toxic emissions to acceptable levels as determined by the local air district.[5]

California Code of Regulations

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) includes regulations that pertain to air quality emissions. Specifically, 13 Cal. Code of Regs. Section 2485 limits idling of all diesel-fueled commercial vehicles (weighing over 10,000 pounds) during construction to 5 minutes at any location. Additionally, 17 Cal. Code of Regs. Section 93115 requires operation of any stationary, diesel-fueled, compression-ignition engines meet specified fuel and fuel additive requirements and emission standards.

California Motor Vehicle Code

The vehicle programs are a critical component in the SIP for achieving national ambient air quality standards in the South Coast.[6] They are also integral in CARB's Scoping Plan[7] to achieve the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goals that were established through California legislation

5 California Air Resources Board (CARB). "AB 2588 Air Toxics 'Hot Spots' Program." Accessed February 2025. http://www.arb.ca.gov/ab2588/ab2588.htm.

6 CARB. "California State Implementation Plans." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/california-state-implementation-plans.

7 CARB. "AB 32 Climate Change Scoping Plan." Accessed February 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scopingplan.htm.

and Executive Orders. Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling (Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 2485).

The Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling[8] measure includes regulations that pertain to air quality emissions. Specifically, Section 2485 states that the idling of all diesel-fueled commercial vehicles weighing more than 10,000 pounds shall be limited to five minutes at any location. In addition, Section 93115 in Title 17 of the CCR[9] states that operation of any stationary, diesel-fueled, compression-ignition engines shall meet specified fuel and fuel additive requirements and emission standards.

CARB Rule 2449, General Requirements for In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets

CARB *Rule 2449* requires off-road diesel vehicles to limit nonessential idling to no more than five consecutive minutes.[10]

California Building Standards Code

California Energy Code

California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings[11] were established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. Title 24 requires the design of building shells and components to conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.

The California Energy Commission (CEC) adopted the Title 24 standards as well as the 2019 Title 24 standards, which became effective on January 1, 2020, and are applicable to the Project.[12] The 2019 standards will continue to improve upon prior Title 24 standards for new construction of, and additions and alterations to, residential and nonresidential buildings.[13]

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8 California Code of Regulations (CCR). Title 13, Section 2485. *Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Vehicle Idling*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/truck-idling/13ccr2485_09022016.pdf.

9 CCR. Title 17, Section 93115. *Final Regulation Order: Amendments to the Airborne Toxic Control Measure For Stationary Compression Ignition Engines*. Effective May 19, 2011. Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/diesel/documents/finalreg2011.pdf.

10 CCR. Title 17, Section 93115. *Final Regulation Order: Amendments to the Airborne Toxic Control Measure For Stationary Compression Ignition Engines*.

11 California Energy Commission (CEC). "2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards." Accessed February 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/building-energy-efficiency-standards/2019-building-energy-efficiency.

12 CEC. "2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards."

13 CEC. "2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards."

California Green Building Code

The California Green Building Standards Code, which is Part 11 of the CCR, is commonly referred to as the CALGreen Code.[14] The most current version of the CALGreen building code went into effect in January 2020. However, the 2022 CALGreen code went into effect January 1, 2023. The purpose is to establish minimum standards to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, and general stability by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, outdoor lighting standards, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all building and structures within its jurisdiction.

5.3.1.3 Regional and Local

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The Project Site lies within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), and compliance with SCAQMD rules and guidelines is required. SCAQMD is responsible for regulating emissions primarily from stationary sources. SCAQMD, in coordination with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), is also responsible for developing, updating, and implementing the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) for the Basin. An AQMP is a plan prepared and implemented by an air pollution district for a county or region designated as "nonattainment" of the national and/or California AAQS. The term "nonattainment area" is used to refer to an air basin in which one or more AAQS are exceeded.

The SCAQMD adopted the Final 2022 AQMP on December 2, 2022.[15] The 2022 AQMP includes transportation control measures developed by SCAG from the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), as well as the integrated strategies and measures needed to meet the NAAQS. The 2022 AQMP includes strategies to meet the 8-hour ozone NAAQS as well as the latest 24-hour and annual $PM_{2.5}$ standards.

Under the Federal CAA, SCAQMD has adopted federal attainment plans for O_3 and PM_{10}. The SCAQMD reviews projects to ensure that they would not (1) cause or contribute to any new violation of any air quality standard; (2) increase the frequency or severity of any existing violation of any air quality standard; or (3) delay the timely attainment of any air quality standard or any required interim emission reductions or other milestones of any federal attainment plan.

The SCAQMD is responsible for limiting the number of emissions that can be generated throughout the Basin by various stationary, area, and mobile sources. Specific rules and regulations have been adopted by the SCAQMD Governing Board. These rules and regulations limit the emissions that can

14 California Building Standards Commission. *California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code)* (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11). Accessed February 2025. http://www.bsc.ca.gov/Home/CALGreen.aspx.

15 SCAQMD. "Air Quality Management Plan." Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/home/air-quality/clean-air-plans/air-quality-mgt-plan.

be generated by various uses or activities and identify specific pollution reduction measures, which must be implemented in association with various uses and activities. These rules not only regulate the emissions of the federal and State criteria pollutants, but also toxic air contaminants and acutely hazardous materials. The rules are also subject to ongoing refinement by SCAQMD.

Among the SCAQMD rules applicable to the Project are *Rule 212* (Standards for Approving Permits and Issuing Public Notice), *Rule 403* (Fugitive Dust), *Rule 1113* (Architectural Coatings), *Rule 1401* (New Source Review of Toxic Air Contaminants), *Rule 1403* (Asbestos emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities), and Regulation XIII (New Source Review). *Rule 212* states that the Executive Officer has the power to deny a Permit to Construct or Permit to Operate based on standard operating procedures and required notifications. *Rule 403* requires the use of stringent best available control measures to minimize PM_{10} emissions during grading and construction activities. *Rule 1113* requires reductions in the VOC content of coatings, with a substantial reduction in the VOC content limit for specified types of coatings. *Rule 1401* requires limits for maximum individual cancer risk, cancer burden, and noncancer acute and chronic hazard index from new permit units, relocations, or modifications to existing permit units which emit toxic air contaminants. *Rule 1403* requires the prevention of asbestos emissions to the outside air by completing a facility survey. Regulation XIII requires new on-site facility nitrogen dioxide emissions to be minimized through the use of emission control measures (e.g., use of best available control technology for new combustion such as boilers, emergency generators, and water heaters).

SCAQMD Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook

In 1993, SCAQMD prepared its *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* to assist local government agencies and consultants in preparing environmental documents for projects subject to CEQA.[16] However, SCAQMD is in the process of developing its *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook* to replace the *CEQA Handbook*. The *CEQA Handbook* and the *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook* describe the criteria that SCAQMD uses when reviewing and commenting on the adequacy of environmental documents. The *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook* provides the most up-to-date recommended thresholds of significance in order to determine if a project will have a significant adverse environmental impact. Other important subjects covered in the *CEQA Handbook* and the *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook* include methodologies for estimating project emissions and mitigation measures that can be implemented to avoid or reduce air quality impacts. Although the Governing Board of SCAQMD has adopted the *CEQA Handbook* and is in the process of developing the *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook*, SCAQMD does not, nor does it intend to, supersede a local jurisdiction's CEQA procedures.[17]

16 SCAQMD. *Air Quality Analysis Handbook*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook.

17 SCAQMD. "Frequently Asked CEQA Questions." Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/frequently-asked-questions.

While the *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook* is being developed, supplemental information has been adopted by SCAQMD. These include revisions to the air quality significance thresholds and a procedure referred to as "localized significance thresholds," which has been added as a significance threshold under the Local Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology.[18] The applicable portions of the *CEQA Handbook*, the *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook*, and other revised methodologies were used in preparing the air quality analysis in this Section, as discussed and referenced later in this Section.

SCAQMD Rule 403.1 (Supplemental Fugitive Dust Control for Construction Activities

Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust) establishes requirements to minimize fugitive dust emissions generated from activities such as grading, excavation, and material handling. The rule requires the implementation of best available control measures (BACMs), which may include stabilizing disturbed surfaces, applying water or chemical suppressants, limiting vehicle speeds on unpaved roads, and covering haul trucks.

Rule 403.1 (Additional Requirements for Large Operations) applies to large-scale earthmoving activities and includes more stringent control requirements beyond those required under *Rule 403*. These requirements may include preparation of a dust control plan, enhanced monitoring, and additional stabilization measures to reduce particulate matter emissions.

Coachella Valley PM_{10} State Implementation Plan

The 2003 PM_{10} Coachella Valley State Implementation Plan (CVSIP) was jointly developed by the SCAQMD, Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) and its member cities and was approved by the USEPA. The 2003 PM_{10} CVSIP updated the 1990 plan, which was drafted as a requirement of the federal Clean Air Act to demonstrate expeditious attainment of PM_{10} standards.[19] On April 18, 2003, the USEPA approved the updated CVSIP.

Historically, PM_{10} levels in the Coachella Valley are elevated due to fugitive dust emission from grading and construction activities, agricultural practices, and strong wind. The finer materials, including sand and silt, can be picked up and transported by the wind and are referred to as "blowsand." PM_{10} particles associated with blowsand are of two types: (1) natural PM_{10} produced by direct particle erosion and fragmentation, and (2) secondary PM_{10} whereby sand deposited on roadways is further pulverized by motor vehicles and then re-suspended in the air by those vehicles.

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18 SCAQMD. *Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology*. June 2003; revised July 2008. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/localized-significance-thresholds/final-lst-methodology-document.pdf.

19 SCAQMD. *Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM_{10} State Implementation Plan*. August 1, 2003. Accessed February 2025. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/clean-air-plans/pm10-plans/final-2003-coachella-valley-pm10-state-implementation-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=2.

The Project area is located in a PM_{10} nonattainment area for the State and federal attainment PM_{10} standards.

In addition to *Rule 403*, fugitive dust sources in the Coachella Valley are subject to *Rule 403.1* (Supplemental Fugitive Dust Control Requirements for Coachella Valley Sources), a supplemental rule that applies specifically to earthmoving activities within the Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin. Under *Rule 403.1*, any operator conducting activity with a disturbed surface area exceeding 5,000 square feet must prepare and obtain SCAQMD approval of a fugitive dust control plan prior to initiating earthmoving activities. Required elements of an approved plan may include, but are not limited to, restricting traffic speeds on unpaved surfaces to 15 miles per hour or less, stabilizing or covering inactive graded soils and stockpiles, limiting drop heights from loading equipment, and covering haul truck loads.

The Project is also subject to Riverside County Dust Control Ordinance 742, which requires County approval of a dust control plan prior to issuance of grading permits for activities disturbing more than 5,000 square feet within the Coachella Valley. Compliance with both *Rule 403.1* and Ordinance 742 is required independent of, and in addition to, compliance with *Rule 403*.

The Coachella Valley was eligible for redesignation as attainment in 2009–2010 due to the annual average PM_{10} concentrations meeting the revoked federal standard. On February 25, 2010, the California Air Resources Board approved the Coachella Valley PM_{10} Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan from serious non-attainment to attainment for the PM_{10} National Ambient Air Quality Standard under Federal CAA Section 107. However, the Coachella Valley began exceeding thresholds for PM_{10} shortly after the redesignation request and continues to exceed thresholds today. The Coachella Valley continues to be in non-attainment for PM_{10}.

SCAQMD employs measures to reduce particulate matter in the basin, sets forth new measures that could further reduce particulate matter, and lists those new measures that need further evaluation prior to implementation. In addition, applicable State code and AQMD Rules, including *Rule 403* (Fugitive Dust), enforce fugitive dust compliance for all activities within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB).

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

SCAG is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial Counties, and serves as a forum for the discussion of regional issues related to transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. As the federally designated MPO for the Southern California region, SCAG is mandated by the federal government to research and develop plans for transportation, hazardous waste management, and

air quality. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 40460(b),[20] SCAG has the responsibility for preparing and approving the portions of the AQMP relating to regional demographic projections and integrated regional land use, housing, employment, and transportation programs, measures, and strategies. SCAG is also responsible under the CAA for determining conformity of transportation projects, plans, and programs with applicable air quality plans.

With regard to air quality planning, SCAG has prepared and adopted the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS,[21] which includes a SCS that addresses regional development and growth forecasts. The SCAG 2020–2045 RTP/SCS is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals, with a specific goal of achieving an 8 percent reduction in passenger vehicle GHG emissions on a per capita basis by 2020, 19 percent reduction by 2035, and 21 percent reduction by 2040 compared to the 2005 level. Although the RTP/SCS is not technically an air quality plan, consistency with the RTP/SCS has air quality implications, including the reduction of VMT which reduces air quality emissions.

Although SCAG recently adopted the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS provides the underlying growth assumptions for the 2022 AQMP, which is the currently applicable AQMP for the region.

County of Riverside General Plan

The County of Riverside General Plan Air Quality Element[22] sets forth policies promoting pollution control, as well as land use and transportation measures to reduce pollutant emissions. The following policies from the Air Quality Element are relevant to the proposed Project:

AQ 3.2 Seek new cooperative relationships between employers and employees to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

AQ 4.1 Require the use of all feasible building materials/methods which reduce emissions.

AQ 4.2 Require the use of all feasible efficient heating equipment and other appliances, such as water heaters, swimming pool heaters, cooking equipment, refrigerators, furnaces, and boiler units.

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20 California Health and Safety Code. Division 26, Air Resources. Part 3, Air Pollution Control Districts. Chapter 5.5, South Coast Air Quality Management District. Article 5, Plan, Section 40460(b). Accessed February 2025. https://law.justia.com/codes/california/2014/code-hsc/division-26/part-3/chapter-5.5.

21 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). *Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategies*. Certified May 7, 2020. Accessed February 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/2020-peir.

22 County of Riverside. *Air Quality Element*. Revised July 17, 2018. In *County of Riverside General Plan*. Accessed February 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-genplan-general-plan-2018-elements-Ch09-AQE-071718.pdf.

AQ 4.4 Require residential building construction to comply with energy use guidelines detailed in Part 6 (California Energy Code) and/or Part 11 (California Green Building Standards Code) of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

AQ 4.6 Require stationary air pollution sources to comply with applicable air district rules and control measures.

AQ 4.7 To the greatest extent possible, require every project to mitigate any of its anticipated emissions which exceed allowable emissions as established by the SCAQMD, MDAQMD, SCAB, the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board.

AQ 4.9 Require compliance with SCAQMD *Rules 403* and *403.1* and support appropriate future measures to reduce fugitive dust emanating from construction sites.

AQ 5.1 Utilize source reduction, recycling, and other appropriate measures to reduce the amount of solid waste disposed of in landfills.

5.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.3.2.1 Air Quality Background

The Project Site lies within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), which spans the Coachella Valley portion of the County of Riverside and the entire County of Imperial. Air quality management of the Riverside County portion of the SSAB is overseen by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The Riverside County portion of the SSAB is bound by the San Jacinto Mountains to the west and spans eastward up to the Palo Verde Valley, which lies along the California-Arizona border. The SSAB, and the adjacent Mojave Desert Air Basin, were previously included in a single large air basin known as the Southeast Desert Air Basin. However, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has subdivided this larger basin into the two separate air basins that are in place today.

The SSAB is classified as having a desert climate, characterized by low precipitation, hot summers, mild winters, low humidity, and strong temperature inversions. The annual average temperature varies little throughout the SSAB, ranging from the low 40s to the low 100s, measured in degrees Fahrenheit (°F). The Western Regional Climate Center (WRCC) maintains historical climate information for the western United States (US), including the City of Indio which contains the closest meteorological monitoring station to the Project Site (Station ID No. 044259). According to this Station, the annual maximum temperature in the local vicinity is 106.9°F in July, while the annual

minimum temperature reported is 39.2°F in January. The average annual rainfall for the Project area is about 3.3 inches.[23]

Air pollutant emissions within the SSAB are generated by stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources can be divided into two major subcategories: point sources and area sources. Point sources occur at an identified location and are usually associated with manufacturing and industry. Examples of point sources are boilers or combustion equipment that produce electricity or generate heat. Area sources are widely distributed and produce many small emissions. Examples of area sources include residential and commercial water heaters, painting operations, gas-powered lawn mowers, agricultural fields, landfills, and consumer products, such as barbecue lighter fluid and hair spray. Mobile sources are emissions from motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions, and are classified as either on-road or off-road. On-road sources may be legally operated on roadways and highways. Off-road sources include aircrafts, ships, freight and commuter rail, and self-propelled construction equipment. e.g., earthmovers, graders, and excavators. Air pollutants can also be generated by the natural environment, such as when fine dust particles are pulled off the ground surface and suspended in the air during high winds.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) designate air basins where air pollution levels exceed the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) or National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) as "nonattainment" areas. These pollutants are referred to as "criteria air pollutants" as a result of the specific standards, or criteria, which have been adopted for them. The federal and State standards have been set at levels considered safe to protect public health, including the health of "sensitive" populations, such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly with a margin of safety; and to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility and damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. If standards are met, the area is designated as an "attainment" area. If there is inadequate or inconclusive data to make a definitive attainment designation, an area is considered "unclassified." Federal nonattainment areas are further designated as marginal, moderate, serious, severe, or extreme as a function of deviation from standards. Transportation conformity for nonattainment and maintenance areas is required under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) to ensure federally supported highway and transit projects conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The USEPA approved California's SIP revisions for attainment of the 1997 8-hour ozone (O_3) National AAQS for the Basin in October 2019.

Ambient air pollution can cause public health concerns and can contribute to increases in respiratory illness and death rates. Air pollution can affect the health of both adults and children. The

23 Western Regional Climate Center. "Indio Fire Stn, California (044259), Period of Record Monthly Climate Summary." Table. Accessed February 2025. https://wrcc.dri.edu/cgi-bin/cliMAIN.pl?ca4259.

adverse health effects associated with air pollution are diverse and include cardiovascular effects, premature mortality, respiratory effects, cancer, reproductive effects, neurological effects, and other health outcomes.[24]

Criteria Air Pollutants and Health Effects

Criteria air pollutants are defined as the six principal pollutants for which NAAQS and CAAQS criteria and standards have been promulgated. The criteria air pollutants most relevant to current air quality planning and regulation in the Air Basin are ozone (O_3) carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), respirable particulate matter (PM_{10}), fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and lead (Pb). In addition, volatile organic compounds (VOC) and toxic air contaminants (TACs) are a concern in the Air Basin but are not classified under AAQS.

The State and federal AAQS and their attainment status in the Basin for each of the criteria pollutants are summarized below in **Table 5.3-1: Ambient Air Quality Standards and Attainment Status.** Under the federal standards, the Basin is currently designated as nonattainment for the O_3, Pb, and $PM_{2.5}$ thresholds. Under the State standards the Basin is currently designated as nonattainment for the O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ thresholds.

TABLE 5.3-1: AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS AND ATTAINMENT STATUS

Pollutant	Averaging Period	California		Federal	
		Standards	Attainment Status	Standards	Attainment Status
Ozone (O_3)	1-hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m^3)	Nonattainment	—	Nonattainment
	8-hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m^3)		0.070 ppm (137 µg/m^3)	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Annual Arithmetic mean	0.03 ppm (57 µg/m^3)	Attainment	0.053 ppm (100 µg/m^3)	Unclassified/ Attainment
	1-hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m^3)		0.100 ppm (188 µg/m^3)	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8 hours	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	Attainment	9 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	Unclassified/ Attainment
	1 hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m^3)		35 ppm (40 mg/m^3)	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	1 hour	0.25 ppm	Attainment	0.075 ppm	Attainment
	24 hours	0.04 ppm		—	
Lead (Pb)	30-day average	1.5 µg/m^3	Attainment	—	Nonattainment

24 SCAQMD. *Chapter 2, Air Quality and Health Effects.* In *Final 2022 Air Quality Management Plan*. Adopted December 2, 2022. Accessed February 2025. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/clean-air-plans/air-quality-management-plans/2022-air-quality-management-plan/final-2022-aqmp/final-2022-aqmp.pdf?sfvrsn=edcebd61_16.

TABLE 5.3-1: AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS AND ATTAINMENT STATUS

Pollutant	Averaging Period	California		Federal	
		Standards	Attainment Status	Standards	Attainment Status
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	Rolling 3-month average	—		0.15 µg/m^3	
	24 hours	50 µg/m^3	Nonattainment	150 µg/m^3	Nonattainment
	Annual arithmetic mean	20 µg/m^3		—	
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	24 hours	—	Attainment	35 µg/m^3	Unclassified/ Attainment
	Annual arithmetic mean	12 µg/m^3		9 µg/m^3	

Note: pm = parts per million; µg = micrometer; m3 = cubic meter; mg = milligram.

Source: California Air Resources Board (CARB). "Area Designations Maps/State and National." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/maps-state-and-federal-area-designations.

Elevated concentrations of certain air pollutants in the atmosphere have been recognized to cause notable health problems and consequential damage to the environment either directly or in reaction with other pollutants. In the United States, such pollutants have been identified and are regulated as part of the overall endeavor to prevent further deterioration and facilitate improvement in air quality. The following pollutants are regulated by the USEPA and are subject to emissions control requirements adopted by federal, State, and local regulatory agencies. These pollutants are referred to as "criteria air pollutants" as a result of the specific standards, or criteria, which have been adopted pertaining to them.

The USEPA established the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) to "provide public health protection, including protecting the health of 'sensitive' populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly," allowing "an adequate margin of safety." California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) were "established to protect the health of the most sensitive groups in our communities" and "defines the maximum amount of a pollutant averaged over a specified period of time that can be present in outdoor air without any harmful effects on people or the environment."[25] The characteristics of each criteria pollutant and their health effects are briefly described below.

Ozone (O_3)

O_3 is a highly reactive and unstable gas that is formed when reactive organic gases (ROGs), sometimes referred to as VOCs, and NO_X, byproducts of internal combustion engine exhaust, undergo slow photochemical reactions in the presence of sunlight. O_3 concentrations are generally

25 CARB. "California Ambient Air Quality Standards." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/california-ambient-air-quality-standards.

highest during the summer months when direct sunlight, light wind, and warm temperature conditions are favorable to the formation of this pollutant.

According to USEPA, O_3 can cause the muscles in the airways to constrict potentially leading to wheezing and shortness of breath. O_3 can make it more difficult to breathe deeply and vigorously; cause shortness of breath and pain when taking a deep breath; cause coughing and sore or scratchy throat; inflame and damage the airways; aggravate lung diseases such as asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis; increase the frequency of asthma attacks; make the lungs more susceptible to infection; continue to damage the lungs even when the symptoms have disappeared; and cause chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.[26]

Long-term exposure to O_3 is linked to aggravation of asthma and is likely to be one of many causes of asthma development. Long-term exposures to higher concentrations of O_3 may also be linked to permanent lung damage, such as abnormal lung development in children.[27] According to CARB, inhalation of ozone causes inflammation and irritation of the tissues lining human airways, causing and worsening a variety of symptoms, and exposure to O_3 can reduce the volume of air that the lungs breathe in and cause shortness of breath.[28]

USEPA states that people most at risk from breathing air containing O_3 include people with asthma, children, older adults, and people who are active outdoors, especially outdoor workers.[29] Children are at greatest risk from exposure to O_3 because their lungs are still developing and they are more likely to be active outdoors when O_3 levels are high, which increases their exposure.[30] According to CARB, studies show that children are no more or less likely to suffer harmful effects than adults; however, children and teens may be more susceptible to O_3 and other pollutants because they spend nearly twice as much time outdoors and engaged in vigorous activities compared to adults.[31] Children breathe more rapidly than adults and inhale more pollution per pound of their body weight than adults and are less likely than adults to notice their own symptoms and avoid harmful exposures. Further research may be able to better distinguish between health effects in children and adults.

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

CO is a colorless, odorless gas produced by the incomplete combustion of carbon-containing fuels, such as gasoline or wood. CO concentrations tend to be the highest during the winter morning, when

26 United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). "Health Effects of Ozone Pollution." Accessed February 2025. https://www.epa.gov/ground-level-ozone-pollution/health-effects-ozone-pollution.

27 USEPA. "Health Effects of Ozone Pollution."

28 USEPA. "Health Effects of Ozone Pollution."

29 USEPA. "Health Effects of Ozone Pollution."

30 USEPA. "Health Effects of Ozone Pollution."

31 USEPA. "Health Effects of Ozone Pollution."

little to no wind and surface-based inversions trap the pollutant at ground levels. Because CO is emitted directly from internal combustion engines, unlike ozone, motor vehicles operating at slow speeds are the primary source of CO in the SSAB. The highest ambient CO concentrations are generally found near congested transportation corridors and intersections.

According to the USEPA, breathing air with a high concentration of CO reduces the amount of oxygen that can be transported in the blood stream to critical organs like the heart and brain and at very high levels, which are possible indoors or in other enclosed environments, CO can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and death.[32] Very high levels of CO are not likely to occur outdoors; however, when CO levels are elevated outdoors, they can be of particular concern for people with some types of heart disease since these people already have a reduced ability for getting oxygenated blood to their hearts and are especially vulnerable to the effects of CO when exercising or under increased stress. In these situations, short-term exposure to elevated CO may result in reduced oxygen to the heart accompanied by chest pain also known as angina.

According to CARB, the most common effects of CO exposure are fatigue, headaches, confusion, and dizziness due to inadequate oxygen delivery to the brain.[33] For people with cardiovascular disease, short-term CO exposure can further reduce their body's already compromised ability to respond to the increased oxygen demands of exercise, exertion, or stress; inadequate oxygen delivery to the heart muscle leads to chest pain and decreased exercise tolerance. Unborn babies, infants, elderly people, and people with anemia or with a history of heart or respiratory disease are most likely to experience health effects with exposure to elevated levels of CO.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) and Nitrogen Oxides (NOX)

NO_2 is a reddish-brown, highly reactive gas that is formed in the ambient air through the oxidation of nitric oxide (NO), similar to O_3. NO_2 is also a byproduct of fuel combustion. NO and NO_2 are collectively referred to as NO_X and are major contributors to O_3 formation. NO_2 also contributes to the formation of PM_{10}. High concentrations of NO_2 can cause breathing difficulties and there is some indication of a relationship between NO_2 and chronic pulmonary fibrosis. Some increase of bronchitis in children (2-3 years old) has been observed at concentrations below 0.3 parts per million (ppm).

According to the USEPA, short-term exposures to NO_2 can potentially aggravate respiratory diseases, particularly asthma, leading to respiratory symptoms (such as coughing, wheezing or difficulty breathing), hospital admissions and visits to emergency rooms. Longer exposures to elevated concentrations of NO_2 may contribute to the development of asthma and potentially increase

32 USEPA. "Basic Information about Carbon Monoxide (CO) Outdoor Air Pollution." https://www.epa.gov/co-pollution/basic-information-about-carbon-monoxide-co-outdoor-air-pollution. Accessed February 2025.

33 CARB. "CO & Health." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/carbon-monoxide-and-health.

susceptibility to respiratory infections. According to CARB, controlled human exposure studies show that NO_2 exposure can intensify responses to allergens in allergic asthmatics.[34]

In addition, a number of epidemiological studies have demonstrated associations between NO_2 exposure and premature death, cardiopulmonary effects, decreased lung function growth in children, respiratory symptoms, emergency room visits for asthma, and intensified allergic responses.[35] Infants and children are particularly at risk from exposure to NO_2 because they have disproportionately higher exposure to NO_2 than adults due to their greater breathing rate for their body weight and their typically greater outdoor exposure duration while in adults, the greatest risk is to people who have chronic respiratory diseases, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

CARB states that much of the information on distribution in air, human exposure and dose, and health effects is specifically for NO_2 and there is only limited information for NO and NO_X, as well as large uncertainty in relating health effects to NO or NO_X exposure.[36]

Particulate Matter (PM_{10}) and Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)

Particulate Matter (PM) consists of small liquid and solid particles floating in the air, including smoke, soot, dust, salts, acids, and metals and can form when gases emitted from industries and motor vehicles undergo chemical reactions in the atmosphere. Sources of PM_{10} emissions include dust from construction sites, landfills and agriculture, wildfires and brush/waste burning, industrial sources, and wind-blown dust from open lands.[37] Sources of $PM_{2.5}$ emissions include combustion of gasoline, oil, diesel fuel, or wood. PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ may be either directly emitted from sources (primary particles) or formed in the atmosphere through chemical reactions of gases (secondary particles) such as SO_2, NO_X, and certain organic compounds.

A consistent correlation between elevated ambient respirable and fine particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) levels and an increase in mortality rates, respiratory infections, number and severity of asthma attacks, and the number of hospital admissions has been observed in different parts of the United States and various areas around the world. In recent years, some studies have reported an association between long-term exposure to air pollution dominated by fine particles and increased mortality, reduction in life span, and an increased mortality from lung cancer.

According to CARB, both PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ can be inhaled, with some depositing throughout the airways; PM_{10} is more likely to deposit on the surfaces of the larger airways of the upper region of the

34 CARB. "Nitrogen Dioxide & Health." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/nitrogen-dioxide-and-health.

35 CARB. "Nitrogen Dioxide & Health."

36 CARB. "Nitrogen Dioxide & Health."

37 CARB. "Inhalable Particulate Matter and Health ($PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10})." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/nitrogen-dioxide-and-health.

lung, while $PM_{2.5}$ is more likely to travel into and deposit on the surface of the deeper parts of the lung, which can induce tissue damage, and lung inflammation.[38] Short-term (up to 24 hours duration) exposure to PM_{10} has been associated primarily with worsening of respiratory diseases, including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, leading to hospitalization and emergency department visits. The effects of long-term (months or years) exposure to PM_{10} are less clear, although studies suggest a link between long-term PM_{10} exposure and respiratory mortality. The International Agency for Research on Cancer published a review in 2015 that concluded that particulate matter in outdoor air pollution causes lung cancer.

Short-term exposure to $PM_{2.5}$ has been associated with premature mortality, increased hospital admissions for heart or lung causes, acute and chronic bronchitis, asthma attacks, emergency room visits, respiratory symptoms, and restricted activity days. Long-term exposure to $PM_{2.5}$ has been linked to premature death, particularly in people who have chronic heart or lung diseases, and reduced lung function growth in children.[39] According to CARB, populations most likely to experience adverse health effects with exposure to PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ include older adults with chronic heart or lung disease, children, and asthmatics. Children and infants are more susceptible to harm from inhaling pollutants such as PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ compared to healthy adults because they inhale more air per pound of body weight than do adults, spend more time outdoors, and have developing immune systems.

Sulfur Dioxide (SO2) and Sulfur Oxides (SOX)

Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2) is a colorless, extremely irritating gas or liquid. It enters the atmosphere as a pollutant mainly as a result of burning high sulfur-content fuel oils and coal, as well as from chemical processes occurring at chemical plants and refineries. When SO_2 oxidizes in the atmosphere, it forms sulfates (SO_4). Collectively, these pollutants are referred to as sulfur oxides (SO_X).

According to the USEPA, short-term exposures to SO_2 can harm the human respiratory system and make breathing difficult.[40] According to CARB, health effects at levels near the State one-hour standard are those of asthma exacerbation, including bronchoconstriction accompanied by symptoms of respiratory irritation such as wheezing, shortness of breath and chest tightness, especially during exercise or physical activity and exposure at elevated levels of SO_2 (above 1 parts per million [ppm]) results in increased incidence of pulmonary symptoms and disease, decreased pulmonary function, and increased risk of mortality.[41] Children, the elderly, and those with asthma,

38 CARB. "Inhalable Particulate Matter and Health ($PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10})."

39 CARB. "Inhalable Particulate Matter and Health ($PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10})."

40 USEPA. "Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2) Pollution." Accessed February 2025. https://www.epa.gov/so2-pollution/sulfur-dioxide-basics.

41 CARB. "Sulfur Dioxide & Health." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/sulfur-dioxide-and-health.

cardiovascular disease, or chronic lung disease (such as bronchitis or emphysema) are most likely to experience the adverse effects of SO_2.[42,43]

Lead (Pb)

Lead (Pb) occurs in the atmosphere as particulate matter and is also considered a TAC. The combustion of leaded gasoline is the primary source of airborne lead in the SSAB. The use of leaded gasoline is no longer permitted for on-road motor vehicles, so the majority of such combustion emissions are associated with off-road vehicles. However, because leaded gasoline was emitted in large amounts from vehicles when leaded gasoline was used for on-road motor vehicles, Pb is present in many urban soils and can be resuspended in the air. Other sources of Pb include the manufacturing and recycling of batteries, paint, ink, ceramics, ammunition, and the use of secondary Pb smelters.

Pb can adversely affect the nervous system, kidney function, immune system, reproductive and developmental systems, and the cardiovascular system, and affects the oxygen carrying capacity of blood. The Pb effects most commonly encountered in current populations are neurological effects in children, such as behavioral problems and reduced intelligence, anemia, and liver or kidney damage.[44] Excessive Pb exposure in adults can cause reproductive problems in men and women, high blood pressure, kidney disease, digestive problems, nerve disorders, memory and concentration problems, and muscle and joint pain.

While the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook contains numerical indicators of significance for Pb, project construction and operation would not include sources of Pb emissions and would not exceed the numerical indicators for Pb.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)

VOCs include any compound of carbon, excluding CO, CO_2, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate, which participates in atmospheric photochemical reactions and thus, acting as a precursor to ozone formation. VOC emissions often result from the evaporation of solvents in architectural coatings. Reactive organic gases are any reactive compounds of carbon, excluding methane, CO, CO_2 carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, ammonium carbonate,

42 CARB. “Sulfur Dioxide & Health.”

43 USEPA. “Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2) Pollution.”

44 CARB. “Lead & Health.” https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/lead-and-health. Accessed February 2025.

and other exempt compounds. ROG emissions are generated from the exhaust of mobile sources.[45] Both VOCs and ROGs are precursors to ozone and the terms can be used interchangeably.[46]

Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs)

Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) or hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) are defined by the USEPA as those contaminants that are known or suspected to cause serious health problems, but do not have a corresponding ambient air quality standard. For consistency within this document, they will be referred to as TACs. TACs are also defined as an air pollutant that may increase a person's risk of developing cancer and/or other serious health effects. TACs are emitted by a variety of industrial processes such as petroleum refining, electric utility and chrome plating operations, commercial operations such as gasoline stations and dry cleaners, and motor vehicle exhaust. TACs may exist as PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ or as vapors (gases). TACs include metals, other particles, gases absorbed by particles, and certain vapors from fuels and other sources. The emission of a TAC does not automatically create a health hazard. Other factors, such as the amount of the TAC, its toxicity, how it is released into the air, the weather, and the terrain, all influence whether the emission could be hazardous to human health. Emissions of TACs into the air can be damaging to human health and to the environment. Human exposure to TACs at sufficient concentrations and durations can result in cancer, poisoning, and rapid onset of sickness, such as nausea or difficulty in breathing. Other less measurable effects include immunological, neurological, reproductive, developmental, and respiratory problems. TACs deposited onto soil or into lakes and streams affect ecological systems and eventually human health through consumption of contaminated food. The carcinogenic potential of TACs is a particular public health concern because many scientists currently believe that there is no "safe" level of exposure to carcinogens. Any exposure to a carcinogen poses some risk of contracting cancer.[47]

The public's exposure to TACs is a significant public health issue in California. The Air Toxics "Hotspots" Information and Assessment Act is a State law requiring facilities to report emissions of TACs to air districts.[48] The program is designated to quantify the amounts of potential TACs released, the location of the release, the concentrations to which the public is exposed, and the resulting health risks. The Air Toxics "Hotspots" Program (AB 2588) identified over 200 TACs, including the 188 TACs identified in the CAA.[49]

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45 SCAQMD. Appendix A: Calculation Details for CalEEMod. May 2021. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/caleemod/user-guide-2021/appendix-a2020-4-0.pdf?sfvrsn=6.

46 Both VOC and ROGs are precursors to ozone so they are summed in the CalEEMod report under the header ROG. For the purposes of comparing the ROG value to a VOC significance threshold, the terms can be used interchangeably.

47 USEPA. "Hazardous Air Pollutants." Accessed February 2025. https://www.epa.gov/haps.

48 CARB. "General Information About 'Hot Spots'." Accessed February 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/ab2588/general.htm.

49 CARB. "AB 25188 Air Toxics 'Hot Spots' Program." Accessed February 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/ab2588/ab2588.htm.

The USEPA has assessed this expansive list and identified 21 TACs as Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs).[50] MSATs are compounds emitted from highway vehicles and nonroad equipment. Some toxic compounds are present in fuel and are emitted to the air when the fuel evaporates or passes through the engine unburned. Other toxics are emitted from the incomplete combustion of fuels or as secondary combustion products. Metal air toxics also result from engine wear or from impurities in oil or gasoline. USEPA also extracted a subset of these 21 MSAT compounds that it now labels as the nine priority MSATs: 1,3-butadiene, acetaldehyde, acrolein, benzene, diesel particulate matter (DPM)/diesel exhaust organic gases, ethylbenzene, naphthalene, and polycyclic organic matter (POM). While these nine MSATs are considered the priority transportation toxics, USEPA stresses that the lists are subject to change and may be adjusted in future rules.[51]

Diesel Exhaust

According to the California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality, the majority of the estimated health risks from TACs can be attributed to relatively few compounds, the most important being particulate matter from the exhaust of diesel-fueled engines (i.e., Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM) differs from other TACs in that it is not a single substance, but rather a complex mixture of hundreds of substances).

Diesel exhaust is composed of two phases, gas and particle, and both phases contribute to the health risk. The gas phase is composed of many of the urban TACs, such as acetaldehyde, acrolein, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, formaldehyde, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. The particle phase is also composed of many different types of particles by size or composition. Fine and ultra-fine diesel particulates are of the greatest health concern and may be composed of elemental carbon with adsorbed compounds such as organic compounds, sulfate, nitrate, metals, and other trace elements. Diesel exhaust is emitted from a broad range of diesel engines; on-road diesel engines of trucks, buses and cars and off-road diesel engines that include locomotives, marine vessels and heavy-duty equipment. Although DPM is emitted by diesel-fueled internal combustion engines, the composition of the emissions varies depending on engine type, operating conditions, fuel composition, lubricating oil, and whether an emission control system is present.

The most common exposure to DPM is breathing air that contains diesel exhaust. The fine and ultra-fine particles are respirable (similar to $PM_{2.5}$), which means that they can avoid many of the human respiratory defense mechanisms and enter deeply into the lungs. Exposure to DPM comes from both

50 USEPA. *Air Toxics Risk Assessment Reference Library, Volume 1 Technical Resource Manual*. April 2004.

51 US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. *Updated Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents*. January 2023. Accessed February 2025. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environMent/air_quality/air_toxics/policy_and_guidance/msat/.

on-road and off-road engine exhaust that is either directly emitted from the engines or lingering in the atmosphere.

Diesel exhaust causes health effects from long-term chronic exposures. The type and severity of health effects depends upon several factors including the amount of chemical exposure and the duration of exposure. Individuals also react differently to different levels of exposure. There is limited information on exposure to only DPM, but there is enough evidence to indicate that inhalation exposure to diesel exhaust causes chronic health effects as well as having cancer-causing potential.

DPM also contributes noncancer health effects in the same manner as $PM_{2.5}$ exposure. Several studies suggest that exposure to DPM may also facilitate development of new allergies. Those most vulnerable to noncancer health effects are children whose lungs are still developing and the elderly who often have chronic health problems.[52]

Gasoline Exhaust

Similar to diesel exhaust, gasoline is composed of two phases, gas and particle, and both phases contribute to the health risk. The gas phase is composed of the same TACs, such as acetaldehyde, acrolein, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, formaldehyde, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. The particle phase is also composed of many different types of particles by size or composition. Fine and ultra-fine diesel particulates are of the greatest health concern and may be composed of elemental carbon with adsorbed compounds such as organic compounds, sulfate, nitrate, metals, and other trace elements. Gasoline exhaust is primarily emitted from light-duty passenger vehicles. The compounds in the gas and particles phases can cause health effects from short- and long-term exposures similar to those described under the TAC and particulate matter discussions above.

Visibility Reducing Particles

Visibility-reducing particles are any particles in the atmosphere that obstruct the range of visibility by creating haze.[53] These particles vary in shape, size, and chemical composition, and come from a variety of natural and manmade sources including windblown metals, soil, dust, salt, and soot. Other haze-causing particles are formed in the air from gaseous pollutants (e.g., sulfates, nitrates, organic carbon particles) which are the major constituents of fine PM, such as $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}, and are caused from the combustion of fuel. CARB's standard for visibility-reducing particles is not based on health effects, but rather on welfare effects, such as reduced visibility and damage to materials, plants, forests, and ecosystems. The health impacts associated with $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} are discussed above under Particulate Matter.

52 CARB. "Overview: Diesel Exhaust & Health." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/overview-diesel-exhaust-and-health.

53 CARB. "Visibility Reducing Particles and Health." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/vinyl-chloride-and-health.

5.3.2.2 Regional

The Southern California region lies in the semi-permanent high-pressure zone of the eastern Pacific. As a result, the climate is mild, tempered by cool sea breezes. The usually mild climatological pattern is interrupted infrequently by periods of extremely hot weather, winter storms, or Santa Ana winds. The extent and severity of air pollution in the SSAB is a function of the area's natural physical characteristics (weather and topography), as well as man-made influences (development patterns and lifestyle). Factors such as wind, sunlight, temperature, humidity, rainfall, and topography affect the accumulation and dispersion of pollutants throughout the SSAB.

California Health and Safety Code Section 39607(e) requires CARB to establish and periodically review area designation criteria. **Table 5.3-2: Salton Sea Air Basin Attainment Status** provides a summary of the attainment status of the Riverside County portion of the SSAB with respect to the federal and State standards.

As shown, the SSAB is currently designated as being in nonattainment at the federal level for O_3 and PM_{10}; and at the State level for O_3 and PM_{10}. Emissions of O_3, NO_X, VOC, and CO have been decreasing in the SSAB since 1975 and are projected to continue to decrease through 2031.[54] These decreases result primarily from motor vehicle controls and reductions in evaporative emissions. Although vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the SSAB continue to increase, emissions are decreasing because of the mandated controls on motor vehicles and the replacement of older polluting vehicles with lower-emitting vehicles.

TABLE 5.3-2: SALTON SEA AIR BASIN ATTAINMENT STATUS

Pollutant	State Status	National Status
Ozone (O_3)	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Carbon monoxide (CO)	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Sulfur dioxide (SO_2)	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Respirable particulate matter (PM_{10})	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment

Source: California Air Resources Board (CARB). "Area Designation Maps / State and National." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/maps-state-and-federal-area-designations.

54 SCAQMD. *Final 2016 Air Quality Management Plan*. March 2017. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/clean-air-plans/air-quality-management-plans/2016-air-quality-management-plan/final-2016-aqmp/final2016aqmp.pdf?sfvrsn=11.

In 1984, as a result of public concern for exposure to airborne carcinogens, CARB adopted regulations to reduce the amount of TAC emissions resulting from mobile and area sources, such as cars, trucks, stationary products, and consumer products. According to the *Ambient and Emission Trends of Toxic Air Contaminants in California* journal article[55] which was prepared for CARB, results show that between 1990-2012, ambient concentration and emission trends for the seven TACs responsible for most of the known cancer risk associated with airborne exposure in California have declined significantly. The decline in ambient concentration and emission trends of these TACs are a result of various regulations CARB has implemented to address cancer risk.

SCAQMD has prepared an Air Basin-wide air toxics study, the Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study in the South Coast Air Basin (MATES-V).[56] MATES V field measurements were conducted at ten fixed sites (the same sites selected for MATES III and IV) to assess trends in air toxics levels. MATES V also included measurements of ultrafine particles (UFP) and black carbon (BC) concentrations, which can be compared to the UFP levels measured in MATES IV. In addition to new measurements and updated modeling results, several key updates were implemented in MATES V. First, MATES V estimates cancer risks by taking into account multiple exposure pathways, which includes inhalation and non-inhalation pathways. This approach is consistent with how cancer risks are estimated in SCAQMD's programs such as permitting, Air Toxics Hot Spots (AB 2588), and CEQA. Previous MATES studies quantified cancer risks based on the inhalation pathway only. Second, along with cancer risk estimates, MATES V includes information on the chronic non-cancer risks from inhalation and non-inhalation pathways for the first time. Cancer risks and chronic non-cancer risks from MATES II through IV measurements have been re-examined using current Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and CalEPA risk assessment methodologies and modern statistical methods to examine the trends over time. Overall, cancer risks have decreased across MATES II to MATES V at all monitoring stations.

5.3.2.3 Local Air Quality

For evaluation purposes, SCAQMD has divided its territory into 36 Source Receptor Areas (SRA) with monitoring stations operating in most of the SRAs. These SRAs are designated to provide a general representation of the local meteorological, terrain, and air quality conditions within the particular geographical area. The Project Site is within SRA 30, Coachella Valley.[57] The nearest air monitoring station SCAQMD operates is located at 46990 Jackson Street in the City of Indio and monitors O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. Other nearby stations include Indio-Amistad High School located at 44801 Golf

55 Ralph Propper, Patrick Wong, Son Bui, Jeff Austin, William Vance, Alvaro Alvarado, Bart Croes, and Dongmin Luo. "Ambient and Emission Trends of Toxic Air Contaminants in California." *American Chemical Society: Environmental Science & Technology*. 2015.

56 SCAQMD. *Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study in the South Coast Air Basin (MATES V) Final Report*. August 2021. Accessed February 2025. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/planning/mates-v/mates-v-final-report-9-24-21.pdf?sfvrsn=6.

57 SCAQMD. "General Forecast Areas and Air Monitoring Areas." Map. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/map-of-monitoring-areas.pdf.

Center Parkway and Indio-29 Palms Reservation located at 84245 vista Del Norte in the City of Indio, however the nearest monitoring station to the Project Site that monitors NO_2 is the Palm Springs Fire Station located at 590 Raquet Club Avenue in the City of Palm Springs, located over 20 miles northwest of the Project Site. **Table 5.3-3: Air Quality Monitoring Summary** lists the ambient pollutant concentrations registered and the violations of State and federal standards that have occurred at the abovementioned monitoring stations from 2020 through 2022 the most recent years for which data are available. The data shows that during the past few years, the region has exceeded the O_3, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ standards.

TABLE 5.3-3: AIR QUALITY MONITORING SUMMARY

Air Pollutant	Average Time (Units)	2020	2021	2022
Ozone (O_3)	State Max 1 hour (ppm)	0.097	0.099	0.072
	Days > CAAQS threshold (0.09 ppm)	2	2	0
	National Max 8 hour (ppm)	0.084	0.078	0.069
	Days > NAAQS threshold (0.075 ppm)	42	18	0
	State Max 8 hour (ppm)	0.085	0.079	0.070
	Days > CAAQS threshold (0.07 ppm)	44	24	0
Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)	National Max 1 hour (ppm)	—	—	—
	Days > NAAQS threshold (0.100 ppm)	—	—	—
	State Max 1 hour (ppm)	—	—	—
	Days > CAAQS threshold (0.18 ppm)	—	—	—
Respirable particulate matter (PM_{10})	National 24 hours (µg/m^3)	145.2	100.4	160.0
	National Annual Average (µg/m^3)	31.6	28.6	19.8
	Days > NAAQS threshold (150 µg/m^3)	0	0	1
	State 24 hours (µg/m^3)	53.8	100.6	106.3
	State Annual Average (µg/m^3)	—	30.1	—
	Days > CAAQS threshold (50 µg/m^3)	2	5	2
Fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	National Max (µg/m^3)	41.3	30.6	25.1
	National Annual Average (µg/m^3)	10.4	9.8	—
	Days > NAAQS threshold (35 µg/m^3)	0	0	2
	State Max (µg/m3)	41.3	30.6	25.1
	State Annual Average (µg/m3)	11.6	8.1	—

Notes: (—) = Data not available
Source: CARB, Aerometric Data Analysis and Management (iADAM): Air Quality Data Statistics. https://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/. Accessed October 2025.

Existing Project Site Emissions

The Project Site is currently vacant and undeveloped; therefore, no emissions are currently generated.

Surrounding Land Uses

Uses surrounding the Project include Mirabella Estates and Santa Rosa Ranch to the north; fallowed agricultural land, disturbed vacant land and a residential villa to the east; Cahuilla Desert Academy, a middle school, to the northeast, two ranches (Rancho Ellenita and Cavallo Ranch) and fallowed agricultural land to the south; and a residential golf neighborhood (Madison Club) and single-family neighborhoods (Carmela and Rancho Santana) to the west.

Sensitive Receptors

Some receptors are considered more sensitive to air pollutants than others, because of preexisting health problems, proximity to the emissions source, or duration of exposure to air pollutants. Land uses such as primary and secondary schools, hospitals, and convalescent homes are considered to be relatively sensitive to poor air quality because the very young, the old, and the infirm are more susceptible to respiratory infections and other air quality related health problems than the general public. Residential areas are also considered sensitive to poor air quality because people in residential areas are often at home for extended periods. Recreational land uses are moderately sensitive to air pollution because vigorous exercise associated with recreation places a high demand on respiratory system function. CARB has identified the following people as most likely to be affected by air pollution: children less than 14 years of age, the elderly over 65 years of age, athletes, and those with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. The nearest sensitive receptors identified for the noise impact assessment, including the Mirabella Estates approximately 20 feet to the north of the Project Site boundary, the Cavallo Ranch approximately 20 feet to the south of the Project Site boundary, and the residential neighborhood approximately 90 feet to the west across Monroe Street from the Project Site boundary, were also evaluated as sensitive receptors in the air quality analysis.

5.3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.3.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine the significance of Air Quality emissions impacts (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines), which are being used by the County for this analysis. Appendix G provides that a project would have a significant environmental impact if it would:

a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

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

c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

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

5.3.4 METHODOLOGY

5.3.4.1 Emissions Inventory Modeling

The California Emissions Estimator Model, known as CalEEMod, is the CARB–approved computer program model recommended by SCAQMD for use in the quantification of air quality emissions. CalEEMod was developed under the auspices of SCAQMD, with input from other California air districts. CalEEMod utilizes widely accepted models for emissions estimates combined with appropriate data that can be used if site-specific information is not available. For example, CalEEMod incorporates USEPA-developed emission factors; CARB's on-road and off-road equipment emission models, such as EMFAC and OFFROAD;[58] and studies commissioned by other California agencies, such as the California Energy Commission and California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).

CalEEMod provides a platform to calculate both construction emissions and operational emissions from a land use development project. CalEEMod version 2022.1.1.37 was used to quantify the Project's air quality pollutants. Project development would generate air pollutants from a number of individual sources during both construction and post-construction (operational) use of the buildings and related activities (e.g., painting operations and landscape maintenance). The following emission sources covered by CalEEMod model include:

- One-time construction emissions associated with site clearing and demolition, grading, construction of the retaining walls, utilities, buildings, and landscaping. Emission sources include both off-road construction equipment and on-road mobile equipment associated with workers and the delivery of construction materials to the Project Site. Construction emissions associated with dust control and disposal of waste at landfills are also included in the CalEEMod model.
- Operational emissions associated with the proposed uses, including on-road mobile vehicle traffic generated by the land uses; off-road emissions from landscaping equipment; water usage in the buildings; and emissions from emergency generators, painting operations, and fuel use. The disposal of solid waste generated during the postconstruction use of the buildings is also included in the CalEEMod model.

As described in **Section 3.0: Project Description**, the estimated annual demand for electricity for the Project will be partially or fully met by an on-site power generation system or by power provided by the Imperial Irrigation District (IID). Emissions that would be generated by the on-site power generation system were estimated based on the estimated annual electricity use for the Project, the

58 EMFAC is an emissions factor model used to calculate emissions rates from on-road vehicles (e.g., passenger vehicles). OFFROAD is an emissions factor model used to calculate emission rates from off-road mobile sources (e.g., construction equipment). CalEEMod version 2022.1 utilizes CARB's 2022 version of EMFAC.

number of generators needed to serve the Project, and equipment specific emissions factors. Emissions for power from IID are estimated with the CalEEMod emissions model.

Construction

Table 5.3-4: Project Construction Schedule provides the dates and durations of each of the activities that will take place during construction, as well as a brief description of the scope of work. Future dates represent approximations based on the general Project timeline and are subject to change, pending unpredictable circumstances that may arise.

Each phase of construction would result in varying levels of intensity and number of construction personnel. The construction workforce would consist of 20 worker trips per day during grading; 49 worker trips per day and 18 vendor trips per day during building construction; 15 worker trips per day during paving; and 10 worker trips per day during architectural coating. Also included in construction activities are mobile source emissions from construction traffic. Construction traffic is generated by vendor deliveries of construction materials and construction worker daily trips to the Project Site. Preliminary earthwork estimates that the Project will balance all grading on-site during final engineering, avoiding the need for soil import or export and minimizing construction-related impacts such as traffic and emissions associated with hauling activities.

An assessment of air pollutant emissions was prepared utilizing the construction schedule in **Table 5.3-4**.

TABLE 5.3-4: PROJECT CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Construction Activity	Start Date	End Date	Duration (Days)	Description
Mass Grading	4/1/2027	9/30/2027	131	Grading of Project Site
Building Construction	7/1/2027	6/30/2029	522	Construction of Proposed Project
Paving	7/1/2029	8/14/2029	32	Paving of asphalt surfaces
Architectural Coating	8/15/2029	9/30/2029	33	Application of architectural coatings to building materials

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Table 5.3-5: Project Construction Diesel Equipment Inventory displays the construction equipment required for each activity described in **Table 5.3-4**. The Project would be required to adhere to SCAQMD *Rule 403* (Fugitive Dust) and *Rule 1113* (Architectural Coatings) during construction activities.

TABLE 5.3-5: PROJECT CONSTRUCTION DIESEL EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

Phase	Off-Road Equipment Type	Amount	Daily Hours	Horsepower [HP] (Load Factor)
Grading	Graders	1	8	148 (0.41)
	Excavators	2	8	36 (0.38)
	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	2	8	84 (0.37)
	Scrapers	2	8	426 (0.48)
	Rubber Tired Dozers	1	8	367 (0.40)
Building Construction	Forklifts	3	8	82 (0.20)
	Generator Sets	1	8	14 (0.74)
	Cranes	1	7	367 (0.29)
	Welders	1	8	46 (0.45)
	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	3	7	84 (0.37)
Paving	Pavers	2	8	81 (0.42)
	Rollers	2	8	36 (0.38)
	Paving Equipment	2	8	89 (0.36)
Architectural Coating	Air Compressors	1	6	37 (0.48)

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Operation

Operation of the Project has the potential to generate criteria pollutant emissions through vehicle trips traveling to and from the Project Site. In addition, emissions would result from area sources on site, such as landscaping equipment and use of consumer products. Area-source emissions are based on landscaping equipment and consumer products (including paint) usage rates provided in CalEEMod.

Operation of the Project has the potential to generate criteria pollutant emissions associated with vehicle trips traveling to and from the Project Site. In calculating mobile-source emissions, trip generation rates were based on the traffic generation estimates provided by Fehr & Peers[59] as part of the Project's transportation analysis. These estimates include projected daily vehicle trips associated with operation of the proposed land uses.

Trip lengths for each land use were based on the default values provided in CalEEMod, which represent typical regional travel distances for similar land uses. These default trip lengths are commonly used in CEQA air quality analyses when project-specific travel distance data are not available.

59 Fehr & Peers. *The Ranch at Madison Transportation Analysis Report*. October 30, 2025. See **Appendix T**.

The traffic study primarily provides average weekday trip estimates for the proposed land uses. To account for variations in travel activity across the week, the CalEEMod default weekend trip ratios for Saturday and Sunday were used to distribute the Project's total daily trip generation across weekday and weekend conditions. The default weekend trip ratios were then scaled to match the total trip generation rates provided in the Fehr & Peers analysis, ensuring that the modeled trip totals remained consistent with the traffic study while still reflecting typical differences in travel activity between weekdays and weekends.

This approach allows the mobile-source emissions modeling to incorporate the Project-specific trip generation estimates provided by Fehr & Peers while maintaining the temporal trip distribution assumptions embedded in the CalEEMod model. As a result, the analysis conservatively accounts for variations in vehicle activity throughout the week when estimating operational mobile-source emissions.

5.3.4.2 SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook

Because of SCAQMD's regulatory role in the Air Basin, the significance thresholds and analysis methodologies in SCAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook[60] are used in evaluating project impacts for construction, operations, and air toxics.[61]

Daily Emissions Thresholds

SCAQMD has identified thresholds to determine the significance of regional air quality emissions for construction activities and project operation, as shown in **Table 5.3-6: Mass Daily Emissions Thresholds**.

TABLE 5.3-6: MASS DAILY EMISSIONS THRESHOLDS

Pollutant	Construction	Operation
	Significant Threshold (pounds/day)	
Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)	75	55
Nitrogen dioxide (NO_X)	100	55
Carbon monoxide (CO)	550	550
Sulfur dioxide (SO_X)	150	150
Respirable particulate matter (PM_{10})	150	150

60 SCAQMD. *Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook*. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/CEQA/hdbk.html.

61 SCAQMD. "South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds." Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/hdbk.html.

TABLE 5.3-6: MASS DAILY EMISSIONS THRESHOLDS		
Pollutant	Construction	Operation
	Significant Threshold (pounds/day)	
Fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	55	55

Source: SCAQMD. "Air Quality Significance Thresholds." Accessed January 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/hdbk.html.

Localized Significance Thresholds

The local significance thresholds (LST) are based on the SCAQMD's Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology (LST Methodology)[62] guidance document for short-duration construction activities. The SCAQMD recommends the evaluation of localized air quality impacts to sensitive receptors in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site because of construction activities. The SCAQMD provides voluntary guidance on the evaluation of localized air quality impacts to public agencies conducting environmental review of projects located within its jurisdiction. Localized air quality impacts are evaluated by examining the on-site generation of pollutants and their resulting downwind concentrations. For construction, pollutant concentrations are compared to significance thresholds for particulates (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), CO, and NO_2. The significance threshold for PM_{10} represents compliance with SCAQMD *Rule 403* (Fugitive Dust). The threshold for $PM_{2.5}$ is designed to limit emissions and to allow progress toward attainment of the AAQS. Thresholds for CO and NO_2 represent the allowable increase in concentrations above background levels that would not cause or contribute to an exceedance of their respective AAQS.

The LST Methodology provides lookup tables of maximum allowable emissions in pounds per day that are based on the area of a construction site from 1 acre up to 5 acres in size.[63] The threshold is a daily emissions level and thus the acreage is an approximation of the daily disturbed area.[64]

Based on the anticipated grading equipment fleet and estimated daily use, the maximum daily disturbed area during Project construction is conservatively assumed to be 5 acres, the maximum acreage category provided in the SCAQMD LST Methodology mass rate look-up tables. The SCAQMD LST Methodology provides look-up tables for project acreages up to a maximum of 5 acres; where actual or anticipated daily disturbance may approach or exceed this threshold, use of the 5-acre

62 SCAQMD. "Localized Significance Thresholds." Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/localized-significance-thresholds.

63 SCAQMD. "Appendix C - Mass Rate LST Look-up Table." In *Final Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology*. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/localized-significance-thresholds/appendix-c-mass-rate-lst-look-up-tables.pdf?sfvrsn=2.

64 SCAQMD. "Fact Sheet for Applying CalEEMod to Localized Significance Thresholds." Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/localized-significance-thresholds/caleemod-guidance.pdf?sfvrsn=2.

category represents the most conservative screening comparison available within the look-up table methodology defined by the SCAQMD.

The LST methodology provides screening thresholds for receptors located at distances of 25, 50, 100, 200, and 500 meters from the emission source. Because some nearby receptors are located within 25 meters of the Project Site, the 25-meter LST values were applied in this analysis. Use of the 25-meter screening distance represents a conservative approach because it applies the most restrictive threshold available in the LST lookup tables.

The resulting localized significance thresholds for each criteria pollutant evaluated during construction and operation are presented in **Table 5.3-7: Localized Significance Thresholds**.

Lead agencies may use the LST mass rate look-up tables as a screening analysis. If the project exceeds any applicable LST when the mass rate look-up tables are used as a screening analysis, then project-specific air quality modeling may be performed.[65]

TABLE 5.3-7: LOCALIZED SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

Pollutant	Construction	Operation
	pounds/day	
Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)	304	304
Carbon monoxide (CO)	2,292	2,292
Respirable particulate matter (PM_{10})	14	4
Fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	8	2

Notes: Based on a distance to sensitive receptors of 25 meters and Project size of 5.0 acres. SCAQMD's Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology for CEQA Evaluations guidance document provides that projects with boundaries located closer than 50 meters to the nearest receptor should use the LSTs for receptors located at 25 meters.

Toxic Air Contaminants

As set forth in the SCAQMD Handbook, the determination of significance of a project with respect to TACs shall be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the following factors:

- Regulatory framework for toxic materials and process involved;
- Proximity of TACs to sensitive receptors;
- Quantity, volume, and toxicity of the contaminants expected to be emitted;

65 SCAQMD. "Localized Significance Thresholds."

- Likelihood and potential level of exposure; and
- Degree to which project design will reduce risk of exposure.

Toxic air contaminants (TAC) are air pollutants that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or serious illness or may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. During construction, the primary potential TAC emissions would be diesel particulate matter (DPM) generated from heavy-duty construction equipment.

SCAQMD does not require preparation of a health risk assessment (HRA) for construction-related DPM emissions; rather, the need for an HRA is determined by the lead agency on a case-by-case basis considering the factors identified above. A quantitative HRA was not determined to be warranted for emissions generated during construction of the Project based on the following considerations:

1. Construction-related DPM emissions are intermittent and limited to the approximately 30-month construction period, in contrast to permanent, continuously operating sources (e.g., industrial facilities, distribution centers with diesel trucks idling) for which quantitative HRAs are prepared to determine long-term average concentrations of TACs that could result in health effects.
2. The modeled construction-related exhaust PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions (3.4 lbs/day and 1.3 lbs/day, respectively) for construction activities are below the SCAQMD LST for PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ at the nearest receptor. While LST thresholds address criteria pollutant mass emission rates rather than TAC-specific cancer risk directly, DPM is a fraction of total exhaust particulate matter from the same equipment fleet; emissions below the LST screening threshold for PM_{10}/$PM_{2.5}$ support, but do not independently establish, a lower potential for elevated DPM concentrations at nearby receptors.
3. The Project would comply with applicable CARB regulations intended to reduce diesel emissions, including the CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation, which requires fleet-wide reductions in diesel PM and NO_X emissions through engine turnover and retrofit requirements, and the CARB Air Toxics Control Measure limiting diesel-powered equipment idling to no more than five minutes, both of which reduce DPM emissions below levels that would occur absent these requirements.

Considered together, the temporary and intermittent nature of construction activity, the modeled construction emissions falling below applicable LST screening thresholds, and mandatory compliance with CARB diesel emission reduction regulations support the conclusion that construction-related TAC impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, preparation of a quantitative HRA is not warranted.

Linear Generator Operational Emissions

Operational air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed on-site power generation system were estimated based on information provided in a technical memorandum describing the proposed linear generator technology (refer to **Appendix D**). The Project would include 11 Mainspring linear generators rated at 250 kilowatts (kW) each. Each generator consists of two generator cores enclosed within a single unit, where power generation occurs through compression and controlled reaction of a natural gas and air mixture that drives opposed oscillators to produce electricity through electromagnetic induction.

Operation of the linear generators would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants associated with the combustion of natural gas, including NOx, CO, VOC, SOx, and PM_{10}. Emission factors for NOx, CO, and VOC were based on the regulatory emission limits established under SCAQMD *Rule 1110.3*, which governs emissions from stationary internal combustion engines. The SOx emission factor was derived from the SCAQMD Air Emissions Reporting (AER) guidelines, while the PM_{10} emission factor was based on manufacturer-provided data for the proposed generator units.

For purposes of this analysis, emissions were calculated assuming continuous operation (24 hours per day, 365 days per year) to represent a conservative worst-case operating scenario. Emission rates were first calculated on a per-core basis and then aggregated to represent the total emissions associated with the proposed generator system.

The generator units would incorporate an oxidation catalyst designed to reduce carbon monoxide emissions, with an assumed control efficiency of 95 percent for CO emissions. Emission rates for NOx, VOC, SOx, and PM were assumed to be consistent with the controlled emission limits specified in the applicable regulatory standards. The resulting hourly, daily, and annual emission estimates were incorporated into the Project's operational emissions inventory and used to evaluate potential regional and localized air quality impacts.

Consistency with Applicable Air Quality Plans

Section 15125 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires an analysis of project consistency with applicable governmental plans and policies. In accordance with the SCAQMD Handbook, the following criteria were used to evaluate the Project's consistency with SCAQMD and SCAG regional plans and policies, including the AQMP:

- Will the Project result in any of the following:
  - Increase the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations?
  - Cause or contribute to new air quality violations?
  - Delay the timely attainment of the air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the AQMP?
- Will the Project exceed the assumptions utilized in preparing the AQMP?

- Is the Project consistent with the population and employment growth projections upon which AQMP forecasted emission levels are based?
- Does the Project include air quality mitigation measures?
- To what extent is Project development consistent with the AQMP land use policies?

Cumulative Threshold

SCAQMD recommends that a project be considered to result in a cumulatively considerable impact to air quality if any construction-related emissions and operational emissions from individual development projects exceed the mass daily emissions thresholds for individual projects.[66]

The SCAQMD neither recommends quantified analyses of the emissions generated by a set of cumulative development projects nor provides thresholds of significance to be used to assess the impacts associated with these emissions.

A project is also considered to result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant impacts if the population and employment projections for the project exceed the rate of growth defined in SCAQMD's AQMP.

5.3.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

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

Less Than Significant Impact.

The SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook describes two criteria indicators used for purposes of analyzing consistency with the AQMP. Consistency Criterion No. 1 states if a proposed project would result in growth that is substantially greater than what was anticipated, then the proposed project would conflict with the AQMP. On the other hand, if a project's density is within the anticipated growth of a jurisdiction, its emissions would be consistent with the assumptions in the AQMP, and the project would not conflict with SCAQMD's attainment plans. Consistency Criterion No. 2 states that a project is consistent with the AQMP if the project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause a new violation.

As discussed in greater detail below, the Project's air quality emissions would not exceed any SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, the Project would not increase the frequency or severity of an existing violation or cause or contribute to new violations for these pollutants. As the Project would

66 SCAQMD. "White Paper on Regulatory Options for Addressing Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution Emissions." *Board Meeting, Agenda No. 29*. September 5, 2003. Accessed February 2025. http://www3.aqmd.gov/hb/2003/September/030929a.html.

not exceed any of the State and federal standards, the Project would also not delay timely attainment of air quality standards or interim emission reductions specified in the AQMP.

With respect to the determination of consistency with AQMP growth assumptions, the projections in the AQMP for achieving air quality goals are based on assumptions in SCAG's RTP/SCS regarding population, housing, and growth trends. Determining whether or not a project exceeds the assumptions reflected in the AQMP involves the evaluation of three criteria: (1) consistency with applicable population, housing, and employment growth projections; (2) project mitigation measures; and (3) appropriate incorporation of AQMP land use planning strategies. The following discussion provides an analysis with respect to each of these three criteria.

4. Is the project consistent with the population, housing, and employment growth projections upon which AQMP forecasted emission levels are based?

A project is consistent with the AQMP, in part, if it is consistent with the population, housing, and employment assumptions that were used in the development of the AQMP. In the case of the 2022 AQMP, two sources of data form the basis for the projections of air pollutant emissions: the County of Riverside General Plan and SCAG's 2020-2024 RTP/SCS. The General Plan serves as a comprehensive, long-term plan for future development of the County.

The 2022 AQMP incorporates the assumptions of the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS. The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS provides socioeconomic forecast projections of regional population growth. The population, housing, and employment forecasts, which are adopted by SCAG's Regional Council, are based on the local plans and policies applicable to the specific area; these are used by SCAG in all phases of implementation and review. The Project Site is currently undeveloped, and the proposed Project would develop a private, nine-hole, golf course community that includes 85 single family homes and a 12-acre mixed-use area that includes a clubhouse, a wellness center, restaurants, and ancillary recreational activities, including sports fields and courts, and pools. Use of these private facilities is limited to the owners of homes within the Project. CalEEMod estimates that the proposed Project would result in a population of approximately 275 residents.[67] In 2019, the population of Unincorporated Riverside County was 386,900.[68] The 2020–2045 RTP/SCS estimates the population of Unincorporated Riverside County would increase to 525,600 by 2045.[69] Additionally, the most recent 2024–2050 RTP/SCS estimates the population of Unincorporated Riverside County is

67 See **Appendix D** of this Draft EIR.

68 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). "Demographics and Growth Forecast (2024)." Accessed February 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/23-2987-tr-demographics-growth-forecast-final-040424.pdf?1712261839.

69 SCAG. "Demographics and Growth Forecast (2020)." Accessed December 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/0903fconnectsocal_demographics-and-growth-forecast.pdf.

estimated to increase to 524,753 by 2050.[70] The proposed Project would not cause the County to exceed population estimates from neither the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS nor the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS.

5. Does the project implement feasible air quality mitigation measures?

As discussed below, the Project would not result in any significant air quality impacts and therefore would not require mitigation. In addition, the Project would comply with all applicable regulatory standards, including SCAQMD *Rule 403*, SCAQMD *Rule 1113*, and SCAQMD *Rule 402* as required by SCAQMD. As such, the Project meets this AQMP consistency criterion.

6. To what extent is project development consistent with the land use policies set forth in the AQMP?

With regard to land use developments such as the Project, the AQMP's air quality policies focus on the reduction of vehicle trips and VMT.

The proposed Project design would allow residents and visitors the ability to walk to a variety of land uses, including event spaces, restaurants, a wellness center, sports fields and courts, and pools. The proposed Project would also include extensive recreational trails and pedestrian pathways. Internal walking trails are planned throughout the Project, connecting the residential units to the mixed-use area. In addition, travel by golf cart is also planned within the Project and connects to the adjacent *Madison Club*, via a grade-separated crossing of Madison Street, which may consist of either a subterranean tunnel or an above-grade bridge, running in an east-to-west direction. These features would offer alternative modes of transportation and would reduce VMTs, thereby reducing air quality emissions. The Project would also comply with CALGreen through energy conservation, water conservation, and waste reduction features.

The AQMP applicable to the Project area is the 2022 AQMP. The 2022 AQMP is the SCAQMD plan for improving regional air quality in the Basin. The 2022 AQMP is the current management plan for continued progression toward clean air and compliance with State and federal requirements. It includes a comprehensive strategy aimed at controlling pollution from all sources, including stationary sources, on- and off-road mobile sources, and area sources. The 2022 AQMP also incorporates current scientific information and meteorological air quality models. It also outlines the federally approved 8-hour O_3 control plan with the commitments for short-term NO_X and VOC reductions. The 2022 AQMP includes short-term control measures related to facility modernization, energy efficiency, good management practices, market incentives, and emissions growth management.

70 SCAG. "Demographics and Growth Forecast (2024)."

The Project would be required to comply with all new and existing regulatory measures set forth by the SCAQMD. Implementation of the Project would not interfere with air pollution control measures listed in the 2022 AQMP.

Based on the discussion above, Project impacts with respect to AQMP consistency would be less than significant.

County of Riverside General Plan Air Quality Element Policies

The County of Riverside General Plan Air Quality Element includes policies with the goal of reducing air quality emissions within the County. **Table 5.3-8: Project Consistency with County of Riverside General Plan** demonstrates the Project's consistency with applicable policies. As shown therein, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the air quality emission reduction strategies contained in the County of Riverside General Plan.

TABLE 5.3-8: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN

Policies		Consistency Analysis
AQ 3.2	**Seek new cooperative relationships between employers and employees to reduce vehicle miles traveled.**	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would develop a mixed-use community that includes 85 single family homes, a mixed-use amenities village including the Event Barn and Event Lawn as well as all the recreational opportunities including the Wellness Center, sports fields and courts, and pools, as well as 97.8 acres of open space including a golf course. The proposed Project's mixed-use development would allow residents and visitors the ability to walk to a variety of land uses. Additionally, the proposed Project would also include extensive recreational trails and pedestrian pathways. In addition, travel by golf carts is also planned within the Project with a connection to the Madison Club, located immediately west of the Project via a grade-separated crossing of Madison Street, which may consist of either a subterranean tunnel or an above-grade bridge, running in an east-to-west direction. These features would offer alternative modes of transportation and would reduce VMTs, thereby reducing air quality emissions.
AQ 4.1	**Require the use of all feasible building materials/methods which reduce emissions.**	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would comply with the CALGreen 2022 requirements which mandate emission-reducing use of building materials through a life cycle assessment, which requires a 10% reduction in global warming potential (GWP) as compared to a baseline building.
AQ 4.2	**Require the use of all feasible efficient heating equipment and other appliances, such as water heaters, swimming pool heaters, cooking equipment, refrigerators, furnaces, and boiler units.**	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would adhere to the 2022 Energy Code Insulation and QII Requirements which require duct insulated to R-8 within climate zones 1, 2, 4, and 8-16.93. The proposed Project would also utilize typical gas storage water heaters have uniform energy factor (UEF) of 0.60-0.76, electric storage water

TABLE 5.3-8: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN

Policies		Consistency Analysis
		heaters approximately 0.90, and gas instantaneous units approximately 0.80-0.94. The proposed Project would also adhere to the requirements of the current CALGreen Building Code Section 110.1 to install appliances that meet or exceed the ENERGY STAR Program requirements.
AQ 4.4	**Require residential building construction to comply with energy use guidelines detailed in Part 6 (California Energy Code) and/or Part 11 (California Green Building Standards Code) of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.**	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would comply with applicable energy, water, and waste efficiency measures specified in the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards.
AQ 4.6	**Require stationary air pollution sources to comply with applicable air district rules and control measures.**	**Consistent**. The proposed on-site power generation system would include natural gas-powered generators. These generators would comply with applicable SCAQMD rules and measures.
AQ 4.7	**To the greatest extent possible, require every project to mitigate any of its anticipated emissions which exceed allowable emissions as established by the SCAQMD, MDAQMD, SCAB, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the California Air Resources Board.**	**Consistent**. As shown below, the proposed Project would not exceed SCAQMD significance threshold for construction nor operation. As such, no mitigation measures are required.
AQ 4.9	**Require compliance with SCAQMD Rules 403 and 403.1 and support appropriate future measures to reduce fugitive dust emanating from construction sites.**	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would comply with SCAQMD *Rules 403* and *403.1* which requires the use of stringent best available control measures (BACMs) to minimize PM_{10} emissions during grading and construction activities.
AQ 5.1	**Utilize source reduction, recycling, and other appropriate measures to reduce the amount of solid waste disposed of in landfills.**	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would comply with AB 1383 which requires all residents and business to recycle organic materials, such as food waste. Additionally, AB 341 requires commercial businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of trash per week to arrange for recycling services. Additionally, as required by the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 8.136.050, all residential properties in unincorporated parts of the County shall participate in the three-bin system, including recyclable materials.

Source: *County of Riverside General Plan*, Air Quality Element. Accessed February 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-genplan-general-plan-2018-elements-Ch09-AQE-071718.pdf.

The Project would be consistent with applicable policies of the County of Riverside General Plan Air Quality Element which sets forth policies promoting pollution control, as well as land use and transportation measures to reduce pollutant emissions. The Air Quality Element calls for supporting

the efforts of the SCAQMD to identify, monitor, and reduce air pollutants.[71] As discussed above in *Section 5.3.4.2*, the Project would be consistent with SCAQMD's AQMP as it is within the AQMP's growth projections and does not exceed any significant thresholds for air quality. Moreover, the Project would be required to meet the CALGreen Code by incorporating strategies such as low-flow toilets, low-flow faucets and other energy and resource conservation measures. The Project would comply with applicable energy, water, and waste efficiency measures specified in the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards.

Based on the analysis above, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans and impacts would be less than significant.

b. Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard?

Less Than Significant Impact.

The Project would be required to comply with the following regulations, as applicable:

- SCAQMD *Rule 403*, which would reduce the amount of particulate matter entrained in ambient air as a result of anthropogenic fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent, reduce or mitigate fugitive dust emissions.
- SCAQMD *Rule 1113*, which limits the VOC content of architectural coatings.
- SCAQMD *Rule 402*, which states that a person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.
- In accordance with Section 2485 in Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations, the idling of all diesel-fueled commercial vehicles (with gross vehicle weight over 10,000 pounds) during construction would be limited to five minutes at any location.
- In accordance with Section 93115 in Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations, operation of any stationary, diesel-fueled, compression-ignition engines would meet specific fuel and fuel additive requirements and emissions standards.

According to the SCAQMD, individual construction projects that exceed the SCAQMD's recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Basin is in nonattainment.

71 County of Riverside. *Air Quality Element*. In *General Plan*. Accessed February 2025.https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-genplan-general-plan-2018-elements-Ch09-AQE-071718.pdf.

Construction activity has the potential to create air quality impacts through the use of heavy-duty construction equipment and through vehicle trips generated by construction workers traveling to and from the Project Site. Fugitive dust emissions would primarily result from grading activities, which would be reduced through compliance with SCAQMD *Rule 403*. NO_X emissions would primarily result from the use of construction equipment and truck trips. During the building finishing phase, paving and the application of architectural coatings (e.g., paints) would potentially release VOCs. However, such releases would be regulated in compliance with SCAQMD *Rule 1113*. The assessment of construction air quality impacts considers each of these potential sources. Construction emissions can vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity, the specific type of operation and, for dust, the prevailing weather conditions.

Table 5.3-9: Maximum Daily Construction Emissions identifies daily emissions that are estimated to occur on peak construction days for each construction phase. As shown in **Table 5.3-9**, construction emissions associated with the Project would not exceed the SCAQMD's emission thresholds and would therefore not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. As such, construction impacts would be less than significant.

In addition to the emissions estimates presented above, construction activities are subject to SCAQMD *Rule 403* and, where applicable, *Rule 403.1*, as well as Riverside County General Plan Air Quality Element Policy AQ 4.9. These requirements mandate the implementation of best available control measures (BACMs) to minimize fugitive dust emissions during construction, including measures such as regular watering of exposed surfaces, stabilization of disturbed soils, covering haul trucks, and limiting vehicle speeds on unpaved surfaces. Compliance with these regulatory requirements would further reduce particulate matter emissions (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) during construction and supports the conclusion that construction-related air quality impacts would be less than significant.

TABLE 5.3-9: MAXIMUM DAILY CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS

Source	VOC	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	pounds/day					
2027	4.3	35.6	45.4	0.1	6.3	2.6
2028	1.2	9.5	16.3	<0.1	1.0	0.4
2029	1.6	9.1	16.0	<0.1	1.0	0.4
Maximum	**4.3**	**35.6**	**45.4**	**0.1**	**6.3**	**2.6**
SCAQMD Mass Daily Threshold	*75*	*100*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; SO_X = sulfur oxides; VOC = volatile organic compounds.

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Operational activities associated with the Project would result in long-term emissions from area and mobile sources. Area-source emissions are based on landscaping equipment and consumer products (including paint) usage rates provided in CalEEMod. Mobile source emissions are derived primarily from vehicle trips generated by the Project. Vehicles traveling on paved roads would be a source of fugitive emissions due to the generation of road dust inclusive of tire wear particulates. The emission estimates for travel on paved roads were calculated using the CalEEMod model.

As described in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the Project includes a modular on-site power generation system designed to partially or fully meet the Project's electricity needs. The on-site power generation and storage system has been designed to meet the peak estimated energy demands for the Project at full development of the uses allowed by the Specific Plan of approximately 3.32 mega-watts (MW) and about 5,886,765 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of annual energy use. Approximately 990,197 kWh of electricity will be generated by the proposed 580 kW DC community solar photovoltaic (PV) system. The remaining 4,896,567 kWh of required power would be provided by the linear generator and BESS units. This demand can be met by eleven (11) 250kW linear generators and one (1) 1,000kW/2,500kWh battery BESS unit. In order to provide redundant backup capability in case any of the generators or the BESS unit is offline for maintenance or other reasons, the proposed system would include thirteen (13) 250kW linear generators and three (3) 1,000kW/2,500kWh battery BESS units. This system incorporates two extra, independent components beyond what is required to provide the amount of power needed to meet the Project demand.

The BESS units would help meet the estimated peak demand for electricity for the Project, which would reduce the number of generator units needed. This system is modular and, for this reason, the needs for electrical power for the Project could be met by a combination of power generated on site and power from IID. For purposes of analysis, emissions from use of electricity generated on- and off-site are both considered.

The results presented in **Table 5.3-10: Maximum Daily Operational Emissions — On-Site Power Generation System** represents the emissions that would result from the on-site power generation system and are compared to the SCAQMD-established operational significance thresholds as well as the existing emissions on site from the current land uses. As shown in **Table 5.3-10**, the operational emissions would not exceed the regional VOC, NO_X, CO, SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ concentration thresholds and would therefore not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. As such, operational impacts would be less than significant under this scenario.

TABLE 5.3-10: MAXIMUM DAILY OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS — ON-SITE POWER GENERATION SYSTEM						
Source	VOC	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	pounds/day					
Mobile	2.2	2.2	14.6	<0.1	4.2	1.1
Area	4.3	0.1	0.0	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	0.1	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total	**8.3**	**3.3**	**15.1**	**0.1**	**4.3**	**1.2**
SCAQMD Mass Daily Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; SO_X = sulfur oxides; VOC = volatile organic compounds.

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Table 5.3-11: Maximum Daily Operational Emissions — IID Power shows the emissions that would result under the scenario that electricity is supplied to the Project Site by IID. As shown in **Table 5.3-11,** the operational emissions would not exceed the regional VOC, NO_X, CO, SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ concentration thresholds and would therefore not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. As such, operational impacts would be less than significant under this scenario.

TABLE 5.3-11: MAXIMUM DAILY OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS — IID POWER						
Source	VOC	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	pounds/day					
Mobile	2.2	2.2	20.1	<0.1	4.2	1.1
Area	4.1	0.0	0.0	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	0.1	1.1	0.6	<0.1	0.1	0.1
Total	**6.4**	**3.3**	**20.7**	**<0.1**	**4.3**	**1.2**
SCAQMD Mass Daily Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; SO_X = sulfur oxides; VOC = volatile organic compounds.

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study and Generator Equipment Information.

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

Localized Emissions

Less Than Significant Impact.

As discussed previously, residential uses are located adjacent to the Project Site. The localized significance thresholds determined in **Table 5.3-7** were compared to the maximum daily emissions during each phase of construction of the proposed Project. The results of the localized air quality analysis are provided in **Table 5.3-12: Localized Construction and Operational Emissions**. As shown in **Table 5.3-12**, emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD localized significance construction and operational thresholds under either generator scenario. In addition, construction activities would be required to comply with SCAQMD *Rule 403* and, where applicable, *Rule 403.1*, as well as Riverside County General Plan Air Quality Element Policy AQ 4.9. These regulations require implementation of BACMs to minimize fugitive dust emissions, including regular watering of exposed surfaces, stabilization of disturbed soils, covering haul trucks, and limiting vehicle speeds on unpaved surfaces. Compliance with these requirements would further reduce localized particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) emissions during construction.

TABLE 5.3-12: LOCALIZED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS

Source	NO_x	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	On-Site Emissions (pounds/day)			
Construction				
Total maximum emissions	25.6	27.3	5.0	2.0
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*14*	*8*
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**
Operational				
On-site Power Generation System				
Project area/energy emissions	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.1
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*4*	*2*
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**
IID Power				
Project area/energy emissions	1.1	0.6	0.1	0.1
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*4*	*2*
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

CO = carbon monoxide; NO_X = nitrogen oxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns.

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Project construction would result in short-term emissions of diesel particulate matter, which is a TAC. Emissions from combustion of gasoline produce much of the $PM_{2.5}$ emissions found in outdoor air.[72] Off-road heavy-duty diesel equipment would emit diesel particulate matter over the course of the construction period, as diesel emissions are strongly correlated with $PM_{2.5}$ emissions. As mentioned previously, the Project Site is surrounded by residential uses located to the north, south,

72 CARB. "Inhalable Particulate Matter and Health ($PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10})."

and west. Localized diesel particulate emissions would be minimal and would be substantially below localized thresholds, as shown above in **Table 5.3-12**. Project compliance with the CARB anti-idling measure, which limits idling to no more than 5 minutes at any location for diesel-fueled commercial vehicles, would further minimize diesel particulate matter emissions in the Project area.

Project operations would generate only minor amounts of diesel emissions from delivery trucks and incidental maintenance activities. Trucks would comply with the applicable provisions of the CARB Truck and Bus regulation to minimize and reduce emission from existing diesel trucks. In addition, Project operations would only result in minimal emissions of air toxics from maintenance or other ongoing activities, such as from the use of architectural coatings or household cleaning products. As a result, toxic or carcinogenic air pollutants are not expected to occur in any meaningful amounts in conjunction with the operation of the proposed uses within the Project Site. Based on the uses expected on the Project Site, potential long-term operational impacts associated with the release of TACs would be minimal and would not be expected to exceed the SCAQMD thresholds of significance.

Linear Generators Operational Emissions

Operation of the proposed on-site linear generators would result in emissions of TACs associated with the combustion of natural gas. TAC emissions were estimated using measured pollutant concentrations from available source test data and emission factors obtained from the SCAQMD Reporting Procedures for AB 2588 Facilities,[73] for natural gas turbine equipment. Emission estimates were calculated assuming a conservative continuous operating schedule (24 hours per day, 365 days per year) and were initially developed on a per-core basis and then aggregated to represent the total emissions associated with operation of the proposed generator system.

Organic TAC emissions from the generators were assumed to be controlled using an oxidation catalyst with an estimated control efficiency of approximately 72 percent. Based on these emission estimates, a Tier 2 health risk assessment was conducted to evaluate potential health impacts in accordance with SCAQMD *Rule 1401* (New Source Review of Toxic Air Contaminants).

Results of the analysis indicate that the maximum individual cancer risk (MICR) associated with generator operation would be below one in one million, which is the risk threshold used by the SCAQMD for evaluating TAC impacts. In addition, the cumulative chronic hazard index (HIc) and acute hazard index (HIa) associated with the generator emissions would not exceed a value of 1.0 for any target organ system. These results demonstrate that TAC emissions from operation of the proposed linear generators would comply with the requirements of SCAQMD *Rule 1401*.

73 SCAQMD. *Reporting Procedures for AB2588 Facilities for Reporting their Quadrennial Air Toxics Emissions Inventory, Table B-1*. Accessed May 2026. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/planning/annual-emission-reporting/supplemental-instructions-for-ab2588-facilities.pdf.

Operation of the proposed generators was also evaluated with respect to the New Source Review requirements contained in SCAQMD Regulation XIII. *Rule 1303(a)* requires the application of Best Available Control Technology (BACT) for new emission sources that result in significant increases in emissions of nonattainment pollutants. Based on the estimated emission rates, operation of the linear generators would not result in a net emission increase exceeding 0.99 pounds per day, and therefore would not trigger BACT requirements under Regulation XIII. Nonetheless, the proposed equipment incorporates an oxidation catalyst to reduce carbon monoxide emissions, which further limits operational emissions.

Rule 1303(b) also establishes requirements related to emission offsets and air quality modeling. Because emissions associated with operation of the proposed generators would not exceed the applicable modeling thresholds contained in Table A-1 of *Rule 1303*, air dispersion modeling is not required. In addition, emission offsets are not required because the net emission increase associated with the equipment would be less than 0.49 pounds per day.

Based on the results of the health risk assessment and the applicable SCAQMD regulatory requirements, operation of the proposed linear generators would not result in significant toxic air contaminant impacts, and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Odors

Less Than Significant Impact.

As shown in ***Table 5.3-12***, the construction of the Project would result in emissions below the localized significance thresholds. Mandatory compliance with SCAQMD *Rule 1113* would limit the number of VOCs in architectural coatings and solvents. According to SCAQMD, while almost any source may emit objectionable odors, some land uses are more likely to produce odors because of their operation. Land uses more likely to produce odors include agriculture, chemical plants, composting operations, dairies, fiberglass molding manufacturing, landfills, refineries, rendering plants, rail yards, and wastewater treatment plants. The Project does not contain any active manufacturing activities and would not convert current agricultural land to residential land uses. Therefore, objectionable odors would not be emitted by the proposed uses.

The proposed Project would be consistent with current land uses. Residential land uses do not typically generate problematic odors. Any unforeseen odors generated by the Project will be controlled in accordance with SCAQMD *Rule 402*. As previously noted, *Rule 402* prohibits the discharge of air contaminants that harm, endanger, or annoy individuals or the public; endanger the comfort, health or safety of individuals or the public; or cause injury or damage to business or property. Failure to comply with *Rule 402* could subject the offending facility to possible fines and/or operational limitations in an approved odor control or odor abatement plan. Based on the analysis

above, the Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and impacts would be less than significant.

5.3.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Development of the Project would result in an increase in construction and operational emissions in an already urbanized area of the County. However, cumulative air quality impacts from construction, based on SCAQMD guidelines, are not analyzed in a manner similar to project-specific air quality impacts. Instead, SCAQMD recommends that a project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts should be assessed utilizing the same significance criteria as those for project-specific impacts. According to SCAQMD, individual development projects that generate construction or operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD recommended daily regional or localized thresholds for project-specific impacts would also cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Basin is in nonattainment.

Based on the Project impact analysis above, the Project would not generate construction or operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD recommended daily regional or localized thresholds. With the implementation of regulatory compliance measures such as *Rule 403* (Fugitive Dust) and *Rule 1113* (Architectural Coating), the Project's construction and operational emissions are not expected to significantly contribute to cumulative emissions for CO, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. As such, the Project's contribution to cumulative air quality emissions in combination with any related projects would not be cumulatively considerable.

As discussed in this Section, the Project would not jeopardize the attainment of air quality standards in the 2022 AQMP for the Salton Sea Air Basin. As such, the Project would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to a potential conflict with or obstruction of the implementation of the AQMP regional reduction plans.

5.3.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.3.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Compliance with local, State, and federal plans, policies, and programs would ensure impacts related to air quality would be less than significant.

5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) addresses the potential for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (referred to herein as the "Specific Plan" or "Project") to affect biological resources on the Project Site, and within the broader Coachella Valley. This section incorporates information from the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) and from the following study of the Project Site:

- *Habitat Assessment and Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Consistency Analysis* (CVMSHCP) Report for The Ranch at Madison Project Located in La Quinta, Riverside County, California, ELMT Consulting, Inc., April 2026, **Appendix F**.

5.4.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.4.1.1 Federal

Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act[1] makes it unlawful to "take" (kill, harm, harass, etc.) any migratory bird, including their nests, eggs, or products. Migratory birds include geese, ducks, shorebirds, raptors, songbirds, and many other species that may utilize natural and artificial habitats throughout the area.

Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973

Section 3 of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)[2] defines an endangered species as any species or subspecies "in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range." A threatened species is defined as any species or subspecies of fish, wildlife, or plant "likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range." Threatened or endangered species and associated critical habitat are designated through publication of a final rule in the Federal Register. Designated endangered and threatened animal species are fully protected from "take" unless an applicant has an incidental take permit issued by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Section 10 or incidental take statement issued under Section 7 of the ESA. Take is defined as the killing, capturing, or harassing of a species. Proposed endangered or threatened species include those species for which a proposed regulation has been published in the Federal Register, but a final ruling has not been made.

1 United States Code. Title 16. Section 703 et seq.

2 United States Code. Title 16. Section 703 et seq.

Clean Water Act

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act [CWA])[3] regulates the discharge of pollutants and dredged or fill materials into water subject to federal jurisdiction. Under Section 404 of the CWA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) administers the permitting program for activities involving the discharge of dredged or fill material into jurisdictional waters, including certain wetlands. Section 401 of the CWA authorizes the State of California, through the State Water Resources Control Board and the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board, to certify that federally permitted activities comply with State water quality standards. The scope of waters subject to federal jurisdiction is governed by the current definition of Waters of the United States (WOTUS) under applicable federal regulations and judicial decisions. Projects affecting jurisdictional waters may require authorization from the USACE under Section 404 and, where applicable, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board. Most impacts to areas determined to be jurisdictional by the USACE require compliance with the CWA and its implementing regulations.

Section 401

Section 401 of the CWA authorizes the State of California to certify that federal permits, including USACE Section 404 permits, and licenses do not violate the State's water quality standards. The State's implementing regulations to conduct certifications are codified under the California Code of Regulations Title 23, "Waters," Sections 3830 – 3869. Projects qualifying for a USACE Section 404 permit must submit materials for review to the appropriate RWQCB and request a Section 401 certification. Much of the same information (project description, potential impacts, and mitigation measures) necessary to apply for USACE Section 404 and CDFW Section 1602 permits is required for the Section 401 certification.

In response to evolving federal regulations and court decisions affecting the scope of CWA jurisdiction, the State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards continue to implement applicable State water quality requirements for waters subject to their authority. At present, the State Water Quality Control Board and the RWQCBs are to:

- continue issuing Section 401 certifications for federal permits; and
- issue Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for dredge or fill discharges to waters deemed by the USACE as not subject to federal jurisdiction referencing the same regulatory considerations that are used to issue general WDRs.

A Section 401 certification and a WDR application may be made on the same form, but the State Board has issued a model letter to be submitted with the WDR application to clarify that the WDRs

3 United States Code. Title 33. Section 1251 et seq.

are intended to cover "waters of the State" not covered by the Section 401 certification and not subject to the USACE regulations.

Section 404

The CWA was passed in 1972 and regulates discharges into waters of the United States. Section 404 of the CWA regulates activities including discharge of dredged or fill materials into waters of the United States.

The discharge of fill material into an area delineated as waters of the United States, including wetlands, that is determined to be under the USACE jurisdiction, requires a permit or other approval by the USACE Regulatory Branch. Fill is broadly defined as anything foreign introduced into the receiving water. This includes most materials (e.g., rock, soil, pilings, concrete, wood, some incidental fallback of soil from earth-moving equipment, and in some cases additional water) that can be discharged into a water body or wetland.

Most Section 404 permits require mitigation for reducing overall impacts to wetlands, including waters of the United States and their functions.

Federal Rivers and Harbors Act

Federal regulations of "waters of the United States" stem from Section 10 of the Federal Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899,[4] enacted to regulate activities within navigable waters. Under Section 10 of the Act, the building of any wharfs, piers, jetties, and other structures is prohibited without Congressional approval, and excavation or fill within navigable waters requires the approval of the Chief of Engineers. Primary concerns of this Act include contamination of sediments associated with dredge or fill projects in navigable waters.

5.4.1.2 State

California Endangered Species Act (CESA)

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA)[5] generally parallels the main provisions of the federal Endangered Species Act and is administered by the CDFW. The CESA ensures that deserving plant or animal species will be given protection by the State based on their ecological, educational, historical, recreational, aesthetic, economic, and scientific value to the people of the State. The CESA establishes State policy to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance endangered species and their habitats. Under State law, plant and animal species may be formally designated as rare, threatened, or endangered through official listing by the California Fish and Wildlife Commission.

4 United States Code. Title 33. Section 403; Chapter 425, 30 Stat. 1151, *Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899*.

5 California Fish and Game Code. Section 2050 et seq.

Listed species are provided greater protection during the land use planning process by local governments, public agencies, and landowners than species that are not listed.

On private property, endangered plants may also be protected by the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977. State-listed threatened plants are protected by the CESA, and State-listed rare plants are protected by the NPPA. However, the CESA authorizes that "private entities may take plant species listed as endangered or threatened under the ESA and CESA through a federal incidental take permit issued pursuant to Section 10 of the ESA, if the CDFW certifies that the incidental take statement or incidental take permit is consistent with the CESA." In addition, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires disclosure of any potential impacts on listed species and alternatives or mitigation that would reduce those impacts.

California Fish and Game Code

Section 1602-1605

The State of California regulates water resources under Sections 1600–1605 of the Fish and Game Code of California.[6] It is unlawful for any person to divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream or lake designated by the department, or use any material from the streambeds, without first notifying the CDFW of that activity.

The CDFW considers most natural drainages to be streambeds unless it can be demonstrated otherwise. Streams are defined in the California Code of Regulations as follows:[7]

> *A stream is a body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and that supports fish or other aquatic life. This includes watercourses having surface or subsurface flow that supports or has supported riparian vegetation.*

The CDFW jurisdiction under Section 1602 includes ephemeral, intermittent, and perennial watercourses, and is often extended to the limit of riparian habitats that are located contiguous to the water resource and that function as part of the watercourse system. The California Fish and Game Code states:[8]

> *Riparian habitat means lands that contain habitat that grows close to and which depends on soil moisture from a nearby freshwater source.*

Any project that impacts CDFW jurisdictional areas, including fills, vegetation removal, or bridging, requires a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFW. Much of the same

6 California Fish and Game Code. Sections 1600 to 1605.

7 California Code of Regulations. Title 14. Chapter 1. Section 1.72.

8 California Fish and Game Code. Section 2785(e).

information (i.e., project description, potential impacts, mitigation measures, etc.) necessary to apply for USACE Section 404 permits is also required in the Streambed Alteration Agreement application.

Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3800

The California Fish and Game Code[9] also prohibits the destruction of bird nests and eggs (Section 3503), and the "take" of birds of prey (Section 3503.5) and nongame birds (Section 3800). Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (killing or abandonment of eggs or young) is considered "take." Such "take" would also violate federal law protecting migratory birds.

Incidental take permits (i.e., Management Agreements) are required from the CDFW for projects that may result in the incidental take of species listed by the State of California as endangered, threatened, or candidate species. The permits require that impacts to protected species be minimized to the extent possible and mitigated to a level of insignificance.

Native Plant Protection Act

Sections 1900–1913 of the Fish and Game Code were developed to preserve, protect, and enhance Rare and Endangered plants in the State of California. The act requires all state agencies to use their authority to carry out programs to conserve Endangered and Rare native plants. Provisions of the Native Plant Protection Act prohibit the taking of listed plants from the wild and require notification of the CDFW at least ten days in advance of any change in land use which would adversely impact listed plants. This allows CDFW to salvage listed plant species that would otherwise be destroyed.

California Environmental Quality Act—Treatment of Listed Plant and Animal Species

The ESA and CESA protect only those species formally listed as endangered or threatened (or rare in the case of the state list). CEQA Guidelines Section 15380 independently define "endangered" species of plants or animals as those whose survival and reproduction in the wild are in immediate jeopardy, "threatened" species as those likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future in the absence of special protection, and "rare" species as those in such low numbers that they could become endangered if their environment worsens. Therefore, a project normally will have a significant effect on the environment if it will substantially affect endangered, threatened, or rare species of animal or plant, or the species' habitat. The significance of impacts to a species under CEQA must be based on analyzing the actual threat of extinction, likelihood of becoming endangered, or rarity of the species or habitat, regardless of legal status.

9 California Fish and Game Code. Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3800.

California Native Plant Society Rare and Endangered Plant Species

Vascular plants listed as rare or endangered by the CNPS, but which have no designated status under the federal ESA or CESA are defined as follows:

California Rare Plant Rank

- **1A** — Plants Presumed Extirpated in California and either Rare or Extinct Elsewhere
- **1B** — Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere
- **2A** — Plants Presumed Extirpated in California, But More Common Elsewhere
- **2B** — Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, But More Common Elsewhere
- **3** — Plants about Which More Information is Needed–A Review List
- **4** — Plants of Limited Distribution–A Watch List

Threat Ranks

- **1** — Seriously threatened in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)
- **2** — Moderately threatened in California (20-80 percent occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
- **3** — Not very threatened in California (<20 percent of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

5.4.1.3 Regional and Local

Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP)

A Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (Plan) was prepared for the entire Coachella Valley and surrounding mountains to address current and potential future state and federal Endangered Species Act issues in the Plan Area. A Memorandum of Understanding (Planning Agreement) was developed to govern the preparation of the Plan. In late 1995 and early 1996, under the auspices of CVAG, the cities of Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, and Rancho Mirage; County of Riverside (County); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG); Bureau of Land Management (BLM); U.S. Forest Service (USFS); and National Park Service (NPS) signed the Planning Agreement to initiate the planning effort. Subsequently, Caltrans, Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), Imperial Irrigation District (IID), Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (County Flood Control), Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District (County Parks), Riverside County Waste Resources Management District (County Waste), California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), and CVMC decided to participate in the Plan. The Plan balances environmental protection and economic development objectives in the Plan Area and simplifies compliance with endangered species related laws. The Plan is intended to satisfy the legal

requirements for the issuance of Permits that will allow the Take of species covered by the Plan in the course of otherwise lawful activities. The Plan will, to the maximum extent practicable, minimize and mitigate the impacts of the Taking and provide for Conservation of the Covered Species. The Conservation Plan includes the establishment of an MSHCP Reserve System, setting Conservation Objectives to ensure the Conservation of the Covered Species and conserved natural communities in the MSHCP Reserve System, provisions for management of the MSHCP Reserve System, a Monitoring Program, and Adaptive Management. The MSHCP Reserve System will be established from lands within 21 Conservation Areas. Because some Take Authorization is provided under the Plan for Development in Conservation Areas, the actual MSHCP Reserve System will be somewhat smaller than the total acres in the Conservation Areas. When assembled, the Reserve System will provide for the Conservation of the Covered Species in the Plan Area.

The Project Site is located within the boundaries of the CVMSHCP Area, but is not located within any Conservation Areas, Preserves, Cores, or Linkages. The proposed Project is not listed as a planned "Covered Activity" under the published CVMSHCP but is still considered to be a current Covered Activity pursuant to Section 7.1 of the CVMSHCP. According to Section 7.1 of the CVMSHCP, take authorization will be provided for certain activities that take place outside of Conservation Areas including:

> *"new projects approved pursuant to county and city general plans, transportation improvement plans for roads in addition to those addressed in Section 7.2, master drainage plans, capital improvement plans, water and waste management plans, the County's adopted Trails Master Plan, and other plans adopted by the Permittees."*

Riverside County General Plan

The County of Riverside General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element includes the following applicable Biological Resources policies with the goal of preserving significant environmental resources within the County:

OS 17.1 Enforce the provisions of applicable MSHCP's and implement related Riverside County policies when conducting review of possible legislative actions such as general plan amendments, zoning ordinance amendments, etc. including policies regarding the handling of private and public standalone applications for general plan amendments, lot line adjustments, and zoning ordinance amendments that are not accompanied by, or associated with, an application to subdivide or other land use development application. Every standalone application shall require an initial Habitat Evaluation and Acquisition Negotiation Process (HANS) assessment, and such assessment shall be made by the Planning Department's Environmental Programs Division. Habitat assessment and species-specific focused surveys shall not be required as part of this initial HANS assessment for standalone applications but will be required when a development proposal or land use application to subsequently divide, grade, or build on the property is submitted to the County.

OS 17.2 Enforce the provisions of applicable MSHCP's and implement related Riverside County policies when conducting review of development applications.

OS 17.3 Enforce the provisions of applicable MSHCP's and implement related Riverside County policies when developing transportation or other infrastructure projects that have been designated as covered activities in the applicable MSHCP.

OS 18.1 Preserve multi-species habitat resources in the County of Riverside through the enforcement of the provisions of applicable MSHCP's and through implementing related Riverside County policies.

OS 18.3 Prohibit the planting or introduction of invasive, non-native species to watercourses, their banks, riparian areas, or buffering setbacks.

OS 18.4 Develop standards for the management of private conservation easements and conservation lots in fee title. For areas with watercourses, apply special standards a – f (below) for their protection, and apply standards g – j (below) generally:

a. For conservation lands with watercourses, conform easement boundaries to setback conditions that will preserve natural flows and changes in the natural boundaries of a watercourse and its protective riparian habitat.
b. Use only "open" fencing that permits the movement of wildlife, and limit fencing to locations outside of setbacks to watercourses (no fencing is permitted to cross the banks or channel of a watercourse, unless no other option is available).
c. Allow fuel modification only to the outside of buffering vegetation (riparian vegetation and vegetation on slopes that buffer the watercourse from erosion and storm water pollution).
d. No planting of non-native invasive species is permitted.
e. No lighting of watercourse area is permitted.
f. Prohibit the use of pesticides and herbicides known to harm aquatic species and sensitive amphibians.
g. Ensure that lands under control of Homeowner's Associations employ an experienced non-profit conservation group or agency to manage/maintain the land.
h. Prohibit the use of recreational off-road vehicles.
i. Prohibit the grazing and alterations of vegetation except for fuel and weed management under close supervision of qualified natural lands manager.
j. For private conservation lands, especially those within criteria cells of MSHCP areas, ensure that easement and fee title agreements provide funding methods sufficient to manage the land in perpetuity.

5.4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project Site is located in the eastern Coachella Valley within a predominately developed and disturbed landscape that has been extensively modified by historic and ongoing agricultural uses and surrounding urban development. As a result, biological resources on and around the Project Site are generally limited and are characteristic of areas influenced by farming activities, infrastructure, and residential development. The Project Site does not support intact native habitat or sensitive natural communities and does not function as a regional wildlife corridor or linkage.

The Project Site lies within the CVMSHCP Plan Area; however, it is not located within any designated Conservation Areas, Preserves, Core Habitat Areas, or Linkages. Biological conditions in the vicinity reflect a landscape that has been substantially altered from its natural state, with habitat value primarily limited to common species adapted to disturbed or urban environments.

5.4.2.1 Existing Conditions

Project Site

The Project Site has been directly and indirectly influenced by human activity as a result of historic and ongoing agricultural operations, infrastructure improvements, and surrounding development. The Project Site is bordered by existing roadways and urban uses to the west, north and south, with additional disturbed and agricultural lands to the east. Avenue 53 traverses the Project Site in an east to west direction and functions as an internal paved roadway. Existing development patterns, roadway infrastructure, and surrounding land uses substantially limit the movement of small terrestrial animals on, off, and through the Project Site and reduce its suitability as functional habitat for sensitive species.

The Project Site supports four (4) land types classified as agricultural, disturbed, developed, and water detention basin. The majority of the Project Site consists of primarily undeveloped, disturbed land that does not support natural plant communities due to routine vegetation removal and ground disturbance. Developed areas on site include Avenue 53, a residential development located near the northern boundary of the site, and associated infrastructure. A date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the Project Site. The southern portion of the Project Site, south of Avenue 53, primarily supported active agricultural fields during the biological field survey, while the northern portion primarily consists of disturbed, mostly barren land with sparse weedy vegetation.

Three water detention basins were observed on the Project Site that were constructed to support agricultural crops. These basins do not support riparian vegetation and were determined to be artificial upland features associated with historic agricultural use. No undisturbed natural plant communities were observed on site.

Topographically, the Project Site is relatively flat and gently slopes south to north with limited topographic relief. The Project Site is not located within any regional wildlife corridors/linkages or

CVMSHCP conservation areas. Additionally, the Project Site is isolated from regional wildlife corridors and linkages, and there are no riparian corridors, creeks, or useful patches of steppingstone habitat (natural areas) within or connecting the Project Site to the CVMSHCP conservation areas, as shown in **Figure 5.4-1: Critical Habitat** and **Figure 5.4-2: CVMSHCP Conservation Areas**.

No naturally occurring springs, perennial aquatic habitats, or drainage features occur within the Project Site. No blue-line streams, washes, or natural drainage features are shown on US Geological Survey maps for the Project Site, and no jurisdictional waters or wetlands were observed during the biological field investigation.[10,11]

The Project Site is underlain by Myoma fine sand (0 to 5 percent slopes), Gilman fine sandy loam (0 to 2 percent slopes), Gilman fine sandy loam, wet (0 to 2 percent slopes), and Indio fine sandy loam.[12]

Surrounding Area

Uses surrounding the Project include vacant and fallow land, date farming, estate density residential, and suburban level development to the west. The Project Site is bordered by the Santa Rosa Ranch, Mirabella Estates, Plantation Golf Club and single-family homes to the north; the Desert Cahuilla Academy, the Tahquitz Equestrian facility, and the Zenyara Luxury Estate (a private event facility) are all located to the east; single-family homes, the Cavallo Ranch, date groves estate-density residential lots and vacant land are located to the south, and The Madison Club, is located west of Monroe Street.

Existing roadways and existing urban uses adjacent to the Project Site further limit habitat connectivity and constrain wildlife movement between the Project Site and surrounding areas. No natural open space, riparian corridors, or wildlife movement linkages connect the Project Site to regional habitat areas.

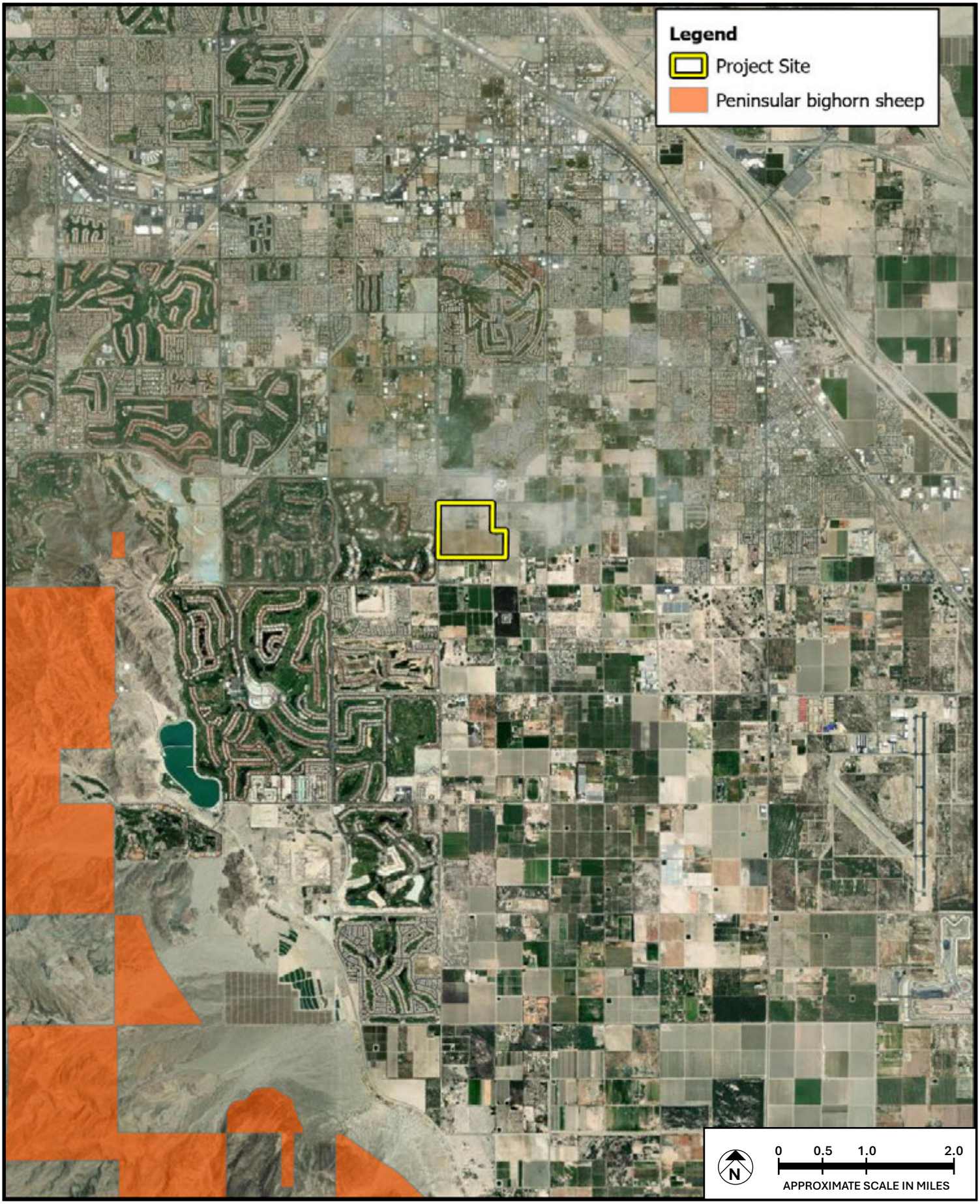
Field Surveys

Field surveys were conducted on October 30, 2024, and evaluated the existing biological conditions within the Project Site and a 200-foot buffer. Plant communities were identified through pedestrian surveys consisting of meandering transects across the site and along community boundaries. Plant communities were evaluated for their potential to support special-status plant and wildlife species. Special attention was given to special-status habitats and/or undeveloped areas, which have higher potential to support special-status plant and wildlife species. No wildlife migratory corridors or

10 See **Appendix F**: **Biological Resources Assessment**.

11 United States Geological Survey. "StreamStats." Accessed December 2025. https://streamstats.usgs.gov/ss/.

12 See **Appendix F**: **Biological Resources Assessment**.



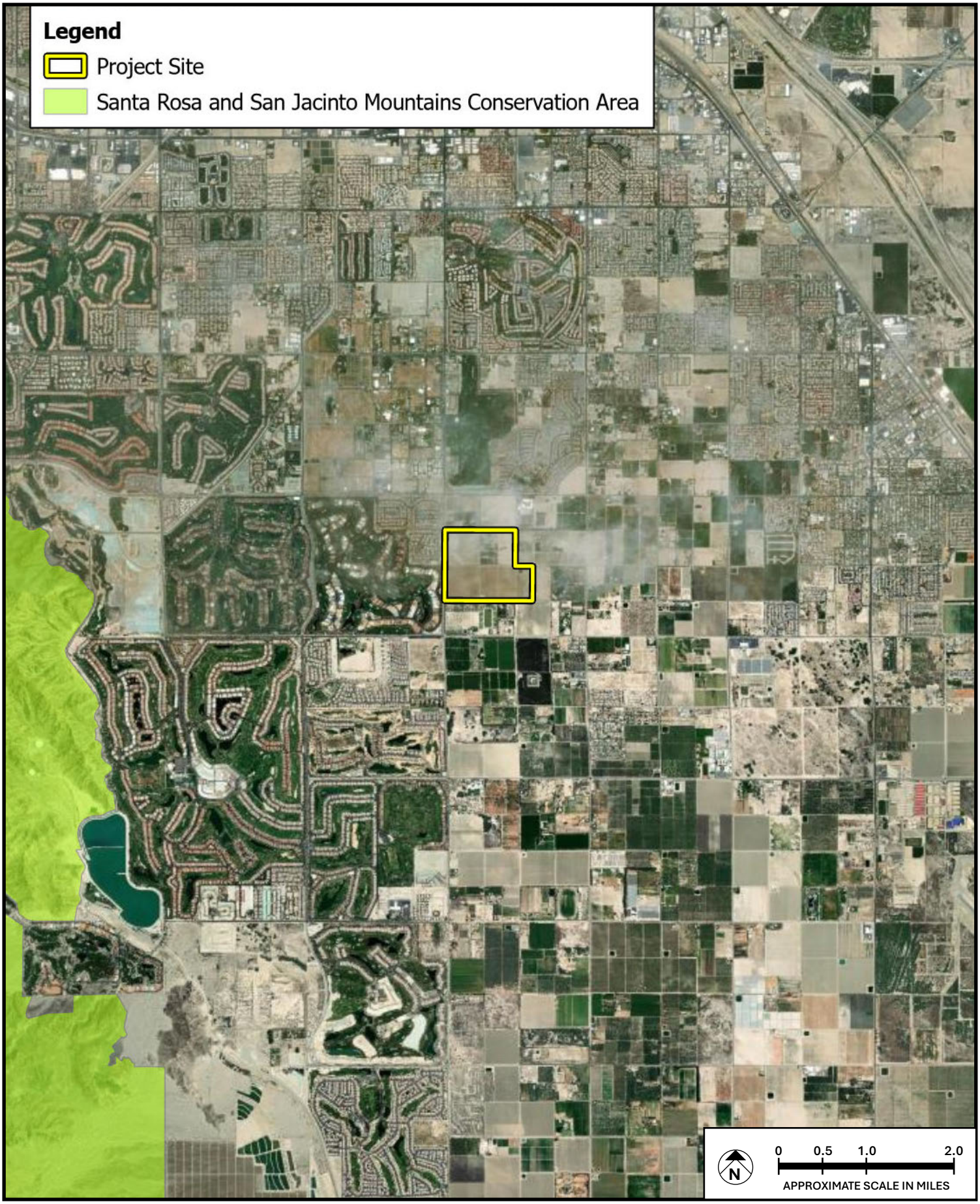
SOURCE: ELMT Consulting – November 2024.

FIGURE **5.4-1**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Critical Habitat

427-001-24



SOURCE: ELMT Consulting – November 2024.

FIGURE **5.4-2**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

CVMSHCP Conservation Areas

linkages that may support the movement of wildlife through the area were identified through the field survey.

Wildlife surveys were conducted simultaneously with plant surveys. Wildlife observations were based on calls, songs, scat, tracks, burrows, and direct observations. No wildlife movement corridors or habitat linkages were identified during the field investigation.

Plant Communities

No undisturbed native plant communities were observed on the Project Site during the biological field investigation. Existing vegetation conditions reflect extensive historic and ongoing disturbance associated with agricultural operations, infrastructure, and routine vegetation management. Based on field surveys and review of available data, the Project Site supports four (4) general land types consisting of agricultural land, disturbed land, developed areas, and water detention basins.

Agricultural areas occur primarily in the southern portion of the Project Site and consist of actively cultivated fields observed during the field survey. Additionally, a date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the Project Site. Disturbed land comprises a substantial portion of the Project Site and generally consists of previously farmed areas that are now largely barren due to routine disking and vegetation removal, which have inhibited the establishment of natural plant communities. Vegetation in these areas is sparse and dominated by common weedy and nonnative species typically associated with disturbed conditions.

Developed areas within the Project Site include Avenue 53, an internal paved roadway, a residential development located near the northern boundary of the site, and associated infrastructure. Water detention basins present on the Project Site were constructed for agricultural irrigation purposes and do not support riparian vegetation or natural wetland plant communities.

Vegetation on the Project Site is characteristic of disturbed agricultural and developed landscapes and does not provide suitable habitat for sensitive natural plant communities or special-status plant species.

Special-Status Plant Species

According to the CNDDB and the CNPS, nineteen (19) special-status plant species have been recorded in the Indio and La Quinta U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangles. No special-status plant species were observed on the Project Site during the biological field investigation.

Based on habitat requirements for specific species and the availability and quality of on-site habitats, the Project Site does not have the potential to support special-status plant species due to the high level of anthropogenic activities associated with current and historic agricultural land uses, and surrounding development.

Wildlife Species

The literature search identified thirty-nine (39) special-status wildlife species as having been reported in the La Quinta and Indio USGS quadrangles. No special-status wildlife species were observed on the Project Site during the field investigation.

Based on the habitat requirements for individual species and the availability and quality of on-site habitats, the Project Site was determined to have a moderate potential to support Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), and prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*); and a low potential to support black-tailed gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*). All other special-status wildlife species evaluated were determined to have low or no potential to occur on the Project Site due to the disturbed nature of on-site conditions and lack of suitable habitat; however, certain species, such as bats, may utilize on-site features for roosting. While the Project Site is highly disturbed, existing features such as ornamental trees, date palm groves, and on-site structures may provide suitable roosting habitat for common and special-status bat species. Therefore, the potential exists for bats to roost within the Project Site.

None of these species are State or federally listed as threatened or endangered; however, burrowing owl is currently designated as a Candidate species under the California Endangered Species Act and is addressed in further detail below.

Burrowing Owl

The burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) is currently designated as a Candidate for Listing under CESA. Burrowing owls typically occupy open areas characterized by sparse vegetation and bare ground, where they rely on burrows created by ground-dwelling mammals or artificial cavities for roosting and nesting.

The Project Site contains areas of open, disturbed land with suitable line-of-sight conditions and several burrows that could provide potential habitat for burrowing owls. However, no burrowing owls or evidence of occupation were observed during the biological field investigation. Based on these findings, the Project Site was determined to have a moderate potential to support burrowing owl.

Wildlife Movement Corridors

Wildlife movement corridors and habitat linkages facilitate the movement and dispersal of wildlife between larger habitat areas. The Project Site has not been identified as occurring within a wildlife movement corridor or linkage and does not provide connectivity to regional habitat areas.

According to the Biological Resources Assessment (**Appendix F**), no designated Critical Habitat, regional wildlife corridors, or habitat linkages occur within or adjacent to the Project Site. The surrounding developed land uses and roadway infrastructure limit the Project Site's function as a movement corridor for wildlife.

Nesting Birds

The Project Site provides limited foraging and nesting opportunities for common avian species adapted to disturbed and developed environments. No active bird nests or nesting behavior were observed during the biological field investigation. Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code.

5.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.4.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine the significance of biological resource impacts (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). Appendix G provides that a project would have a significant environmental impact if it would:

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

b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife?

c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption, or other means?

d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

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

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

5.4.4 METHODOLOGY

Prior to conducting field surveys, a literature review and records search was completed to identify biological resources with the potential to occur on or within the vicinity of the Project Site. Previously recorded occurrences of special-status plant and wildlife species were reviewed using database queries of the CDFW CNDDB, including RareFind, the CNPS Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, the Calflora Database, and species listings maintained by the USFWS. Literature describing biological resources and historic land uses in the vicinity of the Project Site were also reviewed to provide background on existing conditions and site disturbance.

A biological field investigation was conducted on October 30, 2024, to characterize on-site biological resources within the Project Site and a 200-foot buffer. The field survey consisted of pedestrian surveys using meandering transects across the Project Site and along boundaries between land

types. Plant communities and land cover types were identified and mapped, and dominant plant species were recorded. Surveys focused on identifying habitat features with the potential to support special-status plant and wildlife species, including features that may support roosting bats, as well as the presence of any natural corridors or linkages that could facilitate wildlife movement.

Wildlife surveys were conducted concurrently with plant surveys and included visual observations and the identification of indirect evidence such as tracks, scat, burrows, nests, calls, and other signs. Site characteristics such as topography, soils, hydrology, anthropogenic disturbance, and existing development were documented during the field investigation to inform the evaluation of habitat conditions.

Additionally, available geographic information system (GIS) data, USGS topographic maps, United States Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory mapping, and historic and aerial imagery were reviewed to assist in identifying potential jurisdictional waters, wetlands, wildlife corridors, and habitat linkages. Soil information was reviewed using the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey for Riverside County. Applicable regional conservation plans, including the CVMSHCP, were reviewed to analyze the Project Site's proximity to designated conservation areas, habitat linkages, and covered species.

5.4.5 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?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

Construction of the Project would involve vegetation removal, ground disturbance, grading, and the operation of construction equipment, which could result in temporary disturbance or habitat modification for wildlife species occurring within or adjacent to the Project Site. As described in the Project's Biological Resources Assessment (**Appendix F**), the Project Site has been disturbed by historic agricultural activities and does not support native plant communities or high-quality habitat for special-status species.

No special-status plant species were observed during the biological field investigation. Based on the disturbed nature of on-site conditions, routine vegetation management, and the lack of suitable habitat, the Project Site would not provide potential habitat for special-status plant species. Therefore, Project construction would not result in direct or indirect impacts to special-status plant species.

Based on habitat characteristics and regional occurrence data, the Project Site was determined to have a moderate potential to support Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), and prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*); and a low potential to support black-tailed

gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*). Of these species, the burrowing owl is designated as a Candidate species under the CESA and is a covered species under the CVMSHCP.

Construction-related activities, including ground disturbing activities, could result in the disturbance or loss of potential burrowing owl habitat, disturbance of nesting birds, and the removal or disturbance of potential bat roosting habitat associated with on-site palm trees and structures, or the accidental take of an individual if present at the time of construction. Additionally, ground disturbing activities conducted during the avian nesting season could impact nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code. Thus, Project implementation could result in potentially significant impacts to special-status wildlife species without mitigation.

In addition, the Project Site contains features that may support roosting bats. Therefore, a pre-construction focused bat survey shall be conducted to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats. If roosting bats are identified, appropriate avoidance and minimization measures, including establishment of buffers, seasonal restrictions, or preparation of a Bat Management Plan in coordination with the CDFW, shall be implemented to avoid impacts.

As discussed above, the proposed Project is located within the boundaries of the CVMSHCP but not within any of the CVMSHCP designated conservation areas. The Project is considered to be a current Covered Activity pursuant to Section 7.1 of the CVMSHCP,[13] meaning take authorization would be provided for the proposed Project. As a Covered Activity located outside designated conservation areas, the Project would implement the applicable regulatory compliance measures, as described in Section 4.4 of the CVMSHCP.[14] Specifically, the Project would implement Mitigation Measure (**MM**) **BIO-1** through **MM BIO-3** to include burrowing owl focused surveys, a pre-construction bat survey and a pre-construction nesting bird clearance survey to be conducted prior to ground disturbance. Additionally, if necessary, a Bat Management Plan would be developed.

The entirety of the Project Site has been previously disturbed with agricultural activities. Therefore, native vegetation has been impacted in these areas of disturbance, and development of the Project would not result in the loss of native vegetation or habitats that support sensitive or special-status species. With implementation of **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-3**, potential impacts to special-status wildlife species would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

13 Coachella Valley Conservation Commission. "Section 4.0 Establishment of the MSHCP Reserve System." *Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan*. Accessed February 2025. https://cvmshcp.org/plan-documents/.

14 Coachella Valley Conservation Commission. *Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan*. August 2016. Accessed February 2025. https://cvmshcp.org/plan-documents/.

b. Have a substantial adverse effect on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife?

Less Than Significant Impact.

As previously described, the Project Site has been disturbed by historic agricultural activities and does not support riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. As described in the Project's Biological Resources Assessment (**Appendix F**), no riparian vegetation, wetlands, or other sensitive natural plant communities were identified on the Project Site or within the surrounding area. No naturally occurring springs, perennial or intermittent streams, washes, or drainage features occur on the Project Site, and no riparian corridors were observed during the Project's biological field investigation.

Existing water detention basins present on the Project Site were constructed for agricultural irrigation purposes and do not support riparian vegetation or natural wetland plant communities. These features are artificial and do not constitute sensitive natural communities as defined by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or other applicable regulatory agencies.

Because no riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities occur on the Project Site, the Project's construction and operation would not result in the removal, degradation, or disturbance of riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption, or other means?

Less Than Significant Impact.

The Project Site does not contain State or federally protected wetlands or other waters of the United States or State. As identified in the Project's Biological Resources Assessment (**Appendix F**), no naturally occurring springs, perennial, or intermittent streams, washes, or drainage features occur on the Project Site. No blue-line streams are shown on the USGS maps for the Project Site, and no botanical indicators of wetlands or jurisdictional waters were observed during the Project's biological field investigation.

The existing water detention basins on the Project Site are artificial upland features and do not support wetland vegetation, do not exhibit wetland hydrology, and are not considered jurisdictional wetlands or waters subject to regulation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

No State or federally protected wetlands or other jurisdictional waters occur on the Project Site. Thus, Project construction and operation would not result in the direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption of wetlands or waters of the United States or State. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Less Than Significant Impact.

As described in the Biological Resources Assessment (**Appendix F**), the Project Site has not been identified as a wildlife movement corridor or linkage and does not provide connectivity to regional habitat areas or conservation lands. No regional wildlife corridors, habitat linkages, or nursery sites occur on or adjacent to the Project Site. The Project Site is bound by developed land uses and roadways, which already limit the movement of wildlife through the area. Wildlife within the Project Site consists primarily of common species adapted to disturbed or urban environments, which do not rely on the Project Site for migration, dispersal, or breeding connectivity. Because the Project Site does not function as a wildlife movement corridor or nursery site, Project construction and operation would not substantially interfere with the movement of native resident or migratory wildlife species. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

The Project Site is located within the CVMSHCP Plan Area; however, the Project Site is not within any designated Conservation Areas, Preserves, Core Habitat Areas, or Linkages. As described in the Project's Biological Resources Assessment (**Appendix F**), the Project qualifies as a Covered Activity pursuant to Section 7.1 of the CVMSHCP and would comply with all applicable requirements of the plan.

As a Covered Activity located outside designated conservation areas, the Project would implement the applicable regulatory compliance measures outlined in the CVMSHCP, including pre-construction biological surveys and avoidance measures where required. With compliance with the CVMSHCP and implementation of **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-3**, the Project would not conflict with the conservation goals, policies, or requirements of the CVMSHCP.

Additionally, no locally adopted biological resource protection ordinances, such as tree preservation ordinances or habitat conservation policies apply to the Project Site. The Project would not remove any protected or native trees, or impact biological resources protected by local policies or ordinances. Thus, the Project would not conflict with local or regional policies adopted for the purpose of conserving biological resources. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

As previously described, the Project Site is within the boundaries of the CVMSHCP. However, it is not within a designated Conservation Area, Core Habitat Areas, or wildlife linkages identified in the CVMSHCP. The Project Site qualifies as a Covered Activity, pursuant to Section 7.1 of the CVMSHCP.

As a Covered Activity located outside of designated conservation areas, the Project would comply with all applicable requirements of the CVMSHCP. The Project would comply with regulatory compliance measures and would incorporate mitigation measures **MM BIO-1**, **MM BIO-2**, and **MM BIO-3**, which would require focused burrowing owl surveys, a pre-construction bat survey, and if necessary, a Bat Management Plan, and pre-construction nesting bird clearance survey prior to ground-disturbing activities. With implementation of these measures, the Project would not conflict with the conservation objectives or provisions of the CVMSHCP or any other adopted habitat conservation plan. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

5.4.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts to biological resources would occur if the Project, when considered together with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future development in the surrounding area, would contribute to a significant cumulative effect on biological resources.

The Project Site and surrounding area have been subject to historic disturbance associated with agricultural activities, infrastructure development, and urban growth. The Project Site does not support native plant communities, riparian habitat, wetlands, or other sensitive natural communities and no special-status plant species were observed within the Project Site. Further, the Project Site does not provide high-quality habitat for special-status wildlife species.

The Project is located within the planning boundary of the CVMSHCP but is outside of designated conservation areas. The Project qualifies as a Covered Activity under the CVMSHCP and would comply with all applicable requirements, including implementation of mitigation measures, which are designed to avoid or minimize impacts to covered species and ensure consistency with the CVMSHCP's conservation strategy. As with the Project, related projects would be subject to the CVMSHCP as applicable, and the impacts from those projects to sensitive habitats, sensitive plants, and sensitive wildlife would be required to be mitigated through compliance with the requirements of the CVMSHCP, including the payment of the CVMSHCP Conservation Plan Fee. Therefore, implementation of related projects and other anticipated growth in the Coachella Valley would not combine with the Project to result in cumulatively considerable impacts on biological resources.

5.4.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures would reduce biological resource impacts:

MM BIO-1 Burrowing Owl Focused Presence/Absence Survey

The Project Site supports suitable foraging habitat and suitable burrows for burrowing owls. In order to ensure that no burrowing owls occur on site, focused surveys for burrowing owl shall be conducted during the breeding season. Focused surveys will conform to the protocol detailed in the 2012 CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. The survey will consist of at least four (4) visits, with at least one site visit between February 15 and April 15, with a minimum of three surveys, at least three weeks apart between April 15 and July 15, with at least one survey after June 15. A qualified wildlife biologist will survey the entire Project Site by walking transects in suitable habitat and in areas within 150 meters (500 feet) of the limits of disturbance, as applicable based on topography, access, and site conditions. Walking transects will be spaced approximately 10 meters (33 feet) apart or less to ensure 100% visual coverage of all areas.

If no burrowing owls are documented on site during the focused survey, a pre-construction clearance survey shall be conducted prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities to ensure burrowing owls remain absent from the Project Site.

Although not anticipated, if burrowing owls are found on site during the focused surveys, coordination shall occur with the CDFW to determine if avoidance and minimization measures can be implemented to avoid any direct or indirect impacts to burrowing owls, or if an Incidental Take Permit under Section 2081 of the CESA will be prepared and approved by CDFW.

<u>Burrowing Owl Pre-Construction Clearance Survey</u>

To ensure burrowing owls are absent from the Project Site, a pre-construction burrowing owl clearance survey shall be conducted following the regulations in the CDFW 2012 Staff report on Burrowing Owl.

MM BIO-2 Pre-Construction Focused Bat Survey

Prior to implementation of Project activities, a qualified biologist shall be retained to determine whether potential roosting sites for bats may be affected. For large ornamental trees and palms suitable for bat roosting/nursery, exit counts and acoustic surveys shall be performed prior to initial ground disturbance, vegetation, or structure removal to determine whether the Project Site and a 300-foot buffer support a nursery or roost, and by which species. This work will occur between late spring and late summer and/or in the fall (generally mid-March through late October). If the results of the bat survey find a total of a single roosting individual of a special-status bat species, or 25 or more individuals of a non-special status bat species with

potential to be present in the Project Site (i.e., hoary bat, western yellow bat), a Bat Management Plan shall be developed to ensure mortality to bats does not occur. For each location confirmed to be occupied by bats, the plan shall provide details both in text and graphically where exclusion devices/and or staged tree removal will need to occur, the timing for exclusion work, and the timeline and methodology needed to exclude the bats. The plan shall be reviewed and approved by CDFW prior to disturbance of the roosts.

MM BIO-3 Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Fish and Game Code Compliance

Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 prohibit the take, possession, or destruction of birds, their nests, or eggs). In order to protect migratory bird species, a nesting bird clearance survey shall be conducted prior to any ground disturbance or vegetation removal activities that may disrupt the birds during the nesting season.

If construction occurs between February 1 and August 31, a pre-construction clearance survey for nesting birds shall be conducted within three (3) days of the start of any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities to ensure that no nesting birds will be disturbed during construction. The biologist conducting the clearance survey shall document a negative survey with a brief letter report indicating that no impacts to active avian nests will occur. If an active avian nest is discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey, construction activities shall stay outside of a no-disturbance buffer. The size of the no-disturbance buffer shall be determined by the wildlife biologist and will depend on the level of noise and/or surrounding anthropogenic disturbances, line of sight between the nest and the construction activity, type and duration of construction activity, ambient noise, species habituation, and topographical barriers. These factors will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis when developing buffer distances. Limits of construction to avoid an active nest shall be established in the field with flagging, fencing, or other appropriate barriers; and construction personnel shall be instructed on the sensitivity of nest areas. A biological monitor shall be present to delineate the boundaries of the buffer area and to monitor the active nest to ensure that nesting behavior is not adversely affected by the construction activity. Once the young have fledged and left the nest, or the nest otherwise becomes inactive under natural conditions, construction activities within the buffer area can occur.

5.4.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of **MM BIO-1** would implement focused surveys to avoid any direct impacts from Project construction activities on any individual burrowing owls that may be present on the Project Site. Implementation of **MM BIO-2** would ensure that potential impacts to roosting bats are avoided or minimized through pre-construction focused bat surveys, and if necessary, a Bat Management

Plan. Implementation of **MM BIO-3** would avoid any direct impacts from Project construction activities on any nesting birds that may be present on the Project Site at the time construction commences. With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts to biological resources would be less than significant.

5.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) addresses the potential for implementation of the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (Project) to affect cultural resources within the Project Site and in the immediate surrounding area. Cultural resources include places, objects, and settlements that reflect group or individual religious, archaeological, or architectural activities. Such resources provide information on scientific progress, environmental adaptations, group ideology, or other human advancements. Information from the following study of the Project Site is incorporated into this section:

- *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment of an approximate 71-ha (175-acre) Cultural Resource Study within Vista Santa Rosa, Riverside County, California*, Patrick B. Stanton, Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI), May 15, 2025.[1] See **Appendix G**.

5.5.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.5.1.1 Federal

National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, established the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), which contains an inventory of the nation's significant prehistoric and historic properties. Under 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60, a property is recommended for possible inclusion on the NRHP if it is at least 50 years old, has integrity, and meets one of the following criteria:

- It is associated with significant events in history, or broad patterns of events.
- It is associated with significant people in the past.
- It embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural type, period, or method of construction; or it is the work of a master or possesses high artistic value; or it represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- It has yielded, or may yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Certain types of properties are usually excluded from consideration for listing in the NRHP, but they can be considered if they meet special requirements in addition to meeting the criteria listed above. Such properties include religious sites, relocated properties, graves and cemeteries, reconstructed properties, commemorative properties, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years.

1 Statistical Research, Inc. *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment of a 71-Ha (175-Acre) Cultural Resource Study within Vista Santa Rosa, Riverside County, California*. May 15, 2025. See **Appendix G**.

National Register of Historic Places

Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of an undertaking on historic properties, which are defined as cultural resources included in or eligible for listing in the NRHP. A Section 106 review refers to the federal review process designed to ensure that historic properties are considered during federal project planning and implementation. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency, administers the review process, with assistance from State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs). If any impacts are identified, the agency undergoing the project must identify the appropriate SHPO to consult with during the process.

Determination of NRHP eligibility for cultural resources prior to making a finding of effect is made according to the following criteria:

> *National Register criteria for evaluation. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and*
>
> (a) *that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or*
> (b) *that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or*
> (c) *that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or*
> (d) *that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.*

If cultural resources do not meet the above criteria, they are not historic properties and are not further considered in the Section 106 process. In addition to having significance, resources must have integrity for the period of significance. The period of significance is the date or span of time within which significant events transpired, or significant individuals made their important contributions.

5.5.1.2 State

State Health and Safety Code

The discovery of human remains is regulated by *California Health and Safety Code*, Section 7050.5, which states that

> *"...(b) In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of the county in which the human remains are discovered has determined in accordance with Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 27460) of Part 3 of Division*

2 of Title 3 of the Government Code that the remains are not subject to…provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. The coroner shall make his or her determination within two working days from the time the person responsible for the excavation, or his or her authorized representative, notifies the coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains.

(c) If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and if the coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission."

California Register of Historical Resources

As defined by Section 15064.5(a)(3)(A-D) of the CEQA Guidelines, a resource shall be considered historically significant if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the CRHR. The CRHR and many local preservation ordinances have employed the criteria for eligibility to the NRHP as a model, since the National Historic Preservation Act provides the highest standard for evaluating the significance of historic resources. A resource that meets the NRHP criteria is clearly significant. In addition, a resource that does not meet the NRHP standards may still be considered historically significant at a local or State level.

California Public Resources Code

Archaeological and historical sites are protected pursuant to a wide variety of State policies and regulations enumerated under the *California Public Resources Code*. In addition, cultural resources are recognized as a non-renewable resource and, therefore, receive protection under the *California Public Resources Code* and CEQA:

- California Public Resources Code Sections 5020-5029.5 continued the former Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee as the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC). The SHRC oversees the administration of the California Register of Historical Resources and is responsible for the designation of State Historical Landmarks and Historical Points of Interest.
- California Public Resources Code Sections 5079-5079.65 defined the functions and duties of the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). OHP is responsible for the administration of federally and State mandated historic preservation programs in California and the California Heritage Fund.
- California Public Resources Code Sections 5097.9-5097.998 provide protection to Native American historical and cultural resources and sacred sites and identify the powers and duties of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). These sections also require notification of discoveries of Native American human remains, likely descendants, and provide for the treatment and disposition of human remains and associated grave goods.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The CEQA Guidelines state that a resource need not be listed on any register to be found historically significant. The CEQA Guidelines direct lead agencies to evaluate archaeological sites to determine whether they meet the criteria for listing in the CRHR. If an archaeological site is a historical resource, in that it is listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, potential adverse impacts to it must be considered. If an archaeological site is considered not to be a historical resource but meets the definition of a "unique archaeological resource" as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21083.2, then it would be treated in accordance with the provisions of that section.

5.5.1.3 Regional and Local

County of Riverside

The applicable policies listed below are from the County of Riverside General Plan, and are intended to ensure the preservation of cultural, historical, archaeological, paleontological, geological, and educational resources in the County.

OS 19.1 Cultural resources (both prehistoric and historic) are a valued part of the history of the County of Riverside.

OS 19.2 The County of Riverside shall establish a Cultural Resources Program in consultation with Tribes and the professional cultural resources consulting community that, at a minimum, would address each of the following: application of the Cultural Resources Program to projects subject to environmental review; government-to-government consultation; application processing requirements; information database(s); confidentiality of site locations; content and review of technical studies; professional consultant qualifications and requirements; site monitoring; examples of preservation and mitigation techniques and methods; curation and the descendant community consultation requirements of local, state and federal law.

OS 19.3 Review proposed development for the possibility of cultural resources and for compliance with the cultural resources program.

Policy OS 19.5 *Exercise sensitivity and respect for human remains from both prehistoric and historic time periods and comply with all applicable laws concerning such remains*.

5.5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) is part of the Colorado Desert geomorphic province, an area that includes both sides of the lower Colorado River and Coachella and Imperial Valleys of California. The Project Site is along the far-northwestern end of the Coachella Valley, between the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south and southeast and the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the

north. The Valley is part of the Colorado Desert geomorphic province, an area that includes both sides of the lower Colorado River and the Coachella and Imperial Valleys of California.[2]

Geology

The Project Site is located along the far-northwestern end of the Coachella Valley, a low valley situated between the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south and southeast and the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north. The valley is a fault-bound depression; the San Andreas Fault runs along the northern margin of the valley, and the Banning Fault, a subordinate fault to the San Andreas Fault, runs east–west through the valley, between the San Andreas Fault and the San Jacinto Fault to the west.

The Coachella Valley forms the northern extent of the Salton Trough, a northwest–southeast-trending depression that reaches from the San Gorgonio Pass to the Gulf of California, 174 miles to the south. The Valley has been heavily shaped by tectonic forces involving interaction of the Pacific and North American Plates along the San Andreas Fault system.[3] Folding in the earth's crust has blocked the flow of underground aquifers and has resulted in numerous springs and pools. These water sources were crucial resources for prehistoric groups.[4]

The Santa Rosa Mountains are at the northern end of the Peninsular Ranges, a series of mountain ranges running from the Los Angeles Basin southeastward to the tip of the Baja California Peninsula, forming a natural border between the coastal areas to the west and the deserts to the east. The highest point in the region is the San Jacinto Peak with an elevation of 3,302 meters (10,834 feet), which towers above the present-day city of Palm Springs at 3,307 meters (m) above mean sea level (AMSL). The Little San Bernardino Mountains are part of the Transverse Ranges, a series of east–west-trending mountains that are similar in composition to the Peninsular Ranges and include large masses of Mesozoic-era plutonic rocks. The summits of the Transverse Ranges exceed 3,500 meters (11,483 feet) AMSL at San Gorgonio Peak. Much of the Valley bottom is at or below mean sea level (BMSL); the deepest areas dip to 80 meters (263 feet) BMSL. Both alluvial and aeolian sediments are present within the valley. The Project Site is composed entirely of alluvial-fan deposits including the Indio and Gilman soil series, both of which are very fine sandy loams with coarse silt and have mixed calcareous compositions.

Much of the prehistoric occupation of the Coachella Valley appears to have been correlated to the presence of Lake Cahuilla. The earliest known sites in the valley date to the Late Archaic period, roughly 4000–1500 B.P. Most of these sites are at or near the ancient lakeshore, as are several sites

2 SRI. *Phase I Cultural Resources Study*. See **Appendix G**.

3 Harden, Deborah R. *California Geology. 2nd ed*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2004.

4 Wilke, Philip J. "Late Prehistoric Human Ecology at Lake Cahuilla, Coachella Valley, California." *Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility 38* (May 1, 1978): 1–40.

dating to the Late Prehistoric period. The Project Site is along the maximum shoreline of Lake Cahuilla.

Plant Communities

The Coachella Valley is part of the Sonoran Life Zone and is characterized by the Creosote Bush Scrub plant community, which characteristically includes creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), white brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), cholla (*Cylindropuntia*) and prickly pear (*Opuntia spp*.) cacti, chuparosa (*Beloperone californica*), desert lavender (*Hyptis emoryi*), sage (*Salvia spp.*), and various grasses. California fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*), the only species of palm native to California, is present in oases surrounding the valley. Desert oases also provide habitat for a number of other species, including screwbean mesquite (*Prosopis pubescens*) and Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*). Many of the plant populations known to the historic Cahuilla period were medicinal or therapeutic.

Animal Communities

A number of desert animals inhabit the greater Coachella Valley, including mammals such as bighorn sheep (Ovis canadensis), coyote (Canis latrans), gray fox (Urocyon cinereoargenteus), various mouse species (Peromyscus and Perognathus spp.), squirrels (Spermophilus [Citellus] spp.), and lagomorphs (black-tailed jackrabbit [Lepus californicus] and desert cottontail [Sylvilagus audubonii]); reptiles, including rattlesnakes (Crotalus spp.) and a variety of lizards (collared lizards [Crotaphytus], desert iguanas [Dipsosaurus], spiny lizards [Sceloporus], rock lizards [Petrosaurus], and brush lizards [Urosaurus spp.]); and birds, such as turkey vulture (Cathartes aura), red-tailed hawk (Buteo jamaicensis), mourning dove (Zenaida macroura), and common raven (Corvus corax). During prehistoric times and up to the early twentieth century, pronghorn (Antilocapra americana) was common in the Coachella Valley, but it has since been pushed out by modern development. Besides being sources of food, many of the animals were important components of Cahuilla rituals, and their bones have been found in ritual contexts at sites in Tahquitz Canyon.[5]

5.5.2.1 Cultural Setting

Prehistoric Background

In the Colorado Desert, fluctuation in the flow of the Colorado River resulted in periodic inundation and recession of ancient Lake Cahuilla, which had a significant impact on resource availability. Resource availability influenced population movement and settlement and subsistence patterns in the region surrounding Palm Springs, the Coachella Valley, and the Salton Sea. The shifting course of the Colorado River influenced regional prehistory throughout the Holocene as it periodically inundated the Salton Trough and created Lake Cahuilla. Current research suggests that no fewer than

5 SRI. *Phase I Cultural Resources Study*. See **Appendix G**.

three cycles of inundation and desiccation occurred between A.D. 1200 and 1600, and very little is known about the activity of the lake before that time.

The Paleoindian Period (12,000–8,000 B.P.)

Paleoindian period groups, probably with Clovis complex technology, occupied much of California beginning ca. 12,000 B.P. However, there is very little evidence of Paleoindian period occupation of the northern Coachella Valley. The reasons for this are unclear but may be related to a lack of habitat for the large game hunted by Clovis people.

Across much of western North America, the Clovis complex developed into the Western Stemmed tradition (or Western Pluvial Lakes tradition) after 10,000 B.P., probably in response to the warming and drying climate of the early Holocene. This tradition is characterized by crescents and large stemmed, shouldered, and lanceolate points. The cultural assemblage is commonly referred to as San Dieguito in southern California and had an economy presumably based on the exploitation of marsh plants, fish, freshwater shellfish, and large and small game.

In 2012, an isolated fluted point was discovered at the McCoy Springs site, at the base of the McCoy Mountains, approximately 111 km (69 miles) east of the Project Site. The point had a combination of attributes that placed it within the Paleoindian period. Only one other fluted point has been found in Riverside County: in the Pinto Wash, in Joshua Tree National Park. There is little evidence of a San Dieguito presence in the northern Coachella Valley for reasons which are unclear, however, the lack of early occupation may indicate that Lake Cahuilla was not inundated during that time.

The Archaic Period (8,000–1,500 B.P.)

As of ca. 8000 B.P., the climate became hotter and drier, and it appears that the northern Coachella Valley was basically abandoned during that time. When the climate began to cool, during the Late Archaic period 4000 B.P, the Colorado Desert was reoccupied, and several archaeological sites in the northern Coachella Valley are dated to this time. During later occupations, human populations migrated to the shores of Lake Cahuilla. Due to the lack of archaeological evidence, little is known about Late Archaic period human adaptations or social structure.

However, archaeological evidence has yielded details about possible locations of shelters and settlements within this period. One of the best-documented Late Archaic period sites is the Indian Hill Rockshelter near Anza-Borrego State Park, which is approximately 28.6 miles southwest of the Project Site. A rock shelter was discovered in Tahquitz Canyon, 21.4 miles northwest of the Project Site, which contained rock-lined pits and similar artifacts, but no radiocarbon dating was conducted for the site; therefore, its true age is unclear. These limited discoveries suggest that indigenous peoples lived in highly nomadic groups and took advantage of a variety of resources in the area.

Excavations at two sites (CA-RIV-1827 and CA-RIV-2642) near Desert Hot Springs, resulted in deposits dating to the transition from the Late Archaic period to the Late Prehistoric period, ca. 1200–

1000 B.P. These sites contained evidence of habitation, including hearth features; activity surfaces and a variety of artifact types, such as flaked stone debitage; faunal remains; and possible human remains.

The Late Prehistoric Period (1,500–200 B.P.)

As of 1500 B.P., Yuman (or Patayan) agricultural groups along the Colorado River area began to influence Colorado Desert groups, particularly in the Coachella Valley. This Patayan pattern included a preceramic phase and three ceramic phases: Patayan I (ca. 1500–1000 B.P.), Patayan II (ca. 1000–500 B.P.), and Patayan III (after ca. 500 B.P.). After ca. 1000 B.P. (Patayan II), a number of cultural traits, including new ceramic types, small triangular points, and cremations, moved westward from the Colorado River, either through diffusion or, perhaps, carried by some migrating Yuman people. In either case, long-distance trade networks were established between the Coachella Valley and the Colorado River.

The Late Prehistoric period groups that occupied the Coachella Valley were the direct ancestors of the ethnographic Cahuilla. This period witnessed a significant increase in human occupation of the valley, and several large archaeological sites from the period have been identified.[6]

Ethnographic Background

The Indigenous group that occupied the northern Coachella Valley during the historical period was the Desert Cahuilla, who, along with the Mountain and Pass Cahuilla, constituted the ethnographic Cahuilla. The Cahuilla spoke a language of the Takic branch of Northern Uto-Aztecan, and the Desert Cahuilla spoke a distinct dialect of Cahuilla. There have been few archaeological studies of the historical-period Cahuilla, but testing at the former Mission Creek Indian Reservation, approximately 53.7 km (33.4 miles) northwest of the Project Site, identified occupations stretching from the Late Prehistoric period into the early twentieth century. Similarly, excavations at Tahquitz Canyon (Bean et al. 1995), 34.5 km (21.4 miles) northwest of the Project Site, found a large village complex dating to A.D. 1600–1870.

The Cahuilla people were traditionally organized into moieties, clans, and lineages, with each lineage occupying its own village and managing distinct resources. This social structure supported access to a wide range of habitats and promoted economic independence among villages. The Desert Cahuilla relied heavily on mesquite as a staple food but also utilized over 150 plant species for various purposes, such as agave, pinyon, and acorns. Animal resources ranged from large game in the mountains to small desert fauna. They practiced fishing in ancient Lake Cahuilla, used fish traps, and also adopted limited agriculture, later incorporating European-introduced crops. Their lifestyle

6 SRI. *Phase I Cultural Resources Study*. See **Appendix G**.

began to shift with European contact, leading to involvement in ranching and wage labor, as well as a sharp population decline due to disease and migration.

The Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, a federally recognized tribe culturally affiliated with the Desert Cahuilla, is among the smaller bands that reestablished their tribal identity after significant demographic and political challenges. Established under the Mission Indian Relief Act of 1891, the small reservation near Coachella faced severe demographic decline, at one point reduced to a single tribal member. However, a revival in the 1990s under Roberta Augustine's descendants led to the reestablishment of tribal governance and economic development, notably the opening of the Augustine Casino in 2002.

Historical-Period Background

The extreme aridity of the Colorado Desert acted as a deterrent to many early explorers. The earliest recorded European visit to the Coachella Valley was in the winter of 1823–1824 by José Romero, the leader of an expedition attempting to reach the Colorado River by a new route.

In 1853, William P. Blake described the Coachella Valley during the Pacific Railroad Survey expedition and recorded the general environment, noting the locations of Indian villages and providing descriptions of Native agriculture in the valley, as well as some oral traditions of the Indians concerning life around ancient Lake Cahuilla. The European settlement of the valley intensified after the completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1877, as entire business areas were built along newly constructed railroad lines. In 1938, construction began for the 123-mile Coachella Canal, which would supply additional water from the Colorado River to the valley for crop irrigation and to aid in flood control. By the 1960s, the Coachella Valley County Water District rehabilitated the canal and included developments to expand the distribution systems, which has allowed the Coachella Valley to remain a productive agricultural location since the canal's completion.

The development of the federal and state highway systems in the early twentieth century opened the valley to further development. State Route (SR) 111 was completed through the area in 1934. The stretch of SR 111 east of the Project Site generally followed the alignment of the Bradshaw Stage Road, which was established in the 1860s and connected the region with Arizona, to the east. The section of U.S. Highway 86 from Indio southward to the Imperial Valley is part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Farm-To-Market Highway and facilitated agricultural activity in the area. Interstate 10 (I-10), which runs north of the Project Site, is the fourth-longest interstate route in the United States, extends from Los Angeles, California, to Jacksonville, Florida, and was completed in 1964.

The Salton Sea was created between 1905 and 1907, when the Colorado River burst out of diversion canals and flooded a salt mine and nearby agricultural fields. Because of its proximity to the entertainment industry in Los Angeles, nearby Palm Springs became a convenient retreat for motion-picture celebrities and the moneyed elite from the East Coast and the Midwest. Additionally, several

recreational resorts were developed around the Salton Sea well into the 1950s, and it became a popular destination for water-sports enthusiasts in Southern California.

During the late twentieth century, development in the Coachella Valley expanded rapidly; scores of country clubs and housing developments appeared along SR 111 and I-10. The advent of Native American gaming initiatives has also driven economic development in the valley. At least three casino resorts are present in the valley, and several others are nearby.

Previous Archaeological Research in Coachella Valley

Much archaeological research has been carried out within the Coachella Valley and the Colorado Desert since the early twentieth century. The earliest work was that of Malcolm Rogers (1929, 1939, 1945, 1966), who investigated the earliest occupations in Southern California, the San Dieguito cultural assemblages, and later Yuman occupations along the lower Colorado River. Although more recent research has refined his original conclusions, Rogers's work has formed the basis of much of the culture history of the region. Many recorded by the Archaeological Survey Association in the 1950s have since been destroyed by modern development.

Much of the research over the last 35 years has focused on the ancient shorelines of Lake Cahuilla, which have formed on numerous occasions during the last 15,000 years. Earlier theories suggested a long-standing stable lake, but more recent studies show at least three to four cycles of inundation and desiccation. These cycles influenced human settlement patterns, as modeled by Wilke (1978), who suggested that lakeside villages thrived when the lake was full, and desert-based settlements persisted near springs when it dried. However, excavations at the La Quinta site challenged this model, indicating seasonal, not year-round, occupation. Sutton (1998) argued that lakeshore settlements were active mainly in spring and summer, with groups relocating during the winter to yet-unidentified areas.

The influence of Lake Cahuilla on regional settlement patterns may be linked to the eastward migration and ethnogenesis of the Desert Cahuilla. While lakeshore sites have received significant archaeological attention, fewer studies have examined inland desert areas. Notable inland research has taken place in Tahquitz, Andreas, and Murray Canyons, where Late Prehistoric and ethnohistoric sites reveal dense cultural deposits. These include structural features like house pits and ritual elements such as cremations and offerings. Artifact analysis from these areas shows a diverse subsistence strategy, with increasing reliance on seeds, nuts, and high-elevation game like deer and bighorn sheep, reflecting a broad use of ecological zones beyond the lakeshore.[7]

7 SRI. *Phase I Cultural Resources Study*. See **Appendix G**.

5.5.2.2 Existing Conditions

The Project Site is along the far-northwestern end of the Coachella Valley, in between the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south and southeast and the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north. The Valley is part of the Colorado Desert geomorphic province, an area that includes both sides of the lower Colorado River and the Coachella and Imperial Valleys of California.

The Project Site is located in Vista Santa Rosa, a rural unincorporated community in Riverside County, California. The City of La Quinta is situated to the west, the City of Indio to the south, and Coachella and Thermal to the northeast and southeast, respectively. Vista Santa Rosa lies within the Sphere of Influence of the City of La Quinta.

The approximately 174-acre Project Site consists primarily of fallowed agricultural land, unoperated infiltration basins, and disturbed desert terrain associated with previous agricultural use. A date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, the remains of a pair of historical-period concrete foundations and associated refuse, which appear to date to 1968 and 1972, are present. The Project Site also contains ornamental landscaping, including lawns, shade trees, and palms; a modern mobile home, and several modern, non-residential outbuildings and trailers located within APN 780-010-013.

As further detailed below in *Section 5.5.4: Methodology*, the Phase I Cultural Resources Study (**Appendix G**) conducted a records search with the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University in order to identify any previous archaeological projects and previously recorded archaeological resources within the Project Site. A pedestrian survey was conducted on the Project Site. The Project Site was found to be largely undeveloped and most of the Project Site has been previously graded and tilled as agricultural land. The Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment identified the remains of a pair of historical-period foundations and associated refuse within the Project Site; however, these resources were determined not eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources.

5.5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.5.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine whether a project would have a significant effect on the environment (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). Appendix G provides that a project would have a significant impact to cultural resources if it would:

a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.

b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.

c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

5.5.4 METHODOLOGY

The Phase I Cultural Resources Study involved a records search to the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University on November 27, 2024 (see **Appendix G**). The goal of the records search was to review any previous archaeological projects that may have been conducted within the Project Site and to identify previously recorded archaeological resources located on the property. The records search looked at all reports from archaeological work executed within a 1-mile radius of the Project Site. The records search was conducted by examining USGS topographic maps held by the SCIC that show the locations of previous cultural resource surveys and known archaeological sites. The records search also included consultation of the catalogs of sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and/or designated California Historical Landmarks.

Part of the records search and literature review involved contacting the NAHC for a list of traditional-use areas or sacred sites within the Project area and a list of specific Native American groups or individuals who could provide additional information. The NAHC provided a list of 23 contacts from 11 tribes who could provide additional information. SRI sent a letter to all 23 contacts on November 13, 2024.

Additional archival research included reviewing primary and secondary sources for information pertinent to historical-period activities in the Project Site. As part of the archival search, SRI staff consulted the online USGS collection of Historical Topographic Maps, online USDI BLM/GLO records, and historical aerial imagery for information regarding specific historical-period land use in and around the Project Site.

In addition, a pedestrian survey of the Project Site was conducted from December 2 to December 5, 2024, by a single field archaeologist, Alyssa R. Canoff, M.A., RPA. The survey was completed by walking north-south oriented transects spaced at 49-foot intervals across the Project Site. The progress of the survey was monitored with a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) unit and high-resolution aerial photographs. During the survey, transect starting and stopping points were guided by GNSS technology. The field archaeologist also used the GNSS unit to record and map all identified cultural resources encountered within each transect and photographed each artifact. Photographs documented the artifacts within their geological and locational contexts, as well as the surrounding areas. Field observations were made at each site and included data such as measurements and a detailed description of each artifact encountered. No artifacts were collected during the survey.

5.5.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

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

Less than Significant.

According to the Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment, the results of the records search indicated that 21 previously recorded resources were identified within a 1-mile radius of the Project Site, consisting of 13 archaeological sites (4 historical-period, 8 prehistoric, and 1 multicomponent sites) and 8 isolated resources (8 prehistoric resources).[8] No previously recorded resources were identified within the Project Site. Therefore, no known historical resources under CEQA are present onsite.

In addition to the records search, the pedestrian survey of the Project Site identified remains of a pair of historical-period foundations and associated refuse, which appeared to date to 1968 and 1972, as determined from dates inscribed in the concrete. However, the foundations and refuse was determined ineligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), as it did not meet any of the CRHR-eligibility criteria, including: (1) association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history; (2) association with the lives of important persons; (3) embodiment of distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or (4) the potential to yield important information in history or prehistory. Because the resource does not meet any of the CRHR eligibility criteria, it does not qualify as a historical resource under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

Because no CRHR-listed, CRHR-eligible, or local-register historical resources are present within the Project Site, and because the only identified onsite features were found not eligible for listing, the Project would not involve the demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of any historical resource, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. The nearest CRHR-eligible site (CA-RIV-6823) is located outside the Project Site and would not be physically affected or indirectly impacted by Project activities.

Therefore, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and impacts would be less than significant.

8 The previously recorded historical-period sites consisted of two single-family residences, an agricultural farm with single-family residences, and a farmland irrigation system. The previously recorded prehistoric sites consisted of one habitation site with cremations and seven ceramic scatters (one with habitation debris). The previously recorded multicomponent site contained prehistoric artifact scatters with habitation debris and historical-period refuse. There were no historical period isolated resources within the records-search area. The previously recorded prehistoric, isolated resources consisted of lithic debitage and ceramic sherds.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

The archaeological records search conducted as part of the Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment did not identify any previously recorded archaeological sites or prehistoric resources within the Project Site. The Sacred Lands File search conducted by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) also returned negative results, and tribal outreach did not identify any known Native American cultural resources within the Project Site.

No archaeological resources were documented onsite during the pedestrian survey. A total of 21 previously recorded archaeological resources were identified within a 1-mile radius of the Project Site. These include eight (8) prehistoric sites, four (4) historical-period sites, one (1) multicomponent site, and eight (8) prehistoric, isolated finds. Several of these resources occur within 0.5 miles of the Project Site.

The geoarchaeological review found that the Project Site contains soil units associated with the Indio, Gilman, and Myoma series, which exhibit moderate to moderately high sensitivity for intact buried cultural deposits. Although the surface of portions of the property appears to have been mechanically disturbed or previously used for agriculture, available evidence indicates that disturbance was likely shallow, and therefore intact subsurface archaeological resources may still be present. Additionally, the Project Site lies along the maximum shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla, an area where previous studies have identified subsurface prehistoric deposits. Thus, ground-disturbing activities associated with Project construction could encounter previously unknown archaeological resources.

As a result, mitigation is required to ensure that any potential discoveries are properly identified, evaluated, and treated in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Thus, the County standard Conditions of Approval (COA) shall be applied to the Project through the implementation of Mitigation Measures (MM) **CUL-1** through **MM CUL-5** and **MM TCR-1** through **MM TCR-2**, which establishes procedures for managing archaeological discoveries during ground-disturbing activities. Implementation of these mitigation measures would ensure that any archaeological resources encountered during Project construction are adequately protected and treated in coordination with the County Archaeologist and consulting Tribes. Therefore, impacts to archaeological resources would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

According to the Phase 1 Cultural Resources Assessment, no evidence of human remains, burials or cremations, or signs of formal or informal cemeteries were identified within the Project Site. The

records searches, historical background research, NAHC SLF search, and Tribal consultation all produced negative results for known human remains within the Project Site. However, several prehistoric sites and isolated resources, including cremations and habitation areas, have been identified within the 1-mile records search area, indicating that the surrounding region has a moderate to moderately high sensitivity for buried cultural resources, including the potential for previously unknown human remains.

Therefore, in the event that human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that all ground-disturbing activities cease within the area of the discovery and that the County Coroner be notified. If the County Coroner determines the remains to be of Native American heritage, the NAHC shall be contacted by the County Coroner within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the NAHC shall identify the Most Likely Descendant. The Most Likely Descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation with the property owner concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in PRC Section 5097.98.

No further disturbance may occur until the County Coroner, and if applicable, the MLD, have issued recommendations and a final treatment plan has been implemented. Photography of human remains, or associated materials is prohibited. Compliance with these requirements would be ensured through **MM CUL-5**, which outlines procedures in coordination with the County Coroner, the NAHC, and the designated Tribal representative. With implementation of **MM CUL-5**, the Project would comply with all applicable state laws governing the treatment of human remains. Therefore, impacts associated with the disturbance of human remains would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

5.5.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The geographic scope of the analysis of potential cumulative impacts on cultural resources includes the Project Site and surrounding areas within the County of Riverside. The Project would contribute considerably to cumulative impacts if it were to result in a significant adverse effect on cultural resources, including historical and archaeological sites and resources, and cultural resources of importance to local Native American tribes. The County General Plan contains Open Space Policies to reduce or minimize the effects of prospective development on cultural resources. However, the Open Space policies do not provide performance standards to protect buried cultural resources. Thus, the General Plan EIR provides Mitigation Measure 4.7.1A through 4.7.1C in order to preserve cultural resources. Mitigation Measures 4.7.1A outlines procedures to be followed in the event that human remains are encountered. Mitigation Measure 4.7.1B describes avoidance as the preferred treatment for cultural resources and outlines related procedures for avoidance during development. Mitigation Measure 4.7.1C outlines procedures if avoidance and/or preservation is not possible. The General Plan EIR found that implementation of the policies in the proposed General Plan and proposed General Plan mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts on cultural resources to a less-than-significant level.

The cultural resources survey conducted for the Project Site, including the evaluation of a wide range of literature, data, and information on historic, tribal, and other archaeological resources, identified cultural resources in the surrounding area; however, no evidence of such resources was identified within the Project Site or immediately adjacent to it. If unanticipated resources occur on the site, then the Project could contribute to the regional losses of cultural resources. However, the provided mitigation measures would reduce impacts to archaeological resources to less-than-significant levels.

As other projects are developed in the eastern Coachella Valley, surveys for historical and archaeological resources will be required under CEQA on a project-by-project basis. Should these surveys identify the presence of cultural resources, mitigation would be required to ensure that there is no cumulative loss of such resources. These requirements ensure that there would not be cumulative impacts associated with historical or archaeological resources. Therefore, the proposed Project's incremental impacts to these resources would not be cumulatively considerable.

5.5.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

MM CUL-1 Unanticipated Resources

The developer/permit holder or any successor in interest shall comply with the following for the life of this permit. If, during ground-disturbance activities, unanticipated cultural resources (see third bullet in list below) are discovered, the following procedures shall be followed:

- All ground-disturbance activities within 30 m (100 feet) of the discovered cultural resource shall be halted and the Project Archaeologist (see below) shall call the County Archaeologist immediately upon discovery of the cultural resource. A meeting shall be convened between the developer, the Project Archaeologist (see fourth bullet in list below), the Native American tribal representative, and the County Archaeologist to discuss the significance of the find. At the meeting of the aforementioned parties, a decision is to be made, with the concurrence of the County Archaeologist, as to the appropriate treatment (e.g., documentation, recovery, avoidance) for the cultural resource. Resource evaluations shall be limited to nondestructive analysis.
- Further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until the appropriate treatment has been accomplished.
- A cultural resource site is defined, for this condition, as being a feature and/or three or more artifacts in close association with each other. Tribal Cultural Resources are also considered cultural resources.
- If not already employed by the Project developer, a County-approved archaeologist and a Native American Monitor (see below) from the consulting tribe(s) shall be employed by the Project developer to assess the significance of the cultural resource, attend the meeting described above, and continue monitoring of all future site grading activities as necessary.

MM CUL-2 Project Archaeologist/Archaeological Monitors

Before issuance of grading permits, the applicant/developer shall provide evidence to the County Planning Department that a County-certified professional archaeologist (Project Archaeologist) has been contracted 26 to implement a Cultural Resource Monitoring Program (CRMP). A cultural resource monitoring plan shall be developed that addresses the details of all activities and provides procedures that must be followed in order to reduce the impacts to cultural, tribal cultural, and historic resources to a level that is less than significant as well as to address potential impacts to undiscovered buried archaeological resources associated with this Project. A fully executed copy of the contract and a digitally signed copy of the monitoring plan shall be provided to the County Archaeologist to ensure compliance with this condition of approval.

Working directly under the Project Archaeologist, an adequate number of qualified Archaeological Monitors shall be present to ensure that all earthmoving activities are observed. These Archaeological Monitors shall be on site during all grading activities for areas to be monitored, including off-site improvements. Inspections will vary based on the rate of excavation, the materials excavated, and the presence and abundance of artifacts and features.

The Project Archaeologist may submit a detailed letter to the County during grading requesting a modification to the CRMP if circumstances are encountered that reduce the need for monitoring.

MM CUL-3 Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report

Before Grading Permit Final Inspection, a Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report shall be submitted that complies with the Riverside County Planning Department's requirements for such reports for all ground-disturbing activities associated with this grading permit. The report shall follow the County of Riverside Planning Department Cultural Resources (Archaeological) Investigations Standard Scopes of Work posted on the Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) website. The report shall include results of any feature relocation or residue analysis required, as well as evidence of the required cultural sensitivity training for the construction staff held during the required pregrading meeting and evidence that any artifacts have been treated in accordance with procedures stipulated in the cultural resource monitoring plan. The report will also include the Tribal Monitoring notes as a confidential appendix. Once approved by the County Archaeologist, the Project Archaeologist shall provide a copy to the consulting tribes and the SCIC.

MM CUL-4 Artifact Disposition

In the event that cultural resources are identified during ground-disturbing activities, the landowner(s) shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources (including

sacred items, burial goods, and human remains) and provide evidence to the satisfaction of the County Archaeologist that all archaeological materials recovered during the archaeological investigations (including collections made during an earlier project, such as testing of archaeological sites that took place years ago) have been handled through one of the following methods.

1. Historic Resources: All historic archaeological materials recovered during the archaeological investigations (this includes collections made during an earlier project, such as testing of archaeological sites that took place years ago), shall be curated at the Western Science Center, a Riverside County curation facility that meets State Resources Department Office of Historic Preservation Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Resources ensuring access and use pursuant to the Guidelines.

2. Precontact Resources: A fully executed reburial agreement with the appropriate culturally affiliated Native American tribe(s) or band(s). This shall include measures and provisions to protect the reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloging, analysis, and special studies have been completed on the cultural resources. Details of contents and location of the reburial shall be included in the Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report. The details of any disposition of artifacts shall be documented in the Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report.

Deed Restrictions

At the conclusion of all construction activities, the Project proponent and the landowner shall record a deed restriction on the reburial location, if used, with the County to restrict development of these areas in the future. Deed restrictions shall not disclose the nature of the avoidance areas. A copy of the deed restriction(s) shall be submitted to the County planning staff as proof of compliance before the issuance of certificates of occupancy for the Project.

MM CUL-5 Human Remains

If human remains are found on this site, the developer/permit holder or any successor in interest shall comply with State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. Pursuant to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, if human remains are encountered, no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98(b), remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and their disposition has been made. If the Riverside County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the NAHC shall be contacted by the County Coroner within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the NAHC shall identify the Most Likely Descendant. The Most Likely Descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation with the

property owner concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in PRC Section 5097.98. Photography of human remains or associated resources shall be prohibited.

MM TCR-1 Native American Monitor

Before the issuance of grading permits, the developer/permit applicant shall enter into Native American Monitor agreement(s) with the consulting tribe(s) for the appropriate number of Native American Monitor(s). In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor(s), the Native American Monitor(s) shall attend the pregrading meeting with the contractors to provide cultural sensitivity training for all construction personnel. In addition, an adequate number of Native American Monitor(s) shall be on site during all initial ground-disturbing activities and excavation of soils in each portion of the Project Site, including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading, and trenching. In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor(s), the Native American Monitor(s) have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt the ground-disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources. Activities will be documented in Tribal Monitoring Notes, which will be required to be submitted to the County Archaeologist before Grading Permit Final Inspection. The developer/permit applicant shall submit a fully executed copy of the agreement(s) to the County Archaeologist to ensure compliance with this condition of approval. Upon verification, the County Archaeologist shall clear this condition. This agreement shall not modify any conditions of approval or mitigation measure.

MM TCR-2 Tribal Monitoring Notes

Before Grading Permit Final Inspection, a complete set of Tribal Monitoring Notes shall be submitted to the County Archaeologist. Upon receipt and approval of the notes, the condition will be cleared.

5.5.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

With implementation of **MM CUL-1** through **MM CUL-5** and **MM TCR-1** through **MM TCR-2**, impacts associated with cultural resources would be less than significant. Therefore, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts relating to cultural resources have been identified.

5.6 ENERGY

This section of the EIR evaluates potential impacts on energy resources from the construction and operation of the proposed Project. Specifically, this section evaluates the demand for energy resources attributable to the Project and evaluates whether the Project would result in potentially significant impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of resources and whether the Project would conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Energy estimates related to the proposed on-site power generation system are provided in **Appendix E: Site Energy Load Evaluation,** and energy estimates for construction and operation of the proposed homes and other Project components are provided in **Appendix H: Energy Calculations** to this Draft EIR.

5.6.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.6.1.1 Federal Setting

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards were first enacted by Congress in 1975 for the purpose of increasing the fuel efficiency of cars and light-duty trucks in order to reduce energy consumption.[1] The CAFE Standards were implemented as fleet-wide fuel economy averages to be achieved by car manufacturers. CAFE standards are regulated by the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA). NHTSA sets and enforces the CAFE standards, while the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) calculates average fuel economy levels for manufacturers.

In response to the *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency* ruling, the George W. Bush administration issued Executive Order 13432 in 2007, directing the USEPA, the US Department of Transportation (USDOT), and the US Department of Energy (USDOE) to establish regulations that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from motor vehicles, nonroad vehicles, and nonroad engines by 2008.[2] In 2009, the NHTSA issued a final rule regulating fuel efficiency for and GHG

1 US Department of Transportation. "Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards." Accessed October 2025. https://www.transportation.gov/mission/sustainability/corporate-average-fuel-economy-cafe-standards.

2 US Government Publishing Office, Administration of George W. Bush. *Executive Order 13432—Cooperation Among Agencies in Protecting the Environment With Respect to Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Motor Vehicles, Nonroad Vehicles, and Nonroad Engines, 631*. May 14, 2007. Accessed October 2025. https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/WCPD-2007-05-21/pdf/WCPD-2007-05-21-Pg631.pdf.

emissions from cars and light-duty trucks for model year 2011; in 2010, the USEPA and NHTSA issued a final rule regulating cars and light-duty trucks for model years 2012–2016.[3]

In 2010, President Obama issued a memorandum directing the USEPA, USDOT, USDOE, and NHTSA to establish additional standards regarding fuel efficiency and GHG reduction, clean fuels, and advanced vehicle infrastructure. The proposed standards projected to achieve 163 grams/mile of CO_2 in model year 2025, on an average industry fleet-wide basis, which is equivalent to 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) if this level were achieved solely through fuel efficiency. The final rule was adopted in 2012 for model years 2017–2021. On May 2, 2022, NHTSA also finalized fuel economy standards for passenger cars and light trucks for model years 2024–2025 that increase at a rate of 8 percent per year and increase at a rate of 10 percent per year for model year 2026 vehicles. NHTSA currently projects that the revised standards would require an industry fleet-wide average of roughly 49 mpg in model year 2026 and would reduce average fuel outlays over the lifetimes of affected vehicles that provide consumers hundreds of dollars in net savings.[4]

In addition to the regulations applicable to cars and light-duty trucks described above, in 2016, the USEPA and NHTSA finalized Phase 2 standards for medium and heavy-duty vehicles through model year 2027 that will improve fuel efficiency and cut carbon pollution. If implemented, the Phase 2 standards would be expected to lower CO_2 emissions by approximately 1.1 billion metric tons (MT) and save vehicle owners fuel costs of about $170 billion.[5] On March 28, 2022, EPA published a proposed rule that would set new, more stringent standards to reduce pollution from heavy-duty vehicles and engines starting in model year 2027. The proposed standards would significantly reduce emissions of smog- and soot-forming nitrogen oxides (NO_X) from heavy-duty gasoline and diesel engines and set more stringent GHG standards for certain commercial vehicle categories.[6]

5.6.1.2 State Setting

State Senate Bill 1389

SB 1389 (PRC Sections 25300–25323; SB 1389) requires that the California Energy Commission (CEC) develop an integrated plan for electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuels. The CEC must adopt and transmit to the Governor and Legislature an Integrated Energy Policy Report every two

3 United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). "Regulations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Commercial Trucks & Buses." December 27, 2017. Accessed October 2025. https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/regulations-greenhouse-gas-emissions-commercial-trucks.

4 Federal Register. *Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards for Model Years 2024–2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks. May 2, 2022*. Accessed October 2025. https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-05-02/pdf/2022-07200.pdf.

5 USEPA. "Detailed Fact Sheet: EPA and NHTSA Propose Standards to Reduce GHG and Improve Fuel Efficiency of Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicles for Model Year 2018 and Beyond." August 2016. Accessed October 2025. https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/detailed-fact-sheet.pdf.

6 USEPA. "Regulations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Commercial Trucks and Buses." Accessed October 2025. https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/regulations-greenhouse-gas-emissions-commercial-trucks.

years. The CEC prepares updates to these assessments and associated policy recommendations in alternate years. Preparation of the Integrated Energy Policy Report involves close collaboration with federal, State, and local agencies and a wide variety of stakeholders in an extensive public process to identify critical energy issues and develop strategies to address those issues. The most recently approved report and update, the 2021 Integrated Energy Policy Report Update, addresses the State's implementation of SB 350, integrated resource planning, distributed energy resources, transportation electrification, electricity system resilience and efficiency, barriers faced by disadvantaged communities, demand response, renewable energy, natural gas supplies, preliminary transportation energy demand forecast, and climate adaptation and resiliency.[7]

Renewables Portfolio Standard

California's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) program was established in 2002 by SB 1078 with the initial requirement that 20 percent of electricity retail sales must be served by renewable resources by 2017. The program was accelerated in 2015 with SB 350, which mandated a 50 percent RPS by 2030. SB 350 included interim annual RPS targets with three-year compliance periods and required 65 percent of RPS procurement to be derived from long-term contracts of 10 or more years. In 2018, SB 100 was signed into law, which again increased the RPS to 60 percent by 2030 and required all of the State's electricity to come from carbon-free resources by 2045. The most recent RPS-related enactment occurred in 2022; specifically, SB 1020[8] codifies into law a State policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply:

- 90 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2035,
- 95 percent by December 31, 2040, and 100 percent by December 31, 2045; and
- 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all State agencies by December 31, 2035.

To achieve these objectives, SB 1020 requires that CARB and the CEC use unspecified programs authorized under existing statutes and employ measures to ensure that implementation of the policy does not cause increases in GHG emissions elsewhere.

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) implements and administers RPS compliance rules for California's retail sellers of electricity, which include large and small investor-owned utilities (IOUs), electric service providers (ESPs) and community choice aggregators (CCAs). The California Energy Commission (CEC) is responsible for the certification of electrical generation facilities as

7 CEC. *Final 2021 Integrated Energy Policy Report*.

8 California Legislative Information. *Senate Bill No. 1020, Clean Energy, Jobs, and Affordability Act of 2022*. September 19, 2022. Accessed October 2025. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB1020.

eligible renewable energy resources and adopting regulations for the enforcement of RPS procurement requirements of publicly owned utilities (POUs).[9]

California Building Standards Code

California Energy Code

California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings[10] were established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. Title 24 requires the design of building shells and components to conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.

On August 11, 2021, the CEC adopted the 2022 Energy Code. In December, it was approved by the California Building Standards Commission for inclusion into the California Building Standards Code. The 2022 Energy Code encourages efficient electric heat pumps, establishes electric-ready requirements for new homes, expands solar photovoltaic and battery storage standards, strengthens ventilation standards, and more. Buildings whose permit applications are applied for on or after January 1, 2023, must comply with the 2022 Energy Code.[11]

California Green Building Code

The California Green Building Standards Code, which is Part 11 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), is commonly referred to as the CALGreen Code.[12] The most current version of the CALGreen building code, the 2022 CALGreen code, went into effect January 1, 2023. The purpose is to establish minimum standards to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, and general stability by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, outdoor lighting standards, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all building and structures within its jurisdiction.

Transportation Sector Energy Related Regulations

Section 5.8: Greenhouse Gas Emissions of this Draft EIR discusses various statutes that address climate change, which also address energy generation and consumption. As expressed in these statutes, meeting the State's climate change goals requires focused action to quickly transform the State's energy system away from fuels that generate GHGs. The following statutes direct various

9 California Public Utilities Commission. "Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Program." Accessed October 2025. https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/rps/.

10 CEC. "2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards." Accessed October 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/building-energy-efficiency-standards/2019-building-energy-efficiency.

11 CEC. "2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards." Accessed October 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/building-energy-efficiency-standards/2022-building-energy-efficiency.

12 California Building Standards Commission. *California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen)*. California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11. Accessed October 2025. http://www.bsc.ca.gov/Home/CALGreen.aspx.

State agencies to conduct assessments and forecasts that are used to develop recommendations for energy policies and programs that conserve State resources, provide reliable energy, protect the environment, enhance the State's economy, and protect public health and safety.

The State has provided a climate policy portfolio that addresses emissions across sectors including electricity, buildings, transportation, land use and agriculture, and industry. The transportation sector is the largest source of GHG emissions in the State and various State policies call for speeding the transition to zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs), which among other things reduce energy use, including:

- CARB's Scoping Plan, which describes California's approach for achieving its GHG reduction goals. The plan was developed in 2008 and updated in 2014, 2017 and 2022;
- Executive Order B-16-2012 set a goal of reaching 1.5 million ZEVs on California roadways by 2025; and
- Executive Order B-48-18 calls for at least 5 million ZEVs on California roads by 2030 and spurs the installation of 250,000 plug-in electric vehicle chargers, including 10,000 direct-current fast chargers, and 200 hydrogen refueling stations by 2025.

Executive Order B-55-18 established a Statewide goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045; that goal was subsequently codified by AB 1279 in 2022. Although these statutes are broader than the energy sector, reducing GHG emissions from California's energy system, including transportation, is a fundamental part of the effort to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Executive Order S-03-05

Executive Order S-03-05 mandates that California emits 80 percent fewer GHGs in 2050 than it emitted in 1990. Energy efficiency and reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) would play important roles in achieving this goal. As previously mentioned, GHG reduction efforts increase energy efficiency which also reduces the consumption of petroleum-based fuels.

Executive Order S-01-07

Executive Order S-1-07, the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (issued on January 18, 2007), requires a reduction of at least 10 percent in the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by 2020.[13] Regulatory proceedings and implementation of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard have been directed to the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The Low Carbon Fuel Standard has been identified by CARB as a discrete early action item in the adopted Climate Change Scoping Plan (discussed below). CARB expects the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to achieve the minimum 10 percent reduction goal; however, many of the early action items outlined in the Climate Change Scoping Plan work in tandem

13 State of California, Office of the Governor. *Executive Order S-01-07.* January 18, 2007. Accessed October 2025. https://climateactionnetwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/eos0107.pdf.

with one another. Other specific emission reduction measures included are the Million Solar Roofs Program[14] and Assembly Bill (AB) 1493 (Pavley I), Vehicle Emissions: Greenhouse Gases, which establishes motor vehicle GHG emissions standards.[15] To avoid the potential for double-counting emission reductions associated with AB 1493, the Climate Change Scoping Plan has modified the aggregate reduction expected from the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to 9.1 percent. In accordance with the Climate Change Scoping Plan, this analysis incorporates the modified reduction potential for the Low Carbon Fuel Standard. CARB released a draft version of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard in October 2008. The final regulation was approved by the Office of Administrative Law and filed with the Secretary of State on January 12, 2010; the Low Carbon Fuel Standard became effective on the same day.

In 2018, CARB approved amendments to the regulation, which included strengthening and smoothing the carbon intensity benchmarks through 2030 in-line with California's 2030 GHG emission reduction target enacted through SB 32, adding new crediting opportunities to promote zero-emission vehicle adoption, alternative jet fuel, carbon capture and sequestration, and advanced technologies to achieve deep decarbonization in the transportation sector.

California Air Resources Board

In 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) program, an emissions-control program for passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks for model years 2015–2025, thereby continuing the regulatory framework established under the Pavley standards beyond model year 2016. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and GHG emissions with requirements for greater numbers of zero-emission vehicles. The components of the Advanced Clean Cars program include the Low-Emission Vehicle (LEV) regulations that reduce criteria pollutants and GHG emissions from light- and medium-duty vehicles, and the ZEV regulation, which requires manufacturers to produce an increasing number of pure ZEVs (meaning battery electric and fuel cell electric vehicles), with provisions to also produce plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV) in the 2018 through 2025 model years.[16] Consistent with the other State-reduction policies geared toward reducing GHG emissions, the efforts to speed up integration of ZEVs and PHEVs would reduce the consumption of petroleum-based fuels.

The Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling (Title 13, CCR Section 2485) was adopted to reduce public exposure to diesel particulate matter and other air

14 US Department of Energy. *Laying the Foundation for Solar America: The Million Solar Roofs Initiative, Final Report*. October 2006 Accessed October 2025. https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy07osti/40483.pdf.

15 The standards enacted in Pavley I are the first GHG standards in the nation for passenger vehicles and took effect for model years starting in 2009 and going through 2016. Pavley I could potentially result in 27.7 million metric tons CO_2e reduction in 2020. Pavley II will cover model years 2017 to 2025 and potentially result in an additional reduction of 4.1 million metric tons CO_2e.

16 California Air Resources Board (CARB). "California's Advanced Clean Cars Program." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/advanced-clean-cars-program.

contaminants by limiting the idling of diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles. This section applies to diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles with gross vehicular weight ratings of greater than 10,000 pounds that are or must be licensed for operation on highways. Reducing idling of diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles reduces the amount of petroleum-based fuel used by this class of vehicles.

The Regulation to Reduce Emissions of Diesel Particulate Matter, Oxides of Nitrogen, and other Criteria Pollutants, from In-Use Heavy-Duty Diesel-Fueled Vehicles (Title 13, CCR Division 3, Chapter 1, Section 2025) was adopted to reduce emissions of diesel particulate matter, oxides of nitrogen (NO_X), and other criteria pollutants from in-use diesel-fueled vehicles. This regulation is phased, with full implementation by 2023, with compliance resulting in this class of vehicles using petroleum-based fuel in a more efficient manner, thereby reducing diesel fuel consumption.

CARB is responsible for enforcing CCR, Title 13, Sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485, which limit idling from both on-road and off-road diesel-powered equipment to no greater than five minutes at any location. Reducing idling of diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles reduces the amount of petroleum-based fuel used by the vehicle.

CARB 2020 Mobile Source Strategy

CARB staff developed the 2020 Mobile Source Strategy[17] to take an integrated planning approach to identify the level of transition to cleaner mobile source technologies needed to achieve all of California's targets. The actions contained in the Mobile Source Strategy deliver broad environmental and public health benefits, as well as support much needed efforts to modernize and upgrade transportation infrastructure, enhance system-wide efficiency and mobility options, and promote clean economic growth in the mobile sector.

CARB Advanced Clean Cars II

The Advanced Clean Cars II program[18] is designed to take the State's already growing zero-emission vehicle market and robust motor vehicle emission control rules and augment them to meet more aggressive tailpipe emissions standards and ramp up to 100 percent zero-emission vehicles. Additionally, the program will rapidly scale down light-duty passenger car, truck, and SUV emissions starting with the 2026 model year through 2035.

First, the Advanced Clean Cars II program amends the Zero-emission Vehicle Regulation to require an increasing number of zero-emission vehicles, and relies on advanced vehicle technologies,

17 CARB. "2020 Mobile Source Strategy." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/2020-mobile-source-strategy.

18 CARB. "Proposed Advanced Clean Cars II Regulations: All New Passenger Vehicles Sold in California to be Zero Emissions by 2035." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/advanced-clean-cars-program/advanced-clean-cars-ii.

including battery-electric, hydrogen fuel cell electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, to meet air quality and climate change emissions standards. Second, the program amends the Low-emission Vehicle Regulations to include increasingly stringent standards for gasoline cars and heavier passenger trucks to continue to reduce smog-forming emissions while the sector transitions toward 100 percent electrification by 2035.[19]

CARB Advanced Clean Fleets

CARB is developing a medium and heavy-duty zero-emission fleet regulation with the goal of achieving a zero-emission truck and bus California fleet by 2045 everywhere feasible and significantly earlier for certain market segments such as last mile delivery and drayage applications.[20] The initial focus would be on high-priority fleets with vehicles that are suitable for early electrification, their subhaulers, and entities that hire them. The goal of this effort is to accelerate the number of medium and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicle purchases to achieve a full transition to zero-emission vehicles in California as soon as possible.

CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation

The goal of the In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation[21] is to reduce particulate matter (PM) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_X) emissions from in-use (existing) off-road heavy-duty diesel vehicles in California. The regulation covers a wide scope of vehicle types used in (but not limited to) industries as diverse as construction, air travel, manufacturing, landscaping, and ski resorts. Large fleets have compliance deadlines each year from 2014 through 2023, medium fleets each year from 2017 through 2023, and small fleets each year from 2019 through 2028. While the goal of this regulation is primarily to reduce public health impacts from diesel emissions, compliance with the regulation also results in energy savings in the form of reduced fuel consumption from the use of more fuel-efficient engines.

Sustainable Communities Strategy

SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, coordinates land use planning, regional transportation plans, and funding priorities to reduce GHG emissions from passenger vehicles through better-integrated regional transportation, land use, and housing planning that provides easier access to jobs, services, public transit, and active transportation options. These actions achieve their objectives in part through increased energy efficiency. Specific to energy conservation, electric vehicles, natural gas vehicles, and transit/rail, more compact development patterns that reduce vehicle travel also demand less energy per capita. Reducing vehicle travel also

19 CARB. "Advanced Clean Cars II." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/rulemaking/2022/advanced-clean-cars-ii.

20 CARB. "Advanced Clean Fleets." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/advanced-clean-fleets/about.

21 CARB. "In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/use-road-diesel-fueled-fleets-regulation/about.

reduces energy related to producing and distributing fuels and vehicles, as well as the construction and maintenance of roads.

California Environmental Quality Act

In accordance with Appendix F and G of the CEQA Guidelines, and in order to ensure that energy implications are considered in project decisions, EIRs are required to include a discussion of the potential significant energy impacts of proposed projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy (PRC Section 21100(b)(3)). The 2020 update to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines now provides that if a project would result in potentially significant environmental effects due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, or conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, then an EIR shall be prepared for the project that includes mitigation measures for that energy use. The EIR's analysis should include the project's energy use for all project phases and components, including transportation-related energy, during construction and operation. In addition to building code compliance, other relevant considerations may include, among others, the project's size, location, orientation, equipment use, and any renewable energy features that could be incorporated into the project as further described below under Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines.

Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines provides a list of energy-related topics that may be discussed in an EIR, where topics are applicable or relevant to the project, including:

- The Project's energy requirements and its energy use efficiencies by amount and fuel type for each stage of the project including construction, operation, maintenance, and/or removal. If appropriate, the energy intensiveness of materials may be discussed;
- The effects of the Project on local and regional energy supplies and on requirements for additional capacity;
- The effects of the Project on peak and base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy;
- The degree to which the Project complies with existing energy standards;
- The effects of the Project on energy resources; and
- The Project's projected transportation energy use requirements and its overall use of efficient transportation alternatives.

5.6.1.3 Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

The SCAG 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategies (RTP/SCS)[22] is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals, with a specific goal of achieving a 19 percent reduction by 2035, and 21 percent reduction by 2040, compared to the 2005 level. Although the RTP/SCS is not technically an energy efficiency plan, consistency with the RTP/SCS has energy implications, including the reduction of VMT which reduces GHG emissions and has the co-benefit of reducing fossil fuel consumption from travel to and from a project.

5.6.1.4 Local

County of Riverside General Plan

The Riverside County General Plan Air Quality element contains the following policies related to energy efficiency, energy conservation, and renewable energy:

AQ 20.7 Reduce VMT through increased densities in urban centers and encouraging emphasis on mixed use to provide residential, commercial and employment opportunities in closer proximity to each other. Such measures will also support achieving the appropriate jobs-housing balance within the communities.

AQ 20.8 Reduce VMT by increasing options for non-vehicular access through urban design principles that promote higher residential densities with easily accessible parks and recreation opportunities nearby.

AQ 20.9 Reduce urban sprawl in order to minimize energy costs associated with infrastructure construction and transmission to distant locations, and to maximize protection of open space.

AQ 20.10 Reduce energy consumption of the new developments (residential, commercial and industrial) through efficient site design that takes into consideration solar orientation and shading, as well as passive solar design.

AQ 20.11 Increase energy efficiency of the new developments through efficient use of utilities (water, electricity, natural gas) and infrastructure design. Also, increase energy efficiency through use of energy efficient mechanical systems and equipment.

22 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). *Connect SoCal 2024*. Adopted April 4, 2024. Accessed October 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/23-2987-connect-socal-2024-final-complete-040424.pdf.

AQ 20.13 Reduce water use and wastewater generation in both new and existing housing, commercial and industrial uses. Encourage increased efficiency of water use for agricultural activities.

AQ 20.14 Reduce the amount of water used for landscaping irrigation through implementation of County Ordinance 859 and increase use of non-potable water.

AQ 20.15 Decrease energy costs associated treatment of urban runoff water through greater use of bioswales and other biological systems.

County of Riverside Climate Action Plan

The 2019 Riverside County Climate Action Plan (CAP) contains reduction measures designed to conserve energy and reduce GHG emissions. Several of these reduction measures reinforce the State regulations, as described above, including energy efficiency standards for lighting, electricity, and natural gas energy efficiency, increased combined heat and power, and industrial energy efficiency measures. Other reduction measures in the Riverside County CAP would implement policies from the County's General Plan, listed above, related to building energy efficiency, energy conservation, and renewable energy production, reducing solid waste landfill disposal, and methane recapture programs.

5.6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.6.2.1 Existing Conditions

The existing Project Site is vacant and undeveloped and as such, does not currently consume any electricity, natural gas, or petroleum-based fuels.

Electricity

The production of electricity requires the consumption or conversion of energy resources, including water, wind, oil, gas, coal, solar, geothermal, and nuclear resources, into energy. The delivery of electricity involves a number of system components, including substations and transformers, that lower transmission line power (voltage) to a level appropriate for use by customers. The electricity generated is distributed through a network of transmission and distribution lines commonly called a power grid. Conveyance of electricity through transmission lines is typically responsive to market demands.

Energy capacity, or electrical power, is generally measured in watts (W), while energy use is measured in watt-hours (Wh). For example, if a light bulb has a capacity rating of 100 W, the energy required to keep the bulb on for 1 hour would be 100 Wh. If ten 100 W bulbs were on for 1 hour, the energy required would be 1,000 Wh, or 1 kilowatt-hour (kWh). On a utility scale, a generator's capacity is typically rated in megawatts (MW), which is one million watts, while energy usage is measured in megawatt-hours (MWh) or gigawatt-hours (GWh), which is one billion watt-hours.

According to the California Energy Commission's (CEC), the State of California consumed approximately 252,000 GWh of electricity in 2022, with electricity demand projected to rise to approximately 299,000 GWh in 2040, the furthest year of currently available projections.[23]

Imperial Irrigation District (IID) provides electrical power to the Cities of Coachella, Indio, and La Quinta, as well as the unincorporated communities of Thermal, Mecca, and North Shore, within the County of Riverside. IID serves approximately 165,000 people in the Imperial Valley and parts of Riverside and San Diego Counties.[24] The CEC estimates that the IID service area would consume approximately 3,870 GWh of electricity in 2024.[25] IID produces and obtains electricity from various sources, including renewables such as biomass, biowaste, geothermal, hydroelectric, solar, and wind.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is a combustible mixture of simple hydrocarbon compounds (primarily methane) that is used as a fuel source. Natural gas consumed in California is obtained from naturally occurring reservoirs, mainly located outside the State, and delivered through high-pressure transmission pipelines. The natural gas transportation system is a nationwide network and, therefore, resource availability is typically not an issue. Natural gas satisfies almost one-third of the State's total energy requirements and is used in electricity generation, space heating, cooking, water heating, industrial processes, and as transportation fuel. Natural gas is primarily measured in terms of cubic feet (cf), or millions of cubic feet (MMcf), as well as in terms of British thermal units (Btu), and Therms.[26]

According to the CEC's California Energy Consumption Database, the State of California consumed approximately 11,711 million therms (equivalent to approximately 11,711,000 MMcf) of natural gas in 2022,[27] with demand projected to rise to 13,254 million Therms (13,254,000 MMcf) in 2035,[28] the furthest year of currently available projections.

SoCalGas is the natural gas purveyor for the Project Site. The SoCalGas service area reaches 21.8 million consumers through 5.9 million meters in more than 500 communities, covering an area of

23 California Energy Commission (CEC). *2023 Integrated Energy Policy Report Update*. Accessed October 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report-iepr/2023-integrated-energy-policy-report.

24 Imperial Irrigation District (IID). "About IID." Accessed October 2025. https://www.iid.com/power/about-iid-power#:~:text=Located%20in%20a%20region%20with,%2C%20hydroelectric%2C%20solar%20and%20wind.

25 CEC. "California Energy Demand, 2024–2050." Accessed October 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report-iepr/2024-integrated-energy-policy-report-0.

26 One Therm is equivalent to 100,000 British thermal units (BTU) or 100 kBTU. A Therm is approximately the energy equivalent of burning 100 cubic feet (1 cf) of natural gas. The conversion of kBTU to cubic feet uses the factor of 1 cf to 1.037 kBTU.

27 CEC. "California Energy Consumption Database, Gas Consumption by County." Accessed October 2025. https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx.

28 CEC. "California Energy Demand, 2023-2049." Accessed October 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report/2021-integrated-energy-policy-report.

approximately 24,000 square miles throughout Central and Southern California.[29] The SoCalGas planning area had a natural gas throughput of 2,291 MMcf per day in 2024,[30] with throughput projected to be 2,055 MMcf per day in 2040 and capacity projected to be 3,775 MMcf per day in 2040, the furthest year of currently available projections.[31]

Statewide natural gas demand is projected to decline at an annual rate of 1.1 percent each year through 2035.[32] The decline in demand is due to modest economic growth, CPUC-mandated energy efficiency standards and programs, as well as Senate Bill (SB) 350 goals. SB 350, signed on October 7, 2015, is the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015. The objectives of SB 350 include: (1) increase the procurement of electricity from renewable sources from 33 percent to 50 percent; and (2) double the energy savings in electricity and natural gas final end uses of retail customers through energy efficiency and conservation. Other factors that contribute to the downward trend are tighter standards created by revised Title 24 Codes and Standards, renewable electricity goals, a decline in commercial and industrial demand, and conservation savings linked to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). By comparison, the 2018 California Gas Report projected an annual decline in demand of 0.74 percent over the forecast horizon.[33]

Petroleum-Based Fuel

Crude oil is a mixture of hydrocarbons that exists as a liquid in underground geologic formations and remains a liquid when brought to the surface.[34] Petroleum products are produced from the processing of crude oil and other liquids and include transportation-related fuels such as gasoline and diesel. Petroleum is a worldwide commodity. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), California consumed approximately 628,086,000 barrels (26,379,612,000 gallons or 42 gallons per barrel) of petroleum in 2022, the most recent year of publicly available data.[35] The EIA forecasts a national oil supply of 17.0 million barrels per day (mb/d) in 2030.[36] This

29 Southern California Gas (SoCalGas). "Company Profile." Accessed October 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/about-us/company-profile.

30 SoCalGas. *2025 California Gas Report Supplement*. Accessed October 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/2025-07/2025-CA-Gas-Report-FINAL.pdf.

31 SoCalGas. *2024 California Gas Report*. Accessed October 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/2024-08/2024-California-Gas-Report-Final.pdf.

32 SoCalGas. *2022 California Gas Report*. Accessed October 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/Joint_Utility_Biennial_Comprehensive_California_Gas_Report_2022.pdf.

33 SoCalGas. *2018 California Gas Report.* Accessed October 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/regulatory/documents/cgr/2018_California_Gas_Report.pdf.

34 United States Energy Information Administration (US EIA). "Frequently Asked Questions." Accessed October 2025. https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=40&t=6.

35 US EIA. "Table F16: Total petroleum consumption estimates, 2023." Accessed October 2025. https://www.eia.gov/state/seds/data.php?incfile=/state/seds/sep_fuel/html/fuel_use_pa.html&sid=US.

36 US EIA. "Annual Energy Outlook 2023. Table: Table 11. Petroleum and Other Liquids Supply and Disposition." Accessed October 2025. https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/data/browser/#/?id=11-AEO2023&cases=ref2023&sourcekey=0.

equates to approximately 6,205 million barrels per year (mb/y) or 260,610 million gallons per year (mg/y).[37]

Over the last several decades, California has implemented several policies, rules, and regulations to improve vehicle efficiency, increase the development and use of alternative fuels, reduce air pollutants and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transportation sector, and reduce vehicle travel. Incentive programs, such as the CEC's Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program (ARFVTP), are helping the State to reduce its dependency on gasoline. The CEC predicts that the demand for gasoline will continue to decline over the upcoming years and there will be an increase in the use of alternative fuels.[38]

5.6.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.6.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

In order to assist in determining whether a project would have a significant effect on the environment, the County finds a project may be deemed to have a significant impact to energy resources, if it would:

a. Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation.

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

5.6.4 METHODOLOGY

5.6.4.1 Construction

Construction energy consumption would result from transportation fuels (e.g. petroleum) used for haul trucks, heavy-duty construction equipment, construction workers traveling to and from the proposed Project, electricity consumed to convey water for dust control, and any electrically driven construction equipment.

Construction activities could vary substantially from day to day, depending on the specific type of construction activity and the number of workers and vendors that would travel to the proposed Project. This analysis considered these factors and provided the estimated maximum construction energy consumption for the purpose of evaluating the associated impacts on energy resources. The anticipated construction schedule is discussed in **Section 3.0**: **Project Description**.

37 One oil barrel is equivalent to 42 gallons.

38 CEC. *Final 2021 Integrated Energy Policy Report. Volume IV California Energy Demand Forecast*. February 2022. Accessed October 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report/2021-integrated-energy-policy-report.

Construction fuel use was forecasted by assuming a conservative estimate of construction activities and applying mobile source emission factors. Construction would occur in 4 phases: Grading, Building Construction, Paving, and Architectural Coating. Grading would occur beginning in October 2026 and be completed by March 2027, followed by Building Construction from March 2027 to December 2028, and Paving would occur from December 2028 to February 2029, and Architectural Coating would occur from February 2029 to March 2029. Construction electricity use was estimated based on electricity that would be used in association with the conveyance of water used for dust control, and on a limited basis, powering lights during each construction phase. The CalEEMod (Version 2022.1.1) emissions model, described further in **Section 5.3: Air Quality** of this Draft EIR, was used to estimate the proposed Project's emissions of criteria air pollutants. The same model used for air quality analyses was also used for the purpose of estimating energy use.

Electricity

Electricity from water conveyance for dust control was also calculated based on the estimated exposed area and water needs to cover the area during construction activity. Default CalEEMod water electricity intensity factors were used to convert the volume of water needed to electricity demand from water conveyance. Temporary construction lighting requirements were estimated using a conservative acreage-based approach.

Natural Gas

Construction activities, including the construction of new buildings and facilities, typically do not involve the consumption of natural gas. Accordingly, natural gas is not expected to be consumed in large quantity during Project construction. Therefore, natural gas associated with construction activities was not calculated.[39]

Transportation Fuels

Fuel consumption from on-site heavy-duty construction equipment was calculated based on the equipment mix and usage factors provided in the CalEEMod construction output files. The total horsepower was then multiplied by fuel usage estimates per horsepower-hour from CARB's off-road vehicle (OFFROAD) model. Fuel consumption from construction on-road worker, vendor, and delivery/haul trucks was calculated using the trip rates and distances provided in the emissions modeling worksheets and CalEEMod construction output files. Total VMT for these on-road vehicles were then calculated for each type of construction-related trip and divided by the corresponding county-specific miles per gallon factor using CARB's Emission Factor (EMFAC) model. EMFAC

39 In general, natural gas would not be expected to be used and this energy analysis assumes heavy-duty construction equipment is diesel-fueled, as is typically the case. However, natural gas-fueled heavy-duty construction equipment could be used to replace some diesel-fueled heavy-duty construction equipment. If this does occur, diesel fuel demand would be slightly reduced and replaced by a small amount of temporary natural gas demand. This would not substantially affect the energy analysis or conclusions provided herein.

provides the total annual VMT, and fuel consumed for each vehicle type. CalEEMod assumed trip lengths were used for worker commutes while vendor, management visits, concrete, and haul truck trips were taken from emissions modeling worksheets that used EMFAC emission factors. Consistent with CalEEMod, construction worker trips were assumed to include a mix of light-duty gasoline automobiles and light-duty gasoline trucks. Construction vendor trucks were assumed to be a mix of medium-heavy-duty and heavy-duty diesel trucks, and concrete and haul trucks were assumed to be heavy-duty diesel trucks. Each phase of construction would result in varying levels of intensity and number of construction personnel. The construction workforce would consist of 20 worker trips per day during grading; 49 worker trips per day and 18 vendor trips per day during building construction; 15 worker trips per day during paving; and 10 worker trips per day during the architectural coating phase. Energy use during Project construction has been estimated based on the number and type of construction equipment that would be used during Project construction by assuming a conservative estimate of construction activities (i.e., maximum daily equipment usage levels). Energy for construction worker commuting trips has been estimated based on the predicted number of workers for the various phases of construction and the estimated VMT based on the conservative values in the CalEEMod and EMFAC models. The assessment also includes a discussion of the Project's compliance with relevant energy-related regulatory requirements that would minimize the amount of energy usage during construction.

The construction equipment and haul trucks would likely be diesel-fueled, while the construction worker commute vehicles would primarily be gasoline-fueled. For the purposes of this assessment, it is conservatively assumed that all heavy-duty construction equipment and haul trucks would be diesel fueled. The estimated fuel economy for heavy-duty construction equipment is based on fuel consumption factors from the CARB OFFROAD emissions model, which is a State-approved model for estimating emissions from off-road heavy-duty equipment. The estimated fuel economy for haul trucks and worker commute vehicles is based on fuel consumption factors from the CARB EMFAC emissions model, which is a State-approved model for estimating emissions from on-road vehicles and trucks. Both OFFROAD and EMFAC are incorporated into CalEEMod. However, fuel consumption for worker, vendor, and concrete/haul trucks were calculated outside of CalEEMod using emission factors from EMFAC to provide a more detailed and accurate account of truck fuel consumption.

5.6.4.2 Operation

Operational energy demands were estimated for the uses that would be allowed by the proposed specific plan, including 85 dwelling units, a multi-use community center, and a 9-hole golf course.

As described in **Section 3.0: Project Description**, the Project Site is located within the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) electric service area. The proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan includes an Energy Plan that identifies two options to meet the energy needs of the Project. The first option is to obtain power from IID through IID electrical distribution system serving the area, The second option is to construct an on-site private power generation system (Private Power System) consisting

of natural gas-powered linear generators, battery energy storage system (BESS) units to meet peak energy demands and provide reserve power, and on-site solar generation.

The on-site power generation and storage system has been designed to meet the peak estimated energy demands for the project at full development of the uses allowed by the Specific Plan of approximately 3,324 kilowatts and about 5,886,765 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of annual energy use. Approximately 990,197 kWh of electricity will be generated by the proposed 580 kW DC community solar photovoltaic (PV) system. The remaining 4,896,567 kWh of required power would be provided by IID or the Private Power System.

The Private Power System would include eleven (11) 250kW linear generators and one (1) 1,000kW/2,500kWh battery BESS unit. In order to provide redundant backup capability in case any of the generators or the BESS unit is offline for maintenance or other reasons, the proposed system would include thirteen (13) 250kW linear generators and three (3) 1,000kW/2,500kWh battery BESS units. This system incorporates two extra, independent components beyond what is required to provide the amount of power needed to meet the Project demand.

The BESS units would help meet the estimated peak demand for electricity for the Project, which would reduce the number of on-site generator units required to run at any given time. This analysis conservatively evaluates a scenario in which the electricity demand of the Project is met entirely by the Private Power System.

Because the system is modular, it is possible that IID grid power could supplement or partially offset on-site generation at some point during Project operation, which would reduce reliance on the on-site generators and correspondingly reduce associated emissions below what is quantified here. However, since the ability of IID to meet the project demand cannot be confirmed at this time, this potential benefit is discussed qualitatively only and is not relied upon to reduce the emissions estimates or significance conclusions presented in this section.

Electricity

Annual consumption of electricity (including electricity usage associated with the supply and conveyance of water) from Project operation was calculated in **Appendix E: Site Energy Load Evaluation** using an approximation based on the anticipated uses on the Project Site. The estimated annual electricity use for the Project is approximately 5,886,765 kWh of which 990,197 kWh will be provided by community solar PV (photovoltaic), resulting in a remaining need for 4,896,567 kWh of electricity. The assessment below also includes a discussion of the Project's compliance with relevant energy-related regulations and its land use transportation characteristics that would minimize the amount of energy usage during operations.

Natural Gas

As described above, the Project includes a modular on-site power generation system designed to partially or fully meet the Project's electricity needs. These generators would consume natural gas and would make up the majority of the Project's natural gas consumption. Estimates of the natural gas consumed by the on-site power generation system are provided in **Appendix E.** CalEEMod was used to estimate the remaining natural gas use on site from on-site furnaces, water heating, appliances, and other uses.

The Project's estimated natural gas demand was analyzed relative to Southern California Gas Company's (SoCalGas) existing and planned energy supplies in 2030 (i.e., the Project buildout year) to determine if the utility would be able to meet the Project's energy demands.

Transportation Fuels

Energy for transportation from trips associated with the proposed uses are estimated based on the predicted number of trips to and from the Project Site. The transportation fuel demand associated with trips from the Project was accounted for in the Project's operational transportation fuel demand for the purposes of this energy analysis. An Access and Circulation Assessment completed by Fehr & Peers[40] demonstrates an estimated 910 trips per day during operation of the proposed Project.

5.6.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

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

Less Than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would result in the development of up to 85 single family residential dwelling units (47.3 acres), 115.6 acres of open space, including recreational amenities and a golf course, as well as 10.7 acres for circulation. As the proposed development would be built on land that is currently vacant and undeveloped, the demand for energy resources, including electricity, natural gas, and fuel for vehicles used by residents and their guests, would increase.

Construction

Project construction would consume energy in two general forms: fuel energy consumed by construction vehicles and equipment; and bound energy in construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass. Construction of the proposed Project would involve on-site energy demand and consumption related to the use of gasoline and diesel fuel for construction worker vehicle trips, hauling and materials delivery truck trips, and operation of off-road construction equipment. Project

40 Fehr & Peers. *The Ranch at Madison – Transportation Analysis Report*. June 2, 2026. See **Appendix T**.

construction methods would be typical of current construction practices and would not require the use of more energy intensive machinery or higher than normal volumes of trucks and worker vehicle trips.

The Project would utilize construction contractors who demonstrate compliance with applicable CARB regulations governing the accelerated retrofitting, repowering, or replacement of heavy-duty diesel on- and off-road equipment. Compliance with anti-idling and emissions regulations would result in efficient use of construction-related energy and the minimization or elimination of wasteful and unnecessary consumption of energy. Idling restrictions and the use of newer engines and equipment would result in less fuel combustion and energy consumption, as would the use of haul trucks with larger capacities.

Construction of the proposed Project would require the use of various forms of energy. **Table 5.6-1: Summary of Fuel Use During Construction** summarizes the quantity of petroleum fuels that would be consumed during construction. As shown in **Table 5.6-1**, construction of the Project would use an estimated 77,093 gallons of fuel. Additionally, approximately 3,558 kWh of electricity would be used during construction for water conveyance for dust control. Assuming that one temporary light tower (1,000 watts) would be used per 20 acres of the Project Site, resulting in roughly nine (9) light fixtures, approximately 16,875 kWh of electricity would be used for lighting, for a total of 20,433 kWh of electricity used during construction.[41]

TABLE 5.6-1: SUMMARY OF FUEL USE DURING CONSTRUCTION

Fuel Type	Quantity (Gallons)
Off-Road Construction Equipment	54,921
Construction Worker	14,189
Construction Vendor (MDH & HHD Trucks)	7,983
Total	**77,093**

Source: See **Appendix H: Energy Calculations.**

Construction Equipment Fuel Estimates

Fuel consumed by construction equipment would be the primary energy resource expended over the course of Project construction. Fuel consumed by construction equipment was evaluated with the following assumptions:

- Construction schedule of 30 months

41 Each temporary light fixture was assumed to have a connected load of 1,000 watts and to operate for up to three hours per day over approximately 250 workdays per year to account for early morning, winter, or safety-related lighting needs. 9 light fixtures*1,000 watts*250 workdays* 3 hours per day* 30-month construction schedule = 16,875 kWh.

- All construction equipment was assumed to run on diesel fuel.
- Typical daily use of eight (8) hours, with some equipment operating from approximately one (1) to seven (7) hours.
- Aggregate fuel consumption rate for all equipment was estimated at 18.5 horsepower hours per gallon (hp-hr./gal).[42]
- Diesel fuel would be the responsibility of the equipment operators/contractors and would be sourced within the region.
- Project construction represents a "single event" for diesel fuel demand and would not require on-going or permanent commitment of diesel fuel resources during long-term operation.

Using the CalEEMod data input for the air quality and greenhouse gas analyses, the Project's construction phase would consume electricity and fossil fuels as a single energy demand; that is, once construction is completed their use would cease. CARB's 2017 Emissions Factors Tables show that, on average, aggregate fuel consumption (gasoline and diesel fuel) would be approximately 18.5 hp-hr./gal.

Construction Worker Fuel Estimates

It is assumed that construction worker trips range from light-duty autos (LDA), light-duty truck 1 (LDT1), and light-duty truck 2 (LDT2) at a mix of 25 percent, 50 percent, and 25 percent, respectively, along area roadways.[43] Data regarding Project-related construction worker trips were based on CalEEMod model defaults.

Vehicle fuel efficiencies for construction workers were estimated in the air quality and greenhouse gas analyses using information generated from CARB's 2021 Emissions Factor Model (EMFAC) (see **Appendix H** for data). An aggregate fuel efficiency of 26.02 miles per gallon (mpg) was used to calculate VMT for construction worker trips. **Table 5.6-1** shows that an estimated 14,189 gallons of fuel would be consumed for construction worker trips.

Construction Vendor/Hauling Fuel Estimates

Data regarding Project-related vendor and hauling trips were based on CalEEMod model defaults. For architectural coatings, it is assumed that contractors would be responsible for bringing coatings and equipment with them in their light-duty vehicles. Therefore, vendors delivering construction material or hauling debris from the site during grading and building construction would use medium- to heavy-duty vehicles with an average fuel consumption of 7.75 mpg for medium-duty trucks and

42 CARB. "Table D-21: Fuel Consumption Rate Factors." In *The Carl Moyer Program Guidelines, Volume I: Program Overview, Program Administration and Project Criteria.* 2017. Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/msprog/moyer/guidelines/2017/2017_cmpgl.pdf.

43 CalEEMod User's Guide Appendix C (April 2022) states that construction work trips are made by a fleet consisting of 25 percent light-duty auto (or passenger car), 50 percent light-duty truck type 1 (LDT1), and 25 percent light-duty truck type 2 (LDT2).

6.05 mpg for heavy-duty trucks.[44] **Table 5.6-1** shows that an estimated 7,983 gallons of fuel would be consumed for vendor trips.

Construction Energy Efficiency/Conservation Measures

Construction equipment used over the approximately 30 months of construction would conform to CARB regulations and California emissions standards and is evidence of related fuel efficiencies. There are no unusual Project characteristics or construction processes that would require the use of equipment that would be more energy-intensive than is used for comparable activities; or equipment that would not conform to current emissions standards (and related fuel efficiencies). The Project would utilize construction contractors which practice compliance with applicable CARB regulations regarding retrofitting, repowering, or replacement of diesel off-road construction equipment. Additionally, CARB has adopted Airborne Toxic Control Measures[45] to limit heavy-duty diesel motor vehicle idling in order to reduce public exposure to diesel particulate matter and other TACs. Compliance with these measures would result in a more efficient use of construction-related energy and would minimize or eliminate wasteful or unnecessary consumption of energy. Idling restrictions and the use of newer engines and equipment would result in less fuel combustion and energy consumption.

Additionally, as required by California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 13–Motor Vehicles, Section 2449(d)(3) Idling, idling times of construction vehicles are limited to no more than five minutes, thereby minimizing or eliminating unnecessary and wasteful consumption of fuel due to unproductive idling of construction equipment. Enforcement of idling limitations is realized through periodic site inspections conducted by County building officials, and/or in response to citizen complaints.

Operation

Energy consumption in support of, or related to, Project operations would include transportation energy demands (energy consumed by residents, employees, and patron vehicles accessing the Project Site), facilities energy demands (energy consumed by building operations and site maintenance activities), and natural gas consumed by the on-site power generation.

Transportation Fuel Consumption

Operations-related fuel consumption was calculated using the annual VMT from the air quality and greenhouse gas analyses' CalEEMod output, and using information generated from CARB's 2021

44 CalEEMod User's Guide Appendix C (April 2022) states that vendor trips are made by a fleet consisting of 50 percent medium trucks (MHDT) and 50 percent heavy trucks (HHDT), and that hauling and on-site truck trips are made by a fleet consisting of 100 percent HHDT.

45 CARB. "Airborne Toxic Control Measures." Accessed October 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/airborne-toxic-control-measures.

EMFAC model. **Table 5.6-2: Proposed Project Estimated Vehicle Operations Fuel Consumption** shows that an estimated 58,315 gallons of gasoline and 39,926 gallons of diesel fuel would be consumed per year for the operation of buildout that would result from the development of the proposed Project.

TABLE 5.6-2: PROPOSED PROJECT ESTIMATED VEHICLE OPERATIONS FUEL CONSUMPTION

Land Use	Annual VMT	Gasoline Usage	Diesel Usage
Single Family Housing	1,785,501	49,752.5	34,063.9
Golf Course	307,280	8,562.3	5,862.3
Total	**2,092,781**	**58,315.0**	**39,926.0**

Source: See **Appendix H: Energy Calculations.**

Trip generation and VMT generated by the proposed Project were estimated based on daily trips provided by Fehr & Peers based on the Trip Generation Manual, 12th Edition (Institute of Transportation Engineers [ITE]).[46] The Project does not propose uses or operations that would inherently result in excessive and wasteful vehicle trips and VMT, nor associated excess and wasteful vehicle energy consumption. Furthermore, the State of California consumed approximately 3.6 billion gallons of diesel and 13.6 billion gallons of gasoline in 2022.[47,48] Therefore, the increase in fuel consumption from the Project is insignificant in comparison to the State's demand. As such, Project transportation energy consumption would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or otherwise unnecessary.

Facility Energy Demands

Electricity

As described previously, the proposed Project includes a modular on-site power generation system designed to partially or fully meet the Project's electricity needs. The estimated annual electricity use for the Project is approximately 5,886,765 kWh, of which about 990,197 kWh will be provided by community solar PV, resulting in a remaining demand of 4,896,567 kWh of electricity. As described previously, this remaining need could be met by an on-site power generation system or by power supplied by IID.

Building operation and site maintenance (including landscape maintenance) would result in the consumption of electricity and natural gas. As discussed previously, the annual electricity demand for the Project was calculated based on the anticipated uses on the Project Site (see **Appendix H**).

46 Fehr & Peers. *The Ranch at Madison – Access and Circulation Assessment*. October 30, 2025.

47 CEC. "California Gasoline Data, Facts, and Statistics." Accessed October 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/transportation-energy/california-gasoline-data-facts-and-statistics.

48 CEC. "California Gasoline Data, Facts, and Statistics."

The estimated electricity demand for the proposed Project is approximately 5,886,765 kWh (5.8 GWh) per year.

IID estimates that electricity consumption within its planning area will be approximately 4,166 GWh annually by 2030, when the Project would be fully built out.[49] If IID supplies electricity to the Project, the Project would account for less than 0.01 percent of the 2030 annual consumption forecast in the IID planning area. As such, the Project would account for a negligible portion of the projected annual consumption in IID's planning area.

Natural Gas

Natural gas would be provided by Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). Based on the 2024 California Gas Report, the California Gas and Electric Utilities estimates natural gas supply within SoCalGas' planning area will be approximately 1,377,875 MMcf per year in 2030.[50]

The natural gas-powered linear generators included in on-site power generation system would consume an estimated 37,261 MMBtu (35.9 MMcf) per year of natural gas[51]. Additionally, other operational uses on the Project Site, including appliances, would consume an additional 3,022,967 kBTU (2.9 MMcf) per year of natural gas.[52] The combined demand for natural gas per year would be 38.8 MMcf per year. Under this scenario, the proposed Project would continue to account for less than 0.01 percent of the 2030 annual forecasted supply in SoCalGas' planning area.

Accordingly, electricity and natural gas demand during operation would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

California Building Standards Code

Less Than Significant Impact.

As a matter of regulatory compliance, the proposed Project is designed in a manner that is consistent with and not in conflict with relevant energy conservation plans that are intended to encourage development that results in the efficient use of energy resources. The Project would comply with

49 CEC. "California Energy Demand, 2024–2040." *CEDU 2024 Baseline Forecast – IID*. Accessed November 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report-iepr/2024-integrated-energy-policy-report-0.

50 California Gas and Electric Utilities. *2024 California Gas Report*. Accessed January 2026. https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/2024-08/2024-California-Gas-Report-Final.pdf.

51 Secure Energy Solutions. *Site Energy Load Evaluation, The Ranch at Madison.* June 2026. p. 12. See **Appendix E**.

52 Meridian Consultants. *Energy Calculations*. June 2026. See **Appendix H**.

applicable regulatory requirements for the design of new buildings, including the provisions set forth in the Title 24 standards and CALGreen.

SCAG RTP/SCS

The RTP/SCS includes the specific goal of achieving a 19 percent reduction by 2035, and 21 percent reduction by 2040, compared to the 2005 level. Consistency with the RTP/SCS has energy implications, including the reduction of VMT which reduces GHG emissions and has the co-benefit of reducing fossil fuel consumption from travel to and from a project. As discussed further in **Section 5.8: Greenhouse Gases**, the proposed Project would be consistent with the policies applicable to individual development projects in the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS. The proposed Project would increase housing options in an area surrounded by a variety of land uses and would be served by extensive pedestrian, bike, and other recreational trails. In addition, the Project is designed to support travel by golf cart.

County of Riverside General Plan

The County of Riverside General Plan Air Quality Element[53] includes policies with the goal of reducing GHG emissions and would simultaneously reduce energy consumption. As discussed further in **Section 5.8: Greenhouse Gases**, the proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable policies that reduce energy use and increase energy efficiency.

County of Riverside Climate Action Plan

As discussed previously, the County of Riverside Climate Action Plan[54] includes measures to conserve energy and reduce GHG emissions. Several of these reduction measures reinforce the State regulations including energy efficiency standards for lighting, electricity, and natural gas energy efficiency, increased combined heat and power, and industrial energy efficiency measures. As discussed above, the Project would comply with applicable energy, water, and waste efficiency measures specified in the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, CALGreen standards and County Code of Ordinances. Further, as discussed in **Section 5.8: Greenhouse Gases**, the Project would also include measures identified in the CAP screening tables that would reduce energy demand.

5.6.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Based on the Project impact analysis above, the Project would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources

53 County of Riverside. *General Plan Air Quality Element*. Accessed October 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-genplan-general-plan-2018-elements-Ch09-AQE-071718.pdf.

54 County of Riverside. *Climate Action Plan Update*. November 2019. Accessed January 2026. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-CAP-2019-2019-CAP-Update-Full.pdf.

as the increase in demand for electricity, natural gas, and transportation energy associated with the proposed Project would represent a negligible amount of supply of each resource. Additionally, the Project would not conflict with a State or local energy conservation plan as the Project would comply with existing energy standards.

5.6.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are necessary.

5.6.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

5.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) addresses the potential for the proposed Ranch at Madison (Project) to be affected by adverse geologic or soil conditions on the Project Site. More specifically, this section evaluates impacts associated with the Project that may directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic events; substantial erosion or the loss of topsoil; unstable soil; or direct or indirect impacts to a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature. Various federal, State of California (State), regional, and local programs and regulations related to anticipated geologic hazards are also discussed in this section. Information from the following studies is incorporated into this section:

- *Geotechnical Report (APN 780-010-014), Vista Santa Rosa, California*, prepared by LandMark Consultants, Inc., April 2022, **Appendix I**.
- *Geotechnical Investigation [for] Proposed Residential Development (APNs 780-020-001, 002, 003 & 780-010-012, Monroe Street, La Quinta Area, Riverside County, California*; prepared by Sladden Engineering, October 2022, **Appendix J.**
- *Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation [for] Proposed Ranch at Madison (APN 780-010-013)*, prepared by Sladden Engineering, December 2025, **Appendix K**.

5.7.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.7.1.1 Federal

National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program

The National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) was established by the United States Congress when it passed the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977, Public Law 95-124. In establishing the NEHRP, Congress recognized that earthquake-related losses could be reduced through improved design and construction methods and practices, land use controls and redevelopment, prediction techniques and early-warning systems, coordinated emergency preparedness plans, and public education and involvement programs. The four basic goals remain unchanged:

- Develop effective practices and policies for earthquake loss reduction and accelerate their implementation;
- Improve techniques for reducing earthquake vulnerabilities of facilities and systems;
- Improve earthquake hazards identification and risk assessment methods and their use; and
- Improve the understanding of earthquakes and their effects.

Several key federal agencies contribute to earthquake mitigation efforts. There are four primary NEHRP agencies:

- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) of the Department of Commerce;
- National Science Foundation (NSF);
- United States Geological Survey (USGS) of the Department of the Interior; and
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the Department of Homeland Security.

Implementation of NEHRP priorities is accomplished primarily through original research, publications, and recommendations to assist and guide State, regional, and local agencies in the development of plans and policies to promote safety and emergency planning.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) is a program created to implement the Clean Water Act (CWA). In November 1990, the USEPA published final regulations that establish requirements for specific categories of industries, including construction projects that encompass greater than or equal to 5 acres of land. The Phase II Rule became final in December 1999, expanding regulated construction sites to those greater than or equal to 1 acre. The regulations require that stormwater and non-stormwater runoff associated with construction activity, which discharges either directly to surface waters or indirectly through municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4), must be regulated by an NPDES permit.

The EPA has delegated management of California's NPDES program to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine regional board offices which grant permits to regulate point source discharges of industrial and municipal wastewater into the waters of the United States. The NPDES program was established in 1972 to regulate the quality of effluent discharged from easily detected point sources of pollution such as wastewater treatment plants and industrial discharges. The 1987 amendments to the CWA recognized the need to address non-point-source stormwater runoff pollution and expanded the NPDES program to operators of municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s), construction projects, and industrial facilities.

5.7.1.2 State

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act is to identify hazards associated with surface fault ruptures and to prevent the construction of buildings on active faults.[1] The State Geologist is required to establish and map zones around the surface traces of active faults, which are then distributed to county and city agencies to be incorporated into their land use planning and

1 California Public Resources Code, Section 2621.5.

construction policies. Proposed development needs to be proven through geologic investigation to not be located across active faults before a city or county can permit the implementation of projects. If an active fault is found, development for human occupancy is prohibited within a 50-foot setback from the identified fault.

California Building Standards Code (Seismic Hazards Mapping Act of 1990)

The California Building Standards Code (CBC) establishes building requirements for construction and renovation. The CBC is based on the International Code Council's Building and Fire Codes. Included in the CBC are the Electrical Code, Mechanical Code, Plumbing Code, Energy Code, and Fire Code.

In the context of earthquake hazards, the CBC design standards have a primary objective of assuring public safety and a secondary goal of minimizing property damage and maintaining function during and following a seismic event. Recognizing that the risk of severe seismic ground motion varies from place to place, the CBC seismic code provisions vary depending on location—Seismic Zones 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4—with 0 being the least stringent and 4 being the most stringent.

5.7.1.3 Regional and Local

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) serves as the air pollution control agency for the counties of Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino. The SCAQMD is responsible for controlling emissions from primarily stationary sources. *Rules 403* and *403.1* are designed to require that fugitive dust be controlled with best available control measures so that the presence of such dust does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emissions source.

- **SCAQMD** *Rule 403*. This rule governs emissions of fugitive dust during construction and operation activities. Compliance with this rule is achieved through BMPs. This may include application of water or chemical stabilizers to disturbed soils, covering haul vehicles, restricting vehicle speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour, sweeping loose dirt from paved site access roadways, cessation of construction activity when winds exceed 25 mph, and establishing a permanent ground cover on finished sites.
- **SCAQMD** *Rule 403.1*. *Rule 403.1* is a companion regulation to *Rule 403* that is only applicable to fugitive dust sources in the Coachella Valley. *Rule 403.1* establishes special requirements for Coachella Valley fugitive dust sources under high-wind conditions and requires AQMD approval of dust control plans for sources not subject to local government ordinances (e.g., school districts). As with *Rule 403*, compliance with this rule is achieved through BMPs. This supplemental rule requires the submittal and approval of a Fugitive Dust Control Plan before the start of any construction or earth-moving activities.

County of Riverside Code of Ordinances

Code Conformance and Development Regulation

The County of Riverside (County) has zoned fault systems and requires special studies prior to development. These are referred to as County Fault Zones. They generally represent zones that have been identified from groundwater studies. Until solid field evidence is generated to prove or disprove their existence, they should continue to be considered a hazard.

The Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) – Department of Building and Safety provides technical expertise in reviewing and enforcing the County's Codified State Building and Fire Codes. These codes establish site-specific investigation requirements, construction standards, and inspection procedures to ensure that development does not pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Every three years, the Division of the State Architect (DSA), and the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC), jointly oversee the triennial (every three years) update of the California Building Code (CBC). Prior to the end of the calendar year, for each triennial interval, the County is responsible for proposing amendments and codification of the CBC. The current triennial California Building Code cycle took effect on January 1, 2026. Codified Building Code (Ordinance 457) contains the baseline minimum standards to ensure construction will protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

At a minimum, it is imperative to enforce the most recently adopted regulatory codes for new development and significant redevelopment, including the County's Land Use Planning and Zoning Regulations (Ordinance 348) and the Subdivision of Land Regulations (Ordinance 460), which support the Building and Fire Codes (Ordinance 787). Additional guidelines and standards are introduced through the County of Riverside General Plan Safety Element.

Special development regulations can reinforce and augment existing code standards by raising the level of hazard-conscious project design and mitigation engineering. Examples include additional geologic/geotechnical investigation and additional reinforcement of foundations in areas of potential ground failure. While foundation investigations are required by the County's Building Code, it is important to emphasize expected levels of investigation and protection. Furthermore, some requirements that may only apply to critical facilities, such as detailed seismic analyses, could be expanded to include other structures and lifelines. Where engineering methods cannot mitigate the hazards, avoidance of the hazard is appropriate, such as where ground rupture along active or potentially active fault traces are identified.

County of Riverside 2020 General Plan

Safety Element

Below are policies regarding fault rupture hazard reduction from the Safety Element of the County of Riverside General Plan:

S 1.1 Mitigate hazard impacts through adoption and strict enforcement of current building codes, which will be amended as necessary when local deficiencies are identified.

S 2.1 Minimize fault rupture hazards through enforcement of Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act provisions and the following policies:

- Require geologic studies or analyses for critical structures, and lifeline, high-occupancy, schools, and high-risk structures, within 0.5 miles of all Quaternary to historic faults shown on the Earthquake Fault Studies Zones map. The County geologist shall review and make recommendations based on the results to reduce the potential risk.
- Require geologic trenching studies within all designated Earthquake Fault Studies Zones, unless adequate evidence, as determined and accepted by the Riverside County Engineering Geologist, is presented. The County of Riverside may require geologic trenching of non-zoned faults for especially critical or vulnerable structures or lifelines.
- Require that infrastructure systems, such as energy, communications, and transportation infrastructure be designed to resist, without failure to the extent feasible, their crossing of a fault, should fault rupture occur.
- Support efforts by the California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey to develop geologic and engineering solutions in areas of ground deformation due to faulting and seismic activity, in those areas where a through-going fault cannot be reliably located.
- Encourage and support efforts by the geologic research community to define better the locations and risks of Riverside County faults. Such efforts could include data sharing and database development with regional entities, other local governments, private organizations, utility agencies, and local universities.

Below are policies regarding seismically induced liquefaction, landslides, and rock fall hazard reduction from the Safety Element of the County of Riverside General Plan:

S 2.2 Request geological and geotechnical investigations in areas with potential for earthquake-induced liquefaction, landslides, or settlement, for any building proposed for human occupancy and any structure whose damage would cause harm, except for accessory structures/buildings, as determined by County officials. Any studies or surveys should be prepared/completed by a state-licensed professional.

S 2.4 Request that engineered slopes be designed to resist seismically induced failure as appropriate. For lower-risk projects, this may include requiring slope design to be based on pseudo-static stability analyses using soil engineering parameters that are established on a site-specific basis. For

higher-risk projects, appropriate standards may include requiring the stability analyses to factor in the intensity of expected ground-shaking, using a Newmark-type deformation analysis or other analyses as appropriate.

S 2.5 Request that cut-and-fill transition lots appropriately mitigate the potential of seismically induced differential settlement, including through using over-excavation or other techniques as required by geotechnical, soils, and grading requirements.

S 2.6 Request structures in liquefaction and slope instability hazard zones to mitigate the potential of seismically induced differential settlement through appropriate techniques as determined by geotechnical studies, including a 100-percent maximum variation of fill depths as warranted.

S 2.10 Identify and request mitigation of on-site slope instability, debris flow, and erosion hazards on lots undergoing substantial improvements, particularly during the entitlement or permitting process.

S 2.11 Request grading plans, environmental assessments, engineering and geologic technical reports, irrigation and landscaping plans, including ecological restoration and revegetation plans, as appropriate, to ensure the adequate demonstration of a project's ability to mitigate the potential impacts of slope and erosion hazards and loss of native vegetation.

Below are policies regarding subsidence and expansive and collapsible soils hazard reduction from the Safety Element of the County of Riverside General Plan:

S 2.15 Request geotechnical studies within documented subsidence zones, as well as zones that may be susceptible to subsidence, prior to the issuance of development permits. Within the documented subsidence zones of the Coachella, San Jacinto, and Elsinore Valleys, the studies should address the potential for reactivation of these zones, consider the potential impact on the project, and provide adequate and acceptable mitigation measures.

5.7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.7.2.1 Existing Conditions

Project Site

The Project Site consists of primarily fallowed agricultural land, unoperated infiltration basins, and disturbed desert terrain associated with previous agricultural use. A date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. The Project Site is surrounded by the Mirabella Estates and Santa Rosa Ranch to the north; fallowed agricultural land, disturbed vacant land and the Tahquitz Equestrian Facility to the east; two ranches (Rancho Ellenita and Cavallo Ranch) and fallowed agricultural land to the south; and a residential golf neighborhood (Madison Club) and single-family neighborhood (Carmela) to the west.

The Project Site lies at an elevation of approximately 25 to 30 feet below mean sea level (BMSL) in the Coachella Valley region of the California low desert. Annual rainfall is less than 4 inches per year with roughly four months each year averaging above 100 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). Winter temperatures are mild and seldom reach freezing temperatures.

Geologic Setting

The Project Site is located in the Coachella Valley portion of the Salton Trough physiographic province. The Salton Trough is a geologic structural depression resulting from large scale regional faulting. The trough is bounded on the northeast by the San Andreas Fault and Chocolate Mountains and the southwest by the Peninsular Range and faults of the San Jacinto Zone. The Salton Trough represents the northward extension of the Gulf of California, containing both marine and non-marine sediments since the Miocene Epoch. Tectonic activity that formed the trough continues at a high rate as evidenced by deformed young sedimentary deposits and high levels of seismicity.

The surrounding regional geology includes the Peninsular Ranges (Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains), to the south and west, the Salton Basin to the southeast, and the Transverse Ranges (Little San Bernardino and Orocopia Mountains to the north and east. Hundreds of feet to several thousand feet of Quaternary fluvial, lacustrine, and aeolian soil deposits underlie the Coachella Valley. The southeastern part of the Coachella Valley lies below sea level. In the geologic past, the ancient Lake Cahuilla submerged the area. Calcareous tufa deposits may be observed along the ancient shoreline as high as elevation 45 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) along the Santa Rosa Mountains from La Quinta southward. Lacustrine (lakebed) deposits comprise the subsurface soils over much of the eastern Coachella Valley with alluvial outwash along the flanks of the valley.

Subsurface Soils

Subsurface soils encountered during the field exploration conducted on March 14, 2022, consist of surficial silty sand (SM), sandy silt (ML), and sand (SP) overlying medium dense to dense sands (SP) and silty sands (SM) to a depth of 50 feet, the maximum depth of exploration. The near surface soils are non-expansive in nature.

Groundwater

Groundwater was not encountered in the borings during the field investigation. Groundwater levels range from 79–80 feet below ground surface (bgs). Historical data indicates that groundwater levels have remained consistent as annual precipitation has also remained consistent. Levels may vary slightly due to the irrigation of adjacent properties, a change in drainage patterns due to agricultural grading, and also through the development of surrounding parcels. Based on the regional topography, groundwater flow is assumed to be generally towards the southeast within the Project Site.

Faulting

The criterion for fault classification adopted by the California Geological Survey defines Earthquake Fault Zones along active or potentially active faults. An active fault is one that has ruptured during Holocene time (roughly within the last 11,000 years). A fault that has ruptured during the last 1.8 million years (Quaternary time) but has not been proven by direct evidence to have not moved within Holocene time is considered to be potentially active. A fault that has not moved during Quaternary time is considered to be inactive. The Project Site is located in the seismically active Coachella Valley of southern California with numerous mapped faults of the San Andreas Fault System traversing the region. According to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps, the nearest mapped Earthquake Fault Zone is the San Andreas–Coachella faults located approximately 5.5 miles northeast of the Project Site.

Seismic and Other Hazards

Ground Shaking and Surface Rupture

The primary seismic hazard at the Project Site is the potential for strong ground shaking during earthquakes along the San Andreas fault. The Project Site does not lie within the State of California, Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, or County of Riverside Fault Zone. The nearest mapped Earthquake Fault Zone is the San Andreas–Coachella faults located approximately 5.4 miles northeast of the Project Site.

Surface rupture is considered to be unlikely at the Project Site because of the well-delineated fault lines through the Coachella Valley. Due to the high tectonic activity and deep alluvium of the region, an undiscovered or new fault may underlie the Project Site.

Liquefaction

Generally, liquefaction may occur if all of the following conditions apply: the Project Site contains (1) liquefaction-susceptible soils, groundwater within a depth of 50 feet or less, and (2) a high risk from strong seismic shaking. According to Figure A-7 of the Geotechnical Report and Riverside County GIS mapping, the Project Site is located within a broader area identified as susceptible to liquefaction. However, the Geotechnical Report determined that the soils underlying the Project Site are not susceptible to liquefaction and that the Project Site is not located within a fault zone that would produce strong seismic shaking. In regard to the depth of groundwater levels, as referenced above, the average depth of groundwater is consistently between 79–80 feet bgs.

Landsliding

The hazard of landsliding is unlikely due to the regional planar topography. No ancient landslides are shown on geologic maps of the region, and no indications of landslides were observed during the field investigation.

Tsunamis, Seiches, and Flooding

The Project Site does not lie near any large bodies of water. The threat of tsunami, seiches, or other seismically induced flooding is unlikely.

Expansive Soil

The near surface soils at the Project Site consist of sands which are non-expansive.

Seismic Settlement

An evaluation of the non-liquefaction seismic settlement potential was performed for the Project Site. This evaluation would determine the risk of ground settlement that may occur during or after an earthquake in soils that do not liquefy. The soils beneath the Project Site consist primarily of medium dense to dense sands. Total induced settlements are estimated to be less than ½ inch in the event of a MCE_g earthquake (0.79g peak ground acceleration).

Hydro-consolidation

In arid climatic regions, granular soils have a potential to collapse upon wetting. This collapse (hydro-consolidation) phenomenon is the result of the lubrication of soluble cements (carbonates) in the soil matrix causing the soil to densify from its loose configuration during deposition. The Project vicinity has a slight risk of collapse upon inundation at the Project Site.

Soil Resources

Recent soil-survey data from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic Database were used to identify the type and distribution of soils within the Project area to assess the potential of expansive soils that would be subject to collapse from inundation. Soils were also assessed to determine the infiltration rate of the Project Site, and to guide future grading operations where compaction and preparation of building pads are required. According to the geotechnical investigation, the Project Site primarily consists of *Gilman* fine sandy loam, wet, and *Myoma* fine sand, which are all characteristic of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP).

5.7.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.7.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine the significance of impacts to geological resources (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). Appendix G provides that a project would have a significant environmental impact if it would:

a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and

Geology Special Publication 42.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

iv) Landslides?

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

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

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

e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

5.7.4 METHODOLOGY

The Project Site's Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) include 780-010-012, -013, -014, 780-020-001, -002, and -003. The Geotechnical Report and Geotechnical Investigations prepared for the Project Site's APNs, available in **Appendices I** through **Appendix K**, followed standard engineering practice and regulatory guidelines. The Geotechnical Investigations and Report included review of published geologic maps and fault zone data, subsurface exploration with five borings advanced to depths of 20 to 50 feet, Standard Penetration Tests (SPT) in accordance with ASTM D15186, and collection of disturbed and relatively undisturbed soil samples classified per the Unified Soil Classification System (USCS). Laboratory testing included particle size analysis, moisture-density relationships, moisture content, unit weight, and chemical analyses for corrosion potential. Two infiltration tests were conducted at the proposed stormwater basin location, in accordance with the Riverside County Low Impact Development (LID) Best Management Practices (BMP) Design Handbook. Seismic design parameters were developed using the California Building Code and ASCE 7–16 procedures, and settlement potential was evaluated using Tokimatsu and Seed correlations for dry sands.

5.7.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

The State of California, under the guidelines of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, classifies faults as active, potentially active, and inactive. The Eastern Coachella Valley is traversed by the San Andreas Fault, an active fault with significant probability of earthquake activity.

The Project Site does not lie within the State of California, Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, or County of Riverside Fault Zone.[2,3] As mentioned above, the nearest mapped Earthquake Fault Zone is the San Andreas–Coachella faults located approximately 5.4 miles northeast of the Project Site.

As mentioned above, Geotechnical Investigations and a Geotechnical Report were prepared for the Project Site. According to the Geotechnical Investigations, **Appendix I** through **Appendix K**, the Project Site is located in an active seismic zone, like most of Southern California, and will likely experience strong seismic shaking. However, no known active faults are mapped on the Project Site. The nearest mapped fault is San Andreas–Coachella fault, which are located approximately 5.4 miles to the northeast.[4] Further, no signs of active surface faulting, active surface fault rupture, or secondary seismic effects were identified during field investigations. Therefore, it is in the opinion of the Geotechnical Investigations that risks associated with primary surface ground rupture are "low." However, due to the high tectonic activity and deep alluvium of the region, there is potential for surface rupture on undiscovered or new faults that may underlie the Project Site.

The California Building Code (CBC) provides general seismic parameters for structures on Site Class D and E. Sites classified as Class D or E would be required to conduct a site-specific ground motion analysis. However, with eligibility of one (1) of the three (3) exceptions provided by the ASCE 7–16 Section 11.4.8, Class D or E sites would be permitted to use conservative values of design parameters in-lieu of a site-specific hazard analysis. The Project Site has been classified as Site Class D and would accordingly comply with the seismic parameters outlined by the CBC and ASCE 7–16, as provided in detail in **Appendices I** through **K.** Regulatory compliance with the site-specific seismic parameters would ensure that impacts due to surface rupture would be less than significant. Compliance with the CBC would ensure earthquake safety based on factors including occupancy type, the types of soils on site, and the probable strength of ground motion. Design guidelines of the CBC would include the implementation of seismic safety features, proper buildings footings and foundations, and the construction of building structures intended to withstand strong ground shaking. Design features of the Project would adhere to the building design requirements by the County and the CBC and would be required to incorporate structural features, foundation modifications, and improved materials and construction methods that reflect updated seismic and geologic safety standards intended to mitigate adverse seismic impacts upon structures. In addition,

2 California Geological Survey. "Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation." Accessed December 2025. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/eqzapp/.

3 Riverside County Planning Department. "Chapter 6: Safety Element." In *General Plan*. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/riverside-county-general-plan-december-2015.

4 California Geological Survey. "Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation."

the Project would not involve deep excavation, mining operations, or boring of large areas, which could create unstable seismic conditions in the Earth's crust.

The Project would also implement **Mitigation Measure (MM) GEO-1**, which includes all recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation. Recommendations consist of removal of organic and loose near-surface soils associated with prior agricultural use, followed by over-excavation and re-compaction of foundation areas to create uniform bearing conditions. Conventional shallow spread footings and slabs-on-grade would be implemented as well, provided they are founded on properly compacted engineered fill. All recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation are described in further detail in *Section 5.7.7: Mitigation Measures,* below.

Therefore, the proposed Project would not exacerbate existing environmental conditions such that rupture of a known earthquake fault would occur. Through implementation of **MM GEO-1** and regulatory compliance with the CBC and ASCE 7–16, including site-specific seismic parameters, impacts involving rupture of a known earthquake fault would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The intensity of ground shaking at a given location depends on several factors, but primarily on the earthquake magnitude, the distance from the hypocenter to the site of interest, and response characteristics of earth units underlying the site of interest. Similar to most of Southern California, the Project Site is in a seismically active area and is subject to some level of ground shaking as a result of movement along the major active (and potentially active) fault zones that characterize this region.

According to the Geotechnical Investigations prepared for the Project Site, the Project Site is located in an active seismic zone and has potential to experience strong seismic shaking throughout the lifetime of the Project. However, no active faults are known to transect the Project Site. The nearest mapped fault is the San Andreas–Coachella branch, which is located approximately 5.5 miles northeast of the Project Site. Strong seismic ground shaking from nearby active faults has the potential to produce strong seismic ground shaking on the Project Site. The Project would implement **MM GEO-1,** which includes all recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation, described in detail in *Section 5.7.7: Mitigation Measures*. In addition, the Project would comply with the CBC and ASCE 7-16, including site-specific seismic parameters provided for the Project Site in **Appendices I** through **K.** Implementation of **MM GEO-1**, regulatory compliance with the CBC and ASCE 7-16 site-specific seismic parameters, and design requirements of the County Code would ensure that impacts due to strong seismic ground shaking would be less than significant. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in substantial, adverse impacts involving strong seismic ground shaking. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than Significant Impact. Liquefaction, most often caused by earthquakes, describes a phenomenon where a soil's strength and stiffness is substantially reduced. Liquefaction causes the soil's composition to liquefy, which destabilizes buildings that are supported by the ground. The strength loss is a result of a decrease in granular sand volume and an increase in pore pressures.

According to the Geotechnical Investigations and Geotechnical Report prepared for the Project, **Appendices I** through **K,** liquefaction is not likely to occur due to the depth to groundwater in the Project vicinity,[5] and the Project Site is not mapped within an area of liquefaction.[6] Further, the Geotechnical Investigation found that the soils underlying the site consist of primarily medium dense to dense sands, and total induced settlements are anticipated to be minimal.

The Project would also adhere to the CBC design requirements, which includes guidelines and requirements to ensure safety and structural stability during potential seismic events. Therefore, regulatory compliance with the CBC would further ensure potential impacts from seismic-related ground failure, liquefaction, or other secondary seismic effects would be less than significant. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

iv) Landslides?

Less than Significant Impact. There are no natural or man-made hillsides within the Project Site. The Project Site is relatively flat and not located immediately adjacent to any slopes, with adjacent properties at the same relative elevation as the Project Site.[7] In addition, the Geotechnical Investigations and Geotechnical Report, **Appendices I** through **K,** found that slope instability in the form of landslides and rock falls were not observed at or near the Project Site; as such, risks associated with slope instability, such as landslides, are considered negligible. Further, no ancient landslides were identified on geologic maps of the region. Therefore, the Project Site is not considered susceptible to seismically induced landslides. In addition, the Project would not result in any post-grading conditions that would have potential for seismic slope instability and land sliding. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

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

Construction

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

The Project Site currently consists of primarily fallowed agricultural land, unoperated infiltration basins, and disturbed desert terrain associated with previous agricultural use. The Project Site would

5 See **Appendices I** through **K.**

6 California Geological Survey. "Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation."

7 See **Appendices I** through **K.**

be graded prior to construction on the Project, and therefore, the soils would be exposed and could be subject to erosion. In compliance with SCAQMD *Rule 403* and *Rule 403.1*, exposed soils would need to be covered with vegetation as soon as possible and/or watered in order to reduce fugitive dust. Construction vehicles on the Project Site would also need to maintain low speeds as another measure to reduce airborne fugitive dust particles.

As described in **Section 5.10: Hydrology and Water Quality**, the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities requires that the Applicant develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which includes best management practices (BMPs) to prevent erosion of on-site soils, as well as discharge of other construction related pollutants. A monitoring program is required as part of the SWPPP to ensure that BMPs are implemented appropriately and are effective at controlling discharges of pollutants that are related to stormwater, including erosion of on-site soils. The Project would comply with the requirements of the General Permit, SWPPP, and BMPs, which would ensure that potential impacts due to soil erosion or loss of topsoil are less than significant. In addition, the Project would adhere to Chapter 16.52 (Soil Erosion) of the County's Municipal Code, which describes requirements for soil erosion control. Therefore, with regulatory compliance with a General Permit, SWPPP, and BMPs, and adherence to the County's Municipal Code, soil erosion impacts from construction activities would be less than significant.

Operation

The increased intensity of use on the Project Site would potentially impact the surrounding undeveloped adjacent landscape and influence acceleration of erosion from stormwater runoff. In addition, wind erosion from the surrounding undeveloped properties could have potential impacts on the buildings, structures, and individuals within the Project Site. This is due to the nature of the regional landscape, wind patterns, and soil composition. These factors influence the area to be more susceptible to wind erosion impacts.

The Project would implement **MM GEO-1**, which includes all recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation, described in detail in *Section 5.7.7: Mitigation Measures*. Further, the Project would adhere to the design requirements of the CBC, which include additional erosion control measures. Implementation of **MM GEO-1** and regulatory compliance with the CBC would reduce impacts from erosion or loss of topsoil on the Project Site to a less-than-significant level.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

As described above, there are no natural or man-made hillsides within the Project Site. The Project Site is relatively flat and not located immediately adjacent to any slopes, with adjacent properties at the same relative elevation as the Project Site. Therefore, the Project Site is not considered

susceptible to slope instability and the potential for lurching, which is earth movement at right angles to a cliff or steep slope during ground shaking, or landslides.

Liquefaction also has the potential to cause lateral spreading, in areas that are subject to liquefaction risk. For lateral spreading to occur, the liquefiable zone must be continuous, unconstrained laterally, and free to move along gently sloping ground toward an unconfined area. However, if lateral containment is present for those zones, then no significant risk of lateral spreading would be present. As previously discussed, liquefaction is not likely to occur on the Project Site due to the depth of groundwater in the Project vicinity. Further, the Project Site is not mapped within an area of liquefaction. Since the liquefaction potential at the Project Site is low, earthquake-induced lateral spreading is not considered to be a significant seismic hazard, nor would it result in off-site impacts.

Ground surface subsidence generally results from the extraction of fluids or gas from the subsurface that can result in a gradual lowering of the ground level. The Project would not include uses that would extract fluids or gas from the subsurface. According to the Geotechnical Investigations and Geotechnical Report, **Appendices I** through **K,** groundwater was not encountered in the borings during the time of exploration. Groundwater depths, collected from nearby agricultural wells indicated that groundwater level ranges from 79-80 feet bgs. The Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (CDEH) maintains records of recorded well depths for at least the previous 5 years (i.e., 2020) and according to this data, groundwater depths of the tested wells have remained consistent over this time period. With the lack of presence of shallow groundwater, the potential for ground collapse and other adverse effects due to subsidence to occur on the Project Site and off-site areas is considered low.

Additionally, the Geotechnical Investigations and Geotechnical Report prepared for the Project, did not identify local fissures or other surficial evidence of subsidence on or within the vicinity of the Project Site, however, the Project Site is located within an Area of Land Subsidence by the U.S. Geological Survey due to groundwater pumping in the region.[8] Therefore, the Project would implement **MM GEO-1**, which includes recommendations of the Geotechnical Investigation, to address potential impacts of ground subsidence. **MM GEO-1** includes conditions for cut to be replaced as controlled compacted fill, as well as moisture control measures and drainage to ensure adequate site drainage.[9] With implementation of **MM GEO-1**, potential impacts from ground surface subsidence would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

As mentioned above, the Project Site is underlain by primarily medium dense to dense sands, which are non-expansive, therefore, total induced settlements are anticipated to be minimal. The Project

8 United States Geological Survey. "Areas of Land Subsidence in California." Accessed December 2025. https://ca.water.usgs.gov/land_subsidence/california-subsidence-areas.html.

9 See **Appendices I** through **K.**

would be designed in compliance with the provisions of the CBC, which includes guidelines and requirements to ensure safety and structural stability during potential seismic events. For these reasons, the risk of ground settlement would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Although the Project Site's potential to experience a landslide, lateral spreading, liquefaction, or collapse is considered low, the Project would comply with the CBC, which provides construction and safety standards for buildings and structures, to ensure structural integrity and seismic design requirements. Impacts from ground surface subsidence would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of **MM GEO-1**. Accordingly, with implementation of **MM GEO-1** and regulatory compliance with CBC, impacts related to exposure to hazards including landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, and collapse would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Expansive soils are characterized as fine-grained, such as silts and clays, soils with variable amounts of expansive clay minerals that can change in volume due to changes in water content, i.e., soils that have the ability to give up (shrink) or take on (swell) water. When swelling occurs, the soils can exert significant pressure on structures (e.g., buildings, channel linings, and other structures) built upon them. Collapsible soils typically occur in recently deposited soils that tend to be drier and more granular.

The Geotechnical Investigations and Geotechnical Report, **Appendices I** through **K,** prepared for the Project Site, identified subsurface soils to consist of surficial silty sand, sandy silt, and sand overlying medium dense to dense sands and silty sands to a depth of 50 feet, the maximum depth of exploration. The above-mentioned soils are non-expansive in nature, therefore, potential impacts from expansive soils would be less than significant and would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. No mitigation measure is required.

e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

No Impact.

As described in the Project Description, the proposed Project includes densities that require the use of a sanitary sewer system. The proposed Project will connect to the CVWD mainline sewer, located in the centerline of Monroe Street. The use of on-lot septic tanks, with or without leach fields or seepage pits, is not proposed or feasible for the proposed Project. Therefore, the Project would have no impact to on-site soils or their use for on-lot septic systems and no mitigation is required.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

A unique geological feature is defined as a naturally occurring landform, rock formation, mineral deposit, or geological process that retains a special scientific, educational, aesthetic, or cultural significance. A unique geological feature can also be considered an on-site geological feature that is considered rare or distinctive in its composition, structure, age, or appearance. Paleontological resources include the fossilized remains or traces of animals and plants from a previous geologic period.

Paleontological resources are analyzed in Section 4.7.2, Paleontological Sensitivity Areas, in the County General Plan EIR. Riverside County maintains an extensive record of fossil life which starts in Jurassic time, 150 million years ago, with diverse marine mollusks. According to the County General Plan EIR, the Project Site is designated as "High Sensitivity A (High A)" Paleontological area,[10] which consists of geologic formations or mappable rock units that are known to contain or have the correct age and depositional conditions to contain significant paleontological resources.[11]

The General Plan EIR concluded that the potential for impacts to unique paleontological resources would be mitigated to less than significant by implementation of General Plan policies. The General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element contains policies OS 19.6 through 19.9 to ensure that paleontological resources are appropriately considered:

OS 19.6 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has high paleontological sensitivity as shown on Figure OS-8, a paleontological resource impact mitigation program (PRIMP) shall be filed with the County Geologist prior to site grading. The PRIMP shall specify the steps to be taken to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources.

OS 19.7 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has low paleontological sensitivity as shown on Figure OS-8, no direct mitigation is required unless a fossil is encountered during site development. Should a fossil be encountered, the County Geologist shall be notified and a paleontologist shall be retained by the project proponent. The paleontologist shall document the extent and

10 Riverside County Planning Department. "Figure OS-8: Paleontological Sensitivity." In *General Plan, Final Program Environmental Impact Report Volume I*. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/general-plan-environmental-impact-report-volume-i.

11 Riverside County Planning Department. "Section 4.7.2: Paleontological Sensitivity Areas." In *General Plan, Final Program Environmental Impact Report Volume I*. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/general-plan-environmental-impact-report-volume-i#fig4.7.2.

potential significance of the paleontological resources on the site and establish appropriate mitigation measures for further site development.

OS 19.8 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has undetermined paleontological sensitivity as shown on Figure OS-8, a report shall be filed with the County Geologist documenting the extent and potential significance of the paleontological resources on site and identifying mitigation measures for the fossil and for impacts to significant paleontological resources prior to approval of that department.

OS 19.9 Whenever paleontological resources are found, the County Geologist shall direct them to a facility within Riverside County for their curation, including the Western Science Center in the City of Hemet.

In accordance with Open Space Policy 19.6 of the County General Plan, a Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) will be prepared prior to ground-disturbing activities to ensure appropriate monitoring, documentation, and recovery of any paleontological resources that may be present on the Project Site. **MM GEO-2** requires the preparation and implementation of a Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) and paleontological monitoring throughout ground-disturbing activities, any impacts from inadvertent discovery of previously undisturbed paleontological resources will be reduced to a less-than-significant.

5.7.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Geology and soil hazards are related to conditions and circumstances that are considered site-specific. Therefore, the geographic context for the analysis of potential cumulative geology and soils impacts consists of individual development sites. Although cumulative development in the County and broader Coachella Valley may include numerous projects with geologic and soil impacts, these impacts would affect each individual project, rather than resulting in an additive cumulative effect. Mitigation measures would be taken on a project-by-project basis and be specific to each site. None of the related projects are located on an adjacent property or nearby, and all projects have to be designed in accordance with the appropriate jurisdiction's building and grading standards to reduce seismic-related risks to less than significant levels. Thus, cumulative development would result in a less-than-significant cumulative impact related to geology and soil hazards.

5.7.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

MM GEO-1 Implementation of Project-Specific Geotechnical Recommendations

Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Project Applicant shall submit to the County of Riverside Building and Safety Department for review and approval of the final project grading and foundation plans demonstrating compliance with all

applicable development standards and recommendations identified in the following geotechnical reports:

- *Geotechnical Report (APN 780-010-014), Vista Santa Rosa, California* (LandMark Consultants, Inc., April 2022);
- *Geotechnical Investigation for Proposed Residential Development (APNs 780-020-001, 002, 003 & 780-010-012), Monroe Street, La Quinta Area, Riverside County, California* (Sladden Engineering, October 2022); and
- *Supplemental Geotechnical Investigation for Proposed Ranch at Madison (APN 780-010-013)* (Sladden Engineering, December 2025).

The final grading plans shall incorporate all site-specific engineering recommendations related to soil preparation, compaction, grading, slope stability, seismic design parameters, foundations, trench backfill, subdrainage, and pavement design contained in these reports, as required by the County of Riverside Grading Ordinance and Building Code.

All recommendations shall be implemented during site preparation, grading, and construction. A registered geotechnical engineer shall provide construction-phase observation and testing, as necessary, to verify that all required geotechnical measures have been properly implemented. Documentation of compliance shall be submitted to the County prior to final inspection or issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

MM GEO-2 Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP), Monitoring, and Unanticipated Discoveries

Prior to issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist to prepare and implement a Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) in accordance with Riverside County General Plan policies and Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) guidelines. The PRIMP shall include, but not be limited to: (1) a preconstruction review of grading plans and geotechnical data to identify areas of high paleontological sensitivity; (2) development and implementation of a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) to train construction personnel on the identification of paleontological resources and proper notification procedures; (3) protocols for monitoring ground-disturbing activities; (4) procedures for the evaluation, recovery, documentation, and curation of paleontological resources in the event of discovery; and (5) preparation of a final report documenting the results of monitoring and any recovered resources.

In accordance with the approved PRIMP, a qualified paleontologist shall conduct monitoring of ground-disturbing activities in native sediments with moderate to high paleontological sensitivity. If any paleontological resources are encountered, the monitor shall have the authority to temporarily halt work in the immediate area to evaluate the find. Any significant fossils shall be recovered, documented, and

curated in accordance with SVP guidelines and applicable State regulations. Construction may resume once the paleontologist confirms that the resource has been appropriately treated and would not be adversely affected by further ground disturbance.

5.7.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

With implementation of **MM GEO-1** and **MM GEO-2**, impacts associated with geology and soils would be less than significant. Therefore, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts relating to geology and soils have been identified.

5.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This section of the Draft EIR evaluates the potential for the proposed Project to generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that may have a significant effect on the environment or conflict with plans and policies adopted for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Federal, State, regional, and local programs and regulations related to greenhouse gas emissions are discussed in this section.

A quantified estimate of the GHG emissions that could result from the development of the Project is provided. Modeling datasheets for greenhouse gas emissions are included as part of the air quality modeling in **Appendix D**: **Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study** of this Draft EIR.

5.8.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.8.1.1 Federal

Federal Clean Air Act

The US Supreme Court ruled in *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency (2007)*[1] that carbon dioxide (CO_2) and other GHGs are pollutants under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA), which the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) must regulate if it determines they pose an endangerment to public health or welfare.[2] The Court did not mandate that the USEPA enact regulations to reduce GHG emissions. Instead, the Court found that the USEPA could avoid taking action if it found that GHGs do not contribute to climate change or if it offered a "reasonable explanation" for not determining that GHGs contribute to climate change.

On April 17, 2009, the USEPA issued a proposed finding that GHGs contribute to air pollution that may endanger public health or welfare. On April 24, 2009, the proposed rule was published in the Federal Register under Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0171.[3] The USEPA stated that high atmospheric levels of GHGs "are the unambiguous result of human emissions and are very likely the cause of the observed increase in average temperatures and other climatic changes." The USEPA further found that "atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases endanger public health and welfare within the meaning of Section 202 of the Clean Air Act." The final rule was effective on January

1 *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency*, 127 S.Ct. 1438 (2007). Accessed February 2025. https://www.oyez.org/cases/2006/05-1120.

2 Perry W. Payne and Sara Rosenbaum. "Massachusetts et al. v Environmental Protection Agency: Implications for Public Health Policy and Practice," *Public Health Reports* 122 No. 6 (2007): 817–819. Accessed February 2025. https://doi.org/10.1177/003335490712200614.

3 Federal Register. *Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases Under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act* (December 15, 2009). Accessed February 2025. https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2009/12/15/E9-29537/endangerment-and-cause-or-contribute-findings-for-greenhouse-gases-under-section-202a-of-the-clean.

14, 2010.[4] While these findings alone did not impose any requirements on industry or other entities, this action was a prerequisite to regulatory actions by the USEPA, including, but not limited to, GHG emissions standards for light-duty vehicles.

The USEPA promulgated a regulation to require reporting of all GHG emissions from all sectors of the economy. The final rule applies to fossil fuel suppliers and industrial gas suppliers, direct greenhouse gas emitters and manufacturers of heavy-duty and off-road vehicles and engines. The rule does not require control of greenhouse gases; rather, it requires only that sources above certain threshold levels monitor and report emissions.[5]

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards

In response to the *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency (2007)*, President George W. Bush's administration issued Executive Order 13432 in 2007, directing the USEPA, the US Department of Transportation (USDOT), and the US Department of Energy (USDOE) to establish regulations that reduce GHG emissions from motor vehicles, nonroad vehicles, and nonroad engines by 2008.[6] In 2009, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a final rule regulating fuel efficiency for and GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks for model year 2011; in 2010, the USEPA and NHTSA issued a final rule regulating cars and light-duty trucks for model years 2012–2016.[7]

In 2010, President Obama issued a memorandum directing the USEPA, USDOT, USDOE, and NHTSA to establish additional standards regarding fuel efficiency and GHG reduction, clean fuels, and advanced vehicle infrastructure. In response to this directive, the USEPA and NHTSA proposed stringent, coordinated federal GHG and fuel economy standards for model years 2017–2025 light-duty vehicles.[8] The proposed standards projected to achieve 163 grams/mile of CO_2 in model year 2025, on an average industry fleet-wide basis, which is equivalent to 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) if

4 United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). *Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/endangerment-and-cause-or-contribute-findings-greenhouse-gases-under-section-202a-clean/.

5 Federal Register. *Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gases.* October 30, 2009. Accessed February 2025. https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2009-10-30/pdf/E9-23315.pdf.

6 US Government Publishing Office. *Administration of George W. Bush, Executive Order 13432—Cooperation Among Agencies in Protecting the Environment With Respect to Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Motor Vehicles, Nonroad Vehicles, and Nonroad Engines*, 631. May 14, 2007. Accessed February 2025. https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/WCPD-2007-05-21/pdf/WCPD-2007-05-21-Pg631.pdf.

7 USEPA. *Regulations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Commercial Trucks & Buses.* December 27, 2017. Accessed February 2025. https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/regulations-greenhouse-gas-emissions-commercial-trucks.

8 USEPA. *Presidential Announcements and Letters of Support related to Greenhouse Gas Emissions.* August 28, 2017. Accessed February 2025. https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/presidential-announcements-and-letters-support-related.

this level were achieved solely through fuel efficiency. The final rule was adopted in 2012 for model years 2017–2021, and NHTSA intends to set standards for model years 2022–2025 in a future rulemaking. On April 2, 2018, the USEPA signed the Mid-term Evaluation Final Determination, which found that the model year 2022–2025 greenhouse gas standards are not appropriate and should be revised.[9] The Final Determination serves to initiate a notice to further consider appropriate standards for model year 2022–2025 light duty vehicles. On August 24, 2018, the USEPA and NHTSA published a proposal to freeze the model year 2020 standards through model year 2026 and to revoke California's waiver under the Clean Air Act to establish more stringent standards.

In addition to the regulations applicable to cars and light-duty trucks described above, in 2016, the USEPA and NHTSA finalized Phase 2 standards for medium and heavy-duty vehicles through model year 2027 that will improve fuel efficiency and cut carbon pollution. If implemented, the Phase 2 standards would be expected to lower CO_2 emissions by approximately 1.1 billion metric tons (MT), save vehicle owners fuel costs of about $170 billion.[10] But as discussed above, the USEPA and NHTSA have proposed to roll back GHG and fuel economy for cars and light-duty trucks, which suggest a similar rollback of Phase 2 standards for medium and heavy-duty vehicles may be pursued.

In March 2020, the Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule, issued by NHTSA and EPA, set fuel economy and carbon dioxide standards that increase 1.5% in stringency each year from model years 2021 through 2026.[11]

In February 2022, the USEPA issued the Revised 2023 and Later Model Year Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards.[12] This final rule revises current GHG standards beginning with vehicles in model year 2023 through model year 2026, and it established the most stringent GHG standards ever set for the light-duty vehicle sector that are expected to result in average fuel economy label values of 40 mpg, while the standards they replace (the SAFE rule standards) would achieve only 32 mpg in model year 2026 vehicles.[13]

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9 Federal Register. *Mid-Term Evaluation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards for Model Year 2022 – 2025 Light-Duty Vehicles*. April 13, 2018. Accessed February 2025. https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/04/13/2018-07364/mid-term-evaluation-of-greenhouse-gas-emissions-standards-for-model-year-2022-2025-light-duty.

10 USEPA. "EPA and NHTSA Adopt Standards to Reduce GHG and Improve Fuel Efficiency of Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicles for Model Year 2018 and Beyond." Accessed February 2025. https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/detailed-fact-sheet.pdf.

11 US Department of Transportation. "Mar. 31, 2020: NHTSA and EPA finalize CAFE and carbon dioxide emissions standards for model years 2021-2026." Accessed October 2025. https://www.nhtsa.gov/corporate-average-fuel-economy/safe.

12 USEPA. *Federal Register Vol. 86, No. 248, Rules and Regulations, Revised 2023 and Later Model Year Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-12-30/pdf/2021-27854.pdf.

13 USEPA. *Federal Register Vol. 86, No. 248, Rules and Regulations, Revised 2023 and Later Model Year Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards*.

Energy Independence and Security Act

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) facilitates the reduction of national GHG emissions by requiring the following: [14]

- Increasing the supply of alternative fuel sources by setting a mandatory Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) that requires fuel producers to use at least 36 billion gallons of renewable fuel in 2022, with at least 16 billion gallons from cellulosic biofuels and a cap of 15 billion gallons for corn-starch ethanol;
- Prescribing or revising standards affecting regional efficiency for heating and cooling products, procedures for new or amended standards, energy conservation, energy efficiency labeling for consumer electronic products, residential boiler efficiency, electric motor efficiency, and home appliances;
- Requiring approximately 25 percent greater efficiency for light bulbs by phasing out incandescent light bulbs between 2012 and 2014; requiring approximately 200 percent greater efficiency for light bulbs, or similar energy savings, by 2020; and
- While superseded by USEPA and NHTSA actions described above, (i) establishing miles per gallon targets for cars and light trucks; and (ii) directing the NHTSA to establish a fuel economy program for medium- and heavy-duty trucks and create a separate fuel economy standard for trucks.

Additional provisions of EISA address energy savings in government and public institutions, promote research for alternative energy, additional research in carbon capture, international energy programs, and the creation of "green jobs." [15]

5.8.1.2 State

California Air Resources Board

Climate Change Scoping Plan

CARB approved a Climate Change Scoping Plan (Scoping Plan) on December 11, 2008, as required by AB 32. The Scoping Plan proposed a "comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall carbon GHG emissions in California, improve our environment, reduce our dependence on oil, diversify our energy sources, save energy, create new jobs, and enhance public health." [16] The Scoping Plan had a range of GHG reduction actions, including direct regulations; alternative compliance mechanisms; monetary and nonmonetary incentives; voluntary actions; market-based

14 USEPA. *Summary of the Energy Independence and Security Act.* Accessed February 2025. https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-energy-independence-and-security-act.

15 A green job, as defined by the United States Department of Labor, is a job in business that produce goods or provide services that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources.

16 California Air Resource Board (CARB). *Climate Change Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/adopted_scoping_plan.pdf.

mechanisms, such as a cap-and-trade system; and an AB 32 implementation regulation to fund the program.

The Scoping Plan called for a "coordinated set of strategies" to address all major categories of GHG emissions.[17] Transportation emissions were to be addressed through a combination of higher standards for vehicle fuel economy, implementation of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard,[18] and greater consideration to reducing trip length and generation through land use planning and transit-oriented development. Buildings, land use, and industrial operations were encouraged and, sometimes, required to implement energy efficiency practices. Utility energy supplies will change to include more renewable energy sources through implementation of the Renewables Portfolio Standard. This will be complemented with emphasis on local generation, including rooftop photovoltaics and solar hot water installations. Additionally, the Scoping Plan emphasized opportunities for households and businesses to save energy and money through increasing energy efficiency. It indicated that substantial savings of electricity and natural gas would be accomplished through improving energy efficiency.

CARB updated the Scoping Plan in May 2014 (2014 Scoping Plan). The 2014 Scoping Plan[19] adjusted the 1990 GHG emissions levels to 431 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents ($MMTCO_2e$); the updated 2020 GHG emissions forecast is 509 $MMTCO_2e$, which is credited for certain GHG emission reduction measures already in place (e.g., the RPS). The 2014 Scoping Plan also recommended a 40 percent reduction in GHG emissions from 1990 levels by 2030, and a 60 percent reduction in GHG emissions from 1990 levels by 2040.

The 2017 Scoping Plan,[20] approved on December 14, 2017, builds on previous programs, and takes aim at the 2030 target established by the SB 32 (Pavley), which is further discussed below. The 2017 Scoping Plan outlines options to meet California's aggressive goals to reduce GHGs by 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. In addition, the plan incorporates the State's updated RPS requiring utilities to procure 50 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030. It also raises the State's Low Carbon Fuel Standard[21] and aims to reduce emissions of methane and

17 CARB. *Climate Change Scoping Plan*, p. ES-7. Accessed February 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/adopted_scoping_plan.pdf.

18 Office of the Governor. *Executive Order S-01-07*. January 18, 2007. Accessed February 2025. https://climateactionnetwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/eos0107.pdf.

19 CARB. *First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan: Building on the Framework*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/adopted_scoping_plan.pdf.

20 CARB. *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*. Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic//cc/scopingplan/scoping_plan_2017.pdf.

21 Office of the Governor. *Executive Order S-01-07*. January 18, 2007. Accessed February 2025. https://climateactionnetwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/eos0107.pdf.

hydrofluorocarbons by 40 percent from 2013 levels by 2030 and emissions of black carbon by 50 percent from 2013 levels.

The 2022 Scoping Plan[22] was approved on December 15, 2022, and is the most comprehensive and far-reaching Scoping Plan developed to date. It identifies a technologically feasible, cost-effective, and equity-focused path to achieve new targets for carbon neutrality by 2045 and to reduce anthropogenic GHG emissions to at least 85 percent below 1990 levels, while also assessing the progress California is making toward reducing its GHG emissions by at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, as called for in SB 32 and laid out in the 2017 Scoping Plan.[23] The 2030 target is an interim but important stepping stone along the critical path to the broader goal of deep decarbonization by 2045. The relatively longer path assessed in the 2022 Scoping Plan Update incorporates, coordinates, and leverages many existing and ongoing efforts to reduce GHGs and air pollution, while identifying new clean technologies and energy. Given the focus on carbon neutrality, the 2022 Scoping Plan Update also includes discussion for the first time of the natural and working lands sectors as sources for both sequestration and carbon storage, and as sources of emissions as a result of wildfires.

As discussed above, jurisdictions that want to take meaningful climate action (such as preparing a non-CEQA-qualified Climate Action Plan [CAP] or as individual measures) aligned with the State's climate goals in the absence of a CEQA-qualified CAP should also look to the three priority areas (transportation electrification, VMT reduction, and building decarbonization). To assist local jurisdictions, the 2022 Scoping Plan Update presents a nonexhaustive list of impactful GHG reduction strategies that can be implemented by local governments within the three priority areas (Priority GHG Reduction Strategies for Local Government Climate Action Priority Areas).[24]

Cap-and-Trade Program

The Climate Change Scoping Plan identified a Cap-and-Trade Program as one of the strategies California would employ to reduce GHG emissions. CARB asserts that this program will help put California on the path to meet its goal of ultimately achieving an 80-percent reduction from 1990 levels by 2050. Under the Cap-and-Trade Program, an overall limit on GHG emissions from capped sectors was established, and facilities subject to the cap will be able to trade permits to emit GHGs.

22 CARB. "2022 Scoping Plan Documents." Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/ab-32-climate-change-scoping-plan/2022-scoping-plan-documents#:~:text=The%202022%20Scoping%20Plan%20for,directed%20by%20Assembly%20Bill%201279.

23 CARB. *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*. 2017. Accessed February 2025. ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/cc/scopingplan/scoping_plan_2017.pdf.

24 CARB. *2022 Scoping Plan Update*. Table 1 of Appendix D. November 2022.

CARB designed and adopted a California Cap-and-Trade Program[25] pursuant to its authority under AB 32. The Cap-and-Trade Program was designed to reduce GHG emissions from public and private major sources (deemed "covered entities") by setting a firm cap on statewide GHG emissions and employing market mechanisms to achieve the State's emission-reduction mandates. The statewide cap for GHG emissions from the capped sectors[26] (e.g., electricity generation, petroleum refining, and cement production) commenced in 2013 and will decline over time, achieving GHG emission reductions throughout the Program duration.

Under the Cap-and-Trade Program, CARB issues allowances equal to the total amount of allowable emissions over a given compliance period and distributes these to regulated entities. Covered entities that emit more than 25,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year must comply with the Cap-and-Trade Program.[27] Triggering of the 25,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year "inclusion threshold" is measured against a subset of emissions reported and verified under the California Regulation for the Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Mandatory Reporting Rule or "MRR").[28]

Each covered entity with a compliance obligation is required to surrender "compliance instruments"[29] for each $MTCO_2e$ of GHG they emit. Covered entities are allocated free allowances in whole or part (if eligible), and can buy allowances at auction, purchase allowances from others, or purchase offset credits. The Cap-and-Trade Regulation provides a firm cap, ensuring that the statewide emission limits will not be exceeded.

In sum, the Cap-and-Trade Program will achieve aggregate, rather than site-specific or project-level, GHG emissions reductions. Also, due to the regulatory framework adopted by CARB in AB 32, the reductions attributed to the Cap-and-Trade Program can change over time depending on the State's emissions forecasts and the effectiveness of direct regulatory measures.

The Cap-and-Trade Program covers the GHG emissions associated with electricity consumed in California, whether generated in-State or imported.[30] Accordingly, for projects that are subject to CEQA, GHG emissions associated with electricity usage are covered by the Cap-and-Trade Program. The Cap-and-Trade Program also covers fuel suppliers (natural gas and propane fuel providers and

25 California Code of Regulations 17, Sections 95800–96023.

26 California Code of Regulations 17, Sections 95811, 95812.

27 California Code of Regulations 17, Section 95812.

28 California Code of Regulations 17, Sections 95100–95158.

29 Compliance instruments are permits to emit, the majority of which will be "allowances," but entities also are allowed to use CARB-approved offset credits to meet up to 8% of their compliance obligations.

30 California Code of Regulations 17, Section 95811(b).

transportation fuel providers) to address emissions from such fuels and from combustion of other fossil fuels not directly covered at large sources in the Program's first compliance period.[31]

The Program applies to emissions that cover approximately 80 percent of the State's GHG emissions. Demonstrating the efficacy of AB 32 policies, California achieved its 2020 GHG Reduction Target four years earlier than mandated. The largest reductions were the result of increased renewable electricity in the electricity sector, which is a covered sector in the Cap-and-Trade Program.

AB 398 was enacted in 2017 to extend and clarify the role of the State's Cap-and Trade Program through December 31, 2030. As part of AB 398, refinements were made to the Cap-and-Trade Program to establish updated protocols and allocation of proceeds to reduce GHG emissions.

Advanced Clean Cars Regulations

In 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) program, a new emissions-control program for vehicle model years 2017–2025. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and GHGs with requirements for a greater number of zero-emission vehicles. By 2025, when the rules will be fully implemented, automobiles will emit 34 percent fewer global warming gases and 75 percent fewer smog-forming emissions.[32]

Executive Orders

Executive Order S-3-05

Executive Order S-3-05, signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and issued in June 2005, proclaimed that California is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.[33] It declared that increased temperatures could reduce the Sierra snowpack, further exacerbate California's air quality problems, and potentially cause a rise in sea levels. To combat those concerns, the Executive Order established the following total GHG emission targets:

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

However, in adopting the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, also known as Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (Pavley), discussed below, the Legislature did not adopt the 2050 horizon-year goal from

31 California Code of Regulations 17, Sections 95811, 95812(d).

32 CARB. "The Advanced Clean Cars Program." January 18, 2018. Accessed February 2025. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/advanced-clean-cars-program.

33 State of California, Executive Department. *Executive Order S-3-05*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.library.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/GovernmentPublications/executive-order-proclamation/5129-5130.pdf.

Executive Order No. S-3-05 and, in the 2006 legislative session, rejected legislation to enact the Executive Order's 2050 goal.

Executive Order S-01-07

Executive Order S-1-07, the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (issued on January 18, 2007), requires a reduction of at least 10 percent in the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by 2020.[34] Regulatory proceedings and implementation of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard have been directed to the California Air Resources Board (CARB). CARB has identified the Low Carbon Fuel Standard as a discrete early action item in the adopted Climate Change Scoping Plan (discussed below). CARB expects the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to achieve the minimum 10 percent reduction goal; however, many of the early action items outlined in the Climate Change Scoping Plan work in tandem with one another. Other specific emission reduction measures included are the Million Solar Roofs Program[35] and Assembly Bill (AB) 1493 (Pavley I), Vehicle Emissions: Greenhouse Gases, which establishes motor vehicle GHG emissions standards.[36] To avoid the potential for double-counting emission reductions associated with AB 1493, the Climate Change Scoping Plan has modified the aggregate reduction expected from the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to 9.1 percent. In accordance with the Climate Change Scoping Plan, this analysis incorporates the modified reduction potential for the Low Carbon Fuel Standard. CARB released a draft version of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard in October 2008. The final regulation was approved by the Office of Administrative Law and filed with the Secretary of State on January 12, 2010; the Low Carbon Fuel Standard became effective on the same day.

Executive Order B-30-15

Executive Order B-30-15, signed by Governor Edmund Gerald "Jerry" Brown and issued on April 29, 2015, established a new statewide policy goal to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below their 1990 levels by 2030. Reducing GHG emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels in 2030, and by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 (consistent with Executive Order S-3-05), aligns with scientifically established levels needed to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius.[37] Executive Order B-30-15 also directed CARB to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to express the 2030 target in terms of million metric tons (MMT) of CO_2e.

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34 Office of the Governor. *Executive Order S-01-07*. January 18, 2007. Accessed February 2025. https://climateactionnetwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/eos0107.pdf.

35 US Department of Energy. *Laying the Foundation for Solar America: The Million Solar Roofs Initiative*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy07osti/40483.pdf.

36 The standards enacted in Pavley I are the first GHG standards in the nation for passenger vehicles and took effect for model years starting in 2009 and going through 2016. Pavley I could potentially result in 27.7 million metric tons CO_2e reduction in 2020. Pavley II will cover model years 2017 to 2025 and potentially result in an additional reduction of 4.1 million metric tons CO_2e.

37 Office of the Governor. "Governor Brown Established Most Ambitious Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target in North America" (April 29, 2015). Accessed February 2025. https://www.ca.gov/archive/gov39/2015/04/29/news18938/index.html.

Executive Order B-55-18

Executive Order B-55-18, issued by Governor Brown in September 2018, establishes a new statewide goal to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, but no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter. Based on this executive order, CARB would work with relevant State agencies to develop a framework for implementation and accounting that tracks progress towards this goal as well as ensuring future scoping plans identify and recommend measures to achieve the carbon neutrality goal.

Assembly Bill 32 and Related Legislation

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (codified in the California Health and Safety Code (HSC), Division 25.5 – California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006), which focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020. To achieve these goals, which are consistent with the California Climate Action Team, which works to coordinate statewide efforts to implement global warming emission reduction programs and the State's Climate Adaptation Strategy after the passing of AB 32, AB 32 mandates that CARB establish a quantified emissions cap and institute a schedule to meet the cap; implement regulations to reduce statewide GHG emissions from stationary sources consistent with the California Climate Action Team strategies; and develop tracking, reporting, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that reductions are achieved. To reach the reduction targets, AB 32 requires CARB to adopt, in an open, public process, rules and regulations that achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG reductions.

Senate Bills

Senate Bill 743

SB 743 was signed by Governor Brown in 2013, which creates a process to change the way that transportation impacts are analyzed under CEQA. Specifically, SB 743 requires the Office of Planning and Research to amend the CEQA Guidelines to provide an alternative to level of service methodology for evaluating transportation impacts. Particularly within areas served by transit, the required alternative criteria must "promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses." Measurements of transportation impacts may include "vehicle miles traveled, vehicle miles traveled per capita, automobile trip generation rates or automobile trips generated."

Senate Bill 375

SB 375, signed into law in September 2008, aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG reduction targets, and land use and housing allocations.[38] The act requires metropolitan

38 California Legislative Information. *Senate Bill No. 375*. September 30, 2008. Accessed February 2025. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=200720080SB375.

planning organizations (MPOs) to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) that prescribes land use allocation in that MPO's regional transportation plan (RTP). CARB, in consultation with MPOs, provided regional reduction targets for GHGs for the years 2020 and 2035.

Senate Bill X1-2: 2020 Renewable Portfolio Standard

On April 12, 2011, California governor Jerry Brown signed SB X1-2.[39] This bill supersedes the 33 percent by RPS created by Executive Order S-14-08, previously signed by Governor Schwarzenegger. The RPS required that all retail suppliers of electricity in California serve 33 percent of their load with renewable energy by 2020. A number of significant changes are made in SB X1-2. It extends application of the RPS to all electric retailers in the State, including municipal and public utilities, and community choice aggregators.

SB X1-2 creates a three-stage compliance period for electricity providers to meet renewable energy goals: 20 percent of retail sales must be renewable energy products by 2013, 25 percent of retail sales must be renewable energy products by 2016, and 33 percent of retail sales must be renewable energy products by 2020. The 33 percent level must be maintained in the years that follow. This three-stage compliance period requires the RPS to be met increasingly with renewable energy that is supplied to the California grid and is located within or directly proximate to California. SB X1-2 mandates that renewables from this category make up:

- At least 50 percent for the 2011–2013 compliance period;
- At least 65 percent for the 2014–2016 compliance period; and
- At least 75 percent for 2016 and beyond.

SB X1-2 sets rules for the use of Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) as follows:

- Establishes a cap of no more than 25 percent unbundled RECs going toward the RPS between 2011 and 2013, 15 percent from 2014 to 2016, and 10 percent thereafter;
- Does not allow for the grandfathering of tradable REC contracts executed before 2010, unless the contract was (or is) approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC);
- Allows banking of RECs for three years only; and
- Allows energy service providers, community choice aggregators, and investor-owned utilities with 60,000 or fewer customers to use 100 percent RECs to meet the RPS.

39 California Energy Commission. "Renewable Portfolio." Accessed February 2025. http://www.energy.ca.gov/portfolio.

SB X1-2 also eliminates the Market Price Referent, which was a benchmark to assess the above-market costs of RPS contracts based on the long-term ownership, operating, and fixed-price fuel costs for a new 500-megawatt (MW) natural-gas-fired, combined-cycle gas turbine.

Senate Bill 350: Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act

SB 350, the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015, was signed on October 7 of that year.[40] SB 350 implements some of the goals of Executive Order B-30-15 described above. The objectives of SB 350 are: (1) to increase the procurement of our electricity from renewable sources from 33 percent to 50 percent; and (2) to double the energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas final end uses of retail customers through energy efficiency and conservation.[41]

Senate Bill 97

In August 2007, the California State Legislature adopted SB 97 requiring the Governor's OPR to prepare and transmit new CEQA guidelines for the mitigation of GHG emissions or the effects of GHG emissions to the Resources Agency by July 1, 2009. In response to SB 97, the OPR adopted CEQA guidelines that became effective on March 18, 2010. However, neither a threshold of significance nor any specific mitigation measures are included or provided in the guidelines. The guidelines require a lead agency to make a good-faith effort, based on the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of GHG emissions resulting from a project.

Discretion is given to the lead agency whether to: (1) use a model or methodology to quantify GHG emissions resulting from a project, and which model or methodology to use; or (2) rely on a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards. Furthermore, three factors are identified that should be considered in the evaluation of the significance of GHG emissions:

1. The extent to which a project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting;
2. Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project; and
3. The extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions.[42]

40 California Legislative Information. *Senate Bill No. 350*. October 7, 2015. Accessed February 2025. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB350.

41 California Legislative Information. *Senate Bill No. 350*.

42 California Code of Regulations. Title 14, Section 15064.4(b).

The administrative record for the Guidelines Amendments also clarifies "that the effects of greenhouse gas emissions are cumulative and should be analyzed in the context of California Environmental Quality Act's requirements for cumulative impact analysis."[43]

Senate Bill 32 and Assembly Bill 197

Enacted in 2016, SB 32 codifies the 2030 emissions reduction goal of EO B-30-15 by requiring CARB to ensure that statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The reduction of GHG emissions is a priority for development projects throughout the State and is achieved through a combination of policies, planning, direct regulations, market approaches, incentives, and voluntary efforts. Generally speaking, the focus of GHG emission reductions is on energy production and motor vehicles.

SB 32 was coupled with a companion bill: AB 197. Designed to improve the transparency of CARB's regulatory and policy-oriented processes, AB 197 created the Joint Legislative Committee on Climate Change Policies, a committee with the responsibility to ascertain facts and make recommendations to the Legislature concerning statewide programs, policies and investments related to climate change. AB 197 also requires CARB to make certain GHG emissions inventory data publicly available on its website; consider the social costs of GHG emissions when adopting rules and regulations designed to achieve GHG emission reductions; and include specified information in all Scoping Plan updates for the emission reduction measures contained therein.

Center for Biological Diversity v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife

The California Supreme Court's decision published on November 30, 2015, in Center for Biological Diversity v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife[44] reviewed the methodology used to analyze GHG emissions in an EIR prepared for the *Newhall Ranch* project, that proposed 20,885 dwelling units with 58,000 residents on 12,000 acres of undeveloped land, in a rural area of the City of Santa Clara.[45] That EIR used the "business as usual" (BAU) methodology to determine whether the project would impede the State of California's compliance with statutory emissions reduction mandate established by the AB 32 Scoping Plan. The Court did not invalidate the BAU approach entirely, but did hold that:

> *The Scoping Plan nowhere related that statewide level of reduction effort to the percentage of reduction that would or should be required from individual projects and*

43 Letter from Cynthia Bryant, Director of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to Mike Chrisman, California Secretary for Natural Resources, dated April 13, 2009.

44 *Center for Biological Diversity et al. v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife* (2015) (62 Cal.4th 204, 195 Cal.Rptr.3d 247, 361 P.3d 342). Accessed February 2025. http://climatecasechart.com/case/center-for-biological-diversity-v-california-department-of-fish-and-wildlife/.

45 California Department of Fish and Wildlife. *Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spine flower Conservation Plan*. Accessed February 2025. https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/regions/5/newhall.

> *nothing Department of Fish and Wildlife or Newhall have cited in the administrative record indicates the required percentage reduction from business as usual is the same for an individual project as for the entire state population and economy.*[46]

The California Supreme Court suggested regulatory consistency as a pathway to compliance, stating that a Lead Agency might assess consistency with AB 32's goal in whole or part by looking to compliance with regulatory programs designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from particular activities. The Court recognized that to the extent a project's design features comply with or exceed the regulations outlined in the Scoping Plan, and adopted by CARB or other State agencies, a Lead Agency could appropriately rely on their use as showing compliance with performance-based standards adopted to fulfill a statewide plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. This approach is consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064, which provides that a determination that an impact is not cumulatively considerable may rest on compliance with previously adopted plans or regulations, including plans or regulations for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Importantly, the Supreme Court also suggested "a lead agency may rely on existing numerical thresholds of significance for greenhouse gas emissions (brightline threshold approach)."[47]

California Energy Commission

Building Energy Efficiency Standards

Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), regulates the design of building shells and building components. The standards are updated periodically to allow for consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The CEC adopted the 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (2016 Building Standards), effective January 1, 2017. Additionally, the CEC adopted the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and became effective January 1, 2020. Two key areas specific to nonresidential development in the 2019 standards focus on nonresidential ventilation requirements and nonresidential lighting requirements.[48] Under the 2019 standards, nonresidential buildings will be 30 percent more energy efficient compared to the 2016 standards.

The CPUC, CEC, and CARB also have a shared, established goal of achieving Zero Net Energy (ZNE) for new construction in California. The key policy timelines include (1) all new residential

46 *Center for Biological Diversity et al. v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife*.

47 South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). *Interim CEQA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Significance Thresholds, draft guidance document*. Attachment E. October 2008. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-(ghg)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/ghgattachmente.pdf.

48 California Energy Commission (CEC). "2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings." Accessed February 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2019standards/.

construction in California will be ZNE by 2020, and (2) all new commercial construction in California will be ZNE by 2030.

The ZNE goal generally means that new buildings must use a combination of improved efficiency and renewable energy generation to meet 100 percent of their annual energy need, as specifically defined by the CEC:

> *A ZNE Code Building is one where the value of the energy produced by on-site renewable energy resources is equal to the value of the energy consumed annually by the building, at the level of a single "project" seeking development entitlements and building code permits, measured using the [CEC]'s Time Dependent Valuation (TDV) metric. A ZNE Code Building meets an Energy Use Intensity value designated in the Building Energy Efficiency Standards by building type and climate zone that reflect best practices for highly efficient buildings.*

In addition to the CEC's efforts, in 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted the nation's first green building standards. The California Green Building Standards Code (Part 11 of Title 24), commonly referred to as CAL Green, establish voluntary and mandatory standards pertaining to the planning and design of sustainable site development, energy efficiency, water conservation, material conservation, and interior air quality. CAL Green is periodically amended; the most recent 2022 standards became effective on January 1, 2023.

Appliance Standards

The CEC periodically amends and enforces Appliance Efficiency Regulations contained in Title 20 of the CCR. The regulations establish water and energy efficiency standards for both federally regulated appliances and non–federally regulated appliances. The most current Appliance Efficiency Regulations, dated July 2015, cover 23 categories of appliances (e.g., refrigerators; plumbing fixtures; dishwashers; clothes washer and dryers; televisions) and apply to appliances offered for sale in California.

5.8.1.3 Regional

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The Project Site is located in the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) South Coast Air Basin (Air Basin) which consists of Orange County, Los Angeles County (excluding the Antelope Valley portion), and the western, nondesert portions of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, in addition to the San Gorgonio Pass area in Riverside County. SCAQMD is responsible for air quality planning in the Air Basin and developing rules and regulations to bring the area into attainment of the ambient air quality standards. SCAQMD adopted a "Policy on Global Warming and

Stratospheric Ozone Depletion" on April 6, 1990.[49] The policy commits the SCAQMD to consider global impacts in rulemaking and in drafting revisions to the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). In March 1992, the SCAQMD Governing Board reaffirmed this policy and adopted amendments to the policy to include the following directives:

- Phase out the use and corresponding emissions of chlorofluorocarbons, methyl chloroform (1,1,1-trichloroethane or TCA), carbon tetrachloride, and halons by December 1995;
- Phase out the large quantity use and corresponding emissions of hydrochlorofluorocarbons by the year 2000;
- Develop recycling regulations for hydrochlorofluorocarbons (e.g., SCAQMD Rules 1411 and 1415);
- Develop an emissions inventory and control strategy for methyl bromide; and
- Support the adoption of a California GHG emission reduction goal.

In December 2008, SCAQMD adopted an interim draft guide document which included a 10,000 metric tons CO_2e ($MTCO_2e$) per year screening level threshold for stationary source/industrial projects for which SCAQMD is the lead agency. SCAQMD continues to consider adoption of significance thresholds for non-industrial development projects.[50] Specifically, SCAQMD has proposed combining performance standards and screening thresholds for the residential and commercial sectors. The performance standards primarily focus on energy efficiency measures beyond Title 24 and a screening level of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year based on the relative GHG emissions contribution between residential/commercial sectors and stationary source (industrial) sectors.[51]

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the MPO for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial Counties and serves as a forum for the discussion of regional issues related to transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. As the federally designated MPO for the Southern California region, SCAG is mandated by the federal government to research and develop plans for transportation, hazardous waste management, and air quality. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 40460(b),[52] SCAG has the responsibility for preparing and approving the portions of the AQMP relating to regional demographic projections and integrated regional land use, housing, employment, and transportation

49 SCAQMD. "SCAQMD's Historical Activity on Climate Change." Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/nav/about/initiatives/climate-change.

50 SCAQMD. "Greenhouse Gases: CEQA Significance Thresholds." Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/ghg-significance-thresholds.

51 SCAQMD. "Greenhouse Gases: CEQA Significance Thresholds."

52 California Health and Safety Code. Division 26. Air Resources, PART 3. Air Pollution Control Districts, Chapter 5.5. South Coast Air Quality Management District, ARTICLE 5. Plan, Section 40460(b). Accessed February 2025. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=40460.&lawCode=HSC.

programs, measures, and strategies. SCAG is also responsible under the CAA for determining conformity of transportation projects, plans, and programs with applicable air quality plans.

With regard to GHG emissions, SCAG prepared and adopted the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS,[53] also known as Connect SoCal which includes a Sustainable Communities Strategy that addresses regional development and growth forecasts. The SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals, with a specific goal of achieving a 19 percent reduction in passenger vehicle GHG emissions on a per capita basis by 2035 on a per capita basis compared to 2005 levels, and 21 percent reduction by 2040 on a per capita basis compared to the 2005 level on a per capita basis.[54]

5.8.1.4 Local

County of Riverside General Plan

The County of Riverside General Plan Air Quality element includes the following policies that would reduce GHG emissions within the County:

AQ 20.1 Reduce VMT by requiring expanded multi-modal facilities and services that provide transportation alternatives, such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian modes. Improve connectivity of the multi-modal facilities by providing linkages between various uses in the developments.

AQ 20.2 Reduce VMT by facilitating an increase in transit options. In particular, coordinate with adjacent municipalities, transit providers and regional transportation planning agencies to develop mutual policies and funding mechanisms to increase the use of alternative transportation.

AQ 20.3 Reduce VMT and GHG emissions by improving circulation network efficiency.

AQ 20.4 Reduce VMT and traffic through programs that increase carpooling and public transit use, decrease trips and commute times, and increase use of alternative-fuel vehicles.

AQ 20.5 Reduce emissions from standard gasoline vehicles, through VMT, by requiring all new residential units to install circuits and provide capacity for electric vehicle charging stations.

53 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). *Connect SoCal: 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategies*. Accessed October 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/23-2987-connect-socal-2024-final-ch-05-measuring-our-progress-040424.pdf?1712261492.

54 SCAG. *Connect SoCal: 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategies*.

AQ 20.6 Reduce emissions from commercial vehicles, through VMT, by requiring all new commercial buildings, in excess of 162,000 square feet, to install circuits and provide capacity for electric vehicle charging stations.

AQ 20.7 Reduce VMT through increased densities in urban centers and encouraging emphasis on mixed use to provide residential, commercial and employment opportunities in closer proximity to each other. Such measures will also support achieving the appropriate job-housing balance within the communities.

AQ 20.8 Reduce VMT by increasing options for non-vehicular access through urban design principles that promote higher residential densities with easily accessible parks and recreation opportunities nearby.

AQ 20.9 Reduce urban sprawl in order to minimize energy costs associated with infrastructure construction and transmission to distant locations, and to maximize protection of open space.

AQ 20.10 Reduce energy consumption of the new developments (residential, commercial and industrial) through efficient site design that takes into consideration solar orientation and shading, as well as passive solar design.

AQ 20.11 Increase energy efficiency of the new developments through efficient use of utilities (water, electricity, natural gas) and infrastructure design. Also, increase energy efficiency through use of energy efficient mechanical systems and equipment.

AQ 20.12 Support programs to assist in the energy-efficient retrofitting of older affordable housing units to improve their energy efficiency, particularly residential units built prior to 1978 when CCR Title 24 energy efficiency requirements went into effect.

AQ 20.13 Reduce water use and wastewater generation in both new and existing housing, commercial and industrial uses. Encourage increased efficiency of water use for agricultural activities.

AQ 20.14 Reduce the amount of water used for landscaping irrigation through implementation of County Ordinance 859 and increase use of non-potable water.

AQ 20.20 Reduce the amount of solid waste generation by increasing solid waste recycling, maximizing waste diversion, and composting for residential and commercial generators. Reduction in decomposable organic solid waste will reduce the methane emissions at County landfills.

County of Riverside Climate Action Plan

The County of Riverside adopted the County of Riverside CAP in December 2015 and an update to this CAP in November 2019.[55] The CAP was developed in compliance with AB 32 and meets the CEQA guideline requirements to fulfill cumulative mitigation for GHG emissions. The CAP utilizes a GHG emissions reduction target of a 15 percent decrease from 2008 levels by the year 2020 to meet the requirements of AB 32 and SB 375. The CAP defines a process for determining significance of GHG impacts from new development projects that includes: (1) identifying an emissions level that is determined to be less than significant for small projects and (2) utilizing screening tables to mitigate project GHG emissions that exceed the threshold level. The CAP identifies a threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year to identify projects that require the use of screening tables or the preparation of a project-specific technical analysis to quantify and mitigate project emissions. Each mitigation measure provided in the CAP screening tables is assigned a point value and if a project garners at least 100 Points it is considered to be consistent with the GHG reduction target in the County of Riverside CAP.

The 2019 CAP emphasizes the need for specific GHG reductions for 2035 and 2050 needed to reduce emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The current CAP provides conceptual reduction targets for 2035 and 2050 that could be used in a future post 2020 CAP. In addition, the current CAP includes potential reduction measures to reach the conceptual 2035 goal of 2.3 $MMTCO_2e$. The current CAP requires the County of Riverside to adopt a post-2020 CAP that will include specific GHG reduction targets for 2035 and 2050 and corresponding policies, revisions to the general plan, programs, ordinances, and financing.

A draft of the 2025 CAP that updates the 2019 CAP has been released for public review but has not yet been finalized or adopted. The draft 2025 CAP updates the GHG reduction targets identified in the 2019 CAP and proposes new or revised targets and reduction measures that are consistent with updates in State climate change regulations, and updates the CAP consistency review project checklist.

5.8.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.8.2.1 Overview of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Global Context

GHGs are global pollutants that have long atmospheric lifetimes (ranging from one year to several thousand years). [56] GHGs persist in the atmosphere for a long enough time to be dispersed around

55 County of Riverside. *Climate Action Plan Update*. November 2019. Accessed February 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-CAP-2019-2019-CAP-Update-Full.pdf.

56 USEPA. "Overview of Greenhouse Gases." October 2025. https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/overview-greenhouse-gases.

the globe.[57] Although the exact lifetime of any particular GHG molecule depends on multiple variables and cannot be pinpointed, more CO_2 is currently emitted into the atmosphere than is avoided or sequestered.[58] CO_2 sinks, or reservoirs, include vegetation and the ocean, which absorb CO_2 through photosynthesis and dissolution, respectively. The ocean is estimated to absorb approximately 31% of the CO_2 emissions released into the atmosphere.[59]

Similarly, the effects of GHGs are borne globally (sea-level rise, hurricanes, droughts, etc.), as opposed to the localized air quality effects of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants (TACs). The quantity of GHGs that it takes to ultimately result in climate change is not precisely known, but that quantity is enormous. No single project would be expected to measurably contribute to a noticeable incremental change in the global average temperature, or to global, local, or microclimates. However, it is the combined GHG contributions per project that create an impact.

Greenhouse Gas Effects

GHGs play a critical role in determining the Earth's surface temperature because these gases absorb solar radiation. Solar radiation enters the Earth's atmosphere from space. A portion of the radiation is absorbed by the Earth's surface, and a smaller portion of this radiation is reflected back into space. The radiation absorbed by the Earth is reradiated as lower-frequency infrared radiation, which is then selectively absorbed by GHGs in the Earth's atmosphere. As a result, the greater the amount of GHGs in the atmosphere, the greater the amount of infrared radiation trapped, resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as the "greenhouse effect." Scientists have speculated that increased GHG emissions from human activity (anthropogenic) could lead to a less habitable climate. Anthropogenic GHG emissions leading to atmospheric levels in excess of natural ambient concentrations are responsible for intensifying the greenhouse effect and have led to a trend of warming of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans, with corresponding effects on global air and water circulation patterns and climate. CO_2 emissions associated with fossil fuel combustion are the primary contributors to human-induced emissions.

Climate Change Effects for California

Climate change could affect environmental conditions in California in a variety of ways. One effect of climate change is rising sea levels. Sea levels along the California coast rose approximately 7 inches during the last century, and they are predicted to rise an additional 7 to 22 inches by the year 2100, depending on the future levels of GHG emissions. The effects of a rise in sea level could include increased coastal flooding, saltwater intrusion (especially a concern in the low-lying Sacramento–

57 USEPA. "Overview of Greenhouse Gases."

58 USEPA. "Overview of Greenhouse Gases."

59 National Centers for Environmental Information. "Quantifying the Ocean Carbon Sink." Accessed October 2025. https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/quantifying-ocean-carbon-sink#:~:text=Changing%20Ocean%20Chemistry,and%20international%20partners%20in%20Science.

San Joaquin Delta, where pumps delivering potable water to Southern California could be threatened), and disruption of wetlands.

As the State's climate changes over time, the range of various plant and wildlife species could shift or be reduced, depending on the favored temperature and moisture regimes of each species. In the worst cases, some species would become extinct or be extirpated from the State if suitable conditions are no longer available. Additional concerns associated with climate change include a reduction in the snowpack, leading to less overall water storage in the mountains (the largest "reservoir" in the State), and increased risk of wildfires caused by changes in rainfall patterns and plant communities. Changes in the climate can also impact California's weather patterns and rainfall, causing droughts in certain areas and flooding in others.

Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GHGs are the result of both natural and anthropogenic activities. With respect to anthropogenic activities, motor vehicle travel, air travel, consumption of fossil fuels for power generation, industrial processes, heating and cooling, landfills, agriculture, and wildfire are the primary sources of GHG emissions. Additionally, land use decisions and future development projects pursuant to implementation of a general plan can affect the generation of GHG emissions from multiple sectors, resulting in direct or indirect GHG emissions. For example, electricity consumed in the lighting and heating of buildings is an indirect source of GHG emissions because it requires electricity from power plants, which emit GHGs directly into the atmosphere. Conversely, tailpipe emissions from the use of vehicles generate direct GHG emissions.

GHGs are a group of emissions that include CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, HFCs, PFCs, SF_6, and nitrogen trifluoride (NF_3). Carbon dioxide is the most abundant GHG. As stated above, other GHGs are less abundant, but have higher global warming potential than CO_2. Thus, emissions of other GHGs are frequently expressed in the equivalent mass of CO_2; denoted as CO_2e. A general description of GHGs discussed is provided in **Table 5.8-1: Description of Identified Greenhouse Gases**.

TABLE 5.8-1: DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GREENHOUSE GASES

GHG	General Description
Carbon Dioxide (CO_2)	An odorless, colorless GHG that has both natural and anthropogenic sources. Natural sources include the following: decomposition of dead organic matter; respiration of bacteria plants, animals, and fungus; evaporation from oceans; and volcanic outgassing. Anthropogenic (human caused) sources of CO_2 are burning coal, oil, natural gas, and wood.
Methane (CH_4)	Methane is a flammable gas and the primary component of natural gas. When one molecule of CH_4 is burned in the presence of oxygen, one molecule of CO_2 and two molecules of water are released. A natural source of CH_4 is the anaerobic decay of organic matter. Geological deposits, known as natural gas fields, also contain CH_4, which is extracted for fuel. Other sources are from landfills, fermentation of manure, and cattle.

TABLE 5.8-1: DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GREENHOUSE GASES	
GHG	**General Description**
Nitrous Oxide (N_2O)	A colorless GHG. High concentrations can cause dizziness, euphoria, and sometimes slight hallucinations. N_2O is produced by microbial processes in soil and water, including those reactions which occur in fertilizer containing nitrogen. In addition to agricultural sources, some industrial processes (fossil fuel-fired power plants, nylon production, nitric acid production, and vehicle emissions) also contribute to its atmospheric load. It is used in rocket engines, race cars, and as an aerosol spray propellant.
Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)	Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are gases formed synthetically by replacing all hydrogen atoms in CH_4 or ethane (C_2H_6) with chlorine and/or fluorine atoms. CFCs are nontoxic, nonflammable, insoluble, and chemically unreactive in the troposphere (the level of air at Earth's surface). CFCs were first synthesized in 1928 for use as refrigerants, aerosol propellants, and cleaning solvents. Because they destroy stratospheric ozone, the production of CFCs was stopped as required by the Montreal Protocol in 1987. HFCs are synthetic man-made chemicals that are used as substitute for CFCs as refrigerants. HFCs deplete stratospheric ozone, but to a much lesser extent than CFCs.
Perfluorinated Chemicals (PFCs)	PFCs have stable molecular structures and do not break down through the chemical processes in the lower atmosphere. High-energy ultraviolet rays about 60 kilometers above Earth's surface are able to destroy the compounds. PFCs have very long lifetimes, between 10,000 and 50,000 years. Two common PFCs are tetrafluoromethane and hexafluoroethane. The two main sources of PFCs are primary aluminum production and semi-conduction manufacturing.
Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF_6)	An inorganic, odorless, colorless, nontoxic, and nonflammable gas. SF_6 is used for insulation in electric power transmission and distribution equipment, in the magnesium industry, in semi-conductor manufacturing, and as a tracer gas for leak detection.
Nitrogen Trifluoride (NF_3)	An inorganic, nontoxic, odorless, nonflammable gas. NF_3 is used in the manufacture of semiconductors, as an oxidizer of high energy fuels, for the preparation of tetrafluoro hydrazine, as an etchant gas in the electronic industry, and as a fluorine source in high power chemical lasers.

Note:
The GHGs identified in this table are ones identified in the Kyoto protocol and other synthetic gases recently added to the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report.

5.8.2.2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Trends

Existing Statewide GHG Emissions

California is the second largest contributor of GHGs in the United States and the 16th largest in the world.[60] In 2022, California produced 371.1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents

60 CEC. *Inventory of California Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990 to 2004, Staff Final Report, CEC-600-2006-013-SF*. December 2006.

($MMTCO_2e$), including imported electricity, and excluding combustion of international fuels and carbon sinks or storage. The major source of GHGs in California is transportation, contributing to 38 percent of the State's total GHG emissions. The statewide inventory of GHGs by sector is shown in **Table 5.8-2: California GHG Inventory 2014–2022.**

TABLE 5.8-2: CALIFORNIA GHG INVENTORY 2014–2022

Main Sector	Emissions ($MMTCO_2e$)								
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Transportation[a]	157.5	161.1	164.8	166.0	164.8	161.7	135.2	145.1	139.9
Electric Power	90.3	86.3	70.8	64.4	65.0	60.2	59.5	62.3	59.8
Industrial[b]	85.0	82.7	81.3	81.7	82.3	80.9	73.6	74.2	72.7
Commercial and Residential	35.5	37.2	37.7	38.3	37.5	40.6	39.0	38.8	39.5
Agriculture	33.7	32.5	32.1	31.6	32.0	31.2	31.4	30.4	29.8
High GWP[c,d]	17.9	18.8	19.5	20.1	20.6	20.8	21.3	21.3	21.3
Recycled and waste	8.2	8.1	7.9	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.5	8.3	8.2
Total Emissions	**428.1**	**426.8**	**414.1**	**410.3**	**410.5**	**403.7**	**368.5**	**380.4**	**371.1**

[a] *Includes equipment used in construction, mining, oil drilling, industrial and airport ground operations.*
[b] *Reflects emissions from combustion of natural gas, diesel, and lease fuel plus fugitive emissions.*
[c] *These categories are listed in the Industrial sector of CARB's GHG Emission Inventory sectors.*
[d] *This category is listed in the Electric Power sector of CARB's GHG Emission Inventory sectors.*
Note: $MMTCO_2e$ - million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions

Source: CARB, GHG Current California Emission Inventory Data, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/ghg-inventory-data. Accessed October 2025.

Regional Emissions

The County of Riverside CAP includes an inventory of the GHG emission in the County that summarizes the county-wide emissions for 2017 as well as projected Business As Usual (BAU) emission based on the anticipated growth and population in the County for the years 2030 and 2050. The CAP also includes Adjusted BAU (ABAU) emissions that include future State actions to reduce GHG emissions. The countywide inventory of GHGs by sector is shown in **Table 5.8-3: County of Riverside GHG Inventory**.

TABLE 5.8-3: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GHG INVENTORY

Main Sector	Emissions ($MMTCO_2e$)				
	2017	2030 BAU	2030 ABAU	2050 BAU	2050 ABAU
Transportation (on-road)	1,766,784	3,018,767	1,361,200	6,882,509	1,174,310
Agriculture	1,670,945	1,262,044	1,261,044	817,858	817,858
Electricity	712,928	1,017,153	466,971	1,756,843	480,289
Natural Gas	475,211	676,742	652,578	1,165,761	1,104,421
Solid Waste	204,356	298,585	298,585	533,154	533,154
Water and Wastewater	44,606	65,171	30,413	116,370	32,584

TABLE 5.8-3: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GHG INVENTORY					
Main Sector	Emissions ($MMTCO_2e$)				
	2017	2030 BAU	2030 ABAU	2050 BAU	2050 ABAU
Aviation	26,786	26,786	26,786	26,786	26,786
Off-Road Sources	3,883	4,531	4,531	5,744	5,744
Total Emissions	**4,905,518**	**6,368,781**	**4,102,109**	**11,305,026**	**4,175,146**

Source: County of Riverside. *Climate Action Plan Update*. Accessed February 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-CAP-2019-2019-CAP-Update-Full.pdf.

Project Site

The Project Site consists of vacant land. Consequently, no GHG emissions are currently generated from the Project Site.

5.8.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.8.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

To assist in determining whether the Project would have a significant effect on the environment, the County finds the Project may be deemed to have a significant impact related to greenhouse gas emissions if it would:

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

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

The majority of individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to create significant project-specific environmental effects. However, the environmental effects of a project's GHG emission can contribute incrementally to cumulative environmental effects that are significant, contributing to climate change, even if an individual project's environmental effects are limited. The issue of a project's environmental effects and contribution towards climate change typically involves an analysis of whether or not a project's contribution towards climate change is cumulatively considerable. Cumulative considerable means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects.

Neither the SCAQMD, the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR), CARB, the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), or any other State or relevant regional agency has adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing GHG emissions applicable to the Project. Therefore, in recent environmental impact reports certified by the County of Riverside, the County has evaluated the significance of projects' potential impacts with regard to GHG emissions and climate change solely on consistency with plans and polices adopted for the purposes of reducing

GHG emissions and mitigating the effects of climate change, including the CAP. The County has also quantified the project's GHG emissions for informational purposes but does not compare the quantified GHG emissions to a numeric threshold. In the absence of any adopted numeric threshold, the significance of the Project's GHG emissions is evaluated consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b) by considering whether the Project complies with applicable plans, policies, regulations, and requirements adopted to implement a State, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. For this Project, the most directly applicable adopted regulatory plans to reduce GHG emissions are the CARB's Climate Change Scoping Plan, the County's CAP, and SCAG's 2024–2050 RTP/SCS.

As part of the analysis of whether the proposed Project complies with applicable plans, policies, regulations, and requirements adopted to reduce or mitigate GHG emissions, the proposed Project was assessed using the process developed in the County of Riverside CAP, which includes: (1) applying the 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year screening threshold and (2) utilizing Screening Tables or a project-specific technical analysis to quantify and mitigate project GHG emissions that exceed the 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ threshold. When using the CAP Screening Tables, each project feature that would reduce GHG emissions is assigned a point value. According to the CAP, projects that include 100 points or more of project features that reduce GHGs would have a less than significant individual impact for GHG emissions.

Consistency Analysis

Significance of the GHG emissions estimated for the Project is evaluated by assessing the consistency of the Project with applicable GHG reduction strategies and local actions adopted by the County. As discussed previously, the County has established goals and actions to reduce the generation and emission of GHGs.

OPR encourages lead agencies to use programmatic mitigation plans and programs from which to tier when they perform individual project analyses. The County has adopted a CAP which includes policies applicable to the proposed Project to reduce GHG emissions and CAP Screening Tables. Additionally, CARB's Climate Change Scoping Plan includes a range of GHG reduction actions, including direct regulations, alternative compliance mechanisms, monetary and non-monetary incentives, voluntary actions, market-based mechanisms, and an AB 32 implementation regulation. Thus, if the Project is designed in accordance with these policies and regulations, the Project would result in less-than-significant GHG impacts, because it would be consistent with the overarching State regulations on GHG reduction (AB 32).

A consistency analysis is provided below and describes the consistency of the Project with the performance-based standards included in the regulations outlined in the applicable portions of the CARB Climate Change Scoping Plan, SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, and the County CAP.

5.8.4 METHODOLOGY

5.8.4.1 Methodologies for Evaluating Significance

The analysis of the Project GHG emissions includes a quantitative analysis of the GHG emissions generated by the Project and a qualitative analysis of the consistency of the Project with adopted GHG-related legislation, plans, and policies. This approach is in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a), which affirms the discretion of a lead agency to determine, in the context of a particular project, whether to use quantitative and/or qualitative methodologies to determine the significance of a project's impacts.

Emissions Inventory Modeling

The total GHG emissions from the Project were quantified to determine the level of the Project's estimated annual GHG emissions. As with the air quality calculations, construction emissions were estimated using CalEEMod by assuming a conservative estimate of construction activities (i.e., assuming all construction occurs at the earliest feasible date) and applying the mobile-source emissions factors. The modeling used the same input values as previously discussed under the methodology section for air quality. SCAQMD's *Draft Guidance Document—Interim CEQA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Significance Threshold*[61] recognizes that construction-related GHG emissions from projects occur over a relatively short-term period of time and contributes a relatively small portion of a project's overall lifetime GHG emissions. The guidance recommends that a project's construction-related GHG emissions be amortized over a 30-year project lifetime so that GHG reduction measures will address construction GHG emissions as part of the operation GHG reduction strategies. Detailed construction equipment lists, construction scheduling, and emissions calculations are provided in *Appendix 1.0* within **Appendix D.**

CalEEMod was also used to estimate operational GHG emissions from electricity, natural gas, solid waste, water and wastewater, and landscaping equipment. CalEEMod calculates energy use from systems covered by Title 24 (e.g., heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, water heating system, and lighting system); energy use from lighting; and energy use from office equipment, appliances, plug-ins, and other sources not covered by Title 24 or lighting. Mobile-source emissions were estimated based on the CARB EMFAC model. For mobile sources, CalEEMod was used to generate the vehicle miles traveled from Project operation.

With regard to energy demand, the consumption of fossil fuels to generate electricity and to provide heating and hot water generates GHG emissions. Energy demand rates were estimated based on square footage as well as predicted water supply needs for this use. Energy demand (off-site

61 SCAQMD. *Draft Guidance Document—Interim CEQA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Significance Threshold*. October 2008. Accessed February 2025. http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-(ghg)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/ghgattachmente.pdf.

electricity generation and on-site natural gas consumption) for the Project was calculated within CalEEMod using the CEC's California Commercial End-Use Survey (CEUS) data set, which provides energy demand by building type and climate zone.

Emissions of GHGs from solid waste disposal were also calculated using CalEEMod software. The emissions are based on the waste disposal rate for the land uses, the waste diversion rate, and the GHG emission factors for solid waste decomposition. The GHG emission factors, particularly for methane, depend on characteristics of the landfill, such as the presence of a landfill gas capture system and subsequent flaring or energy recovery. The default values, as provided in CalEEMod, for landfill gas capture (e.g., no capture, flaring, energy recovery), which are statewide averages, were used in this assessment.

Emissions of GHGs from water and wastewater result from the required energy to supply and distribute the water and treat the wastewater. Wastewater also results in emissions of GHGs from wastewater treatment systems. Emissions are calculated using CalEEMod and are based on the water usage rate for the proposed use; the electrical intensity factors for water supply, treatment, and distribution and for wastewater treatment; the GHG emission factors for the electricity utility provider; and the emission factors for the wastewater treatment process.

As described in **Section 3.0: Project Description**, the Project includes a modular on-site power generation system designed to partially or fully meet the Project's electricity needs. The on-site power generation and storage system has been designed to meet the peak estimated energy demands for the project at full development of the uses allowed by the Specific Plan of approximately 3,324 kilowatts and about 5,886,765 kilowatt-hour (kWh) of annual energy use. Approximately 990,197 kWh of electricity will be generated by the proposed 580 kW DC community solar photovoltaic (PV) system. The remaining 4,896,567 kWh of required power would be provided by the linear generator and BESS units. This demand can be met by eleven (11) 250kW linear generators and one (1) 1,000kW/2,500kWh battery BESS unit. In order to provide redundant backup capability in case any of the generators or the BESS unit is offline for maintenance or other reasons, the proposed system would include thirteen (13) 250kW linear generators and three (3) 1,000kW/2,500kWh battery BESS units. This system incorporates two extra, independent components beyond what is required to provide the amount of power needed to meet the Project demand.

The BESS units would help meet the estimated peak demand for electricity for the Project, which would reduce the number of generator units needed. This system is modular and, for this reason, the needs for electrical power for the Project could be met by a combination of power generated on site and power from IID. For purposes of analysis, emissions from use of electricity generated on- and off-site are both considered.

Emissions resulting from the use of the on-site generator system were calculated based on the estimated annual electricity use at the Project Site and equipment specific emissions factors included in *Appendix 2.0* within **Appendix D**.

5.8.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

Construction of the proposed Project includes four (4) phases: grading, building construction, paving, and application of architectural coatings like paint. Construction activity impacts are relatively short in duration, so they contribute a relatively small portion of the total lifetime GHG emissions of a project. The combustion of fossil fuels in construction equipment results in GHG emissions of CO_2 and smaller amounts of CH_4 and N_2O. Emissions of GHG would also result from the combustion of fossil fuels from vendor trucks delivering materials and construction worker vehicles commuting to and from the Project Site. The construction workforce would consist of 20 worker trips per day during grading; 41 worker trips per day and 13 vendor trips per day during building construction; 15 worker trips per day during paving; and 8 worker trips per day during architectural coating. Typically, light-duty and medium-duty automobiles and trucks would be used for worker trips and heavy-duty trucks would be used for vendor trips. The vast majority of motor vehicles used for worker trips rely on gasoline as an energy source while motor vehicles used for vendor trips would primarily rely on diesel as an energy source. In addition, GHG emissions-reduction measures for construction equipment are relatively limited. Therefore, in its Draft Guidance Document – Interim CEQA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Significance Thresholds, the SCAQMD recommends that construction emissions be amortized over a 30-year project lifetime so that GHG reduction measures will address construction GHG emissions as part of the operational GHG reduction strategies.

Construction assumptions used in the analysis of GHG emissions conservatively assume that the Project would be constructed with the most intensive activities occurring on a daily basis. The total emissions from construction of the Project are shown in **Table 5.8-4: Annual Construction GHG Emissions**.

TABLE 5.8-4: ANNUAL CONSTRUCTION GHG EMISSIONS

Construction Year	$MTCO_2e$
2027	610
2028	397
2029	222
Overall Total	**1,229**
30-Year Annual Amortized Rate	**41**

Source: Refer to **Appendix DD** for the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

As recommended by SCAQMD, the total GHG construction emissions were amortized over the 30-year lifetime of the Project (i.e., total construction GHG emissions were divided by 30 to determine annual construction emissions estimate that can be added to the Project's operational emissions) in order to determine the Project's annual GHG emissions inventory. Total GHG emissions from the construction activities are forecast to be 1,229 $MTCO_2e$. The total GHG emissions were amortized over a 30-year Project lifetime and forecast to be 41 $MTCO_2e$ per year.

Operation

Operation of the Project has the potential to generate GHG emissions through vehicle trips traveling to and from the Project Site. In addition, emissions would result from area sources on site, such as natural gas combustion, landscaping equipment, and use of consumer products. Emissions from mobile and area sources and indirect emissions from energy and water use, wastewater, as well as waste management would occur every year after full development of the uses allowed by the Project. The Project would comply with federal, State, and regional regulations. Emissions were estimated using CalEEMod based on the land uses in the proposed Project.

Area Sources

The area source GHG emissions included in this analysis result from landscaping-related fuel combustion sources, such as lawn mowers as well as hearths, such as fireplaces, however, consistent with SCAQMD *Rule 445* there would be no wood burning devices included in the proposed Project. CalEEMod defaults were used for landscape maintenance emissions. Area source emissions are shown in **Table 5.8-5: Area Source GHG Emissions**. As shown in **Table 5.8-5**, Project emissions would result in 2 $MTCO_2e$ per year from area sources.

TABLE 5.8-5: AREA SOURCE GHG EMISSIONS

Source	Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year
Hearths	0
Landscaping	2
Total	**2**

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Energy Sources

GHGs are emitted as a result of activities in buildings when electricity is used as an energy source for heating, ventilation, air condition (HVAC) systems, water heating systems, lighting, appliances, plug-ins, and other sources. Natural gas use in buildings results from use of natural gas appliances, such as stoves. Combustion of any type of fuel emits CO_2 and other GHGs directly into the atmosphere; when this occurs in a building, it is a direct emission source associated with that building. GHGs are also emitted during the generation of electricity from fossil fuels.

As described in **Section 3.0: Project Description**, the Project includes a modular on-site power generation system designed to partially or fully meet the Project's electricity needs. The estimated annual electricity use for the Project is approximately 5,886,765 kWh, of which about 990,197 kWh will be provided by community solar PV (photovoltaic), resulting in a remaining need for 4,896,567 kWh of electricity. As described above, this remaining need could be met by either the proposed on-site power generation system or by power supplied by IID.

As shown in **Table 5.8-6: Energy Source GHG Emissions** below, the Project would generate 2,629 $MTCO_2e$ per year from natural gas and electrical energy use if all electrical demand for the Project is met by the on-site power generation system, comprised of 199 $MTCO_2e$ per year from natural gas use estimated by the CalEEMod Emissions model[62] and 2,430 $MTCO_2e$ per year from electricity use based on equipment specific emissions factors for the natural gas powered generator units.[63] If the electricity needed for the Project is provided by IID, the Project would generate 1,423 $MTCO_2e$ per year, comprised of 199 $MTCO_2e$ per year from natural gas use and 1,224 $MTCO_2e$ per year from electricity estimated by the CalEEMod emissions model.[64]

TABLE 5.8-6: ENERGY SOURCE GHG EMISSIONS

Land Use	Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year
On-site Power Generation System	
On-site Power Generation System	2,430
Natural Gas	199
Total	**2,629**
IID Power	
Electricity	1,224
Natural Gas	199
Total	**1,423**

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Mobile Sources Emissions

Vehicle trips generated by growth within the Project Site vicinity would result in operational emissions through the combustion of fossil fuels. CO_2 emissions were determined based on the trip rates resulting from 910 weekday daily trip as provided by Fehr & Peers based on the Trip Generation Manual, 12th Edition (Institute of Transportation Engineers [ITE]).[65] As shown in **Table 5.8-7: Mobile**

62 See **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

63 See **Appendix E** for Site Energy Load Evaluation.

64 See **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

65 Fehr & Peers. *The Ranch at Madison – Access and Circulation Assessment*. October 30, 2025.

Source GHG Emissions, the Project's mobile source emissions would result in 745 $MTCO_2e$ per year.

TABLE 5.8-7: MOBILE SOURCE GHG EMISSIONS

Source	Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year
Mobile (trips)	745
Total	**745**

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Solid Waste Emissions

Solid waste generation and associated emissions are calculated using default data found in CalEEMod for the proposed land uses. Disposal of organic waste in landfills can lead to the generation of CH_4, a potent GHG. By generating solid waste, the Project would contribute to the emission of fugitive CH_4 from landfills, as well as CO_2 and N_2O from the operation of trash collection vehicles. As shown in **Table 5.8-8: Solid Waste Source GHG Emissions**, GHG emissions resulting from solid waste would be forecast to be 59 $MTCO_2e$ per year.

TABLE 5.8-8: SOLID WASTE SOURCE GHG EMISSIONS

Land Use	Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year
Residential	24
Golf Course	<1
Other Asphalt Surfaces	0
Racquet Club	4
Quality Restaurant	1
Recreational Swimming Pool	2
Health Club	28
General Office Building	<1
Total	**59**

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Water Consumption and Wastewater Emissions

California's water conveyance system is energy intensive, with electricity used to pump and treat water. The Project would result in indirect GHG emissions due to water consumption and wastewater generation. Water consumption and wastewater generation, and their associated emissions, are calculated based on the square footage of the proposed uses, using CalEEMod data. As shown in **Table 5.8-9: Water Source GHG Emissions**, the Project's water and wastewater GHG emissions are forecast to be 32 $MTCO_2e$ per year.

TABLE 5.8-9: WATER SOURCE GHG EMISSIONS	
Land Use	**Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year**
Residential	23
Golf Course	2
Other Asphalt Surfaces	0
Racquet Club	<1
Quality Restaurant	4
Recreational Swimming Pool	<1
Health Club	2
General Office Building	1
Total	**32**

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study.

Total Emissions

As shown in **Table 5.8-10: Total Operational GHG Emissions**, the Project is estimated to generate approximately 3,510 $MTCO_2e$ per year if all electricity is provided by the on-site power generation system. If the electricity for the Project is provided by IID, the total Operational GHG Emissions would be approximately 2,304 $MTCO_2e$ per year.

TABLE 5.8-10: TOTAL OPERATIONAL GHG EMISSIONS	
Source	**Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year**
On-site Power Generation System	
Construction (amortized)	41
Mobile	745
Area	2
Energy	2,629
Water	32
Waste	59
Refrigerants	2
Total	**3,510**
IID Power	
Construction (amortized)	41
Mobile	745
Area	2
Energy	1,423
Water	32
Waste	59
Refrigerants	2
Total	**2,304**

TABLE 5.8-10: TOTAL OPERATIONAL GHG EMISSIONS	
Source	**Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year**

Source: Refer to **Appendix D** for Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Study and Generator Equipment Information.

It should be noted that each source category of GHG emissions from the Project would be subject to a number of regulations that directly or indirectly reduce climate change-related emissions:

- Stationary and Area Sources: Emissions from small on-site sources are subject to specific emission reduction mandates and/or are included in the State's Cap and Trade program.
- Energy: Both construction and operational activities associated with the Project would generate energy-related emissions that are covered by the State's renewable portfolio mandates, including SB 350, which requires that at least 50 percent of electricity generated and sold to retail customers come from renewable energy sources by December 31, 2030.
- Transportation: Both construction and operational activities associated with the Project would generate transportation-related emissions from combustion of fossil fuels that are covered in the State's Cap and Trade program.
- Building Structures: Operational efficiencies would be incorporated into the Project that reduce energy use and waste, as mandated by CAL Green, such as use of energy efficient windows and construction materials.
- Water and Wastewater Use: The Project would be subject to drought-related water conservation emergency orders and related State Water Quality Control Board restrictions.
- Major appliances: The Project would include major appliances that are regulated by CEC requirements for energy efficiency.
- Solid Waste Management: The Project would be subject to solid waste diversion policies that reduce GHG emissions, such as the County's recycling program.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

The proposed Project would comply with applicable State and local regulations intended to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. These include the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6) and the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), which establish requirements for building energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable construction practices.

In addition to general building efficiency requirements, the Title 24 Energy Code requires that newly constructed low rise residential buildings include on-site solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, unless an approved alternative compliance pathway such as community solar is implemented. These requirements were adopted by the California Energy Commission to reduce building-related electricity demand and support statewide greenhouse gas reduction goals.

The proposed single-family residences associated with the Project would comply with these Title 24 requirements. Accordingly, on-site solar PV systems or equivalent alternative compliance measures would be incorporated into the design of the residential units. The inclusion of solar PV systems would reduce the net electricity demand associated with residential energy use and therefore reduce operational greenhouse gas emissions relative to conventional residential development without on-site renewable energy generation.

Operational energy use and greenhouse gas emissions presented in this analysis were estimated using CalEEMod, which incorporates energy consumption assumptions consistent with the applicable Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. As a result, the Project's operational energy demand and associated greenhouse gas emissions reflect compliance with current State energy efficiency requirements, including the incorporation of on-site renewable energy systems where required.

Therefore, the Project would be consistent with applicable State energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements and would support implementation of State climate policies intended to reduce building-related greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate Change Scoping Plan

Consistency with 2022 Scoping Plan Update

As discussed above, jurisdictions that want to take meaningful climate action (such as preparing a non-CEQA-qualified CAP or as individual measures) aligned with the State's climate goals in the absence of a CEQA-qualified CAP should also look to the three priority areas (transportation electrification, VMT reduction, and building decarbonization). To assist local jurisdictions, the 2022 Scoping Plan Update presents a non-exhaustive list of impactful GHG reduction strategies that can be implemented by local governments within the three priority areas (Priority GHG Reduction Strategies for Local Government Climate Action Priority Areas).[66] A detailed assessment of the applicable goals, plans, and policies implemented by the County which would support the GHG reduction strategies in the three priority areas is provided below. In addition, further details are provided regarding the correlation between these reduction strategies and applicable actions included in Table 2-1 (page 72) of the Scoping Plan (Actions for the Scoping Plan Scenario).

Transportation Electrification

The priority GHG reduction strategies for local government climate action related to transportation electrification are discussed below and would support the Scoping Plan action to have 100 percent of all new passenger vehicles to be zero-emission by 2035 (see Table 2-1 of the Scoping Plan).

66 CARB. *2022 Scoping Plan Update*. Table 1 of Appendix D.

- **Convert local government fleets to zero emission vehicles (ZEV)**

The CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars II rule which codifies Executive Order N-79-20 and requires 100 percent of new cars and light trucks sold in California be zero-emission vehicles by 2035. The State has also adopted AB 2127, which requires the CEC to analyze and examine charging needs to support California's EVs in 2030.

Although this measure mainly applies to City fleet, the Project would comply with the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 17.188.045, which requires all development projects that require 50 or more parking spaces shall designate three spaces for electrical vehicles and designate one additional space for electrical vehicles for each additional 50 parking spaces. This would be consistent with the Scoping Plan goals for transitioning to EVs.

- **Create a jurisdiction-specific ZEV ecosystem to support deployment of ZEVs statewide (such as building standards that exceed state building codes, permit streamlining, infrastructure siting, consumer education, preferential parking policies, and ZEV readiness plans**

The State has adopted AB 1236 and AB 970, which require cities to adopt streamline permitting procedures for EV charging stations. As a result, the County has included Chapter 16.23.060 of County Code Ordinances to achieve timely and cost-effective installations.

VMT Reduction

VMT is a key factor influencing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. The California Air Resources Board Scoping Plan identifies reducing VMT per capita as a critical strategy for achieving statewide greenhouse gas reduction targets. These strategies are further supported through implementation of Senate Bill 375, which requires integration of transportation, land use, and housing planning to reduce GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. To implement SB 375, the Southern California Association of Governments adopted the 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), also known as Connect SoCal. The RTP/SCS prioritizes development patterns that co-locate housing, employment, and services, expand mobility choices, and encourage compact and mixed-use development.

The proposed Project incorporates several land use characteristics that support these regional strategies, including a mix of residential and supporting land uses that allow residents and visitors to access services and amenities within close proximity of one another. These design features help reduce the need for longer vehicle trips and support reductions in overall VMT.

The transportation analysis evaluated VMT associated with the Project in accordance with applicable CEQA transportation guidance. The VMT analysis evaluated the Project's estimated VMT per capita and compared these values to the applicable regional thresholds used to identify significant transportation impacts. Based on the results of the VMT analysis, the Project would generate VMT

levels that are below the applicable significance threshold, indicating that the Project would not result in a substantial increase in regional VMT.

Because the Project's VMT performance is consistent with regional planning assumptions and below the applicable CEQA significance threshold, the Project would support statewide strategies intended to reduce vehicle travel and associated greenhouse gas emissions. Accordingly, the Project would be consistent with regional land use and transportation planning policies intended to reduce VMT and would contribute to achieving State greenhouse gas reduction goals.

The priority GHG reduction strategies for local government climate action related to VMT reduction are below would support the Scoping Plan action to reduce VMT per capita 25 percent below 2019 levels by 2030 and 30 percent below 2019 levels by 2045.

- **Reduce or eliminate parking standards in new developments.**
- **Implement parking pricing or transportation demand management pricing strategies.**
- **Increase access to public transit by increasing density of development near transit, improving transit service by increasing service frequency, creating bus priority lanes, reducing or eliminating fares, microtransit, etc.**
- **Increase public access to clean mobility options by planning for and investing in electric shuttles, bike share, car share, and walking.**
- **Amend zoning or development codes to enable mixed-use, walkable, transit-oriented, and compact infill development (such as increasing the allowable density of a neighborhood)**
- **Preserve natural and working lands by implementing land use policies that guide development toward infill areas and do not convert "greenfield" land to urban uses (e.g., green belts, strategic conservation easements).**

These reduction strategies are supported through implementation of SB 375 which requires integration of planning processes for transportation, land-use and housing and generally encourages jobs/housing proximity, promote transit-oriented development (TOD), and encourages high-density residential/commercial development along transit corridors. To implement SB 375 and reduce GHG emissions by correlating land use and transportation planning, SCAG adopted the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, also referred to as *Connect SoCal*. The 2024–2050 RTP/SCS' "Core Vision" prioritizes the maintenance and management of the region's transportation network, expanding mobility choices by co-locating housing, jobs, and transit, and increasing investment in transit and complete streets. Please refer below for additional discussion of consistency with the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS.

The Project would include parking within each single-family dwelling, under the Riverside County Development Code and adjacent to the Amenity Village. No parking structures or subterranean parking is proposed. In addition, the proposed Project's mixed-use nature would result in a reduction of average weekday vehicle trips, as the proposed Project's mix of land uses allows residents and visitors to be in close proximity to a variety of land uses, thereby reducing the need for further travel

and reducing VMT and GHG emissions. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with these reduction strategies.

Building Decarbonization

The priority GHG reduction strategies for local government climate action related to electrification are discussed below and would support the Scoping Plan actions regarding meeting increased demand for electrification without new fossil gas-fired resources and all-electric appliances beginning in 2026 (residential) and 2029 (commercial) (see Table 2-1 of the Scoping Plan).

- **Adopt all-electric new construction reach codes for residential and commercial uses**

California's transition away from fossil fuel–based energy sources will bring the Project's GHG emissions associated with building energy use down to zero as our electric supply becomes 100 percent carbon free. California has committed to achieving this goal by 2045 through SB 100, the 100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018. SB 100 strengthened the State's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) by requiring that 60 percent of all electricity provided to retail users in California come from renewable sources by 2030 and that 100 percent come from carbon-free sources by 2045. The land use sector will benefit from RPS because the electricity used in buildings will be increasingly carbon-free, but implementation does not depend (directly, at least) on how buildings are designed and built.

While the County has not yet adopted an all-electric reach code for new construction, the County's CAP includes measures to increase electricity production from eligible renewable power sources and replace natural gas fired electricity production with zero GHG emitting renewable sources of power.[67]

- **Adopt policies and incentive programs to implement energy efficiency retrofits for existing buildings, such as weatherization, lighting upgrades, and replacing energy-intensive appliances and equipment with more efficient systems (such as Energy Star-rated equipment and equipment controllers).**

This reduction strategy would support the Scoping Plan action regarding electrification of appliances in existing residential buildings (see Table 2-1 of the Scoping Plan). The Project would not involve retrofitting of existing buildings; rather, it consists of the development of a new residential, golf-oriented community with up to 85 residential units, a private 9-hole golf course, and associated open space, recreational facilities, and circulation improvements. However, the Project would include energy efficient appliances in compliance with CALGreen requirements, which would have low GHG emission rates and incorporate energy saving technologies and appliances. Therefore, the Project would be consistent and not conflict with policies to implement energy efficiency retrofits.

67 County of Riverside. *Climate Action Plan Update*.

SCAG 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

A discussion of the Project's consistency with the policies applicable to individual development projects in the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS is presented in **Table 5.8-11: Project Consistency with SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS Goals and Policies**, below. As shown in **Table 5.8-11**, the Project would not conflict with the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS.

TABLE 5.8-11: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals and Policies	Consistency Analysis
Mobility: Build and maintain an integrated multimodal transportation network	
Support investments that are well-maintained and operated, coordinated, resilient and result in improved safety, improved air quality and minimized greenhouse gas emissions.	**Consistent**. While not necessarily applicable on a project-specific basis, the Project would support this goal complying with applicable energy, water, and waste efficiency measures specified in the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards.
Ensure that reliable, accessible, affordable and appealing travel options are readily available, while striving to enhance equity in the offerings in high-need communities.	**Consistent.** While not necessarily applicable on a project-specific basis, the proposed Project would support this goal by improving the viability of alternative forms of transportation through higher density development. Moreover, the proposed Project's inclusion of a variety of amenities would allow residents and visitors the ability to walk to a variety of land uses. The proposed Project would also include extensive recreational trails and pedestrian pathways. In addition, travel by golf cart is also planned within the Project with a connection to the adjacent *Madison Club*, located immediately west of the Project via a grade-separated crossing of Madison Street, which may consist of either a subterranean tunnel or an above-grade bridge, running in an east-to-west direction. These features would offer alternative modes of transportation and would reduce VMTs, thereby reducing air quality emissions.
Support planning for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.	**Consistent**. While not necessarily applicable on a project-specific basis, the Project would provide an additional 85 single-family homes and a private 9-hole golf course, and associated improvements including open space, recreational facilities, and multimodal transportation facilities.
Communities: Develop, connect and sustain livable and thriving communities	
Create human-centered communities in urban, suburban, and rural settings to increase mobility options and reduce travel distances.	**Consistent**. As mentioned previously, the proposed Project includes the development of a residential community that includes 85 single-family homes, a mixed-use amenities village including the Event Barn and Event Lawn as well as all the recreational opportunities including the Wellness Center, sports fields and courts, and pools, as well as 97.8 acres of open space including a golf course. The proposed Project's inclusion of a variety of amenities would allow residents and visitors the ability to walk to a variety of land uses. Additionally, the proposed Project would also include extensive recreational trails and pedestrian pathways. In

TABLE 5.8-11: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals and Policies	Consistency Analysis
	addition, travel by golf cart is also planned within the Project and connects to the adjacent *Madison Club*, either through a subterranean tunnel or an above-grade bridge, running in an east-to-west direction. These features would offer alternative modes of transportation and would reduce VMT from the Project, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Produce and preserve diverse housing types in an effort to improve affordability, accessibility and opportunities for all households.	**Consistent.** The Project would provide additional low-density single-family homes and medium density single-family homes within a residential community on previously undeveloped land. The Specific Plan would allow development of up to 20 Village Units on 11.9 acres in PA 1, resulting in an overall density of approximately 1.7 du/ac; up to 31 low density single-family Estate Lot homes on approximately 24.5 acres in Planning Areas (PAs) 2 to 4, resulting in an overall density of approximately 1.3 du/ac; and up to 34 medium density single-family Golf Cottage homes on 11.1 acres in PAs 5 to 7, resulting in an overall density of approximately 3.1 du/ac. The Project would not involve the demolition of any existing residential uses and would create a mixed-income community.
Environment: Create a healthy region for the people of tomorrow	
Develop communities that are resilient and can mitigate, adapt to, and respond to chronic and acute stresses and disruptions, such as climate change.	**Consistent**. This strategy is directed towards SCAG and is not specifically applicable to the Project. The Project would support this goal by increasing housing options in an area surrounded by a variety of land uses and would be served by extensive pedestrian, bike, and other recreational trails and would also include facilities allowing and promoting the use of golf carts to travel within the Project and to the Madison Club, located immediately west of the Project Site.
Integrate the region's development pattern and transportation network to improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enable more sustainable use of energy and water.	**Consistent**. While not necessarily applicable on a project-specific basis, the proposed Project would be served by extensive pedestrian, bike, and other recreational trails and would also include facilities allowing and promoting the use of golf carts to travel within the Project and to the Madison Club, located immediately west of the Project Site. The proposed Project would also comply with applicable energy, water, and waste efficiency measures in the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards.
Conserve the region's resources.	**Consistent**. While not necessarily applicable on a project-specific basis, the Project would comply with applicable energy, water, and waste efficiency measures specified in the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards.
Economy: Support a sustainable, efficient and productive regional economic environment that provides opportunities for all people in the region	

TABLE 5.8-11: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS GOALS AND POLICIES	
Goals and Policies	**Consistency Analysis**
Improve access to jobs and educational resources.	**Consistent**. While not necessarily applicable on a project-specific basis, the Project includes 85 single-family homes in unincorporated Riverside County where SCAG estimates a jobs/housing ratio of 0.92 by 2050.[68,69] An employment to housing ratio in the range of 0.75 to 1.5 is considered beneficial.
Advance a resilient and efficient goods movement system that supports the economic vitality of the region, attainment of clean air and quality of life for our communities.	**Consistent**. This goal is directed toward SCAG and is not specifically applicable to the Project. Nonetheless, the proposed Project is located near existing residential developments and would foster economic growth in the region.

Consistency with County of Riverside General Plan

As discussed previously, the County of Riverside General Plan Air Quality Element includes policies with the goal of reducing GHG emissions within the County. **Table 5.8-12: Project Consistency with County of Riverside General Plan** demonstrates the Project's consistency with applicable policies. As shown therein, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the GHG emission reduction strategies contained in the County of Riverside General Plan.

TABLE 5.8-12: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN	
Policies	**Applicability**
AQ 20.7—Reduce VMT through increased densities in urban centers and encouraging emphasis on mixed use to provide residential, commercial and employment opportunities in closer proximity to each other. Such measures will also support achieving the appropriate jobs-housing balance within the communities	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would develop a residential community that includes 85 single-family residential units, a private 9-hole golf course, and associated improvements including open space, recreational facilities, and multimodal transportation facilities. The proposed Project's inclusion of a variety of amenities would allow residents and visitors the ability to walk to a variety of land uses. The Project would create a limited number of employment opportunities within the amenity uses, including three full-service restaurants, two quick service restaurants, fitness center and wellness center/spa.
AQ 20.8—Reduce VMT by increasing options for non-vehicular access through urban design principles that promote higher residential densities with easily accessible parks and recreation opportunities nearby.	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would develop a residential community that includes 85 single-family residential units, a private 9-hole golf course, and associated improvements including open space, recreational facilities, and multimodal transportation facilities. The proposed Project's inclusion of a variety of amenities would allow

68 SCAG. "2024 Demographics and Growth Forecast." Accessed February 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/23-2987-tr-demographics-growth-forecast-final-040424.pdf?17122618399.

69 The jobs/housing ratio is determined by dividing the estimated employment by the estimated number of households (148,800 employees / 161,400 households = 0.92 jobs per household ratio).

TABLE 5.8-12: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN

Policies	Applicability
	residents and visitors the ability to walk to a variety of land uses. Additionally, the proposed Project would also include extensive recreational trails and pedestrian pathways.
AQ 20.9—Reduce urban sprawl in order to minimize energy costs associated with infrastructure construction and transmission to distant locations, and to maximize protection of open space	**Consistent**. The proposed Project is located near existing development immediately west of the Project Site in the City of La Quinta and north of the Project Site in the City of Indio and is a logical extension of this existing development pattern. The Project would develop a residential community that includes 85 single-family homes and a mixed-use amenity village. The Project would also include approximately 115.6 acres of open space, including a golf course. IID currently provides electrical service to the area the Project Site is located in. Localized improvements to the existing IID electrical distribution system are needed to provide service to the Project Site. The Project includes a modular on-site power generation system that could provide some or all of the electricity needed for the Project, avoiding the need for improvements to the existing IID distribution system serving the area the Project Site is located in.
AQ 20.10—Reduce energy consumption of the new developments (residential, commercial and industrial) through efficient site design that takes into consideration solar orientation and shading, as well as passive solar design.	**Consistent**. The Specific Plan would include high-performance residential windows with responsive passive solar shading strategies to withstand the desert heat. The proposed Project complies with the current Building Energy Efficiency Standards for residential development within climate zones 10–15, which requires a solar reflectance of 0.2 and a thermal emittance of 0.75. Additionally, the Project would include 580 kW of solar power from solar panels covering parking areas.
AQ 20.11—Increase energy efficiency of the new developments through efficient use of utilities (water, electricity, natural gas) and infrastructure design. Also, increase energy efficiency through use of energy efficient mechanical systems and equipment.	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would comply with applicable energy, water, and waste efficiency measures specified in the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards.
AQ 20.13—Reduce water use and wastewater generation in both new and existing housing, commercial and industrial uses. Encourage increased efficiency of water use for agricultural activities.	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would comply with applicable water and waste efficiency measures specified in the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards.
AQ 20.14—Reduce the amount of water used for landscaping irrigation through implementation of County Ordinance 859 and increase use of non-potable water.	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would include native and drought tolerant plants in compliance with the County's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 17.276 water efficient landscape requirements. Additionally, the Project would comply with the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 17.276.050 which requires irrigation systems to be designed maintained and managed to meet or exceed an average efficiency of 0.71.
AQ 20.20—Reduce the amount of solid waste generation by increasing solid waste recycling,	**Consistent**. The proposed Project would comply with AB 1383 which requires all residents and business to recycle

TABLE 5.8-12: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN

Policies	Applicability
maximizing waste diversion, and composting for residential and commercial generators. Reduction in decomposable organic solid waste will reduce the methane emissions at County landfills.	organic materials, such as food waste. Additionally, AB 341 requires commercial businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of trash per week to arrange for recycling services. Additionally, as required by the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 8.136.050, all residential properties in unincorporated parts of the County shall participate in the three-bin system, including recyclable materials.

Source: County of Riverside. *General Plan Air Quality Element*. Accessed February 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-genplan-general-plan-2018-elements-Ch09-AQE-071718.pdf.

Consistency with the County of Riverside Climate Action Plan

The Project's GHG impacts were evaluated using the screening criteria contained in the County of Riverside CAP. The CAP provides screening thresholds and reduction strategies intended to reduce communitywide GHG emissions and support the State's climate change goals. The CAP screening tables were originally developed based on the statewide GHG reduction targets established under Assembly Bill (AB) 32, which required California to reduce statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

Subsequent State legislation, including SB 32, established a more stringent statewide target of reducing GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. These updated targets are reflected in the Scoping Plans adopted by the California Air Resources Board, which identify statewide strategies and regulatory programs intended to further reduce GHG emissions from transportation, energy production, and other sectors.

Although the Riverside County CAP screening methodology was originally developed to support the AB 32 reduction target, the CAP remains an adopted climate planning framework that includes measures intended to reduce emissions from land use development, transportation, building energy use, and other sources. Projects that are consistent with the CAP screening criteria and applicable reduction measures would therefore support ongoing State climate policies and contribute to reducing regional GHG emissions over time.

Accordingly, the CAP screening approach remains an appropriate CEQA pathway for evaluating Project-level GHG impacts because it reflects the County's adopted strategy for reducing communitywide emissions and incorporates measures consistent with State programs intended to achieve long-term GHG reduction reductions. Based on the CAP screening analysis presented in **Table 5.8-13: County of Riverside Greenhouse Gas Screening Table**, the Project would be consistent with the County's CAP framework and would not conflict with applicable State GHG reduction goals. The Project will provide access or installation of significant EV charging infrastructure to support the adoption of EV vehicles per the requirement of this item including an EV

charger in all single-family residences. All single-family homes and commercial facilities will be built to meet or exceed the minimum Title 24 standards. The Project incorporates a dual-layered solar and battery storage design to provide energy redundancy. At the residential level, each home is equipped with individual rooftop PV and a 10-kWh battery, which reduces individual household demand on the grid. At the community level, the infrastructure includes a 580-kW community solar array, central battery energy storage, microgrid controls, and dispatchable generators. Combining both distributed and centralized generation and storage capacities allows the system to provide power redundancy that exceeds minimum code requirements. The Project will exceed the goals of 20 percent of energy demand met by renewable energy for nonresidential buildings and 30 percent of energy demand met by renewable energy for single-family residential buildings. It is important to note, features related to mixed use developments have not been assigned specific point values, and as such are not accounted for in the total point value of the Project. As discussed above, projects that garner at least 100 points will be consistent with the reduction quantities anticipated in the County's CAP Update. Based on the CAP screening analysis presented in this report, the Project would be consistent with the County's CAP framework and would not conflict with State GHG reduction goals. Therefore, the Project's GHG impacts would be less than significant.

TABLE 5.8-13: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GREENHOUSE GAS SCREENING TABLE

Feature	Description	Project Consistency	Points
Screening for GHG Implementation Measures for Residential Development			
EE5.A.1 Insulation	Greatly Enhanced Insulation (spray foam wall insulated walls R-18 or higher, roof/attic R-38 or higher	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by including insulated walls R-18 or higher and roof/attic R-38 or higher.	11 points
EE5.A.2 Windows	Greatly Enhanced Window (0.28 or less U-Factor, 0.22 or less SHGC)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by including windows rated 0.28 or less U-Factor, 0.22 or less SHGC.	5 points
EE10.A.3 Cool Roofs	Greatly Enhanced Cool Roof (CRRC Rated 0.35 aged solar reflectance, 0.75 thermal emittance)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by installing cool roofs that are CRRC Rated 0.35 aged solar reflectance, 0.75 thermal emittance.	8 points
EE5.A.4 Air Infiltration	Minimizing leaks in the building envelope is as important as the insulation properties of the building. Insulation does not work effectively if there is excess air leakage. Air barrier applied to exterior walls, caulking, and visual inspection such as the HERS Verified Quality Insulation Installation (QII or equivalent	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by including air barrier applied to exterior walls, caulking, and visual inspection during Project construction.	6 points

TABLE 5.8-13: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GREENHOUSE GAS SCREENING TABLE

Feature	Description	Project Consistency	Points
EE5.B.1 Heating/Cooling Distribution System	Distribution loss reduction with inspection (HERS Verified Duct Leakage or equivalent)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by installing an HVAC system that would include distribution loss reduction practices.	7 points
EE5.B.2 Space Heating/ Cooling Equipment	Improved Efficiency HVAC (SEER 14/78% AFUE or 8 HSPF)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure with compliance with the minimum efficiency requirements established by Title 24.	2 points
EE5.B.3 Water Heaters	Very High Efficiency Water Heater (0.92 Energy Factor)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by including only very high efficiency water heaters (energy factors of 0.92 or greater).	11 points
EE5.B.4 Daylighting	Daylighting is the ability of each room within the building to provide outside light during the day reducing the need for artificial lighting during daylight hours. All rooms within the living space have daylight (through use of windows, solar tubes, skylights, etc.)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by including windows in all rooms within living spaces.	1 point
EE5.B.5 Artificial Lighting	High Efficiency Lights (100% of in-unit fixtures are high efficiency)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by adhering to the requirements of the current CALGreen Building Code Section 150(k) 1A which requires all luminaries or light sources be high efficacy and by permanently installing lighting within the interior common areas in the buildings that are high efficacy luminaire.	7 points
W2.A.1 Water Efficient Landscaping	Only California Native Plants that requires no irrigation or some supplemental irrigation	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by including native and drought tolerant plants in compliance with the County's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 17.276 water efficient landscape requirements.	5 points
W2.A.2 Water Efficient Irrigation Systems	Low precipitation spray heads < .75"/hr or drip irrigation	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by adhering to the requirements of the 2022 CALGreen Building Code Section 4.304.1. Additionally, the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 17.276.050 requires irrigation systems to be	1 point

TABLE 5.8-13: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GREENHOUSE GAS SCREENING TABLE

Feature	Description	Project Consistency	Points
		designed maintained and managed to meet or exceed an average efficiency of 0.71, which exceeds the 0.75/hr requirements with slower and more efficient watering than 0.75/hr.	
W2.B.1 Showers	Water Efficient Showerheads (2.0 gpm)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by adhering to the requirements of the current 2022 CALGreen Building Code Section 4.303.1 by installing showerheads not exceeding 1.8 gpm at 80 psi.	2 points
W2.B.2 Toilets	Water Efficient Toilets (1.5 gpm)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by adhering to the requirements of the current CALGreen Building Code Section 4.303.1 by installing water efficient toilets less than or equal to 1.28 gal/flush.	2 points
W2.B.3 Faucets	Water Efficient faucets (1.28 gpm)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by adhering to the requirements of the current CALGreen Building Code Section 4.303.1 by installing water efficient faucets for the lavatories, metering, and kitchen that are rated at 1.28 gpm or less.	2 points
W2.B.4 Dishwasher	Water Efficient Dishwasher (6 gallons per cycle or less)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by adhering to the requirements of the current CALGreen Building Code Section 110.1 to install dishwashers that use no more than 4.25 gallons per cycle.	1 point
W2.B.5 Washing Machine	Water Efficient Washing Machine (Water factor <5.5)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by installing Energy Star appliances which have a water factor of less than or equal to 3.2 gallons of water per cycle per cubic foot for front loading washers and less than or equal to 4.3 gallons per cycle per cubic foot for top loading washers.	1 point
W2.B.6 WasterSense	EPA WaterSense Certification	The proposed Project would obtain the EPA WaterSense Certification.	7 points

TABLE 5.8-13: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GREENHOUSE GAS SCREENING TABLE

Feature	Description	Project Consistency	Points
T2.A.2 Bicycle paths	Provide bicycle path linkages between residential and transit	The proposed Project would satisfy this requirement providing a linkage between the Project Site and the nearby Sunline Transit stops. The closest Sunline Transit stops to the Project Site are Route 6, which has a stop at Monroe Street and Avenue 48, and Route 8, which has a stop at Avenue 50 and Calhoun Street, approximately 2.2 miles to the northeast.	5 points
EE5.B.6 Appliances	Energy Star Refrigerator (new) Energy Star Dishwasher (new) Energy Star Washing Machine (new)	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure by adhering to the requirements of the current CALGreen Building Code Section 110.1 to install appliances that meet or exceed the ENERGY STAR Program requirements.	3 points
S1.A.1 Recycling	County initiated recycling program diverting 100% of waste requires coordination in neighborhoods to realize this goal. The following recycling features will help the County fulfill this goal: Provide green waste composting bins at each residential unit Multi-family residential projects that provide dedicated recycling bins separated by types of recyclables combined with instructions/education program explaining how to use the bins and the importance or recycling	The proposed Project would satisfy this measure pursuant to California mandatory recycling laws. AB 1383 requires all residents and business to recycle organic materials, such as food waste. Additionally, as required by the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 8.136.050, all residential properties in unincorporated parts of the County shall participate in the three-bin system, including recyclable materials.	7 points
T4.A.1 Electric Vehicle Recharging	Provide circuit and capacity in garages of residential units for use by an electric vehicle. Charging stations are for on-road electric vehicles legally able to drive on all roadways including Interstate Highways and freeways	The proposed Project would comply with all applicable requirements of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24), including the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). In accordance with Title 24, Part 11, all new residential dwelling units are required to provide electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure to support future installation of Level 2 (240-volt) EV charging equipment.	1 point
W2.C.1 Recycled Water	5% of the total project's water use comes from recycled/reclaimed water	The proposed Project would utilize recycled/reclaimed water for the	5 points

TABLE 5.8-13: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GREENHOUSE GAS SCREENING TABLE

Feature	Description	Project Consistency	Points
		golf course and irrigation of common areas.	
T1.B.2 Residential Near Local Retail (Residential only Projects)	Having residential developments within walking and biking distances of local retail helps to reduce vehicle trips and/or vehicle miles traveled. The point value of residential projects in close proximity to local retail will be determined based upon traffic studies that demonstrate trip reductions and/or reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) The suburban project will have at least three of the following on site and/or off site within ¼-mile: Residential Development, Retail Development, Park, Open Space, or Office. The mixed-use development should encourage walking and other non-auto modes of transport from residential to office/commercial locations (and vice versa). The project should minimize the need for external trips by including services/facilities for daycare, banking/ATM, restaurants, vehicle refueling, and shopping.	The proposed Project includes residential development, open space. Additionally, there are planned future commercial uses to be located at the southwest corner of Avenue 52 and Montore Street. The Transportation Impact Assessment prepared for the Project includes a 50% reduction rate for the golf course on site, due to its exclusive use for residents and their guests.	16 points
Total Points			**114**

Source: County of Riverside. *Climate Action Plan*. Appendix D. Accessed December 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-CAP-2019-2019-CAP-Update-Full.pdf.

Conclusion

As shown above, the Project would not conflict with the CARB Climate Change Scoping Plan, SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, County of Riverside General Plan, and the County of Riverside CAP and, for this reason, impacts would be less than significant.

5.8.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

To achieve statewide goals, CARB is continuing its ongoing process of updating, establishing, and implementing regulations to reduce statewide GHG emissions. As discussed, the operation of the proposed Project would exceed the 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year screening threshold, however the Project would incorporate measures outlined in the County's CAP screening tables in compliance with existing regulatory compliance measures such as the General Plan, CALGreen Building Codes, Title 24 requirements, and the County's Code of Ordinances. As stated above, the Project would not result in a potentially significant impact because it would not conflict with CARB's Climate Change Scoping

Plan, SCAG's 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, the County of Riverside General Plan, or the County's CAP. As such, cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Related projects would generate both construction and operational GHG emissions during the life of each project. Given that the Project would not have a potentially significant impact from GHG emissions, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts is not considered a significant impact.

5.8.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures required.

5.8.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

5.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section describes the use of hazardous materials and other hazards to public health and safety that could result from the proposed Project. Information from the following studies is incorporated into this section:

- *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment* (APNs 780-020-001, 002, 003 & 780-010-012), La Quinta, California, prepared by Sladden Engineering, September 2022, **Appendix L.**
- *Results of Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, The Ranch at Madison* (APNs 780-010-013 & 014), prepared by Sladden Engineering, October 2025, **Appendix M.**
- *Results of Shallow Soil Sampling* (APNs 780-020-001 to 003 & 780-010-012), La Quinta, prepared by Sladden Engineering, May 2023, **Appendix N.**
- *Results of Shallow Soil Sampling* (APNs 780-010-013 & 014), La Quinta, California, prepared by Sladden Engineering, November 2025, **Appendix O.**

5.9.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.9.1.1 Federal Regulations

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The RCRA gives the EPA the authority to control hazardous waste from the "cradle-to-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 1986 amendments to RCRA enabled the EPA to address environmental problems that could result from underground tanks storing petroleum and other hazardous substances.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

The U.S. Congress passed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund) in 1980. The purpose of CERCLA is to identify and remediate chemically contaminated sites that pose a significant environmental health threat. The Hazard Ranking System is used to determine whether a site should be placed on the National Priorities List for cleanup activities.

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act

The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) primarily pertain to emergency management of accidental releases. SARA requires the formation of State and local emergency planning committees, which are responsible for collecting material handling and transportation data for use as a basis for their planning. Chemical inventory data is made available to the public under the "right-to-know" provision of this Act. SARA also requires annual reporting of continuous

emissions and accidental releases of specified compounds. These annual submissions are compiled into a nationwide Toxics Release Inventory.

Hazardous Material Transportation Act

The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (HMTA) serves as the statutory basis for the body of regulations designed to ensure the safe transport of hazardous materials via water, rail, highways, air, or pipelines. This Act includes provisions for material classification, packaging, marking, labeling, placarding, and shipping documentation.

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), along with the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Railroad Administration, regulate the transportation and handling of hazardous materials through the HMTA and through the RCRA. Through these regulations, Congress directed the EPA to create regulations to manage hazardous materials from "the cradle to the grave." Under this mandate, the EPA developed strict requirements for all aspects of hazardous materials management, including the treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances. In addition to those federal requirements, states may develop more stringent requirements that are broader in scope than the federal regulations.

In California, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) implements, and the California Highway Patrol enforces these regulations. Carriers that violate these regulatory requirements subject themselves to possible civil and criminal liability.

5.9.1.2 State Regulations

California Health and Safety Code

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) has established rules governing the use of hazardous materials and the management of hazardous wastes. California Health and Safety Code Sections 25531, et seq., incorporate the requirements of SARA and the CAA as they pertain to hazardous materials. Health and Safety Code Section 25534 directs facility owners storing or handling acutely hazardous materials in reportable quantities to develop a Risk Management Plan (RMP). The RMP must be submitted to the appropriate local authorities, the designated local administering agency, and the EPA for review and approval.

The California Hazardous Waste Control Law

The Hazardous Waste Control Law (HWCL) is the primary hazardous waste statute in California. HWCL implements RCRA as a "cradle-to-grave" waste management system in the State. The HWCL states that generators have the primary duty to determine whether their wastes are hazardous and to ensure their proper management. The HWCL also establishes criteria for the reuse and recycling of hazardous wastes. The HWCL exceeds federal requirements by mandating source reduction planning, and a much broader requirement for permitting facilities that treat hazardous waste. It also

regulates a number of types of wastes and waste management activities that are not covered by RCRA.

California Code of Regulations

Most State and federal regulations and requirements that apply to generators of hazardous waste are spelled out in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4.5. Title 22 contains detailed compliance requirements for hazardous waste generators and transporters as well as treatment, storage, and disposal facilities. Because California is a fully authorized State according to RCRA, most RCRA regulations (those contained in 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 260, et seq.) have been duplicated and integrated into Title 22. However, because the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) regulates hazardous waste more stringently than the EPA, Title 22 contains fewer exemptions and exclusions than 40 CFR Part 260. As with the California Health and Safety Code, Title 22 also regulates a wider range of waste types and waste management activities than RCRA regulations in 40 CFR Part 260. To make regulatory requirements more accessible and easier to follow, California compiled the hazardous materials, waste, and toxics-related regulations contained in the California Code of Regulations, Titles 3, 8, 13, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, and 27, into one consolidated California Code of Regulations Title 26 "Toxics." However, California hazardous waste regulations are still commonly referred to as Title 22.

5.9.1.3 Local Regulations

Southern California Hazardous Waste Management Authority

The County of Riverside is a member of the Southern California Hazardous Waste Management Authority (SCHWMA) and, therefore, has agreed to work on a regional level to solve problems involving hazardous waste. SCHWMA was formed through a joint powers' agreement between Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Bernardino, Orange, San Diego, Imperial, and Riverside counties and the cities of Los Angeles and San Diego. Using a "fair share" approach, each SCHWMA county has agreed to take responsibility for the treatment and disposal of hazardous waste in an amount that is at least equal to the amount generated within that county. This responsibility can be met by siting hazardous waste management facilities (transfer, treatment and/or repository) capable of processing an amount of waste equal to or larger than the amount generated within the county, or by creating intergovernmental agreements between counties to provide compensation to a county for taking another county's waste, or through a combination of both facility siting and intergovernmental agreements. Once an application to site a facility has been received, the County of Riverside will review the requested facility and its location against a set of established siting criteria to ensure that the location is appropriate and may deny the application based on the findings of this review. Presently, the County of Riverside does not have any of these facilities within its jurisdiction and therefore must rely on intergovernmental agreements to fulfill its fair share responsibility to SCHWMA.

County of Riverside Operational Area, Multi-hazard Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The purpose of the Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJLHMP) is to identify the County's hazards, review and assess past disaster occurrences, estimate the probability of future occurrences, and set goals to mitigate potential risks to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards. The MJLHMP was prepared pursuant to the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

County of Riverside Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

The County of Riverside Emergency Operations Plan was formally adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in 2024. The EOP intends to assist with facilitating an effective response to any emergency situation through collaboration between the County of Riverside Operational Area (OA), Emergency Operations Center (EOC), first responders, and other support agencies. The OA consists of a combination of the County, all unincorporated areas, all cities, and all political subdivisions within the County's geographic boundaries. The County's EOP consists of the Base Plan, Appendices, and Emergency Support Functions.

Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan

As indicated in the Safety Element of the County of Riverside 2021 General Plan, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) on September 12, 1989. With a framework of 24 existing and recommended programs, the CIWMP serves as the County's primary planning document for the management of hazardous substances.

The CIWMP, in its entirety, is comprised of the following elements: Countywide Summary Plan; the Countywide Siting Element; and the Source Reduction and Recycling Elements (SRRE's), Household Hazardous Waste Elements (HHWE's), and Nondisposal Facility Elements (NDFE's) for Unincorporated Riverside County and each of the cities in Riverside County.

Countywide Summary Plan: The Countywide Summary Plan contains goals and policies, as well as a summary of integrated waste management issues faced by the County and its cities. The Summary Plan summarizes the steps needed to cooperatively implement programs among the County's jurisdictions to meet and maintain the 50% diversion mandates.

Countywide Siting Element: The Countywide Siting Element demonstrates that there are at least 15 years of remaining disposal capacity to serve all the jurisdictions within the County. If there is not adequate capacity, a discussion of alternative disposal sites and additional diversion programs must be included in the Siting Element.

Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE): The SRRE analyzes the local waste stream to determine where to focus diversion efforts, including programs and funding. A separate SRRE was developed by Unincorporated Riverside County and each of the cities in Riverside County.

Household Hazardous Waste Element (HHWE): The HHWE provides a framework for recycling, treatment and disposal practices for Household Hazardous Waste programs. A separate HHWE was developed by Unincorporated Riverside County and each of the cities in Riverside County.

Non-Disposal Facility Element (NDFE): The NDFE identifies and describes, at a minimum, existing and proposed facilities, other than landfills and transformation facilities, requiring a solid waste permit to operate. Nondisposal facilities are also those facilities that will be used by a jurisdiction to implement its SRRE in order to meet its diversion goals. A separate NDFE was developed by Unincorporated Riverside County and each of the cities in Riverside County.

Each jurisdiction must provide an Annual Report Summary to CalRecycle. In addition, Riverside County provides a Five-Year Review Report to provide an update on the CIWMP status for the entire county, including each jurisdiction.

Cities within Riverside County include Banning, Beaumont, Blythe, Calimesa, Canyon Lake, Cathedral City, Coachella, Corona, Desert Hot Springs, Eastvale, Hemet, Indian Wells, Indio, Jurupa Valley, Lake Elsinore, La Quinta, Menifee, Moreno Valley, Murrieta, Norco, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, Perris, Rancho Mirage, Riverside, San Jacinto, Temecula, and Wildomar.

Riverside County General Plan

The County of Riverside 2020 General Plan sets forth the following applicable policies that are relevant to hazards and hazardous materials:

Land Use Element

LU 29.6 Require that commercial projects abutting residential properties protect the residential use from the impacts of noise, light, fumes, odors, vehicular traffic, parking, and operational hazards.

Safety Element

S 5.1 Enforce land use policies and existing criteria related to hazardous materials and waste through ongoing implementation of the programs identified in the County's Hazardous Waste Management Plan (CHWMP). (AI 88)

S 5.2 Review all proposed development projects that manufacture, use, or transport hazardous materials for compliance with the CHWMP. Such projects shall provide a buffer zone, to be determined by the County, between the installation and property boundaries sufficient to protect public safety.

S 5.3 Require that applications for discretionary development projects that will generate hazardous wastes or use hazardous materials include detailed information on hazardous waste reduction, recycling, and storage.

S 5.5 Regulate the storage of hazardous materials and wastes and require secondary containment and periodic examination for all such materials as necessary.

S 5.6 Require that any business that handles a hazardous material prepare a plan for emergency response to a release or threatened release of a hazardous material, including providing updated information to emergency responders on the type and quantity of hazardous materials kept on-site.

S 5.8 Ensure that the use and disposal of hazardous materials in the County complies with local, state, and federal safety standards.

5.9.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.9.2.1 Existing Conditions

The Project Site is located in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area of Riverside County, east of the City of La Quinta, south of the City of Indio, and west of the City of Coachella, and within the La Quinta Sphere of Influence. The Project is also located within Vista Santa Rosa, a unique community as identified in the Riverside County General Plan. The rolling foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains are located approximately four miles west of the Project Site. Regional access to the Project Site is provided via Highway 111, located approximately three miles to the north and east, and Interstate 10 (I-10), located approximately five miles to the north. Primary access to the Project Site is provided from Monroe Street via I-10 to the north.

The Project Site is located in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area of the Sonoran Desert, approximately four miles east of the rolling foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains with site elevations around 20 feet below mean sea level. The Eastern Coachella Valley is bounded by the Santa Rosa Mountains to the west, and the Mecca Hills and the edge of Joshua Tree National Park to the northwest. The portion of the Eastern Coachella Valley planning area east of the All American Canal is either desert or mountain terrain.

The Project Site is approximately 174 acres and is situated on vacant agricultural land and flat desert terrain. There is an existing date palm grove located at the northeast portion of the Project Site and a retention basin located at the furthest northwest portion of the Project, adjacent to Monroe Street. This basin is not in use and remains from the former agricultural use. At the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a previous residence and their ancillary structures, as shown in **Figure 3.0-3** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR**.**

The associated APNs for the parcels are provided in **Table 5.9-1: Ranch at Madison Specific Plan APNs**, below.

TABLE 5.9-1: RANCH AT MADISON SPECIFIC PLAN APNS
APNS
780-010-012
780-010-013
780-010-014
780-020-001
780-020-002
780-020-003

Historical Uses

Project Site

The Project Site was in an undeveloped and natural state up until at least 1985, when the Mirabella Estates property was developed. This property includes a single-family home, with several ancillary buildings and agricultural activities. In addition, the Project Site has been intermittently farmed with both irrigated and non-irrigated crops (i.e., "dry farming") on the northeastern portion of the site. By 1959 the entire site was in agricultural use and has continued in this state to the present day.

Based on the Phase I Environmental Site Assessments, the historical use of the Project Site involving the application of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers is identified as a Recognized Environmental Condition (REC), as identified by ASTM E1527-13. This REC reflects the potential for residual agricultural chemicals to be present in shallow soils due to long-term farming activities.

Surrounding Uses

As shown in **Figure 3.0-1**: **Regional Location** in **Section 3.0**: **Project Description** of this Draft EIR, uses surrounding the Project Site include single-family and rural residential/golf course communities, including The Madison Club, west of Monroe Street in the City of La Quinta. Within the County, two (2) properties are located north of the Project Site (Mirabella Estates and Santa Rosa Ranch) which have a land use designation of Rural Community–Estate Density Residential (RC:EDR). Unincorporated parcels to the east contain vacant, fallow agricultural land and the Tahquitz Equestrian Facility, which have a land use designation of Agriculture (AG) and Rural Community–Low-Density Residential (RC:LDR). Unincorporated parcels to the south consist of two ranches (Rancho Ellenita and Cavallo Ranch) and a single-family neighborhood (Carmela) which have a land use designation of AG**.**

Additional uses surrounding the Project Site, but not adjacent, include Cahuilla Desert Academy to the northeast; the Hidden Paradise Coachella, the Palm Plaza at Rancho Nuestro, and agricultural uses to the east; the Plantation Golf Club and single-family residential neighborhoods north of 52nd Avenue; and Forsythe Equestrian Club and other agricultural uses to the south.

5.9.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.9.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine whether a project would have a significant effect on the environment (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). Appendix G provides that a project would have a significant impact to hazards if it would:

a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.9.4 METHODOLOGY

5.9.4.1 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment

The Phase I ESAs evaluated areas of potential environmental concern that may be present on the site as a result of past hazardous materials use, handling, or storage on or near properties with respect to the range of contaminants within the scope of Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and petroleum products for a parcel of commercial real estate. The Phase I ESA included review of reported areas of possible environmental impairment on or within a 1.0-mile radius of the property, provided as an Environmental Database Report (EDR)[1] and a field investigation conducted in August 2022, and interviews with owners and local government officials.

Pursuant to ASTM Standard E1527-13, which addresses the potential presence of methane or subsurface gases, the Phase I ESAs found that, because there are no landfills, dumps, or buried organic debris or other methane sources in the Project Site vicinity and no underground petroleum

1 Refer to **Appendix L** and **Appendix M**.

storage tanks on the Project Site, the potential for methane or other subsurface gases impacting the Project Site is determined to be negligible. The various trash and debris observed on the Project Site was not determined to be a recognized environmental condition (REC) and would be cleaned up and transported to an approved landfill. In addition, the Phase I ESAs found that, based on the previous and ongoing farming/agricultural usage of the Project Site, a Phase II ESA was recommended to evaluate the potential presence of residual pesticide and herbicide contaminants in shallow soils. This recommendation was based on the identification of a REC associated with historical agricultural use of the Project Site.

5.9.4.2 Phase II Environmental Site Assessment

Sladden Engineering (Sladden) completed shallow soil sampling across the entire Project Site. On May 2, 2023, Sladden visited APNs 780-020-001, 002, 003 and 780-010-012 to collect shallow soil samples for laboratory analysis. These parcels were divided into 61 quadrants and samples were collected from each quadrant at depths between 6 and 12 inches below the existing ground surface, consistent with CalEPA guidance. Discrete samples were also collected from 17 locations and packaged following similar procedures to determine the presence of arsenic and organochlorine pesticides.

Laboratory chemical analytical results indicate that arsenic is not detected above the indicated reporting limit in any of the samples tested. Analytical results for composite samples 1–14 indicate organochlorine pesticides were not detected (ND) at concentrations above their laboratory detection limits. Analytical results for composite sample 15 indicate organochlorine pesticides were not detected (ND) at concentrations above their laboratory detection limit with the exception of one sample, which indicated a value of 6.1 micrograms per kilogram (ug/kg) for 4,4-DDE at this location. The 4,4-DDE concentration (6.1 ug/kg) reported is less than the 2.0 mg/kg (2,000 ug/kg) Department of Toxic Substances Control screening level for residential soil. A duplicate sample for this location had a 4,4-DDE concentration of 6.6 ug/kg which is less than the 2.0 mg/kg (2,000 ug/kg) Department of Toxic Substances Control screening level for residential soil. Sladden concluded that no additional environmental investigation was necessary.

On October 21, 2025, Sladden visited APNs 780-010-013 and -014 to collect shallow soil samples for laboratory analysis. These parcels were divided into 60 quadrants and samples from each quadrant were collected at depths between six and 12 inches below the existing ground surface, consistent with CalEPA guidance. Discrete samples were also collected from 16 locations and packaged following similar procedures to determine the presence of arsenic and organochlorine pesticides.

Laboratory chemical analytical results indicate that arsenic is not detected above the indicated reporting limit in any of the samples tested. Analytical results for composite samples 4 - 16 indicate organochlorine pesticides were not detected (ND) at concentrations above their laboratory detection limits with the exception of 4,4-DDE. Testing indicated a value ranging from 6.8 to 150 ug/kg for 4,4-

DDE in these samples. The 4,4-DDE concentration (6.8 to 150 ug/kg) reported is less than the 2.0 mg/kg (2,000 ug/kg) Department of Toxic Substances Control screening level for residential soil and the 330 ug/kg limit listed in the California Water Board 2025 Soil Screening Level Table. Sladden concluded that no additional environmental investigation was necessary.

5.9.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction Impacts

Construction of the Project will involve the use and storage of small amounts of vehicle fuel, paints, solvents, and other acidic or alkaline solutions that require special handling, transport, and disposal. All materials used during construction would be used and stored in compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations. These regulations include the Hazardous Material Transportation Act, the RCRA, the California HWCL, Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA), and the California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) program. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts to occur. The quantity of potential hazardous substances used during construction is very limited and does not require special permitting. As the use and transport of regulated materials would be limited, in terms of volume and duration, these materials are not considered a significant hazard to the public or environment.

Furthermore, any unexpected spills or leakages (for example, fuel from a vehicle) that occur during construction would be required to be remediated in accordance with the State and local regulations for hazardous waste cleanup. Specifically, the construction site would be subject to the regulations in Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations (T8 CCR) that governs workplace safety, and which address the handling of hazardous materials in a workplace environment. Any contaminated waste would be required to be collected and disposed of at an appropriately licensed disposal or treatment facility. Adherence to all emergency response plan requirements set forth by the County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)[2] would be required through the duration of the proposed Project construction phase. All potentially hazardous materials would be contained, stored, and used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions and handled in compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations. For these reasons, compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations, potential impacts related to the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during construction of the Project would be less than significant. No mitigation would be required.

2 Riverside County. *Riverside County Emergency Operations Plan*. August 2024. Accessed December 2025. https://rivcoready.org/about-emd/plans.

Operational Impacts

Use of the proposed 85 single-family residential units, private clubhouse with recreational amenities, streets, pathways, and the golf cart grade-separated crossing of Monroe Street, which may consist of either an underground tunnel or an above-grade bridge, would not involve the storage or use of hazardous materials. Standard household chemicals such as surface and floor cleaning products utilized for routine janitorial cleaning procedures would be used and stored in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and handled in accordance with all applicable standards and regulations, including, but not limited to, those set forth by the federal and State Occupational Safety and Health Acts. The use of a 9-hole private golf course and practice area would involve the use of commercially available pesticides and herbicides, such as, Glyphosate (Roundup), 2,4-D, dicamba, chlorpyrifos, fungicides, rodenticides, insecticides, and fertilizers, such as Ammonium nitrate, urea, potassium chloride, superphosphates. These chemicals are regulated by the EPA's Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA); more specifically, fertilizers are also regulated by the EPA and the federal and state Department of Transportation (DOT), which are all products that would be used and stored in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and handled in accordance with all applicable standards and regulations, including, but not limited to, those set forth by the federal and State Occupational Safety and Health Acts.

Use of the golf course and practice area would involve the use of fuel and petroleum products, such as gasoline, diesel, propane, oils, lubricants, for use in maintenance equipment (e.g., mowers, carts, and generators). These products are subject to the EPA's Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) regulations, as well as applicable CalEPA and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) requirements.

The golf course operations would not store, transport, or utilize these materials, chemicals, and products in a manner that would exceed the limits allowed by federal and State regulations. Furthermore, storage and use of these products would not require a special permit to store or use in conjunction with the golf course use.

Therefore, any associated risk would be adequately reduced to a less-than-significant level through implementation and compliance with these existing laws and regulations. Operational impacts through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant and no mitigation measure is required.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction activities typically involve the demolition of existing site improvements, earthmoving activities associated with excavation and grading for subsurface levels, and the transport and disposal of these materials and soil. Such activities have the potential to result in the release of

hazardous materials into the environment, should these demolished site improvements and soil contain hazardous materials. An accidental spill of common construction materials, such as fuels, paints, cleaners, solvents, or welding materials may impact the environment.

All potentially hazardous materials would be contained, stored, and used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions and handled in compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations. Any associated risk would be reduced to less than a significant level through compliance with these standards and regulations. For these reasons, compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations, potential impacts related to the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during construction of the Project would be less than significant.

As mentioned above, the Phase I ESAs, included an evaluation of potential environmental concerns on or within 1.0-mile radius of the Project Site was conducted, which included a review of regulatory records, site reconnaissance, and interviews. The Phase I ESAs found there are no landfills, dumps, buried organic debris or other methane sources on the Project Site or within the site vicinity, including underground petroleum storage tanks. Therefore, it was determined that the potential for methane or other subsurface gases impacting the Project Site is negligible, and there would be no potential impacts from underground petroleum storage tanks resulting in reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions. Historical agricultural use of the Project Site involving pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers constitutes a REC, indicating the potential for residual contamination in shallow soils. As such, previous and ongoing farming/agricultural usage of the Project Site would require Phase II ESAs.

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Phase I ESAs, Phase II ESAs were prepared for the Project Site**.** The Phase II ESAs included laboratory analysis of shallow soil samples collected on the site. According to the Phase II ESA, laboratory chemical analysis results determined that arsenic and organochlorine pesticides were not detected above the indicated reporting or screening limit in all soil samples tested. Therefore, the Phase II ESA concluded that the previous use of pesticides at the Project Site does not present risk for release of hazardous materials and no further environmental investigations are needed. Accordingly, the Project Site would not present a significant environmental risk from hazardous materials through upset or accident conditions.

Through compliance with applicable federal, State, and local laws and regulations relating to environmental protection and the management of hazardous materials as well as adherence to manufacturer's instructions for the safe handling and disposal of hazardous materials, a release of hazardous materials into the environment would be avoided. Therefore, impacts with regard to the release of hazardous materials to the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

The Cahuilla Desert Academy is located on the parcel of land located immediately to the northeast of the Project Site. The proposed Project would involve the use and storage of standard hazardous materials associated with residential development and operation of a private golf course, including fuels, oils, lubricants, and landscaping chemicals. Standard household chemicals would be used and stored in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and all applicable standards and regulations, including, but not limited to, those set forth by the federal and State Occupational Safety and Health Acts. The operation of the golf course and practice area may involve the use of commercially available pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and other landscaping chemicals, which would be handled, used and stored in accordance with manufactures' instructions and all applicable federal, State, and local regulations. Use of the golf course and practice area would involve the use of fuel and petroleum products, such as gasoline, diesel, propane, oils, lubricants, for use in maintenance equipment (e.g., mowers, carts, and generators). These products are subject to the EPA's Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) regulations, as well as applicable CalEPA and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) requirements.

The Project would also comply with the CIWMP and be required to contract with the local waste hauler for the disposal of solid waste generated from both the residential and private commercial and recreational uses (see **Section 5.15**: **Utilities and Service Systems–Solid Waste** of this Draft EIR). A waste hauling agreement is required, as a Project condition of approval, for the ongoing use and operations of the Project Site. Furthermore, the Project would adhere to Riverside County's Waste Diversion Program and AB 939, which address construction and demolition waste.[3] The Project would not involve the use or storage of acutely hazardous materials or hazardous waste beyond that typical of the proposed uses. Therefore, any associated risk to the adjacent Cahuilla Desert Academy would be less than significant with regulatory compliance of these existing laws and regulations.

Accordingly, the proposed Project would not pose a significant risk of hazardous emissions or significant handling of hazardous materials or substances within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school and impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation measure is required.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

3 Eastin, Delaine A, Byron D Sher, and Lucy Killea. "AB-939 Solid Waste Management, Source Reduction, Recycling, Composting, and Market Development." Bill Text - *AB-939 Solid waste management, source reduction, recycling, composting, and market development*. September 1989. Accessed December 2025. ttps://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=198919900AB939.

California Government Code Section 65962.5 references the following types of hazardous materials sites: hazardous waste facilities; hazardous waste discharges for which the State Water Quality Control Board has issued certain types of orders; public drinking water wells containing detectable levels of organic contaminants; underground storage tanks with reported unauthorized releases; and solid waste disposal facilities from which hazardous waste has migrated.

Information on hazardous materials sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 is compiled on the websites of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the State Water Resources Control Board, and California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA). The DTSC maintains the EnviroStor database, which consists of hazardous materials sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, and also identifies potentially hazardous sites where cleanup actions or extensive investigations are planned or have occurred. This database provides a listing of federal Superfund sites, State response sites, voluntary cleanup sites, and school cleanup sites.

According to the Phase I ESAs, a records review, site reconnaissance, and interviews were prepared for the Project Site. Records review of readily available records included standard environmental records found that the Project Site is not located on a hazardous materials site compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. One site identified as Sunglow Ranch, within 0.5 mile of the Project Site, was listed within the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) database, however, the cleanup case was listed as "Completed Case Closed" on September 8,1998. Therefore, no further remediation is required, and impacts of this site would not have a significant adverse impact on the Project Site.

Additionally, according to the Phase II ESAs prepared for the Project Site, laboratory chemical analysis results determined that arsenic and organochlorine pesticides were not detected above the indicated reporting or screening limit in all soil samples tested. Therefore, the Phase II ESA concluded that the previous use of pesticides at the Project Site would not present risk of release of hazardous materials such that would create a significant adverse impact to people or the environment.

Therefore, the Project Site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5,[4] and would also not be affected by contamination identified in the surrounding vicinity of the Project Site. For these reasons, the Project Site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

4 Department of Toxic Substances Control. "Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese)." EnviroStor. Accessed January 2025. https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/.

area?

No Impact.

The Project is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport, public use airport, or private airstrip. The nearest public use airport to the site is Jacqueline Cochran Airport, located approximately 3.5 miles southeast of the site. According to the 2006 Compatibility Land Use Plan (CLUP), the site is not located within the Airport Influence Area (AIA).[5] The Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area associated with an airport or airstrip. No impact would occur under these thresholds.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

The County Office of Emergency Management (OES) prepared and operates the Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJLHMP). The purpose of the County of Riverside Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJLHMP), also known as the Base Plan, is to identify the County's hazards, review and assess past disaster occurrences, estimate the probability of future occurrences, and set goals to mitigate potential risks to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards. The MJLHMP was prepared pursuant to the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 to achieve eligibility and potentially secure mitigation funding through Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Mitigation Assistance, Pre-Disaster Mitigation, and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs. Riverside County's continual efforts to maintain a disaster-mitigation strategy is ongoing. Our goal is to develop and maintain an all-inclusive plan to include all jurisdictions, special districts, businesses, and community organizations and to promote consistency, continuity, and unification. The County's planning process followed a methodology presented by FEMA and CalOES which included conducting meetings with the Operational Area Planning Committee (OAPC) coordinated by County of Riverside Emergency Management Department (EMD) comprised of participating Federal, State, and local jurisdictions agencies, special districts, school districts, nonprofit communities, universities, businesses, Tribal Leaders, and Healthcare Facilities. The MJLHMP identifies vulnerabilities, provides recommendations for prioritized mitigation actions, evaluates resources, and identifies mitigation shortcomings, provides future mitigation planning and maintenance of existing plans.

Currently, site access is provided from Monroe St, adjacent to the westerly boundary of the Project Site. Following Project buildout, access to the site would be provided by Serena Street, a full turning movement intersection with Monroe Street, located towards the northwest portion of the Project

5 Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission. "Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan." October 2004. Accessed October 10, 2025. Riverside: https://rcaluc.org/sites/g/files/aldnop421/files/migrated/Portals-13-PDFGeneral-plan-newplan-02--20Vol.-201-20Table-20of-20Contents.pdf.

Site. In addition to the two access points onto Monroe Street, the Project will construct Arabia Street, located adjacent to the Cahuilla Desert Academy at the northwestern portion of the Project Site. Arabia Street would be accessed internally from Driveway G, as shown on **Figure 3.0-9**: **Vehicle Circulation Plan** in **Section 3.0**: **Project Description** of this Draft EIR.

The proposed street system would follow a curvilinear pattern with internal streets. The minimum face of curb return radius would be designed to allow fire truck turn movements and to accommodate emergency vehicle access. During operations on the Project Site, implementation of MJLHMP emergency response plans would not be impaired and emergency access throughout the site would be provided by internal circulation. During Project construction, temporary lane closure on Monroe Street may be required; however, any temporary lane closures would be coordinated with the Riverside County Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA), and the OES and complete closure of the roadway is not anticipated during construction activities. Based on the above information, the Project, as designed, would not interfere with, or impair implementation of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

According to the MJLHMP the County does not have established evacuation routes for major emergencies such as wildfire, that are applicable to the Project Site. The closest Fire Hazard Severity Zone to the Project Site is undeveloped land located approximately 9.5 miles southwest of the Project Site, located in the Santa Rosa Mountains. The land uses directly adjacent to the Project Site include residential uses to the west, vacant, agricultural, and estate lots to the north, south, and east. In addition, the Cahuilla Desert Academy is located to the northeast. All adjacent properties are also designated as non-VHFHSZ. Monroe Street is considered an important point of access to I-10. The County's Emergency Operations Center is the central management entity responsible for directing and coordinating the various County departments and other agencies in their emergency response activities. Implementation of the Project Site would not alter any facility or propose a physical change that would inhibit the County's Emergency Operations Plan. In addition, development of the Project Site would include widening of roadways adjacent to the Project Site and funding of additional roadway improvements, which could aid in evacuation. Site preparation, grading, and construction would not block roadways providing access to surrounding properties or surrounding neighborhoods. Therefore, implementation of the Project Site would not interfere with the adopted emergency response plan and/or the emergency evacuation plan, and a less-than-significant impact would occur.

Therefore, the Project would result in a less-than-significant impact.

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

No Impact. The Project Site is not located within a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ). The nearest High or Very High FHSZ relative to the site is located approximately 9.5 miles southwest of the Project Site, located in the Santa Rosa Mountains. As such, the Project would not create a

significant impact related to exposing people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to the risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. Therefore, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

5.9.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The cumulative impact analysis for hazards and hazardous materials evaluates whether impacts of a project or contamination on nearby properties, when taken as a whole, would have significant environmental impacts under the hazards and hazardous materials thresholds. If the Project would result in a cumulatively significant impact, then the significance of the Project's incremental contribution to that cumulatively significant impact must be determined.

As discussed in **Section 4.0: Environmental Setting**, of this Draft EIR, there are 46 related projects in the vicinity of the Project Site. Development of the Project, as well as the related projects in the area, would introduce new residential and commercial activities within a 2-mile radius of the Project Site. While impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials are typically site-specific and do not cumulatively affect off-site areas, conditions such as contaminated groundwater can affect downgradient properties. As described in **Section 5.7: Geology and Soils** of this Draft EIR, the average depth of groundwater is consistently between 79 feet to 80 feet below ground surface.

As discussed in **Section 5.10: Hydrology and Water Quality**, of this Draft EIR, the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to surface water and groundwater quality. A Preliminary Hydrology Report (**Appendix P**) demonstrates compliance with County and Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District drainage standards and confirms that adequate stormwater storage would be provided to maintain existing flow patterns and protect downstream water quality. The Project would incorporate an on-site storm drain and retention system and implement stormwater best management practices, including vegetated swales, landscaped buffers, and retention basins, in accordance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 754, the County NPDES MS4 permit, and a Project-specific Water Quality Management Plan. With these measures in place, the Project would not result in significant adverse impacts to water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, such that would result in groundwater contamination.

To identify reported areas of possible environmental impairment on or within a 1.0-mile radius of the Project Site, an Environmental Database Report (EDR) was obtained from EDR. The records search concluded that the Project Site was not listed in any databases searched by EDR. Therefore, impacts related to the presence of off-site hazardous materials are not anticipated to affect on-site conditions. Additionally, each of the related projects would require evaluation for potential threats to public safety, including those associated with the use, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous materials, asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), lead-based paints (LBPs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), oil, and gas, and would be required to comply with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, rules and regulations, as discussed above for the Project. Because environmental safety issues are largely site-specific, this evaluation would occur on a case-by-case basis for each

individual project affected, in conjunction with development proposals on these properties. Therefore, Project impacts, when combined with impacts resulting from the related projects with regard to this aspect of hazardous material management, would be less than significant. In addition, operation of many of the related projects can reasonably be expected to involve the limited use of potentially hazardous materials typical of those used in commercial and residential developments, including cleaning agents, paints, pesticides, and other materials used for landscaping. However, the 46 related projects, located within a 2-mile radius of the Project Site would be subject to the same local, State, and federal regulations described above with regard to hazards and hazardous materials.

Therefore, with full compliance with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, rules and regulations, as well as implementation of site-specific recommendations for the related projects and Project, significant cumulative impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would not occur. As such, the Project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

5.9.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.9.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Compliance with local, State, and federal plans, policies, and programs would ensure impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be less than significant.

5.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) addresses the potential for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (referred to herein as the "Specific Plan" or "Project") to impact local and regional hydrology and water quality conditions. More specifically, this section evaluates impacts associated with the Project that may potentially affect the regional and local water quality, surface water hydrology, groundwater hydrology, environmental degradation, and public health and safety. This section incorporates information from the following studies prepared for the Project Site:

- RTM Engineering Consultants, *Madison Club Ranch Expansion Preliminary Hydrology Report*, March 2026. See **Appendix P**.
- RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC, *The Madison Club Ranch Expansion (SP00408, TTM39179) Preliminary Water Quality Management Plan*, June 2026. See **Appendix Q.**
- RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC, *Water Supply Assessment (WSA) and Water Supply Verification for the Proposed Ranch at Madison*, November 2025. See **Appendix R.**

5.10.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.10.1.1 Federal

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act of 1972 (CWA) was enacted to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters by regulating the discharge of pollutants to waters of the US from point sources for the propagation of fish and wildlife. Section 208 of the CWA and the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations require local water management plans. Preparation of these water management plans is delegated to individual states by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), which is charged with implementing the CWA.

Section 404 of the CWA establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including fill for development and mining projects. "Waters of the United States" are defined in US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulations as navigable waters that are navigable in the traditional sense and includes adjacent wetlands and tributaries to navigable waters of the US and other waters, the degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate or foreign commerce. Proposed activities are regulated through a permit process, reviewed by the USACE, which evaluates applications under a public interest review, as well as the environmental criteria set forth in the CWA Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines and regulations promulgated by the USEPA.

The CWA requires all states to conduct water quality assessments of their water resources to identify water bodies that do not meet its water quality standards. The water bodies that do not meet water

quality standards are placed on a list of impaired waters pursuant to the requirements of Section 303(d) of the CWA.

Section 303(d) of the 1972 Federal CWA requires States to identify water bodies that do not meet water quality objectives and are not supporting their beneficial uses. Each State must submit an updated list, called a 303(d) list, to the USEPA every two years. In addition to identifying the water bodies that are not supporting beneficial uses, the list also identifies the pollutant or stressor causing impairment and establishes a priority for developing a control plan to address the impairment. The list identifies State water bodies where 1) a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) has been approved by the USEPA, but water quality standards are not yet met, and 2) water bodies where the water quality impairment is being addressed by an action other than a TMDL and water quality standards are not yet met.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) are responsible for monitoring, assessing, and reporting under CWA Sections 303(d) and 305(b), and TMDL development for the State of California. The State Board and Regional Boards cooperate in developing Section 305(b) and Section 303(d) listing reports. TMDLs are normally developed by the RWQCBs and then approved by the SWRCB and State Office of Administrative Law before being submitted for EPA approval.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

In 1972, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) was established under Section 402 of the CWA to control the discharge of pollutants to waters of the US. It does so by establishing a variety of measures designed to reduce pollutant discharges through a permitting program. The permit contains limits on allowable discharge, monitoring and reporting requirements, and other provisions to ensure that the discharge does not pollute water quality or is detrimental to public health. Under the CWA, the NPDES program is managed nationally by the USEPA, who authorizes the NPDES permit program to State, tribal, and territorial governments, enabling them to perform many of the permitting, administrative, and enforcement aspects of the NPDES program.

In the State of California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) guide the regulation, protection, and administration of water quality. The Project Site and the County are located within the Colorado River Region (Region 7), which administers the permit program for regulating stormwater from construction activities for projects greater than one acre in size in the project areas under the State's General Permit approach, since urban development and construction-related activities have the potential to impact the quality and quantity of runoff to proximate receiving waters. These potential construction-related impacts are mitigated by implementing a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), in compliance with the Construction General Permit (State Water Resources Control Board Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002) under the NPDES. The SWPPP requires construction sites to develop and implement best management practices (BMPs) in order to mitigate potential runoff contamination

from construction activities. Some BMPs include implementing storm drain inlet protection, concrete washout bins, secondary containment, and proper material storage at construction sites.

To address post-construction runoff impacts, projects are regulated under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) within the Whitewater River Watershed, otherwise known as the MS4 Permit (Order No. R7-2013-0011 and NPDES No. CAS617002).

Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) is the main federal law that ensures the quality of the Nation's drinking water.[1] The SDWA was originally passed by Congress in 1974 to protect public health by regulating the nation's public drinking water supply and its sources, including rivers, lakes, reservoirs, springs, and groundwater wells. Under SDWA, the USEPA sets standards for drinking water quality and oversees the states, localities, and water suppliers that implement those standards. The SDWA regulates contaminants of concern in domestic water supply, including the maximum contaminant levels (MCLs), and the USEPA has delegated the California Department of Public Health the responsible agency for administering California's drinking water program. MCLs are established under California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 22, Div. 4, Ch. 15, Article 4 (Title 22 Standards).

National Flood Insurance Program

The National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 mandate the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to evaluate flood hazards.[2] FEMA provides flood insurance rate maps (FIRMs) for local and regional planners to promote sound land use and development practices, by identifying potential flood areas based on the current conditions. To delineate a FIRM, FEMA conducts engineering studies referred to as flood insurance studies (FIS). Using information gathered in these studies, FEMA engineers and cartographers delineate special flood hazard areas (SFHA) on FIRMs.

The Flood Disaster Protection Act requires owners of all structures within identified SFHAs to purchase and maintain flood insurance as a condition of receiving federal or federally related financial assistance, such as mortgage loans from federally insured lending institutions. Community members within designated areas are able to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) afforded by FEMA.

1 United States Code, Title 42 – The Public Health and Welfare- Chapter 6A Public Health and Service, *Safe Drinking Water Act*. 2006 Edition, Supplement 4, 2006.

2 *The National Flood Insurance Act of 1968*, as amended, and *The Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973*, 42 U.S.C. 4001 et. seq.

5.10.1.2 State

California Department of Water Resources

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is responsible for managing and protecting California's water resources, systems, and infrastructure, including the State Water Project (SWP). Some responsibilities of the DWR include preventing and responding to floods, droughts, and catastrophic events, informing, and educating the public on water issues, developing scientific solutions, restoring habitats, planning for future water needs, climate change impacts, constructing and maintaining facilities, generating power, ensuring public safety, and providing recreational opportunities. The DWR works with other agencies to benefit the State's people and to protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments.

Water Boards

California's Water Boards consist of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine RWQCBs. The mission of the Water Boards is to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations. Together they are authorized to implement the federal Clean Water Act in California.

State Water Resources Control Board

The SWRCB was developed in 1967 with the mission to ensure the highest reasonable quality for waters of the State, while allocating those waters to achieve the optimum balance of beneficial uses. The joint authority of water allocation and water quality protection enables the Water Board to provide comprehensive protection for California's waters. In addition to allocating water rights, the SWRCB adjudicates water rights disputes, develops Statewide water protection plans, establishes water quality standards, and guides the Regional Water Quality Control Boards located in the major watersheds of the State.

Regional Water Quality Control Board

The Regional Water Quality Control Boards serve as the frontline for State and federal water pollution control efforts. There are nine control boards, each including seven members. Regional boundaries are based on watersheds and water quality requirements are based on the unique differences in climate, topography, geology, and hydrology for each watershed. Each Regional Board makes critical water quality decisions for its region, including setting standards, issuing waste discharge requirements, determining compliance with those requirements, and taking appropriate enforcement actions. As stated previously, the Project Site is located in Region 7, the Colorado River Region.

Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board

The Project Site is located within the 13-million-acre Colorado River Basin, which is governed by the Colorado River Basin RWQCB, i.e., Region 7. The Colorado River Basin RWQCB has adopted a Basin Plan in accordance with criteria contained in the CWA, Porter-Cologne Act, and other pertinent State and federal rules and regulations. The intent of the Basin Plan is to provide definitive guidelines and give direction to the scope of Colorado River Basin RWQCB activities that will optimize the beneficial uses of the State waters within the Colorado River Basin by preserving and protecting the quality of these waters. The intended beneficial use of water determines the water quality objectives. For example, the quality requirements for irrigation water are different from drinking water.

The Colorado River Basin RWQCB implements the Basin Plan by issuing and enforcing waste discharge requirements for appropriate persons and groups; these can include individuals, communities, or businesses whose waste discharges may affect water quality. These requirements can be either State Waste Discharge Requirements for discharge to land, or federally delegated NPDES permits for discharges to surface water. Discharges are required to meet water quality objectives and, thus, protect beneficial uses.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

On September 16, 2014, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed a three-bill package known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The legislation allows local agencies to customize groundwater sustainability plans to their regional economic and environmental needs. The three bills that make up SGMA are AB 1739, SB 1319, and SB 1668. The SGMA provides for sustainable management of groundwater basins; enhances local management of groundwater consistent with rights to use or store groundwater; establishes minimum standards for effective, continuous management of groundwater; provides local groundwater agencies with the authority, technical and financial assistance needed to maintain groundwater supplies; avoids or minimizes impacts for land subsidence; improves data collection and understanding of groundwater resources and management; increases groundwater storage and removes impediments to recharge; and empowers local agencies to manage groundwater basins, while minimizing State intervention. SGMA requires the formation of local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to prepare and implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) for high- and medium priority basins. The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), along with the Coachella Water Authority, Desert Water Agency, Indio Water Authority, Mission Springs Water District, and Myoma Dunes Mutual Water Company jointly developed the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) to support regional groundwater management and compliance with SGMA.

Porter–Cologne Act

Under the Porter–Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Water Code Sections 13000 et seq.), the SWRCB has authority over State water rights and water quality policy. This Act divided the State into nine regional basins, each under the jurisdiction of a RWQCB, to oversee water quality on a day-to-day basis at the local and regional level. RWQCBs engage in a number of water quality functions in their respective regions. RWQCBs regulate all pollutant or nuisance discharges that may affect either surface water or groundwater. Each RWQCB is required to formulate and adopt a Water Quality Control Plan or Basin Plan for its region. The Basin Plan establishes beneficial use definitions for the various types of water bodies and serves as the basis for establishing water quality objectives, discharge conditions and prohibitions, and must adhere to the policies set forth in the CWC and established by the SWRCB.

SWRCB Construction General Permit

The SWRCB has adopted a statewide Construction General Permit (Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002) for stormwater discharges associated with construction activity. These regulations prohibit the discharge of stormwater from construction projects that include one acre or more of soil disturbance. Construction activities subject to this permit include clearing, grading, and other disturbance to the ground, such as stockpiling or excavation, that results in soil disturbance of at least one acre of total land area. Individual developers are required to submit Permit Registration Documents (PRDs) to the SWRCB for coverage under this general permit prior to the start of construction. The PRDs include a Notice of Intent (NOI), risk assessment, site map, Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), annual fee, and a signed certification statement. The PRDs are submitted electronically to the SWRCB via the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS) website. This general Construction General Permit requires all dischargers to (1) develop and implement a SWPPP, which specifies best management practices (BMPs) to be used during construction of the project; (2) eliminate or reduce non-stormwater discharge to stormwater conveyance systems; and (3) develop and implement a monitoring program of all specified BMPs. The two major objectives of the SWPPP are to (1) help identify the sources of sediment and other pollutants that affect the water quality of stormwater discharges and (2) to describe and ensure the implementation of BMPs to reduce or eliminate sediment and other pollutants in stormwater as well as non-stormwater discharges.

State Water Board Trash Amendments

On April 7, 2015, the State Water Board adopted an Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California (Ocean Plan) to Control Trash and Part 1 Trash Provisions of the Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California (ISWEBE Plan). Together, they are collectively referred to as "the Trash Amendments." The purpose of the Trash Amendments is to reduce trash entering waterways Statewide, provide consistency in the SWRCB's regulatory approach to protect aquatic life and public health beneficial uses, and reduce environmental issues associated with trash in State waters. There are two compliance tracks:

- **Track 1:** Permittees install, operate, and maintain a network of certified Full Capture Systems (FCS) to capture trash in storm drains, located in priority land use areas for municipal systems, and the entire facility for industrial and commercial permit holders.
- **Track 2:** Permittees install, operate, and maintain any combination of controls (structural and/or institutional) anywhere in their jurisdiction as long as they demonstrate that their system performs as well as Track 1.

The Trash Amendments provide a framework for permittees to implement its provisions. Full compliance must occur within 10 years of the permit and permittees must also meet interim milestones such as average load reductions of 10 percent per year.

California Antidegradation Policy

The California Antidegradation Policy, otherwise known as the Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Water in California, was adopted by the SWRCB, (State Board Resolution No. 68-16) in 1968. Unlike the federal Antidegradation Policy, the California Antidegradation Policy applies to all waters of the state (e.g., includes isolated wetlands and groundwater), not just surface waters. The policy states that whenever the existing quality of a water body is better than the quality established in individual Basin Plans, such high quality must be maintained, and discharges to that water body must not unreasonably affect present or anticipated beneficial uses of such water resources.

Urban Water Management Plans

Pursuant to the California Urban Water Management Act (California Water Code Sections 10610–10656), urban water purveyors are required to prepare and update an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) every five years. UWMPs are prepared by California's urban water suppliers to support long-term resource planning and ensure adequate water supplies. Every urban water supplier that either delivers more than 3,000 acre-feet per year of water annually or serves more than 3,000 connections are required to assess the reliability of its water sources over a 20-year period under normal-year, dry-year, and multiple-dry-year scenarios in a UWMP. UWMPs must be updated and submitted to the California Department of Water Resources every five years for review and approval. The Project Site is covered by the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan (2020 UWMP).

Senate Bills 610 and 221

SB 610 and SB 221, amended into state law effective January 1, 2002, improve the linkage between certain land use decisions made by cities and counties and water supply availability. The statutes require detailed information regarding water availability and reliability with respect to certain developments to be included in the administrative record, to serve as the evidentiary basis for an approval action by the city or county on such projects. Under Water Code Section 10912(a), projects subject to the CEQA that require a water supply assessment (WSA) include (1) residential development of more than 500 dwelling units; (2) shopping center or business establishment employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space; (3)

commercial office building employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space; (4) hotel, motel or both, having more than 500 rooms; (5) industrial, manufacturing, or processing plants, or industrial parks 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; (6) mixed-use projects that include one or more of the projects specified; or (7) a project that would demand an amount of water equivalent to or greater than the amount required by a 500-dwelling-unit project. A fundamental source document for compliance with SB 610 is the UWMP, which can be used by the water supplier to meet the standard for SB 610. SB 221 applies to the Subdivision Map Act, conditioning a tentative map on the applicant to verify that the public water supplier has sufficient water available to serve the proposed development.

CALGreen (California Green Building Standards Code)

Formerly known as the California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 11, of the California Code of Regulations, CALGreen is designed to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by utilizing design and construction methods that reduce the negative environmental impact of development, and to encourage sustainable construction practices. CALGreen provides mandatory direction to developers of all new construction and renovations of residential and nonresidential structures with regard to all aspects of design and construction, including, but not limited to, site drainage design, stormwater management, and water use efficiency. Required measures are accompanied by a set of voluntary standards designed to encourage developers and cities to aim for a higher standard of development.

California Toxics Rule

USEPA has established water quality criteria for certain toxic substances via the California Toxics Rule. The California Toxics Rule established acute (i.e., short-term) and chronic (i.e., long-term) standards for bodies of water, such as inland surface waters and enclosed bays and estuaries, that are designated by each RWQCB as having beneficial uses protective of aquatic life or human health.

California Antidegradation and Groundwater Protection Programs

The State Water Resources Control Board's Antidegradation Policy and groundwater protection programs are intended to maintain and protect existing high-quality waters of the State and ensure that activities do not unreasonably degrade groundwater or surface water quality.

5.10.1.3 Regional and Local

Whitewater River Region Stormwater Management Plan

The Whitewater River Region Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) describes activities and programs implemented by the permittees to manage urban runoff to comply with the requirements of the NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit for the Whitewater River Region.

The SWMP emphasizes source control measures and strong public education/outreach efforts as being the most effective way to manage urban runoff in the highly arid Coachella Valley region.

The SWMP discusses program management, detection and elimination of illicit connections and discharges, new and re-development programs, private construction activities, permittee facilities and activities, public education and outreach programs, and monitoring programs. The Whitewater River SWMP also emphasizes reporting and responding to any spills, leaks, and/or illegal discharges including: any sewage spill above 1,000 gallons or that could impact water contact recreation, any oil spill that could impact wildlife, any hazardous material spill where residents are evacuated, any spill of reportable quantities of hazardous waste, any other spill or discharge that is reportable to the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES).

According to the Whitewater River Region SWMP, each permittee performing construction activities requires applicable project proponents to obtain coverage under the Statewide Construction General Permit (Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002) as part of standard conditions of project approval; proof of coverage must be furnished prior to the issuance of any building or grading permits. Proponents seeking coverage must file all required documentation to the SWRCB, including their site SWPPP via the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS). The Construction General Permit specifies minimum BMPs that site operators must implement dependent upon their site's calculated risk. Permittees also require erosion, sediment, and construction waste controls through grading permits, standard conditions of approval, and notes on grading plans, in accordance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 754 (Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance).

Coachella Valley Water District

CVWD Urban Water Management Plan

The six urban water suppliers in the Coachella Valley, (CVWD, Coachella Water Authority, Desert Water Agency, Indio Water Authority, Mission Springs Water District, and Myoma Dunes Mutual Water Company) collaboratively prepared the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional UWMP, including regional and individual agency content and other necessary elements as set forth in DWR's 2020 UWMP Guidebook. Each agency also prepared a Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) to describe the actions that could be taken during a water shortage to reduce demands. The 2020 Coachella Valley Regional UWMP and CVWD's WSCP were adopted by the Board of Directors on June 22, 2021, and submitted to DWR on July 1, 2021. The 2020 Regional UWMP was written in compliance with the Urban Water Management Planning Act established in 1983 and most recently amended by Senate Bill x7-7, which requires a 20 percent reduction in per-capita water use by 2020. The 2020 Regional UWMP supports long-term water resources planning and ensures adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future urban water demands. Major new requirements identified by DWR to be included in the 2020 Regional UWMP include:

- Five Consecutive Dry-Year Water Reliability Assessment

- Drought Risk Assessment.
- Seismic Risk
- Water Shortage Contingency Plan
- Groundwater Supplies Coordination
- Lay Description

CVWD water demand projections contained in the 2020 UWMP take into account the increased growth throughout its service area. According to the 2020 Regional UWMP, CVWD's actual service area urban water demand was 99,842 AF in 2020. Projected urban water demand in the 2020 UWMP for the year 2045 is anticipated to be 148,166 AF.

CVWD Landscape and Irrigation Ordinance

CVWD's Landscape and Irrigation Ordinance (Ordinance No. 1302.1, codified in Section 3.15 of CVWD Regulations) establishes new requirements for new and rehabilitated landscaped areas to promote water efficiency and reduce waste. The ordinance requires new developments to install weather-based irrigation controllers that automatically adjust water allocation based on climatic conditions. Additional requirements included setbacks of spray emitters from impervious surfaces, as well as use of porous rock and gravel buffers between grass and curbs to eliminate run-off onto streets. With the exception of turf, all landscaping, including groundcover and shrubbery, must be irrigated with a drip system. The ordinance also establishes maximum water allowance for landscaped areas, requiring developers to maximize the use of native and drought-tolerant plant species and minimize high-water-use features, such as turf and decorative fountains.

County of Riverside General Plan

The County of Riverside General Plan outlines the following applicable goals and policies related to the County's water supplies and hydrology.

Land Use Element

LU 5.1 Ensure that development does not exceed the ability to adequately provide supporting infrastructure and services, such as libraries, recreational facilities, educational and day care centers transportation systems, and fire/police/medical services.

LU 5.3 Review all projects for consistency with individual urban water management plans.

LU 18.1 Ensure compliance with Riverside County's water-efficient landscape policies. Ensure that projects seeking discretionary permits and/or approvals develop and implement landscaping plans prepared in accordance with the Water-Efficient Landscape Ordinance (Ordinance No. 859), the County of Riverside Guide to California Friendly Landscaping and Riverside County's California Friendly Plant List. Ensure that irrigation plans for all new

development incorporate weather based controllers and utilize state-of-the-art water-efficient irrigation components.

LU 18.2 Minimize use of turf. Minimize the use of natural turf in landscape medians, front-yard typical designs, parkways, other common areas, etc. and use drought tolerant planting options, mulch, or a combination thereof as a substitute. Limit the use of natural turf to those areas that serve [as] a functional recreational element. Incorporate other aesthetic design elements such as boulders, stamped concrete, pavers, flagstone, decomposed granite, manufactured rock products to enhance visual interest and impact.

LU 18.3 Design and field check irrigation plans to reduce run-off. Emphasize the use of subsurface irrigation techniques for landscape areas adjoining non-permeable hardscape. Utilize subsurface irrigation or other low volume irrigation technology in association with long, narrow, or irregularly shaped turf areas. Minimize use of irregularly shaped turf areas.

LU 18.4 Coordinate Riverside County water-efficiency efforts with those of local water agencies. Support local water agencies' water conservation efforts.

LU 18.5 Emphasize and expand the use of recycled water in conjunction with local water agencies. Recycled water determined to be available pursuant to Section 13550 of the California State Water Code shall be used for appropriate non-potable uses whenever it: a) provides a beneficial use to the customer; b) is economically and technically feasible; c) is consistent with applicable regulatory requirements; and d) is in the best interests of public health, safety, and welfare. With the exception of non-common areas of single-family home residential developments, all other irrigation systems must be designed and installed to accommodate the current or future use of recycled water for irrigation. If no recycled water availability exists or is imminent in the vicinity of a project (as determined by prevailing water agency), all subsurface piping shall be installed as "recycled water ready" to reduce future retrofit costs. Such irrigation plans shall be developed in accordance with standards and policies of the applicable recycled water purveyor. Recycled water systems shall be designed to meet regulatory requirements of the California Department of Public Health and the local recycled water purveyor.

Open Space Multipurpose Element

OS 1.4 Promote the use of recycled water for landscape irrigation.

OS 2.1 Implement a water-efficient landscape ordinance and corresponding policies that promote the use of water-efficient plants and irrigation technologies, minimizes the use of turf, and reduces water-waste without sacrificing landscape quality.

OS 2.2 Encourage the installation of water-conserving systems such as dry wells and graywater systems, where feasible, especially in new developments. The installation of cisterns or infiltrators shall also be encouraged to capture rainwater from roofs for irrigation in the dry season and flood control during heavy storms.

OS 3.1 Encourage innovative and creative techniques for wastewater treatment, including the use of local water treatment plants.

OS 3.3 Minimize pollutant discharge into storm drainage systems, natural drainages, and aquifers.

OS 3.4 Review proposed projects to ensure compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits and require them to prepare the necessary Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

OS 3.5 Integrate water runoff management within planned infrastructure and facilities such as parks, street medians and public landscaped areas, parking lots, streets, etc. where feasible.

OS 3.6 Design the necessary stormwater detention basins, recharge basins, water quality basins, or similar water capture facilities to protect water-quality. Such facilities should capture and/or treat water before it enters a watercourse. In general, these facilities should not be placed in watercourses, unless no other feasible options are available.

OS 3.7 Where feasible, decrease stormwater runoff by reducing pavement in development areas, reducing dry weather urban runoff, and by incorporating "Low Impact Development," green infrastructure and other Best Management Practice design measures such as permeable parking bays and lots, use of less pavement, bio-filtration, and use of multi-functional open drainage systems.

OS 4.4 Incorporate natural drainage systems into developments where appropriate and feasible.

OS 4.5 Encourage streets in the vicinity of watercourses to include park strips or other open space areas that allow permeability.

OS 4.6 Retain stormwater at or near the site of generation for percolation into the groundwater to conserve it for future uses and to mitigate adjacent flooding. Such retention may occur through "Low Impact Development" or other Best Management Practice measures.

OS 4.7 Encourage stormwater management and urban runoff reduction as an enhanced aesthetic and experience design element. Many design practices exist to accomplish this depending on site conditions, planned use, cost benefit, and development interest.

Healthy Communities Element

HC 18.9 Encourage the location and design of new developments to visually enhance and not degrade the character of the surrounding area through consideration of the following concepts.

c. Require that an appropriate landscape plan be submitted and implemented for development projects subject to discretionary review.
d. Use of drought tolerant landscaping that incorporates adequate drought-conscious irrigation systems.
f. Application of water conservation techniques, such as groundwater recharge basins, use of porous pavement, drought-tolerant landscaping, and water recycling, as appropriate.
n. As feasible, maximize landscape coverage with emphasis on drought-tolerant landscaping.

HC 18.11 In coordination with service agencies, limit or prohibit new development or activities in areas lacking water and access roads in the absence of a plan to address such deficiencies to meet the needs of both new development and within existing disadvantaged communities. Work with community partners and service agencies to establish future plans to meet needs for potential community growth in areas lacking water and road infrastructure.

HC 22.2 Develop a stormwater capture system in areas that do not have the appropriate curb and gutter infrastructure.

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan acts as an extension of the County of Riverside General Plan and Vision Statement. The Area Plan details standards and policy direction specifically for the Eastern Coachella Valley.

Watershed/Water Supply

ECVAP 9.1 Conserve and protect watersheds and water supply through adherence to policies contained in the Open Space, Habitat and Natural Resource Preservation and Land Use Designation Policies sections found in the General Plan Land Use Element, and the Water Resources section of the General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element.

Flooding

ECVAP 18.1 Protect life and property from the hazards of flood events through adherence to the policies identified in the Flood and Inundation Hazards Abatement section of the General Plan Safety Element.

ECVAP 18.2 Adhere to the flood proofing, flood protection requirements, and Flood Management Review requirements of the Riverside County Ordinance No. 458 Regulating Flood Hazard Areas.

ECVAP 18.3 Require that proposed development projects that are subject to flood hazards, surface ponding, high erosion potential or sheet flow be submitted to the Coachella Valley Water District for review.

Riverside County Flood Control & Water Conservation District (RCFC&WCD)

The RCFC&WCD is responsible for regional flood control and stormwater management within the County. The District's mission is to protect people and property from flooding by planning, designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining regional and local flood control and drainage facilities in cooperation within the CVWD, cities and other local agencies. The RCFC&WCD also serves as the County's primary agency for implementing and enforcing federal and state stormwater quality regulations under the NPDES permit program.

County Ordinance 458, *An Ordinance of the County of Riverside Regulating Special Flood Hazard Areas and Implementing the National Flood Insurance Program* of the County's Ordinance addresses floodplain management and requirements. The purposes of this division of the Ordinance are to promote public health, safety, and general welfare, and to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions in specific areas through regulations applicable to all publicly and privately owned land within flood prone, mudslide [mudflow] or flood-related erosion areas.[3] These regulations restrict or prohibit uses which are dangerous to health, safety, and property due to water or erosion hazards, or which result in damaging increases in erosion or flood heights or velocities; require that uses vulnerable to floods, including facilities which serve such uses, be protected against flood damage at the time of initial construction; control the alteration of natural floodplains, stream channels, and natural protective barriers, which help accommodate or channel floodwaters; control filling, grading, dredging, and other development which may increase flood damage; and, prevent or regulate the construction of flood barriers which will unnaturally divert floodwaters or may increase flood hazards in other areas.

County Ordinance No. 754, *Stormwater/Urban Runoff Management and Discharge Control Ordinance*, provides regulations for stormwater quality management and discharge control consistent with NPDES permit requirements. Section 55.26 provides regulations regarding the discharge and transport of pollutants for new development and redevelopment projects.[4] Stormwater BMPs include increasing permeable areas through the use of porous materials for driveways and walkways, modifying the grade of the property and the use of swales and other features to divert flow, and maximizing storage through the use of retention structures. Section 55.27

3 Indio Municipal Code. Title XV, Floodplain Management, Chapter 153.

4 Indio Municipal Code. Title V, Public Works. Chapter 55, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control. Section 55.26.

requires compliance with NPDES permits and allows the County to require proof of compliance prior to issuance of County grading, building, or occupancy permits.

County Ordinance 859, *An Ordinance of the County of Riverside Establishing Water-Efficient Landscape Requirements,* implements the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) and establishes requirements for landscape design, irrigation efficiency, and water budgeting to promote water conservation in new and rehabilitated landscapes for public, commercial, industrial, and residential developments.

5.10.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.10.2.1 Existing Conditions

Regional Setting

The topography of the Coachella Valley influences the climatic and hydrologic conditions in the region. The various mountain ranges, particularly the San Jacinto Mountain range, capture precipitation from strong Pacific storms that pass through, and separate the semi-arid environment to the west from the dry, desert regions to the east. Most of the precipitation occurs during the winter months, primarily between November and March. However, high intensity, short duration tropical storms emanating from the south can occur during the summer months of July through September.

The physical geography of the Coachella Valley has resulted in multiple drainage patterns that co-exist with urban development in the cities. Most of the washes, drainage courses, and some of their surrounding floodplains are still undeveloped and can be considered as existing open space and are utilized as water collection channels in a serious storm event. The general course of drainage within the Coachella Valley runs from the northwest to the southeast, ultimately leading to the Salton Sea.

The Coachella Valley, including the Project Site, lies within the boundaries of the Coachella Valley Planning Area of the Colorado River Basin (Region 7). Region 7 covers approximately 13,000,000 acres (20,000 square miles) in the southeastern portion of California and includes all of Imperial County and portions of San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego Counties. It is bounded by the Colorado River to the east, Baja California, Mexico to the south, the Vista Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains to the west, and Joshua Tree National Park to the north.

The Project Site is located in the Whitewater River Watershed. The Project Site is located in the 1,920-square-mile Whitewater River Watershed (Watershed), which includes a majority of Riverside County and a small portion of southern San Bernardino County, and consists mainly of sparsely populated mountains, desert, and agricultural lands. The Watershed is bounded on the south by the Salton Sea, the unincorporated community of Mecca to the east, the Morongo Indian Reservation to the north, and the unincorporated community of Idyllwild to the west. The highest elevation (upper reaches) of the Watershed occurs in the San Jacinto Mountains at 10,000 feet above mean sea level (amsl), while the lowest elevation of the Watershed occurs at the Salton Sea, at 230 feet below mean sea level.

Drainage

Regional

Drainage in the Coachella Valley, consisting of seasonal precipitation and the snowmelt from the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains, is primarily conveyed through the northwest–southeast trending drainage course, the Whitewater River.[5] The Whitewater River is typically a channelized desert dry wash that flows only in periods of intense rain. However, because of diversions and percolation into the basin, the River becomes dry further downstream. A constructed downstream extension of the Whitewater River is the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, which is a drainage course for irrigation return flows, treated community wastewater, and stormwater runoff.[6]

The CVWD operates and maintains the stormwater facilities throughout the Coachella Valley. These facilities include the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel, Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, West and East side dike systems, fifteen Cove Community channels from Rancho Mirage to La Quinta, Cove Community basins, East Valley stormwater channels in the agricultural areas, and detention channels that drain water impounded behind the dikes.[7]

Local

As previously stated, the Whitewater River is the primary drainage course in the Coachella Valley, which includes the County of Riverside. The Whitewater River is located approximately 4.5 miles east of the Project Site. The Whitewater River has an intricate drainage network of several intermittent, north-flowing streams that drain the Santa Rosa Mountains and empty into the Whitewater River. Water flows northwest to southeast through the County and eventually empties into the Salton Sea. In the urbanized parts of the Watershed, streams have been modified and are now mostly confined to open channels, culverts, and storm drains; however, for most of their length, they remain natural and unmodified. Local drainage facilities in the Watershed generally convey runoff from local streets and lots to the regional facilities. The local storm drain system consists of gutters, engineered storm drains, and channels.

According to the Project Site's Preliminary Hydrology Report (see **Appendix P**), existing drainage within the Project Site occurs as sheet flow from the northwest to the southeast across the site, with no existing storm drain infrastructure or defined drainage channels present. CVWD maintains

5 City of Indio. *Master Drainage Plan Update*. November 2019. Accessed October 2025. https://www.indio.org/departments/public-works-department/engineering-services-division/public-works-master-plans-492.

6 California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Colorado River Basin. *Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region*. Amended 2019. Accessed October 2025. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/coloradoriver/water_issues/programs/basin_planning/docs/2020/rb7bp_e2019.pdf.

7 Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD). "Stormwater Protection & Flood Control." Accessed October 2025. http://www.cvwd.org/165/Stormwater-Protection-Flood-Control.

underground tile drain lines both on and adjacent to the Project Site, which assist in subsurface drainage.[8]

Coachella Canal

The Coachella Canal supplies Colorado River water to the County. The Coachella Canal, which was constructed as a branch of the All-American Canal, flows in a northwesterly direction through the Eastern Coachella Valley. The Canal water distribution system was constructed to deliver Colorado River water for agricultural uses in the East Valley. Currently, Canal water supplies agricultural, golf course irrigation, fish farming operations, duck clubs, and recreational lake uses.[9]

Various facilities have been constructed to capture natural flows and stormwater runoff to recharge groundwater basins in the Coachella Valley. Colorado River water transported by the Colorado River Aqueduct and the Coachella Canal are used for recharge and replenishment efforts regionally. With the recent statewide drought and implementing stormwater and water quality management policies, groundwater recharge is at the forefront of flood control infrastructure and water quality management.

Stormwater

Regional

Stormwater is defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) as the runoff generated when precipitation from rain and snowmelt events flows over land or impervious surfaces without percolating into the ground. Stormwater is often considered a nuisance because it mobilizes pollutants such as motor oil and trash. In most cases, stormwater flows directly into water bodies through sewer systems, contributing a major source of pollution to rivers, lakes, and the ocean. Stormwater discharges in California are regulated through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, further discussed below. However, stormwater may also act as a resource and recharge groundwater when properly managed.[10]

The Coachella Valley Planning Area is located in the Whitewater River Watershed, under the jurisdiction of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Colorado River Basin Region (Region 7) of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Region 7 covers approximately 13,000,000 acres (20,000 square miles) in the southeastern portion of California. A watershed is a geographic area that drains into a specified point on a watercourse, usually a confluence of streams or rivers. Watersheds (also referred to as drainage areas, catchments, or river

8 See **Appendix P.**

9 CVWD. *2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan*. Accessed October 2025. https://www.cvwd.org/DocumentCenter/View/5482/Coachella-Valley-RUWMP.

10 California State Water Resources Control Board. "Storm Water Program." Accessed October 2025. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/.

basins) are usually bordered and separated from other watersheds by mountain ridges or other naturally elevated areas. The Whitewater River Watershed boundaries to the north and northwest are the mountain ranges of the Colorado Desert, the San Bernardino Mountains, Little San Bernardino Mountains, and Indio Hills. The Watershed boundaries to the east and south are met by the Mecca Hills, Orocopia Mountains, the Salton Sea, and Santa Rosa Mountains. The western boundary is generally defined by the San Jacinto Mountains. As previously stated, the surface drainage within this watershed drains to the Salton Sea.

Local

CVWD operates as a Joint Powers Authority and manages the conveyance of irrigation and domestic (drinking) water, collects and recycles wastewater, provides regional stormwater protection, replenishes the groundwater basin, and promotes water conservation. CVWD manages a total of 173 miles of stormwater channels. This network includes 19 regional flood protection facilities that span from Palm Springs to the Salton Sea, with the primary component being the 50-mile Whitewater River/Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel.[11] Additionally, CVWD is involved with regional stormwater and flood protection, including planning, maintenance, and construction of drainage improvements for regional flood control facilities, as well as watershed and watercourse protection related to these facilities.

The main regional flood control facility in the County is the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel. This channel is the main drainage course for the entire Coachella Valley region from north of Palm Springs to the Salton Sea.[12] This channel meanders through the County in a west to east direction, partially along the Interstate 10 Freeway, and is maintained by CVWD. As previously stated, the CVWD operates underground tile drainage lines on and adjacent to the site. No other formal stormwater management infrastructure is present on the Project Site.

Groundwater

Regional

Groundwater is the primary source of water supply in the Coachella Valley, and CVWD obtains groundwater from both the Indio and Mission Creek Subbasins of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. CVWD has the legal authority to manage the groundwater basin within its boundaries under the County Water District Law (California Water Code section 30000, et seq.) and as a GSA under the SGMA.

The Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin is bounded on the north and east by the San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains, on the south and west by the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto

11 CVWD. "Regional Stormwater Protection." September 2025. Accessed October 2025. https://www.cvwd.org/DocumentCenter/View/4968/Stormwater-Protection-Fact-Sheet-English.

12 CVWD. "Regional Stormwater Protection."

Mountains, and on the south by the Salton Sea. At the west end of the San Gorgonio Pass, between Beaumont and Banning, the basin boundary is defined by a surface drainage divide separating the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin from the Beaumont Groundwater Basin of the Upper Santa Ana Drainage Area.

Although there is interflow of groundwater throughout the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin, fault barriers, constrictions in the basin profile, and areas of low permeability limit and control movement of groundwater. Based on these factors, the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin has been divided into subbasins and subareas as described by DWR in 1964 and 2003, and by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in 1974.

Groundwater that would be supplied to the Project Site is also used by other domestic water suppliers and private pumpers for crop irrigation, fish farms, duck clubs, golf course irrigation, greenhouses, and industrial uses in the Coachella Valley.

Groundwater Supplies

Groundwater production in the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin by CVWD totaled approximately 99,266 acre-feet in 2024, including 96,325 acre-feet from the Indio Subbasin and 2,941 acre-feet from the Mission Creek Subbasin. The DWR approved Alternative Plans monitor long-term sustainability of the Indio and Mission Creek Subbasins. According to the 2022 Indio Subbasin Alternative Plan Update and the 2022 Mission Creek Subbasin Alternative Plan Update, groundwater levels in all Key Wells in both subbasins remained above their respective Minimum Thresholds (MTs) in 2023–2024, indicating that chronic lowering of groundwater levels, depletion of storage, or subsidence are not occurring.

Groundwater storage and levels in the Indio Subbasin have shown a sustained positive trend since 2009, attributed to CVWD's artificial recharge programs using imported Colorado River water and local stormwater. Since 2009, the Indio Subbasin has experienced more than 800,000 acre-feet of net storage increase. Similarly, the Mission Creek Subbasin shows a balanced condition since 2012, with groundwater levels increasing since 2008 and 2009 and stable long-term storage trends. Both subbasins remain in sustainable yield and are effectively managed under SGMA compliance requirements.

Groundwater Quality

As stated previously, groundwater is the primary source of domestic water supply for residents and businesses within CVWD's service area. Groundwater quality within the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin is generally suitable for municipal and agricultural use. Water quality and the character of groundwater are determined by a number of factors including mineral content of sediments, recharge and drainage patterns, stormwater infiltration, historic land use practices, and casing screening intervals and depths of wells sampled.

The State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water (DDW) and the USEPA require routine and comprehensive monitoring of drinking water supply, and as required by the California Safe Drinking Water Act. In accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, CVWD employees routinely monitor the public water systems and collect drinking water samples that are tested at CVWD's State-certified laboratory to ensure that domestic water meets State and federal standards.

In the Indio Subbasin, total dissolved solids (TDS) concentrations are generally lowest in the West Valley recharge areas and increase toward the East Valley, where lower-permeability soils and historic agricultural return flows have contributed to elevated salinity levels. Nitrate concentrations are locally elevated in some agricultural zones but generally remain below the maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for drinking water where groundwater is used for potable supply. The Mission Creek Subbasin generally exhibits good water quality with low TDS and nitrate concentrations due to higher recharge rates and limited agricultural activity.

CVWD implements a number of groundwater quality protection measures, including groundwater replenishment with imported Colorado River water, conversion of irrigation systems to reduce percolation of salts and nutrients, and active participation in regional water quality monitoring programs. Thus, CVWD ensures continued compliance with State and federal water quality standards.

Surface Water Quality

Regional

Surface water in the Coachella Valley originates from several local rivers and streams including the Whitewater River, Snow Creek, Falls Creek, and Chino Creek, as well as numerous smaller creeks and washes. Surface water flows are highly variable and occur primarily during seasonal precipitation or snowmelt events from the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains. CVWD does not currently use or intend to use any local surface water as part of its urban potable water supply. Local runoff is captured at recharge facilities such as the Whitewater River Groundwater Replenishment Facility (GRF) or infiltrates naturally to support groundwater recharge.

The Coachella Valley Drainage Service Area is approximately 65 percent mountainous and 35 percent valley floor, with alluvial fan topography transitioning to desert valley conditions. Mean annual precipitation ranges from more than 30 inches in the San Bernardino Mountains to less than three inches near the Salton Sea. Precipitation events are typically associated with general winter storms, regional thunderstorms, or localized convective storms, producing highly variable runoff volumes. In most years, streams in the Coachella Valley are ephemeral and flow only in response to storm events.

The Project Site is located in the Colorado River Region (Region 7), where the approved Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) identifies the beneficial water uses, describes the water quality which must be maintained to support such uses, and describes the programs, projects,

and other actions necessary to achieve the standards and protect water quality. The most recent regional Basin Plan was amended in December 2023.[13]

Regional drainage of this area is conveyed by the Whitewater River, which flows northwest to southeast and passes approximately 4.5 miles east of the Project Site. Due to the natural topography of the region, the Project would indirectly discharge into these receiving waters. The beneficial uses of the downstream receiving waters (Whitewater River, Coachella Valley Storm Water Channel (CVSC), and Salton Sea) include but are not limited to agriculture supply, water-contact recreation, and warm freshwater habitat.

Surface water quality within the Colorado River Basin Region is regulated by the Colorado River Basin RWQCB under the authority of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and the federal CWA. The RWQCB implements Basin Plan provisions, administers NPDES permits, and ensures protection of surface water beneficial uses throughout the region.

Project Site

The Project Site is generally level throughout and is situated at an approximate elevation of 30 feet below mean sea level (MSL). No natural ponding of water or surface seeps were identified on the Project Site. Regional drainage ultimately discharges to the Whitewater River, which is located approximately 4.5 miles east of the Project Site. Currently, the site's drainage flows in a sheet pattern from the northwest corner to the southeast corner, with no drainage structures in place. As previously described, the CVWD has existing underground tile drain lines both on and adjacent to the Project Site.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Map Number 06065C2261H, the Project Site is located within an "Area of Minimal Flood Hazard (Zone X)."

5.10.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.10.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine whether a project would have a significant effect on the environment (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). Appendix G provides that a project would have a significant impact to hydrology and water quality, if it would:

a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality.

b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater

13 California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Colorado River Basin. *Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region*.

management of the basin.

c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

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

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

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

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows.

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

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

5.10.4 METHODOLOGY

The hydrology and water quality analysis is based in part on the Preliminary Hydrology Report (**Appendix P**), Water Quality Management Plan (**Appendix Q**), and WSA (**Appendix R**) prepared by RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC for the Project. The Preliminary Hydrology Report provides a quantitative and engineering-level evaluation of existing and proposed drainage conditions within the Project Site.

The Preliminary Hydrology Report includes refined watershed delineation, hydrologic modeling, on-site and off-site flow characterization, peak flow rate calculations, and engineering-level stormwater detention and conveyance design parameters. The analysis identifies pre-project runoff conditions, evaluates planned drainage improvements, and determines whether proposed facilities would maintain or improve existing downstream flow patterns in compliance with County of Riverside requirements and the Whitewater River Region Stormwater Manual.

The Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) outlines the Project's approach for meeting water quality protection requirements under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. The WQMP identifies potential pollutants of concern, evaluates site design and source control measures, and specifies treatment control Best Management Practices (BMPs) necessary to reduce pollutant loads in post-construction runoff. The plan includes sizing criteria for structural BMPs and demonstrates compliance with the County of Riverside's WQMP guidance, ensuring that long-term stormwater quality is protected.

The Water Supply Assessment evaluates whether adequate water supplies are available to meet the Project's projected water demand during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years over a 20-year planning horizon. Prepared consistent with California Water Code Sections 10910–10915, the WSA identifies existing water sources, projected supply availability, and demand conditions within the

service provider's system. The assessment analyzes cumulative supply conditions, potential reliability constraints, and confirms whether sufficient entitlements and delivery infrastructure exist to serve the Project consistent with state law.

5.10.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

a. Would the project result in the violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Less Than Significant Impact.

The Project proposes an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Designation for the Project Site from Agriculture and Low Density Residential to Specific Plan. The change in land use will convert the Project Site to low and medium density residential uses along with a 9-hole golf course. The Project would be required to comply with the applicable Land Use, General Plan policies, applicable federal and state laws and regulations concerning the protection of water quality, including the federal Clean Water Act. The NPDES General Construction permit requires preparation and implementation of a SWPPP and WQMP, which must include erosion and sediment control BMPs that would meet or exceed measures required by the NPDES General Permit, as well as BMPs that control hydrocarbons, trash and debris, and other potential construction-related pollutants. Riverside County Ordinance No. 754, the Stormwater/Urban Runoff Management and Discharge Control Ordinance implements local stormwater quality regulations, consistent with the NPDES requirements. Section 55.26 covers discharge and transport of pollutants.

The proposed drainage plan for the Project is designed to retain 100 percent of on-site stormwater runoff within the five designated Drainage Management Areas (DMAs), with detention basin capacities sized conservatively and in excess of modeled on-site runoff volumes. Each DMA would convey flows to a corresponding on-site water quality detention basin, consistent with the RCFC&WCD Hydrology Manual. The proposed stormwater system would include a network of surface drainage swales; storm drain piping and catch basins that direct runoff from roadways and developed areas to on-site retention facilities. These facilities are designed to accommodate the 100-year, 24-hour storm event, with additional detention capacity available to accommodate off-site contributing flows, ensuring that post-development runoff volumes are fully contained within the Project Site. No off-site discharge of stormwater is anticipated under proposed conditions, and all retention basins would be integrated into the golf course and landscaped open space areas to promote infiltration and water quality treatment. The proposed Project's Preliminary Hydrology Report (see **Appendix P**) confirms that the design meets County and RCFC&WCD drainage standards and provides adequate storage capacity for storm events, maintaining existing flow patterns and preventing any degradation of downstream water quality.

The Project design measures, and compliance with federal, State, and Local regulations, would prevent violations to water quality standards and waste discharge requirements by implementing

adequate stormwater management facilities at each stage of development and operation, which are designed to contain Project-related runoff and prevent discharges into any receiving waters. The Project would also be required to obtain the appropriate permit approvals that ensure compliance with NPDES, MS4, and County retention ordinance regulations applicable during construction and operation.

Construction

Prior to the start of construction, a SWPPP designed to reduce potential adverse impacts to surface water quality during the period of construction would be developed for implementation as required by the statewide Construction General Permit (Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ).

The SWPPP will identify the limits of disturbance during each phase of construction with specific locations where activities would require implementation of stormwater BMPs. Stormwater BMPs will include a schedule of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, and other management practices to prevent, eliminate, or reduce the pollution of waters of the receiving waters. BMPs also include treatment requirements, operating procedures, and practices to control plant site runoff spillage or leaks. Consistent with the Construction General Permit, SWPPP implementation will include good site management (housekeeping), non-stormwater management, erosion control, sediment controls, run-on and runoff controls, along with inspection, maintenance, and repair measures. Other relevant requirements of the SWPPP include proper waste management, proper material handling, and storage within the allowable construction limits. As construction progresses, any on-site proposed storm drain-inlets that become operational would require temporary protection to prevent sediment or pollutants from entering the on-site storm drain system.

During construction, the Project would also be required to comply with the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) *Rule 403* and *403.1*, which requires the Project Applicant to prepare and implement a Fugitive Dust (PM10) Control Plan. Implementation of the Fugitive Dust Control Plan primarily pertains to air quality but also supports water quality protection through the requirement of soil stabilization measures to prevent sediment erosion and track-out. The concurrent implementation of the required SWPPP and Dust Control Plan would prevent potential adverse construction-related impacts to water quality at the Project Site and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

During operation, the Project's on-site storm drain, and retention system would continue to effectively manage stormwater in compliance with Riverside County Ordinance No. 754 and the County's NPDES MS4 permit requirements. As previously described, the Project's development is divided into five DMAs, each designed to convey runoff through a network of storm drainpipes, catch basins, and landscaped swales to on-site detention basins that provide both storage and water quality treatment.

The Project's Preliminary Hydrology Report (see **Appendix P**) confirmed that the Project would be designed to retain 100 percent of on-site stormwater runoff generated during a 100-year, 24-hour storm event, with detention basins sized using refined hydrologic modeling and conservative storage factors. No off-site discharge of stormwater is anticipated under post-development conditions. Runoff from streets, residential lots, and the golf course would be directed into the detention basins, which are integrated into the open space and golf course areas in order to promote infiltration and pollutant removal prior to percolation. The basin design was sized using the RCFC&WCD Hydrology Manual methodology and includes conservative storage factors to ensure adequate capacity.

Stormwater BMPs, such as vegetated swales, landscaped buffers, and on-site retention basins would remove sediment, trash, and urban pollutants from stormwater prior to infiltration, minimizing potential effects on surface and groundwater quality. Regular maintenance of the drainage system, consistent with the Project's WQMP (**Appendix Q**), would ensure the effectiveness of these features. Through compliance with Ordinance No. 754, NPDES/MS4 permit requirements and the Project-specific WQMP, the Project would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements during operation. Impacts to surface and groundwater quality would therefore be less than significant.

b. Would the project result in substantially decreased groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Development of the Project Site would introduce impervious surfaces including buildings, roadways, internal circulation areas, and sidewalks. As a result, the increase in impervious surfaces will decrease the rate of stormwater infiltration and increase the velocity in which stormwater would be discharged off site. However, the Project includes on-site stormwater quality and retention facilities consistent with Section 3.5 of the WQMP Guidance document for the Whitewater Watershed, which consist of Site Design BMP concepts, Source Control, LID/Site Design and, if/where necessary, Treatment Control BMPs as described herein, and MS4 requirements, which would capture stormwater runoff and allow for infiltration where feasible. Thus, the Project would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge efforts. Groundwater recharge within the County is primarily conducted through regional groundwater management programs and replenishment facilities constructed and operated by CVWD. CVWD implements groundwater replenishment by importing Colorado River water and other available supplies for direct recharge via spreading basins and in-lieu recharge, consistent with its adopted Groundwater Replenishment Programs (GRPs). The Project Site is located within the Eastern Whitewater River Subbasin Area of Benefit, where groundwater production is subject to replenishment assessments that fund these recharge activities. As discussed in the Project's WSA, the Project's groundwater demand is included in CVWD's service-area demand projections and would be offset through CVWD's ongoing groundwater replenishment

programs, which are designed to maintain long-term basin sustainability in compliance with the SGMA.

The 2020 Regional UWMP serves as a planning tool that documents actions in support of long-term water resources planning and ensures adequate water supplies are available to meet the existing and future urban water demands. Artificial replenishment, or recharge, is recognized by the water districts as one of the most effective methods available for preserving local groundwater supplies, reversing aquifer overdraft and meeting demand by domestic consumers. According to the CVWD, since 1973, approximately 3.8-million-acre feet of water has been recharged at WWR-GRF.[14] Individual development projects can contribute to groundwater replenishment by retaining and infiltrating stormwater runoff on site. See **Section 5.15: Utilities and Service Systems** for more information on the water supply.

A WSA was prepared for the Project Site to determine if the water demand during operation of the Project would be accommodated without causing substantial decreases in groundwater supplies.[15] As documented in the WSA, the Project would rely on groundwater supplies provided by the CVWD. Based on the WSA, the projected total water demand for the Project Site would be 668.67 acre-feet per year (AFY), or 3.84 acre-feet per acre (AFA). The WSA demonstrates that the Project's groundwater demand is included within CVWD's service area demand projections and that sufficient water supplies would be available to meet existing and future demands under normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year conditions over a 20-year planning horizon. CVWD's 5-year average urban water demand from 2020 to 2024 was 98,756 AFY, and the projected urban water demand by 2045 is 148,166 AFY. The Project's water demand of 668.67 AFY, which would be supplied primarily by groundwater, accounts for less than one percent of the total planned increases by 2045.

Although the CVWD has a sufficient amount of water to serve the Project, the County and CVWD require implementation of water conserving and water efficient technologies, consistent with the County General Plan, California MWELO, and the applicable MS4 permit requirements. As discussed above, long-term water supply planning and groundwater management programs in the County ensure that adequate water supplies will be available to meet future demand. The Project complies with State, regional, and local water conservation standards, SGMA requirements, and County groundwater recharge policies. Therefore, the Project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

14 California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Colorado River Basin. *Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region*.

15 RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Water Supply Assessment (WSA) for Madison Club East*. November 2025. See **Appendix R.**

i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Construction

During Project construction, soil would be exposed and disturbed, drainage patterns would be temporarily altered during grading and other construction activities, and there would be an increased potential for soil erosion and siltation compared to existing conditions. Additionally, during a storm event, soil erosion and siltation could occur at an accelerated rate.

The Project would be required to obtain coverage under the Statewide Construction General Permit and prepare a SWPPP. The SWPPP would identify and implement construction BMPs such as perimeter sediment controls, inlet protection, dust control, and stabilization of disturbed soil areas to minimize erosion and prevent sediment from entering stormwater flows.

With implementation of the SWPPP and required BMPs, including erosion and sediment control measures consistent with the County of Riverside and MS4 permit requirements, construction activities would not result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation. Construction impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Following construction, the Project would introduce impervious surfaces associated with residential uses, internal private roadways, and recreational uses. However, the Project includes a comprehensive permanent stormwater management system designed consistently with the Riverside County Ordinance No. 754 and the RCFC&WCD Hydrology Manual and Whitewater Watershed MS4 Permit Guidelines.

According to the Project's Preliminary Hydrology Report (see **Appendix P**), the Project Site would be divided into five DMAs that direct on-site runoff to detention basins designed to retain flows from a 100-year, 24-hour storm event. These basins would be integrated into landscaped open space and the Project's proposed golf course. Development of the Project Site, including proposed landscaping would stabilize exposed soils and reduce erosion potential. Roadway drainage, landscaped swales, and catch basins would convey stormwater to the on-site retention system, preventing uncontrolled runoff that could mobilize sediment.

With compliance with the Project's WQMP and implementation of BMPs, the Project would not result in substantial on-site or off-site erosion or siltation. Operational impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact.

Construction

As discussed above, Project construction would comply with the requirements of the Construction General Permit and would include the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP. The SWPPP would specify construction BMPs to control and direct on-site surface runoff, minimize erosion and sedimentation, and prevent pollutants from entering stormwater flows. Temporary inlet protection, fiber rolls, and stabilized construction entrances would be implemented as needed to prevent discharge of sediment to the storm drain system. With these measures, stormwater runoff during construction would not exceed the capacity of the drainage system or substantially increase the rate or amount of runoff that could cause on- or off-site flooding. Construction-related impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

As discussed previously, the Project would increase impervious surface areas, which would increase stormwater runoff compared to existing conditions. However, the Project's drainage design would maintain the existing overall drainage pattern across the Project Site and would include a storm drain and detention system that retains on-site runoff consistent with the RCFC&WCD Hydrology Manual and Whitewater Watershed MS4 Permit Guidelines.

With the implementation of BMPs, landscaped retention basins, and water-quality features, the Project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in on- or off-site flooding. Operation-phase stormwater management would comply with the Riverside County Ordinance No. 754, the County's MS4 permit, and the Project's WQMP. Therefore, with the Project's proposed drainage improvements and regulatory compliance, the Project would not result in or contribute to on-site or downstream flooding. Impacts related to increased surface runoff would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact.

Aside from a previously graded area and foundation associated with a former single-family residence in the northeastern corner, the Project Site is undeveloped and primarily consists of vacant agricultural land that allows stormwater to percolate through sandy soils. Existing drainage flows in a sheet pattern from the northwest toward the southeast corner of the site, with no formal storm drain infrastructure present.

The Project would introduce residential and recreational uses that would increase impervious surfaces. An increase in impervious surface area would increase the velocity of surface runoff. The Project is responsible to detain the increased surface flows in a manner that reflects the predevelopment condition. The Project design includes a comprehensive on-site stormwater

management system that provides full retention of runoff, consistent with the County standards and the RCFC&WCD Hydrology Manual and Whitewater Watershed MS4 Permit Guidelines.

As referenced above, the Project Site would be divided into five DMAs, each of which would convey surface flows through a network of swales, catch basins, and storm drainpipes to on-site detention basins. As described in the Preliminary Hydrology Report (**Appendix P**), DMA-1 through DMA-5 represent on-site drainage areas within the Project Site; off-site contributing drainage (DMA-6) is evaluated separately in the Hydrology Report, and the refined drainage design demonstrates that excess on-site detention capacity is available to safely accommodate these flows on site without off-site discharge. As shown in **Table 5.10-1: Project Stormwater Runoff Volume Summary**, the total on-site stormwater storage capacity is approximately 38.2 acre-feet, which exceeds the total modeled on-site runoff volume and provides excess detention capacity to accommodate off-site contributing drainage. The basins would be integrated into the landscaped open space and golf course areas to promote infiltration and water quality treatment prior to percolation. Stormwater BMPs incorporated into the site design would remove sediment and urban pollutants from runoff before infiltration. This design would ensure that no untreated stormwater would be discharged off site and that downstream facilities would not be exceeded.

Thus, with the implementation of the Project's proposed drainage system and compliance with applicable regulations, such as Riverside County Ordinance No. 754, the MS4 permit, and the Project's WQMP, the Project would not create or contribute runoff water that exceeds the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, nor provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Impacts would be less than significant.

TABLE 5.10-1: PROJECT STORMWATER RUNOFF VOLUME SUMMARY

Drainage Management Area (DMA)	Drainage Area (acre)	Vol 100-year, 24-hour (acre-feet)	Detention Basin Volume (acre-feet)
DMA-1	51.50	6.00	10.00
DMA-2	39.80	4.40	10.50
DMA-3	19.50	2.50	2.80
DMA-4	33.20	4.00	9.70
DMA-5	35.70	4.50	5.20
Total	–	21.40	38.20

Notes:
[a] *Volume of runoff from a 100-year, 24-hour storm event, in acre-feet.*

Source: RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Preliminary Hydrology Report*. March 2026. **Appendix P.**

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

Less Than Significant Impact.

The regional topography of the Coachella Drainage Area naturally drains from the northwest to the southeast, eventually draining to the Salton Sea. The Project Site's drainage flows in a sheet pattern from the northwest corner to the southeast corner, with no drainage structures in place. Aside from a previously graded area and foundation associated with a former single-family residential structure located in the northeast corner, the site is vacant agricultural land. To the north of the Project Site, there is a developed lot that detains its runoff on site, and a vacant lot with sheet flows to the southeast as well. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Map Number 06065C2261H, the Project Site is located within an "Area of Minimal Flood Hazard (Zone X)."

The Project would include a comprehensive on-site drainage system designed consistent with the RCFC&WCD Hydrology Manual and Riverside County Ordinance No. 754, Stormwater/Urban Runoff Management and Discharge Control Ordinance. As previously described, the Project Site would be divided into five DMAs, each of which would collect runoff via swales, catch basins, and storm drainpipes and convey flows to on-site detention basins. These basins would be sized to retain 100 percent of stormwater runoff generated during a 100-year, 24-hour storm event, ensuring that no off-site discharge would occur, and that both on-site and off-site contributing flows are safely detained within the Project Site without altering the regional drainage patterns. The proposed on-site system would maintain existing general drainage patterns while containing storm flows within the Project Site boundary. Thus, the Project would not alter regional drainage patterns nor redirect stormwater in a manner that would create flood hazards.

Therefore, the Project would not impede or redirect flood flows and would comply with the County stormwater regulations, the County MS4 permit, and the RCFC&WCD Hydrology Manual. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact.

According to the Project's Preliminary Hydrology Report (see **Appendix P**) and the National Flood Insurance Program Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Map Number 06065C2261H, the Project Site is located within Zone X, which is defined as an area of minimal flood hazard and lies outside both the 100-year and 500-year floodplains. The Project Site is not subject to inundation by floodwaters and would not expose people or structures to significant flood risks. The Project Site is located inland and is not subject to hazards associated with tsunami or seiche events. As the Project is not located within a designated flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone, implementation of the Project would not

risk the release of pollutants due to Project inundation. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact.

Adherence to the State Construction General Permit, implementation of the SWPPP, and adherence to the County's Floodplain Management requirements, would ensure that surface and groundwater quality are not adversely impacted during construction. In addition, implementation of the BMP measures at the site, including catch basins and retention basins, would ensure that water quality is not impacted during the operational phase of the Project. As a result, site development would not obstruct or conflict with the implementation of the Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan.

CVWD provides potable (drinking) and irrigation water to the Project Site. The District has implemented a number of programs to maximize the use of local water supplies and reduce demands including significant recycled water and water conservation programs. Therefore, the Project would not obstruct or conflict with the 2020 Regional UWMP, applicable water quality control plans, or applicable sustainable groundwater management plans, and impacts would be less than significant.

5.10.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Implementation of the Project, together with other future related projects in the region, would increase impervious surfaces and urban runoff, contributing to cumulative demands on stormwater conveyance systems and groundwater resources. However, development within the County is subject to compliance with applicable water quality regulations, stormwater management requirements, and groundwater sustainability planning efforts. Thus, cumulative impacts to hydrology and water quality would be less than significant.

With regard to water quality, the related projects would also be required to comply with the NPDES General Construction Permit, including the implementation of a site-specific SWPPP, to prevent polluted runoff from entering local stormwater drainage systems during construction activities. Additionally, each related project would be subject to NPDES requirements after buildout and applicable County ordinances and requirements. As each related project would be required to comply with NPDES requirements and local regulations designed to prevent polluted runoff from entering local storm drain systems and receiving water bodies during construction and after buildout, the cumulative impact to water quality would be less than significant. Further, as compliance with NPDES and local ordinance requirements would prevent substantial erosion and siltation, the cumulative impact related to erosion and siltation would also be less than significant.

With regard to flooding and storm drain capacity, related projects would be required to demonstrate that on-site drainage improvements are designed to adequately convey flows consistent with County standards, including the ability to accommodate runoff from a 100-year storm event. The Project includes on-site detention and water quality features designed to comply with Riverside County Flood Control standards and the MS4 Permit, ensuring stormwater is retained and treated on site prior to discharge. Therefore, when combined with other development, the Project would not contribute to a cumulative increase in flooding or exceedance of storm drain capacity. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

With respect to groundwater resources, cumulative development could increase demand for water and reduce groundwater recharge within the region due to the creation of additional impervious surfaces. However, groundwater production and basin management in Riverside County are subject to the SGMA and implemented through regional GSPs and recharge programs. The Project's water supply is documented in the Project's WSA, which confirms sufficient supplies are available to meet Project demand without causing adverse cumulative effects on groundwater supplies. The Project would install stormwater retention features that reduce incremental effects of impervious area. For these reasons, cumulative impacts to groundwater supply would be less than significant.

Based on the Project's compliance with regional stormwater management requirements, the MS4 Permit, SGMA planning, and adopted County drainage standards, and the Project's WSA which confirmed there are adequate future water supplies, cumulative impacts to hydrology and water quality would be less than significant.

5.10.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.10.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

No mitigation is required. Impacts would remain less than significant.

5.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) evaluates the potential land use impacts of the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (Project) and the Project's consistency with applicable land use plans and policies, including the County of Riverside (County) General Plan. Land use impacts can be either direct or indirect. Direct impacts result in land use incompatibilities or the division of neighborhoods or communities. Indirect impacts are secondary effects resulting from conflicts with implementation of land use policies, such as an increase in demand for public utilities or services, or increased traffic on roadways. Indirect impacts are addressed in other topical sections of this Draft EIR.

5.11.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.11.1.1 Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

SCAG is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. SCAG is the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for this region, which encompasses more than 38,000 square miles. SCAG is a regional planning agency and a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and State law. In this role, SCAG reviews proposed development and infrastructure projects to analyze their impacts on regional planning programs. As the southern California region's MPO, SCAG cooperates with SCAQMD, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and other agencies in preparing regional planning documents. SCAG has developed regional plans to achieve specific regional objectives.

SCAG is also responsible for preparing the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), including its Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS; together, RTP/SCS) component pursuant to Senate Bill 375. The primary goal of the RTP is to increase mobility for the region's residents and visitors, as well as for commerce and goods movement. The SCAG Connect SoCal 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals, with a specific goal of achieving an 8 percent reduction in passenger vehicle GHG emissions on a per capita basis by 2020, 19 percent reduction by 2035, and 21 percent reduction by 2040 compared to the 2005 level.

Although the RTP/SCS is not technically an air quality plan, consistency with the RTP/SCS has air quality implications, including the reduction of VMT, which reduces air quality emissions.[1]

Coachella Valley Association of Governments

CVAG is a sub-regional organization within SCAG. CVAG is made up of ten cities, the County, and two Native American Indian tribes. CVAG represents member local governments and agencies throughout the Coachella Valley seeking cooperative subregional and regional planning, and supports coordination and technical assistance on issues of mutual concern. CVAG is made up of several departments, including an Energy and Environmental Resources Department that monitors and implements both regional and local plans related to energy and air quality issues, waste management, water quality, habitat conservation planning, and trails issues.

Coachella Valley Conservation Commission

The Project Site is located within the jurisdiction of a habitat conservation plan prepared in the Coachella Valley – the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC), a joint powers authority of elected representatives, oversees and manages the CVMSHCP. The CVCC has no regulatory powers and no land use authority. Its primary purpose is to buy land from willing sellers in the conservation areas and to manage that land.[2] The CVMSHCP addresses approximately 1.2 million acres encompassing the Coachella Valley and the surrounding mountains up to the ridgeline. The CVMSHCP aims to conserve over 240,000 acres of open space and protect 27 sensitive plant and animal species in the Coachella Valley and the surrounding mountains while creating a robust system of open space parks, trails, and reserves.[3]

The CVMSHCP, which became effective October 2008, is a regional conservation plan that identifies and coordinates the permanent protection of habitats, biological linkages and corridors, and ecological processes for the benefit of plants and wildlife. CVMSHCP participants include the County, the cities of Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, and Rancho Mirage, as well as the Coachella Valley Water District and Imperial Irrigation District. CVAG serves as the lead agency for plan review and, in coordination with the CVCC, oversees the plan implementation. The plan enables the participating public agencies (permittees) to comply with both the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts and other regulations promulgated to protect listed plants and wildlife.

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1 Southern California Association of Governments. "Chapter 5 – Measuring Our Progress." *Final Connect SoCal 2024*. Accessed February 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/connect-socal.

2 Coachella Valley Conservation Commission. "Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Fact Sheet." Accessed February 2025. http://www.cvmshcp.org/doc/Fact%20Sheet%20CVMSHCP.pdf.

3 Coachella Valley Conservation Commission. "Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Fact Sheet."

5.11.1.2 Local

County of Riverside General Plan

The County's General Plan is the blueprint for the County. It describes the future growth and development within the County over the long term and acts as a constitution for both public and private development. The General Plan is intended to express the community's goals with respect to both human-made and natural environments, and outlines policies and implementation measures to achieve them for the welfare of those who live, work, and do business in the County.

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) is a component of the County of Riverside General Plan that provides more detailed policy direction tailored to the unique environmental, social, and economic conditions of the eastern Coachella Valley region. The ECVAP refines and implements the broader General Plan vision by establishing land use designations, development patterns, circulation concepts, and resource management strategies specific to the communities within this planning area, including Vista Santa Rosa, Thermal, Mecca, and Oasis. The Area Plan guides future growth, infrastructure investment, and conservation objectives in a manner that supports balanced development, agricultural preservation, and improvements to community services. As an extension of the General Plan, the ECVAP functions as a locally focused framework directing both public and private development decisions within the eastern Coachella Valley.

County of Riverside Code of Ordinances

The County Code of Ordinances (Riverside Code) regulates activities within the County of Riverside. The following sections of the Riverside Code are frequently used by the Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) – Planning Department and are integral to the review and approval of development proposals:

- Title 6 - Animals
- Title 7 – Noise Control
- Title 12 – Streets, Sidewalks, and Public Places
- Title 15 – Building and Construction
- Title 16 - Subdivision
- Title 17 - Zoning
- Title 20 – Cultural Resources
- Countywide and District Design Guidelines
- Vista Santa Rosa Design Guidelines

The Countywide and District Design Guidelines and the Vista Santa Rosa Design Guidelines are intended to promote a desired level of future development within the unincorporated County that:

Countywide Design Guidelines – Project Objectives:

- Ensures that new homes are constructed in neighborhoods that are interesting and varied in appearance
- Utilizes building materials and enhanced landscaping to promote a look of quality, both at the time of initial occupancy, as well as in future years
- Encourages efficient use of land while creating high-quality communities that will maintain their economic values and long-term desirability as places to live and work
- Incorporates conveniently located and accessible neighborhood parks, trails, and open space
- Provides functional public access to recreational opportunities in relation to the overall open space system

Vista Santa Rosa Design Guidelines – Project Objectives:

- Recognizes each community in the County as an identifiable and unique place.
- Defines and retains the rural, agricultural, and equestrian history of the Vista Santa Rosa Community
- Protects and preserves the equestrian and agricultural activities that play a role in both economic and social development within the region.
- Identifies and protects commonly used viewpoints, view paths, natural panoramas, and views of major community landmarks.
- Incorporates the Vista Santa Rosa Design Logo on entry monuments, gates, and street signage associated with new residential and commercial developments.
- Identifies edge conditions between existing land uses and new development and incorporates buffers through the use of increased setbacks, agricultural easements, reduction of block walls, and use of equestrian or agricultural fencing.

5.11.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.11.2.1 Existing Conditions

Project Site

As shown in **Figure 3.0-3: Project Location** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the approximately 174-acre Project Site consists primarily of fallowed agricultural land, unoperated infiltration basins, and disturbed desert terrain associated with previous agricultural use. A date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a former 1970s residence and related structures. The Project Site also contains ornamental landscaping, including lawns, shade trees, and palms; a modern mobile home, and several modern, nonresidential outbuildings and trailers located within APN 780-010-013. Existing sidewalks are constructed along the westerly boundary of Monroe Street. The existing sidewalk along Monroe Street varies between six and eight feet wide. Pedestrian

crosswalks are available at the nearby intersection of Monroe Street and Avenue 54. Existing improvements, including street lighting, retaining walls, and ornamental landscaping, are also located on the west side of Monroe Street, adjacent to the existing Madison Club golf course community. There are no additional street improvements, such as bus stops or signalized intersections, constructed adjacent to the Project Site.

As shown in **Figure 3.0-4: Existing General Plan Land Use** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the General Plan Land Use designations for the Project Site are Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG). As shown in **Figure 3.0-5: Existing Zoning Map** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the existing zoning designations of the Project Site are A-1-20 (Light Agriculture), R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwellings), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture), and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone - Residential Developments).

The RC:LDR land use designation provides for the development of detached single-family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. In the RC:LDR land use designation, equestrian and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged, while agriculture and small-scale commercial uses are also permitted. The density range for RC:LDR ranges from one to two dwelling units per acre (du/ac). The AG land use designation has been established to help conserve productive agricultural lands within the County. These include row crops, nurseries, citrus groves and vineyards, dairies, ranches, poultry and hog farms, and other agricultural-related uses. Areas designated for AG generally lack an infrastructure that is supportive of urban development. Residential density is permitted at one dwelling unit per parcel provided that the parcel is 10 acres in size or larger. An additional dwelling unit may be allowed for each additional 10 acres being farmed for use by the owner, operator, or employees, up to a maximum of five total dwelling units per parcel. State law authorizes additional dwellings for farm worker housing.

Existing Surrounding Land Uses

The Project Site is surrounded by the Mirabella Estates and Santa Rosa Ranch to the north; fallowed agricultural land, disturbed vacant land, and the Tahquitz Equestrian Facility to the east; two ranches (Rancho Ellenita and Cavallo Ranch) and fallowed agricultural land to the south; and a residential golf neighborhood (Madison Club) and single-family neighborhood (Carmela) to the west.

5.11.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.11.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine the significance of land use impacts (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). Appendix G provides that a project would have a significant environmental impact related to land use if it would:

a. Physically divide an established community.

b. ***Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.***

5.11.4 METHODOLOGY

The determination of the Project's consistency with applicable land use plans and policies is based upon a review of the previously identified planning documents that regulate land use or guide land use decisions at and around the Project Site. The Project is considered to be consistent with the provisions of the identified regional and local plans if it meets the general intent of the plans and would not preclude the attainment of the primary intent of the land use plan or policy.

5.11.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan establishes the land use framework, development standards, infrastructure requirements, design guidelines, and implementation procedures that would regulate future development within the 174-acre Project Site. Upon adoption by Riverside County, the Specific Plan would serve as the zoning for the Project Site and provide a comprehensive set of plans and policies to guide the efficient and orderly development of a private, master-planned residential community consistent with the County's General Plan.

As shown in **Figure 3.0-6: Specific Plan Land Use Plan** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the Specific Plan organizes the community into 13 Planning Areas (PAs) with land use designations consisting of Mixed Use Area, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Open Space–Recreation uses. The Specific Plan would enable development of a residential, golf-oriented, amenity-focused community consisting of up to 85 single-family residential units, a private 9-hole golf course, and associated open space, recreational facilities, and multimodal transportation improvements.

To implement the proposed land use framework, the Project includes a Foundation General Plan Amendment (FGPA No. 250010) to modify the Foundation Component of the Project Site from Agriculture and Rural Community (RC) to Community Development and Open Space. In conjunction with the FGPA, the Project would change the General Plan land use designations for the Project Site from RC: Low Density Residential (approximately 97 acres) and Agriculture (approximately 77 acres) to Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Community Development: Mixed Use Area, and Open Space–Recreation, consistent with the Specific Plan. To ensure zoning consistency with the proposed FGPA and land use designations, the Project also includes a Change of Zone to reclassify the existing zoning districts—One-Family Dwellings (R-1-20000), Residential Agriculture (R-A-2), Open Area Combining Zone–Residential Developments (R-5), and Light Agriculture (A-1-20)—to a Specific Plan (SP) Zone.

The Specific Plan application formally establishes the Planning Area boundaries, permitted uses, and development standards through the Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance, ensuring coordinated implementation of the Project's development objectives and design intent.

A summary of the land uses within the Project Site is provided in **Table 5.11-1: Ranch at Madison Specific Plan—Land Use Plan Summary**. Residential development would be allowed on 47.5 acres, with the balance consisting of open space, roads, trails, and supporting infrastructure facilities. The average density of the residential and MUA planning areas would be 1.8 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and the overall Project average density is 0.5 du/ac. Further breakdown of proposed development within each PA can be found in **Table 3.0-1: Planning Area Land Use Summary** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR.

TABLE 5.11-1: RANCH AT MADISON SPECIFIC PLAN—LAND USE PLAN SUMMARY

Land Use	Acres	Dwelling Units	Density
Mixed Use Area (MUA)	11.9	20	1.7
Low Density Residential (LDR)	24.5	31	1.3
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	11.1	34	3.1
Residential Subtotal	47.5	85	1.8
Open Space - Recreation	115.6	-	-
Circulation	10.7	-	-

Source: *Ranch at Madison Specific Plan*. December 2025.

a. Would the project physically divide an established community?

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project Site is largely undeveloped and consists of previously farmed agricultural land and several remaining foundation pads from prior structures. Circulation within the site is limited to Avenue 53, which bisects the property in an east–west direction between Monroe Street and an unnamed road aligned with Arabia Street, and a few internal dirt access roads. There are currently no sidewalks, bicycle facilities, or dedicated pedestrian improvements along the perimeter of the Project Site.

The Project includes a request to vacate the existing segment of Avenue 53 within the Project Site and construct a new system of private internal roadways, pedestrian pathways, and golf cart trails that would provide circulation throughout the community. There are no existing communities within the Project Site. Therefore, the removal of the Avenue 53 segment that bisects the Project Site would not physically divide a community within the Project Site.

While vacating Avenue 53 within the Project Site could potentially divide surrounding communities, the proposed Project includes off-site improvements to ensure adequate circulation is maintained for surrounding properties. As illustrated in **Figure 3.0-8: Off-Site Vehicular Circulation** and

detailed in **Section 5.13: Transportation**, these improvements would comply with County circulation standards and include installing a traffic signal at the intersection of Avenue 53 and Arabia Street, widening and improving the existing segment of Arabia Street located south of Avenue 52, extending Arabia Street to Avenue 53, extending the median along Monroe Street, widening streets to their designated County road classifications, and adding sidewalks, bike lanes, and multiuse paths. These roadway improvements were designed through coordination with the City of La Quinta and the Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD), which operates the Desert Cahuilla Academy School located adjacent to the existing segment of Arabia Street south of Avenue 52. East–west vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the Project vicinity will continue to be provided by Avenue 52 and Avenue 54.

In addition, the Project proposes a grade-separated golf cart/pedestrian crossing beneath Monroe Street to allow golf carts and pedestrians to safely travel between the Project Site and the adjacent Madison Club golf course to the west. Based on these characteristics, the Project as proposed would not physically divide the existing community.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project Site is entirely within the County and therefore subject to the County's land use regulations. The consistency of the Project with the County's land use plans and policies applicable to the area and to topics of environmental concern is discussed below. Additionally, because the County participates in regional planning efforts coordinated by SCAG and CVCC, consistency with regional planning policies and efforts related to topics of environmental concern are also evaluated.

SCAG RTP/SCS Analysis

The 2024 SCAG RTP/SCS is an advisory document to local agencies in the southern California region for their information and voluntary use while preparing local plans and handling local issues of regional significance. **Table 5.11-2: Consistency with Final Connect SoCal 2024 Goals**, provides an assessment of the Project's relationship to regional goals pertaining to issues of environmental concern contained in various chapters of the RTP/SCS. The analysis contained in **Table 5.11-2** concludes that the Project would be consistent with the RTP/SCS goals. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not result in significant land use impacts due to inconsistency with the RTP/SCS goals. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

TABLE 5.11-2: CONSISTENCY WITH FINAL CONNECT SOCAL 2024 GOALS

Goals and Policies	Consistency Analysis
Goal 1: Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness	**Consistent**. This Goal is directed towards actions taken by SCAG and does not apply to the Project. Nonetheless, the Project would enhance

TABLE 5.11-2: CONSISTENCY WITH FINAL CONNECT SOCAL 2024 GOALS	
Goals and Policies	**Consistency Analysis**
	the prosperity of the neighborhood through the creation of up to 85 homes, providing residential opportunities to the community and additional residents to support local businesses.
Goal 2: Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods.	**Consistent**. The Project would be consistent with the General Plan, including its Circulation Element, and would improve the internal and area circulation system. The traffic analysis conducted pursuant to CEQA requirements finds that the Project would have a less than significant impact on the County's transportation system, and that impacts regarding VMT generation would also be less than significant. The Project thus would not conflict with efforts to improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods.
Goal 3: Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system.	**Consistent**. While not necessarily applicable to an individual development project, the Project would support this goal by improving the viability of alternative forms of transportation in the area immediately surrounding the Project Site. The Project includes the development of a network of connective open space corridors that would facilitate improved access to sidewalks, trails, and protected bicycle lane facilities that have been proposed by the County. The Project is designed in such a way that a variety of transportation options, including walking, biking, and the use of golf carts are available to meet the mobility needs of residents and visitors.
Goal 4: Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system.	**Consistent**. While not necessarily applicable to an individual development project, the Project would support this goal by improving local access to alternative forms of transportation, including walking, biking, and the use of golf carts, with appropriate design considerations to account for future population growth and multimodal choices.
Goal 5: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.	**Consistent**. The Project involves the creation of a new residential community that provides a number of transportation alternatives to meet the needs of future residents, while reducing the proportion of trips requiring the use of a private vehicle. The proposed grade-separated golf cart/pedestrian crossing would connect the Project to the adjacent Madison Club community. The Project's provisions for safe and convenient walking, biking, and the use of golf carts to reach social, recreation, and entertainment amenities support the goal of reducing GHG emissions and improving air quality through promoting the use of these alternative modes among residents of the proposed community. Further, analysis conducted as part of **Section 5.8: Greenhouse Gases** of this Draft EIR found that any impacts the Project may have related to GHG emissions would be less than significant.
Goal 6: Support healthy and equitable communities.	**Consistent**. The Project would support healthy, active lifestyles among residents through the provision of a network of pedestrian amenity trails, bicycle facilities, and common area facilities that will include a fitness center, outdoor pool, and sports courts.
Goal 7: Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network.	**Consistent**. This policy is directed towards SCAG actions to support integrated regional development patterns. The Project would be consistent with the General Plan, supporting the County's overall vision for regional development.

TABLE 5.11-2: CONSISTENCY WITH FINAL CONNECT SOCAL 2024 GOALS

Goals and Policies	Consistency Analysis
Goal 8: Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel.	**Not Applicable**. This policy is directed towards SCAG actions to leverage the use of new transportation technologies using data-driven solutions.
Goal 9: Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.	**Consistent**. The Project consists of up to 85 homes that provide housing choices within the Lower Coachella Valley. The Project would include a network of pedestrian, bicycle, and golf cart accessible trails that would provide a range of transportation choices in the proposed neighborhood and surrounding area beyond the use of private vehicles. The Project would also provide access to a regional trail proposed for Monroe Street by the County, should it ultimately be constructed.
Goal 10: Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats.	**Consistent**. While the Project Site was formerly used for agricultural purposes, none of this land is actively used for agriculture, and its location surrounded by residential neighborhoods precludes such uses from being reinitiated in the future. Further, analysis conducted as part of **Section 5.4: Biological Resources** of this Draft EIR found that any impacts the Project may have on natural lands or sensitive habitats would be less than significant.

Source: SCAG, *Connect SoCal: 2024–2045 RTP/SCS*, https://scag.ca.gov/connect-socal. Accessed June 2025.

County of Riverside General Plan Analysis

The County's General Plan includes multiple levels of policies related to the desired vision, land uses, and strategies for different areas in the County in addition to the parcel-by-parcel zoning established in County Ordinance No. 348. The General Plan consists of two levels of policies that direct land use and development in the County: (1) policies that apply Countywide, and (2) those that are unique to a specific region. Countywide policies are applicable to the entire unincorporated area, are contained in the General Plan and reflected on the General Plan Land Use Map. More focused policies that address specific regional or local issues are found in the individual area plans. As detailed above, the Project Site is located within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan.

Since the uses permitted by the proposed Specific Plan are not allowed by the current AG or RC:LDR land use designations for the Project Site, a Foundation Component General Plan Amendment (FGPA) and Change of Zone are proposed as part of the Project. The FGPA process is required when a project proposes to amend the General Plan Land Use Element Map for properties located within an adopted Area Plan, ensuring that any land use redesignation remains consistent with the overall policy framework and structure of the General Plan.

The Project would redesignate the Project Site from RC:LDR and AG to Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Community Development: Mixed Use Area, and Open Space–Recreation, consistent with the land use pattern established in the proposed Specific Plan. As part of the FGPA process, the County evaluates whether the proposed land use changes maintain internal consistency with the General Plan's goals, policies, and implementation programs, including those

related to land use compatibility, community design, circulation, natural resources, and infrastructure planning.

As shown in **Table 5.11-3: County of Riverside General Plan Consistency** and **Table 5.11-4: Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan Consistency**, the Project has complied with the FGPA requirements by providing the necessary policy consistency findings with the County's General Plan and ECVAP. With adoption of the FGPA and associated entitlements, the Specific Plan would become the zoning for the Project Site, ensuring the Project is carried out in a manner consistent with the County's General Plan and regulatory framework.

TABLE 5.11-3: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

Relevant General Plan Policies	Specific Plan Consistency
Vision Statement	
V-10 – Growth involving new development or expansion of existing development is consistently accompanied by the public improvements required to serve it.	**Consistent.** As detailed throughout this document, the proposed Project would include on-site access points for emergency personnel, utility connections for the proposed community, and off-site improvements to ensure there is adequate circulation in the Project vicinity.
V-12 – New growth patterns no longer reflect a pattern of random sprawl. Rather, they follow a framework or transportation and open space corridors, with concentrations of development that fit into that framework. In other words, important open space and transportation corridors define growth areas.	**Consistent.** The proposed Specific Plan establishes a clearly defined land use framework organized around the internal circulation network, open space corridors, and the central Amenity Village, rather than dispersed or uncoordinated development. Residential neighborhoods, recreation areas, and the golf course are clustered within designated Planning Areas that align with planned transportation and open space features, ensuring growth occurs in a structured, non-sprawl pattern consistent with this policy.
V-16 – Riverside County residents are provided with a wide range of physical and cultural opportunities. The County of Riverside consistently promotes recreational, cultural and educational opportunities to all residents in a safe and welcoming environment.	**Consistent.** The proposed Specific Plan provides residents with a variety of recreational and lifestyle amenities, including a private 9-hole golf course, open space areas, trails, and community facilities within the Mixed Use Area. These features contribute to a safe, high-quality living environment and promote access to recreational opportunities consistent with the County's vision.
V-19 – Innovative land use policies continue to foster communities where a mixture of land uses provide healthy recreation and food options close to home. These healthy communities also offer ample bicycle trails and footpaths that are well-connected to surrounding land uses and multi-modal transportation options. This interconnectivity facilitates non-motor transportation, reducing long commutes and traffic.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan incorporates a mix of residential, recreational, and amenity uses within walkable distances, including trails, golf cart paths, and pedestrian connections integrated throughout the community. The Project also provides new sidewalks, bike lanes, and multimodal improvements along Monroe Street and Avenue 53, enhancing connectivity to surrounding areas and supporting non-motorized travel consistent with this policy.
V-22 – Flexible planning tools such as mixed use zoning, incentives for creative use of land, overlay zoning, and multiple, flexible use of open space are in	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan utilizes flexible planning tools, including a Mixed Use Area that accommodates residential and amenity uses, and open space areas designed for multiple recreational functions. By

TABLE 5.11-3: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

Relevant General Plan Policies	Specific Plan Consistency
common use as our communities mature and new communities take shape.	establishing a customized zoning framework tailored to the Project Site, the Specific Plan promotes innovative and adaptable land use planning consistent with this policy.
Land Use Element	
Policy LU-2.1 – Accommodate land use development in accordance with the patterns and distribution of use and density depicted on the General Plan Land Use Map (Figure LU-1) and the Area Plan Land Use Maps, in accordance with the following: a. Provide a land use mix at the countywide and area plan levels based on projected need and supported by evaluation of impacts to the environment, economy, infrastructure, and services. b. Accommodate a range of community types and character, from agricultural and rural enclaves to urban and suburban communities. c. Provide for a broad range of land uses, intensities, and densities, including a range of residential, commercial, business, industry, open space, recreation, and public facilities uses. d. Concentrate growth near community centers that provide a mixture of commercial, employment, entertainment, recreation, civic, and cultural uses to the greatest extent possible. e. Concentrate growth near or within existing urban and suburban areas to maintain the rural and open space character of Riverside County to the greatest extent possible. f. Site development to capitalize upon multi-modal transportation opportunities and promote compatible land use arrangements that reduce reliance on the automobile. g. Prevent inappropriate development in areas that are environmentally sensitive or subject to severe natural hazards.	**Consistent.** The proposed Specific Plan redesignates the Project Site to residential, mixed-use, and open space land use categories consistent with the General Plan Land Use Map and the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. The Project provides a balanced mix of residential densities, recreational amenities, and open space areas supported by environmental analysis and infrastructure planning (*subpolicies a–c*). Development is concentrated within a defined community framework adjacent to existing suburban and resort uses, thereby limiting encroachment into rural or environmentally sensitive areas (*subpolicies d–e, g*). The Specific Plan incorporates multimodal circulation improvements, including new sidewalks, bike lanes, pedestrian pathways, and golf cart routes, reducing reliance on automobiles and supporting transit-adaptive design principles (*subpolicy f*).
Policy LU-4.1 – Require that new developments be located and designed to visually enhance, not degrade the character of the surrounding area through consideration of the following concepts: a. Compliance with the design standards of the appropriate area plan land use category. b. Require that structures be constructed in accordance with the requirements of Riverside County's zoning, building, and other pertinent codes and regulations.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan includes comprehensive development standards, architectural guidelines, and a detailed landscape concept plan that ensure new development visually complements the surrounding community (*subpolicies a–c, g, i*). The Project incorporates drought-tolerant landscaping, water-efficient irrigation systems, and opportunities for stormwater infiltration consistent with County sustainability and water conservation policies (*subpolicies d–f, m–n*). Building orientation, circulation design, and landscaping support energy-efficient site planning and pedestrian-oriented

TABLE 5.11-3: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

Relevant General Plan Policies	Specific Plan Consistency
c. Require that an appropriate landscape plan be submitted and implemented for development projects subject to discretionary review. d. Require that new development utilize drought tolerant landscaping and incorporate adequate drought-conscious irrigation systems. e. Pursue energy efficiency through street configuration, building orientation, and landscaping to capitalize on shading and facilitate solar energy, as provided for in Title 24 Part 6 and/or Part 11, of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). f. Incorporate water conservation techniques, such as groundwater recharge basins, use of porous pavement, drought tolerant landscaping, and water recycling, as appropriate. g. Encourage innovative and creative design concepts. h. Encourage the provision of public art that enhances the community's identity, which may include elements of historical significance and creative use of children's art. i. Include consistent and well-designed signage that is integrated with the building's architectural character. j. Provide safe and convenient vehicular access and reciprocal access between adjacent commercial uses. k. Locate site entries and storage bays to minimize conflicts with adjacent residential neighborhoods. l. Mitigate noise, odor, lighting, and other impacts on surrounding properties. m. Provide and maintain landscaping in open spaces and parking lots. n. Include extensive landscaping. o. Preserve natural features, such as unique natural terrain, arroyos, canyons, and other drainage ways, and native vegetation, wherever possible, particularly where they provide continuity with more extensive regional systems. p. Require that new development be designed to provide adequate space for pedestrian connectivity and access, recreational trails, vehicular access and parking, supporting functions, open space, and other pertinent elements.	environments (*subpolicies e, p–t*). The Specific Plan preserves existing drainage features where feasible and integrates extensive open space and recreational amenities that enhance community identity and continuity with the broader landscape setting (*subpolicies o, u*). Vehicle access is designed to be safe and compatible with adjacent uses, with internal roadways, trails, and multimodal improvements facilitating pedestrian, bicycle, and cart connectivity throughout the community (*subpolicies j, k, l, q, r, s, t*). The Project's design framework thereby complies with applicable County codes and design standards and promotes a visually cohesive, safe, and high-quality built environment consistent with this policy.

TABLE 5.11-3: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

Relevant General Plan Policies	Specific Plan Consistency
q. Design parking lots and structures to be functionally and visually integrated and connected. r. Site buildings access points along sidewalks, pedestrian areas, and bicycle routes, and include amenities that encourage pedestrian activity. s. Establish safe and frequent pedestrian crossings. t. Create a human-scale ground floor environment that includes public open areas that separate pedestrian space from auto traffic or where mixed, it does so with special regard to pedestrian safety. u. Recognize open space, including hillsides, arroyos, riparian areas, and other natural features as amenities that add community identity, beauty, recreational opportunities, and monetary value to adjacent developed areas. v. Manage wild land fire hazards in the design of development proposals located adjacent to natural open space.	
Policy LU-7.3 – Consider the positive characteristics and unique features of the project site and surrounding community during the design and development process.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan incorporates the positive characteristics of the Project Site and surrounding community by establishing a residential, golf-oriented development pattern similar to existing master-planned golf communities in the area, such as the Madison Club and other nearby resort-residential neighborhoods. The Project's land use layout, open space network, and amenity-focused design respond to the site's setting and reinforce the established community character, consistent with this policy.
Policy LU-9.3 – Incorporate open space, community greenbelt separators, and recreational amenities into Community Development areas in order to enhance recreational opportunities and community aesthetics, and improve the quality of life.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan integrates substantial open space areas, a private 9-hole golf course, community recreational amenities, and landscaped corridors throughout the development, enhancing community aesthetics and providing diverse recreational opportunities. These features function as greenbelt separators between residential neighborhoods and strengthen the overall quality of life consistent with this policy.
Policy LU-21.1 – Require that grading be designed to blend with undeveloped natural contours of the site and avoid an unvaried, unnatural, or manufactured appearance.	**Consistent.** The Project Site consists primarily of previously disturbed agricultural land with minimal natural topographic variation, allowing grading to be designed in a manner that maintains the site's existing gentle contours. The Specific Plan's grading approach avoids creating abrupt or unnatural landforms and provides smooth transitions that blend with surrounding terrain, consistent with this policy.
Policy LU-25.2 – Provide for a balanced distribution of recreational amenities.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan provides a balanced mix of recreational amenities, including a private 9-hole golf

TABLE 5.11-3: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY	
Relevant General Plan Policies	**Specific Plan Consistency**
	course, trails, open space areas, sports courts and fields, pools, and the centrally located Amenity Village. These facilities are distributed throughout the community to ensure convenient access for residents and support a well-rounded recreational environment consistent with this policy.
Policy LU-28.10 – Require that residential units/projects be designed to consider their surroundings and to visually enhance, not degrade, the character of the immediate area.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan includes architectural design guidelines, landscape standards, and siting requirements that ensure residential development complements surrounding master-planned golf communities and the overall visual character of the area. Building forms, materials, and community landscaping are intended to visually enhance the setting and integrate harmoniously with adjacent development, consistent with this policy.
Circulation Element	
Policy C-4.1 – Provide facilities for the safe movement of pedestrians within developments, as specified in the Riverside County Ordinances Regulating the Division of Land of the County of Riverside.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan incorporates a network of sidewalks, pedestrian pathways, trails, and golf cart routes that provide safe internal circulation throughout the community. These facilities are designed in accordance with County subdivision and development standards, ensuring safe pedestrian movement within the Project consistent with this policy.
Policy C-5.2 – Encourage the use of drought-tolerant native plants and the use of recycled water for roadway landscaping.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan's landscape concept emphasizes drought-tolerant, desert-appropriate planting palettes and water-efficient irrigation systems throughout roadway edges and community corridors. Where feasible, the Project would utilize non-potable or recycled water sources for landscape irrigation consistent with County guidance, supporting water-conserving roadway landscaping in accordance with this policy.
Healthy Communities Element	
Policy HC-9.3 – Require safe and appealing recreational opportunities.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan provides a variety of safe and appealing recreational opportunities, including a private 9-hole golf course, community pools, sports courts and fields, pedestrian and golf cart trails, and landscaped open space areas. These amenities are designed with appropriate access, visibility, and design standards to ensure a safe and enjoyable recreational environment consistent with this policy.
Policy HC-13.1 – Encourage development of recreational centers to serve all phases of life (e.g. children, families, and senior citizens).	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan includes a centrally located Amenity Village with a Wellness Center, pools, sports courts, event spaces, and recreational programming suitable for residents of all ages, including children, families, and seniors. The mix of amenities and open space areas provides inclusive recreational opportunities that serve multiple stages of life, consistent with this policy.

TABLE 5.11-3: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY	
Relevant General Plan Policies	**Specific Plan Consistency**
Policy HC-16.13 – Provide buffer spaces and vegetative barriers between high-volume roadways/ transportation and train track corridors and sensitive land uses.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan incorporates landscaped setbacks and open space areas along Monroe Street and Avenue 53, creating buffer zones between these higher-volume roadways and residential neighborhoods. Vegetative screening and community edge landscaping further reduce potential exposure of sensitive land uses to roadway-related nuisances, consistent with this policy.
Policy HC-19.7 – Incorporate open space, community greenbelt separators, and recreational amenities into development areas in order to enhance recreational opportunities and community aesthetics to improve the quality of life.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan integrates extensive open space areas, a private golf course, community greenbelts, and a variety of recreational amenities throughout the development. These features create visual separation between neighborhoods, enhance community aesthetics, and provide accessible recreational opportunities that support a high quality of life, consistent with this policy.

TABLE 5.11-4: EASTERN COACHELLA VALLEY AREA PLAN CONSISTENCY	
Relevant Area Plan Policies	**Specific Plan Consistency**
Vision Statement	
Policy ECVAP – 1.1 a. Prepare a detailed land use plan, with community development policies, for the Vista Santa Rosa Community that will: provide for a harmonious blend of country club, residential, commercial, rural, and agricultural, and equestrian uses and community facilities in this area, and promote unifying community themes through signs, landscaping, scale of development, and trail and road facilities, etc. for the community. e. All development proposals within the Vista Santa Rosa Policy Area shall include multi-purpose recreational trails and shall provide for potential linkages of such trails to Riverside County's planned trail system as shown in the Non-motorized Transportation section of the Circulation Element.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan establishes a coordinated land use framework for the Vista Santa Rosa Community that blends residential neighborhoods with golf, recreational amenities, and open space areas, consistent with the community development themes described in the Area Plan (*subpolicy a*). The Project incorporates an internal network of multipurpose trails, pedestrian pathways, and golf cart routes, and provides connections to off-site sidewalks and bike lanes along Monroe Street and Avenue 53, supporting potential linkages to the County's broader non-motorized transportation system (*subpolicy e*).
Policy ECVAP – 12.3 Separate vehicular traffic from pedestrian and equestrian traffic in order to avoid potential hazards and where traffic volumes justify the costs.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan separates vehicular circulation from pedestrian, bicycle, and golf cart pathways through a dedicated internal trail system, landscaped buffers, and sidewalk improvements along community roadways. These design features reduce conflicts between modes of travel and enhance safety where traffic volumes warrant separation, consistent with this policy.

In conclusion, with the approval of the FGPA and Change of Zone, the Project would not conflict with any applicable land use plans and policies, resulting in less-than-significant impacts.

5.11.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts would be less than significant, and the Project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to potential land use impacts. Development of the Project, in conjunction with other cumulative development in the area permitted by the General Plan, would not result in Countywide and regional land use and planning impacts. Furthermore, as analyzed in detail above, the Project would be consistent with applicable goals and policies of the General Plan.

The proposed uses within the Project Site would be consistent and compatible with existing and planned land uses surrounding the Project Site, including the existing residential golf course community to the west; residential and open space uses to the north; and agricultural uses along with estate residential lots and special event center-type uses to the south and east. Therefore, development of the Project would create a cohesive community of residential uses that is well-connected with the surrounding community, thereby contributing to the General Plan Goals and Vision.

As with the Project, related projects and other future growth would be subject to compliance with the local and regional plans reviewed in this section. Therefore, implementation of related projects in accordance with plans would not combine with the Project to result in potentially significant cumulative land use impacts. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

5.11.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.11.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

No significant impacts have been identified and no mitigation measures are necessary.

5.12 NOISE

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) evaluates the potential for the proposed Project to result in noise impacts within the Project Site and surrounding communities. This evaluation uses procedures and methodologies as specified by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Noise monitoring and roadway noise modeling datasheets are included in **Appendix S: Noise Study** of this Draft EIR.

5.12.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.12.1.1 Federal

Federal Transit Administration

The FTA has published a technical manual, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impacts Assessment Manual*, that provides ground-borne vibration impact criteria with respect to building damage during construction activities.[1] According to the FTA guidelines, a vibration criterion of 0.20 PPV should be considered as the significant impact level for nonengineered timber and masonry buildings. Structures or buildings constructed of reinforced concrete, steel, or timber have a vibration damage criterion of 0.50 PPV based on the FTA guidelines. Structures amplify ground-borne vibration, and wood-frame buildings, such as typical residential structures, are more affected by ground vibration than are heavier buildings. The level at which ground-borne vibration is strong enough to cause architectural damage has not been determined conclusively. The most conservative estimates are reflected in the FTA standards, shown in **Table 5.12-1: Construction Vibration Damage Criteria**.

TABLE 5.12-1: CONSTRUCTION VIBRATION DAMAGE CRITERIA

Building Category	PPV (ips)	Lv (VdB)
I. Reinforced concrete, steel, or timber (no plaster)	0.5	102
II. Engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster)	0.3	98
III. Nonengineered timber and masonry buildings	0.2	94
IV. Buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage	0.12	90

Note:
For Max Lv (VdB), Lv = the velocity level in decibels as measured in 1/3 octave bands of frequency over the frequency ranges of 8 to 80 Hz; VdB = vibration decibels; Hz = hertz; ips = inches per second.

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

1 Federal Transit Administration (FTA). *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, *FTA report no. 0123*. September 2018. Accessed October 2025. https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123_0.pdf.

5.12.1.2 State

Office of Planning and Research Guidelines for Noise Compatible Land Use

The California Department of Health Services (DHS) has established guidelines for evaluating the compatibility of various land uses as a function of community noise exposure; these guidelines have been included in the State of California General Plan Guidelines, which is published and updated by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.[2] According to the State, an exterior noise environment up to 60 dBA CNEL and 65 dBA CNEL is "normally acceptable" for single- and multifamily residential uses, respectively, without special noise insulation requirements. In addition, noise levels up to 75 dBA CNEL are "conditionally acceptable" with special noise insulation requirements, while noise levels at 75 dBA CNEL and above are "clearly unacceptable" for residential uses. In addition, Section 65302(f) of the California Government Code requires each county and city in the State to prepare and adopt a comprehensive long-range general plan for its physical development, with Section 65302(g) requiring a noise element to be included in the general plan. The noise element must (1) identify and appraise noise problems in the community, (2) recognize Office of Noise Control guidelines, and (3) analyze and quantify current and projected noise levels.

DHS's Office of Noise Control has established guidelines to provide communities with noise environments that it deems to be generally acceptable based on land-use categories. These guidelines serve as a primary tool for a city to use to assess the compatibility between land uses and outdoor noise. Noise exposure for single-family uses is normally acceptable when the CNEL at exterior residential locations is equal to or below 60 dBA, conditionally acceptable when the CNEL is between 55 to 70 dBA, and normally unacceptable when the CNEL exceeds 70 dBA. Some overlap exists between categories. These guidelines apply to noise sources such as vehicular traffic, aircraft, and rail movements.

State of California Building Code

California's noise insulation standards are codified in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Building Standards Administrative Code, Part 2, California Building Code. These noise standards are applied to new construction in California for the purpose of interior noise compatibility from exterior noise sources. The regulations specify that acoustical studies must be prepared when noise-sensitive structures, such as residential buildings, schools, or hospitals, are located near major transportation noise sources, and where such noise sources create an exterior noise level of 60 dB(A) CNEL or higher. Acoustical studies that accompany building plans must demonstrate that the structure has been designed to limit interior noise in habitable rooms to acceptable noise levels. For

2 State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research. *General Plan Guidelines 2017*. 2018. Page 374. Accessed October 2025. http://opr.ca.gov/planning/general-plan/guidelines.html.

new residential buildings, schools, and hospitals, the acceptable interior noise limit for new construction is 45 dB(A) CNEL.

California Noise Insulation Standards

The California Noise Insulation Standards[3] require that interior noise levels from exterior sources be 45 dB(A) or less in any habitable room of a multiresidential use facility (e.g., hotels, motels, dormitories, long-term care facilities, and apartment houses, but excluding detached single-family dwellings) with doors and windows closed. Measurements are based on CNEL or Ldn (the day–night average), whichever is consistent with the noise element of the local general plan. Where exterior noise levels exceed 60 dB(A) CNEL, an acoustical analysis for new development may be required to show that the proposed construction will reduce interior noise levels to 45 dB(A) CNEL. If the interior 45 dB(A) CNEL limit can be achieved only with the windows closed, the residence must include mechanical ventilation that meets applicable *Uniform Building Code* (UBC) requirements.

Public Resources Code Section 21085 (Assembly Bill 1307)

Assembly Bill (AB) 1307 was signed by Governor Newsom, in September 2023. For residential projects, noise generated by occupants is not a significant effect on the environment under the California Environmental Quality Act.

5.12.1.3 Regional and Local

County of Riverside 2020 General Plan

The Noise Element of the County of Riverside (County) General Plan identifies sources of noise and provides policies that are designed to protect noise-sensitive land uses from noise emitted by outside sources, prevent new projects from generating adverse noise levels on adjacent properties, and provide solutions to noise problems. Overall, the County's Noise Element describes the noise environment (including noise sources) in the County, addresses noise mitigation regulations, strategies, and programs, and addresses noise compatibility with different land uses within the County.

As described in the General Plan, the County has a number of educational facilities, hospitals, convalescent homes, residential uses, places of worship, and other facilities that are considered noise-sensitive. However, the primary noise-sensitive uses within the County are residential uses. The noise exposure of these sensitive uses varies from low in quiet residential areas, to high, in areas near mass transit. Considering noise sources as part of the planning process is achieved by specifying acceptable noise exposure ranges for various land uses throughout the County. **Table 5.12-2: Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Sources**, presents criteria used to assess the compatibility of proposed land uses within the noise environment. As shown, normally

3 California Code of Regulation, Title 24, sec. 3501 et seq.

acceptable noise exposure for residential—single-family range from 50 – 60 dBA CNEL and conditionally acceptable between 55 – 70 dBA CNEL.

TABLE 5.12-2: LAND USE COMPATIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY NOISE SOURCES

Land Use Categories	Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential—Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes						
Residential—Multiple Family						
Transient Lodging - Motel, Hotels						
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes						
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters						
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports						
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks						
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries						
Office Buildings, Business, Commercial, and Professional						

TABLE 5.12-2: LAND USE COMPATIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY NOISE SOURCES

Land Use Categories	Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture						

***Normally Acceptable**: Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.*

***Conditionally Acceptable**: New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will suffice.*

***Normally Unacceptable**: New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.*

***Clearly Unacceptable**: New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.*

Source: Riverside County. *General Plan*, *Noise Element*.

In addition to the Land Use Compatibility Matrix provided in **Table 5.12-2**, the County's interior and exterior noise standards for residential uses are identified in **Table 5.12-3: Interior and Exterior Noise Standardsa**, which represents specific noise standards for interior and exterior noise areas that are considered acceptable based on noise levels generated by stationary sources including motors, appliances, air conditioners, lawn and garden equipment, power tools, and generators are often found in residential neighborhoods, as well as on or near the properties of schools, hospitals, and parks. These standards are suggested, and the County does not utilize these as thresholds of significance for environmental impact analyses under CEQA.

TABLE 5.12-3: INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR NOISE STANDARDS[a]

Time	Interior Standards	Exterior Standards
10:00 PM to 7:00 AM	40 L_{eq} (10 minute)	45 L_{eq} (10 minute)
7:00 AM to 10:00 PM	55 L_{eq} (10 minute)	65 L_{eq} (10 minute)

Note:

[a] *These are only preferred standards; final decision will be made by the Riverside County Planning Department and Office of Public Health.*

Source: Riverside County. *General Plan*, *Noise Element*.

The County's General Plan Noise Element also includes the following relevant policies to protect noise-sensitive land uses from noise resulting from temporary construction activities:

N 13.1 Minimize the impacts of construction noise on adjacent uses within acceptable practices.

N 13.2 Ensure that construction activities are regulated to establish hours of operation in order to prevent and/or mitigate the generation of excessive or adverse noise impacts on surrounding areas.

N 13.3 Condition subdivision approval adjacent to developed/occupied noise-sensitive land uses by requiring the developer to submit a construction-related noise mitigation plan to the County for review and approval prior to issuance of a grading permit. The plan must depict the location of construction equipment and how the noise from this equipment will be mitigated during construction of this Project, through the use of such methods as:

- Temporary noise attenuation fences;
- Preferential location of equipment; and
- Use of current noise suppression technology and equipment

N 13.4 Require that all construction equipment utilizes noise reduction features (e.g. mufflers and engine shrouds) that are no less effective than those originally installed by the manufacturer.

County of Riverside Code of Ordinances

Chapter 9.52 of the County Code of Ordinances outlines countywide standards regulating noise; however, it is not intended to establish thresholds of significance for the purpose of any analysis required by the CEQA and no such thresholds are established by the County.

The County regulates and enforces noise standards through Chapter 9.52.040, which establishes exterior noise limits measured at the property line for General Plan land uses within the County, as shown in **Table 5.12-4: County of Riverside Sound Level Standards.**

TABLE 5.12-4: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE SOUND LEVEL STANDARDS

General Plan Foundation Component	General Plan Land Use Designation	Maximum dBA	
		7:00 AM – 10:00 PM	10:00 PM – 7:00 AM
Community Development	Residential[1]	55	45
	Commercial[2]	65	55
	Light Industrial	75	55
	Heavy Industrial	75	75
	Business Park	65	45
	Public Facility	65	45
	Specific Plan Residential	55	45

TABLE 5.12-4: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE SOUND LEVEL STANDARDS			
General Plan Foundation Component	General Plan Land Use Designation	Maximum dBA	
		7:00 AM – 10:00 PM	10:00 PM – 7:00 AM
	Specific Plan Commercial	65	55
	Specific Plan Light Industrial	75	55
	Specific Plan Heavy Industrial	75	75
Rural Community	Estate Density Residential	55	45
	Low Density Residential	55	45
	Very low Density Residential	55	45
Rural	Rural Residential	45	45
	Rural Mountainous	45	45
	Rural Desert	45	45
Agriculture	Agriculture	45	45
Open Space	Conservation	45	45
	Conservation Habitat	45	45
	Recreation	45	45
	Rural	45	45
	Watershed	45	45
	Mineral Resources	75	75

Notes:

[1] *Estate Density Residential, Very Low Density Residential, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Medium High Density Residential, High Density Residential, Very High Density Residential, Highest Density Residential.*

[2] *Retail Commercial, Office Commercial, Tourist Commercial, Community Center.*

Source: County of Riverside. Code of Ordinances, Chapter 9.52.040.

Chapter 9.52.020 of the County Code of Ordinances establishes that construction projects located one-quarter of a mile or more from an inhabited dwelling are exempt from County noise standards; further construction projects located within one-quarter of a mile from an inhabited dwelling are exempt, provided that construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 PM and 6:00 AM during the months of June through September, and construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 PM and 7:00 AM during the months of October through May. Noise generated by construction or equipment operations during established hours of 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM during the months of June through September, and 6:00 AM and 7:00 PM during the months of October through May is not considered a nuisance. Further, Chapter 9.52.070 of the County Code of Ordinances provides exemptions from Chapter 9.52.040 for construction-related activities.

5.12.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.12.2.1 Noise Descriptors

Noise levels are measured using a variety of scientific metrics. As a result of extensive research into the characteristics of noise and human response, standard noise descriptors have been developed for noise exposure analyses. All noise levels provided in this Noise Report are for outdoor conditions, unless otherwise stated specifically to be interior noise levels.

- **A-Weighted Sound Pressure Level (dBA):** The decibel (dB) is a unit used to describe sound pressure level. When expressed in dBA, the sound has been filtered to reduce the effect of very low and very high frequency sounds, much as the human ear filters sound frequencies. Without this filtering, calculated and measured sound levels would include events that the human ear cannot hear (e.g., dog whistles and low-frequency sounds, such as the groaning sounds emanating from large buildings with changes in temperature and wind). With A-weighting, calculations and sound-monitoring equipment approximate the sensitivity of the human ear to sounds of different frequencies.
- **Maximum Noise Level (Lmax):** Lmax is the maximum or peak sound level during a noise event. The metric accounts only for the instantaneous peak intensity of the sound, and not for the duration of the event. As a vehicle passes by an observer, the sound level increases to a maximum level and then decreases. Some sound level meters measure and record the maximum or Lmax level.
- **Sound Exposure Level (SEL):** SEL, expressed in dBA, is a time-integrated measure, expressed in decibels, of the sound energy of a single noise event at a reference duration of 1 second. The sound level is integrated over the period that the level exceeds a threshold. Therefore, SEL accounts for both the maximum sound level and the duration of the sound. The standardization of discrete noise events into a 1-second duration allows calculation of the cumulative noise exposure of a series of noise events that occur over a period of time.
- **Equivalent Continuous Noise Level (Leq):** Leq is the sound level, expressed in dBA, of a steady sound that has the same A-weighted sound energy as the time-varying sound over the averaging period. Unlike SEL, Leq is the average sound level for a specified time period (e.g., 24 hours, 8 hours, 1 hour). Leq is calculated by integrating the sound energy from all noise events over a given time period and applying a factor for the number of events. Leq can be expressed for any time interval; for example, the Leq representing an averaged level over an 8-hour period would be expressed as Leq(8).
- **Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL):** CNEL, expressed in dBA, is a rating of community noise exposure to all sources of sound that differentiates between daytime (7:00 AM to 7:00 PM), evening (7:00 PM to 10:00 PM), and nighttime (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM) noise exposure. CNEL includes penalties applied to noise events occurring after 7:00 PM and before 7:00 AM, when noise is considered more intrusive. The penalized time period is further subdivided into an evening period with an addition of 5 dBA to measured or forecasted noise levels and a nighttime period with an addition of 10 dB to measured or forecasted noise levels. CNEL has been adopted

by the State of California to define the community noise environment in preparing the community noise element of a General Plan.[4]

- **Day-Night Average Sound Level (L_{dn}):** The day-night average sound level is the average noise level over a 24-hour period. The noise level measurements between the hours of 10:00 pm and 7:00 am are artificially increased by 10 dBA before averaging. Nighttime noise is weighted to take into account a decrease in community background noise of 10 dBA during this period. The evening weighting is the only difference between CNEL and day-night average sound level (DNL).

5.12.2.2 Effects of Noise on Humans

Human response to sound is highly individualized. Annoyance is the most common issue associated with community noise levels. Many factors influence the response to noise including the character of the noise, the variability of the sound level, the presence of tones or impulses, and the time of day of the occurrence. Additionally, non-acoustical factors, such as an individual's opinion of the noise source, the ability to adapt to the noise, the attitude towards the source and those associated with it, and the predictability of the noise, all influence the response to noise. These factors result in the reaction to noise being highly subjective, with the perceived effect of a particular noise varying widely among individuals in a community. The effects of noise can be grouped into three general categories:

- Subjective effects of annoyance, nuisance, dissatisfaction;
- Interference with activities such as speech, sleep, and learning; and
- Physiological effects such as hearing loss.

Noise-induced hearing loss usually takes years to develop. Hearing loss is one of the most obvious and easily quantifiable effects of excessive exposure to noise. While the loss may be temporary at first, it can become permanent after continued exposure. When combined with hearing loss associated with aging, the amount of hearing loss directly due to the environment is difficult to quantify. Although the major cause of noise induced hearing loss is occupational, nonoccupational sources may also be a factor.

Noise can mask important sounds and disrupt communication between individuals in a variety of settings. This process can cause anything from a slight irritation to a serious safety hazard, depending on the circumstance. Noise can disrupt face-to-face communication and telephone communication, and the enjoyment of music and television in the home. Interference with communication has proved to be one of the most important components of noise-related annoyance.

Noise-induced sleep interference is one of the critical components of community annoyance. Sound level, frequency distribution, duration, repetition, and variability can make it difficult to fall asleep

4 State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research. *General Plan Guidelines*. 2017. Accessed October 2025. http://calaverascap.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/OPR_COMPLETE_7.31.17.pdf.

and may cause momentary shifts in the natural sleep pattern or level of sleep. It can produce short-term effects, with the possibility of more serious effects on health if it continues over long periods.

Annoyance can be defined as the expression of negative feelings resulting from interference with activities, as well as the disruption of one's peace of mind and the enjoyment of one's environment. The consequences of noise-induced annoyance are privately held dissatisfaction, publicly expressed complaints to authorities, and potential adverse health effects, as discussed previously.

Some common sounds on the dBA scale, relative to ordinary conversation, are provided in **Table 5.12-5: Common Sounds on the A-Weighted Decibel Scale**. As shown, the relative perceived loudness of sound doubles for each increase of 10 dBA, although a 10 dBA change corresponds to a factor of 10 in relative sound energy. Generally, sounds with differences of 3 dBA or less are not perceived to be noticeably different by most listeners.

TABLE 5.12-5: COMMON SOUNDS ON THE A-WEIGHTED DECIBEL SCALE

Sound	Sound Level (dBA)	Subjective Evaluations
Near Jet Engine	140	**Deafening**
Threshold of Pain	130	
Rock music, with amplifier	120	
Thunder, snowmobile (operator)	110	**Very Loud**
Boiler shop, power mower	100	
Orchestral crescendo at 25 feet, noisy kitchen	90	
Busy street	80	**Loud**
Interior of department store	70	
Ordinary conversation, 3 feet away	60	**Moderate**
Quiet automobiles at low speed	50	
Average office	40	**Faint**
City residence	30	
Quiet country residence	20	**Very Faint**
Rustle of leaves	10	
Threshold of hearing	0	

Notes:

[1] *Continuous exposure above 85 dB is likely to degrade the hearing of most people (hearing protection recommended).*

[2] *Range of Speech: 50 – 70 dB*

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *Aircraft Noise Impact – Planning Guidelines for Local Agencies*. 1972.

5.12.2.3 Vibration

Vibration consists of waves transmitted through a solid medium. Groundborne vibration propagates from the source through the ground to adjacent buildings by surface waves. A vibration may be a single pulse, a series of pulses, or a continuous oscillatory motion. The frequency of a vibrating

object describes how rapidly it is oscillating, measured in hertz (Hz). Most environmental vibrations consist of a composite, or "spectrum," of many frequencies, and are generally classified as broadband or random vibrations. The normal frequency range of most groundborne vibration that can be felt starts from a low frequency of less than 1 Hz to a high of about 200 Hz. Vibration is often measured in terms of the peak particle velocity (PPV) in inches per second (in/sec) because it is related to the stresses that are experienced by buildings. Vibration is also measured in vibration decibels (VdB). The human threshold of perception is approximately 65 VdB. A vibration velocity of 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible levels for many people. Vibration levels are acceptable at approximately 85 VdB if there are an infrequent number of events per day.[5]

Vibration energy attenuates as it travels through the ground, causing the vibration amplitude to decrease with distance away from the source.[6] High frequency vibrations reduce much more rapidly than low frequencies, so that in the far-field from a source, the low frequencies tend to dominate. Soil properties also affect the propagation of vibration. When groundborne vibration interacts with a building, there is usually a ground-to-foundation coupling loss, but the vibration can also be amplified by the structural resonances of the walls and floors.[7] Vibration in buildings is typically perceived as rattling of windows or of items on shelves, or the motion of building surfaces.

Groundborne vibration is generally limited to areas within a few hundred feet of certain types of construction activities, especially pile driving. Road vehicles rarely create enough groundborne vibration to be perceptible to humans unless the road surface is poorly maintained and there are potholes or bumps.[8] If traffic, typically heavy trucks, induces perceptible vibration in buildings, such as window rattling or shaking of small loose items, then it is most likely an effect of low-frequency airborne noise or ground characteristics. Human annoyance by vibration is related to the vibration energy and the number and duration of events, as well as the setting in which the person experiences the vibration. As discussed previously, vibration can be amplified by the structural resonances of the walls and floors of buildings. The more the events or the greater the duration, the more annoying it will be to humans.

5.12.2.4 Existing Conditions

Noise within the County is generated by numerous sources found near places where people live and work. These sources are of particular concern when the noise they generate reaches levels above the prevailing background noise. There are many different types of noise, including mobile, stationary, and construction-related, that affect noise-sensitive receptors such as residences, schools,

5 FTA. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, *FTA report no. 0123*. p. 7-8.

6 California Department of Transportation. *Earthborne Vibrations*. 1990. p. VII-27.

7 FTA. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, *FTA report no. 0123*. p. 7-1, 7-2.

8 FTA. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, *FTA report no. 0123*. p. 7-9.

cemeteries, and hospitals. Roadway traffic is identified as one of the most pervasive sources of noise within Riverside County.

Ambient Noise Levels

Short-term sound monitoring was conducted by Meridian Consultants at five (5) locations to measure the ambient sound environment in the Project vicinity. Measurements were taken over 15-minute intervals at each location during the afternoon period between the hours of 9:21 AM – 10:57 AM on June 19, 2025, as shown in **Table 5.12-6: Ambient Noise Measurements**. **Figure 5.12-1** through **Figure 5.12-5: Noise Monitoring** Location (Site 5) depict locations where ambient noise measurements were conducted. As shown in **Table 5.12-6**, ambient noise levels ranged from a low of 43.6 dBA (L_{eq} 15-minute) at the northeast corner of the Project Site along Arabia Street (Site 5) to a high of 68.6 dBA (L_{eq} 15-minute) at the southwest corner of the Project Site along Moore Street (Site 3).

Noise-level monitoring was conducted for 15-minute intervals at each location using a Larson Davis Model 831 sound-level meter. This meter satisfies the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard for general environmental noise measurement instrumentation. The ANSI specifies several types of sound-level meters according to their precision. Types 1, 2, and 3 are referred to as "precision," "general-purpose," and "survey" meters, respectively. Most measurements carefully taken with a Type 1 sound-level meter will have a margin of error not exceeding 1 dB.

TABLE 5.12-6: AMBIENT NOISE MEASUREMENTS

Location Number/Description		Distance to nearest sensitive receptor	Nearest Use	Time Period	dBA Leq-15-minute
1	**Northwest corner Project Site along Monroe Street**	200 feet	Residential uses, agricultural uses	10:42 AM – 10:57 AM	66.6
2	**Western border of Project Site at intersection of Moore Street and Avenue 53**	315 feet	Residential uses, agricultural uses	10:24 AM – 10:39 AM	63.9
3	**Southwest corner of Project Site along Monroe Street**	230 feet	Residential uses, agricultural uses	10:06 AM – 10:21 AM	68.6
4	**Eastern border of Project Site along Avenue 53**	1,200 feet	Agricultural uses	9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	62.9
5	**Northeast corner of Project Site along Arabia Street**	675 feet	Agricultural uses	9:21 AM – 9:36 AM	43.6

Notes: dBA = A-weighted decibels; Leq = average equivalent sound level.

Source: Refer to **Appendix S** for the Noise Study.

The Larson Davis Model 831 is a Type 1 precision sound-level meter. This meter meets all requirements of ANSI S1.4-1983 and ANSI S1.43-1997 Type 1 standards, as well as International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) IEC61672-1 Ed. 1.0, IEC60651 Ed 1.2, and IEC60804 Type 1, Group X standards.



North



West



South



East



SOURCE: Google Earth - 2025

FIGURE **5.12-1**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Noise Monitoring Location (Site 1)

427-001-24



North



West



South



East



SOURCE: Google Earth - 2025

FIGURE **5.12-2**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Noise Monitoring Location (Site 2)

427-001-24



North



West



South



East



SOURCE: Google Earth - 2025

FIGURE **5.12-3**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Noise Monitoring Location (Site 3)

427-001-24



North



West



South



East



SOURCE: Google Earth - 2025

FIGURE **5.12-4**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Noise Monitoring Location (Site 4)

427-001-24



North



West



South



East



SOURCE: Google Earth - 2025

FIGURE **5.12-5**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Noise Monitoring Location (Site 5)

427-001-24

The sound-level meter was located approximately 5 feet above ground and was covered with a Larson Davis windscreen. The sound-level meter was field calibrated with an external calibrator prior to operation.

Surrounding Uses

The Noise Element of the County of Riverside General Plan identifies noise-sensitive land uses as residential uses, educational facilities, hospitals, rest homes, long-term care facilities, mental care facilities, places of worship, and passive recreation areas. These uses are considered sensitive because they require a relatively quiet environment to support normal activities such as sleeping, learning, or passive recreation.

The Project Site has a General Plan land use designation of Rural Community – Low-Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG), which provides for large residential lots, farming, and animal keeping uses. The existing zoning classifications are R-1-20000 (One-Family Dwellings), R-A-2 (Residential Agriculture, 2-acre minimum), and R-5 (Open Area Combining Zone - Residential Developments).

The nearest noise-sensitive receptors used for the noise impact modeling include the Mirabella Estates approximately 20 feet to the north of the Project Site boundary, the Cavallo Ranch approximately 20 feet to the south of the Project Site boundary, the residential neighborhood approximately 90 feet to the west across Monroe Street from the Project Site boundary, and the Cahuilla Desert Academy approximately 20 feet to the northeast (refer to **Figure 5.12-6: Sensitive Receptor Map**).

These receptors represent the worst-case location for evaluating potential construction and operational noise impacts because they are the closest residential uses to the proposed noise sources. All construction noise calculations and operational noise modeling were performed using these receptor distances to conservatively evaluate potential impacts to assess compliance with applicable County standards.

Existing Groundborne Vibration

Based on field observations, the primary source of existing ground-borne vibration in the vicinity of the Project Site is vehicle traffic on local roadways. According to the Federal Transit Administration, typical road traffic-induced vibration levels are unlikely to be perceptible by people.[9] Trucks and buses typically generate ground-borne vibration velocity levels of approximately 63 VdB (at a 50-foot distance), and these levels could reach 72 VdB when trucks and buses pass over bumps in the road. A vibration level of 72 VdB is above the 60 VdB level of perceptibility.

9 FTA. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, FTA report no. 0123.*

Existing Off-Site Roadway Noise Levels

In addition to the ambient noise measurements near the Project Site, the existing traffic noise on local roadways in the surrounding areas was calculated to quantify the 24-hour CNEL noise levels using information provided in the transportation impact analysis.[10]

The transportation impact analysis analyzed four segments within the Project vicinity. Traffic noise levels were calculated using the Federal Highway Administration Traffic Noise Model (FHWA TNM). The transportation impact analysis analyzed the following seven intersections within the Project vicinity:

- Monroe Street & 50th Avenue
- Monroe Street & 52nd Avenue
- Arabia Street & 52nd Avenue
- Jackson Street & 52nd Avenue
- Monroe Street & Via La Serena
- Monroe Street & 53rd Avenue
- Driveway G & 53rd Avenue

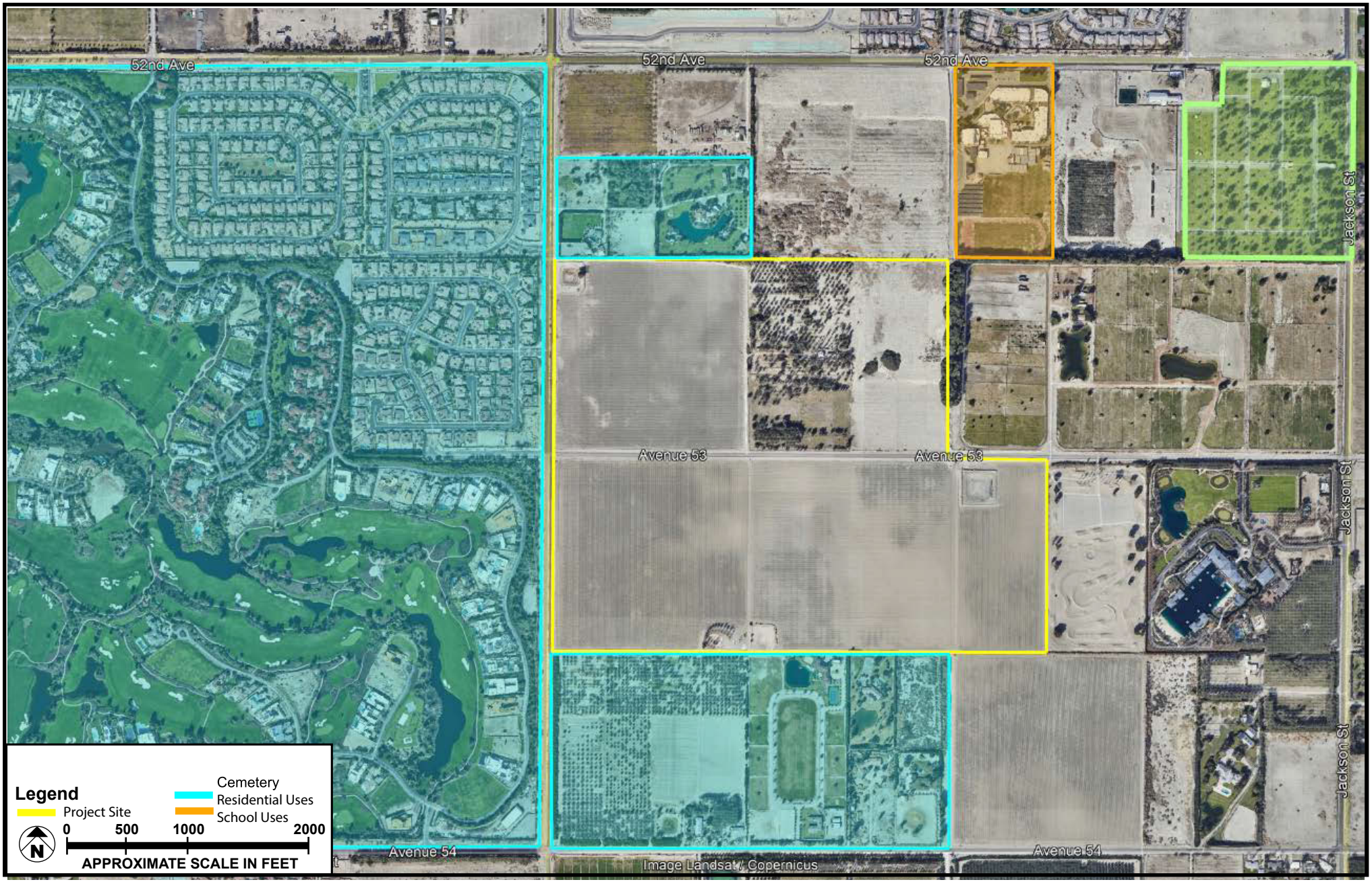
Table 5.12-7: Existing Roadway Noise Levels provides the calculated 24-hour CNEL noise levels for the analyzed local roadway segments based on existing traffic volumes. 24-hour CNEL levels attributed to roadway traffic range from a low of 46.1 dBA CNEL along 53rd Avenue west of Monroe Street to a high of 62.3 dBA CNEL along Monroe Street north of 50th Avenue, 50th Avenue east of Monroe Street, 52nd Avenue east of Arabia Street and west of Jackson Street. In terms of the County's land use compatibility categories based on roadway traffic only, all locations are classified as normally acceptable or conditionally acceptable.

Each roadway segment described below was subject to noise exposure compatibility standards based on adjacent land uses. Such standards for single-family residential uses, which are the majority of the surrounding land uses, are summarized as follows:

- **Normally acceptable**: <60
- **Conditionally acceptable**: 60-70
- **Normally unacceptable**: 70-75
- **Clearly unacceptable**: >75

In terms of the County's land use noise compatibility categories based on roadway traffic only, most locations are classified as normally acceptable, with others classified as conditionally acceptable.

10 Fehr & Peers, *Transportation Impact Analysis*. November 2025.



SOURCE: Google Earth – 2025

FIGURE **5.12-6**

Trinity Consultants | Meridian

Sensitive Receptor Map

427-001-24

TABLE 5.12-7: EXISTING ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS				
Intersection Number	Roadway Segment	Adjacent Land Use(s)	Existing Roadway Noise Level *(dBA CNEL)*	Existing Noise Exposure Compatibility Category
Monroe Street				
1	North of 50th Avenue	Single-Family Residential Uses	62.3	Conditionally Acceptable
1	South of 50th Avenue	Single-Family Residential Uses	61.8	Conditionally Acceptable
2	North of 52nd Avenue	Single-Family Residential Uses	61.4	Conditionally Acceptable
2	South of 52nd Avenue	Single-Family Residential Uses	60.1	Conditionally Acceptable
6	North of 53rd Avenue	Single-Family Residential Uses	60.1	Conditionally Acceptable
6	South of 53rd Avenue	Agricultural Uses	59.7	Normally Acceptable
50th Avenue				
1	East of Monroe Street	Single-Family Residential Uses	62.3	Conditionally Acceptable
1	West of Monroe Street	Single-Family Residential Uses	61.4	Conditionally Acceptable
Arabia Street				
3	North of 52nd Avenue	Single-Family Residential Uses	54.3	Normally Acceptable
3	South of 52nd Avenue	School Uses	59.4	Normally Acceptable
Jackson Street				
4	North of 52nd Avenue	Commercial Uses	60.3	Normally Acceptable
4	South of 52nd Avenue	Residential Uses	58.0	Normally Acceptable
52nd Avenue				
2	East of Monroe Street	Agricultural Uses	62.0	Normally Acceptable
2	West of Monroe Street	Single-Family Residential Uses	61.4	Conditionally Acceptable
3	East of Arabia Street	School Uses	62.3	Normally Acceptable
3	West of Arabia Street	Single-Family Residential Uses	61.1	Conditionally Acceptable
4	East of Jackson Street	Single-Family Residential Uses	60.8	Conditionally Acceptable
4	West of Jackson Street	Single-Family Residential Uses	62.3	Conditionally Acceptable
53rd Avenue				
6	East of Monroe Street	Single-Family Residential Uses	51.0	Normally Acceptable
6	West of Monroe Street	Agricultural Uses	46.1	Normally Acceptable

Source: Refer to **Appendix S** for the **Noise Study.**

5.12.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.12.3.1 Threshold of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine the significance of noise impacts (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). Appendix G provides that a project would have a significant environmental impact if it would result in the:

a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

Construction Noise

The County has established sound level limits for activity within the County. However, the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 9.52 allows for noise resulting from construction activities not to be considered a nuisance if it occurs between the hours of 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM during the months of June through September, and 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM during the months of October through May.

Although the County ordinance establishes allowable hours for construction activities, it does not provide a quantitative threshold for evaluating temporary construction noise levels at nearby noise-sensitive receptors for purposes of environmental review. Therefore, to evaluate whether the Project would generate a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels at off-site sensitive receptors, construction noise impacts were evaluated by comparing predicted construction noise levels to existing ambient noise levels measured or estimated at each nearest sensitive receptor.

A 5 dBA increase over ambient was used as the significance threshold for this analysis. This level is widely recognized in community noise literature as the point at which a change becomes clearly noticeable to most listeners, distinct from the roughly 3 dBA change that is barely perceptible and the 10 dBA change associated with a perceived doubling of loudness. Evaluating construction noise against existing ambient conditions, rather than solely against a fixed numerical ceiling, is also consistent with the Fifth District Court of Appeal's holding in *King and Gardiner Farms, LLC v. County of Kern* (2020) 45 Cal.App.5th 814, which found that noise impacts cannot be assessed against an absolute limit alone without also considering the increase over ambient conditions in the affected setting.

For purposes of this analysis, predicted construction noise levels generated by Project-related activities were calculated at the nearest noise-sensitive receptor and compared to the corresponding existing ambient noise level at that location. A predicted increase of 5 dBA or greater over ambient during permitted construction hours would represent a potentially significant short-term noise impact at that receptor.

Because construction activities associated with the Project would occur during the daytime hours permitted by Riverside County Code Chapter 9.52, this threshold was applied to the ambient conditions typical of those hours at each receptor evaluated.

Operation Noise

The County's General Plan establishes exterior and interior standards for noise generated by stationary sources including motors, appliances, air conditioners, lawn and garden equipment, power tools, and generators, which are often found in residential neighborhoods, as well as on or near the properties of schools, hospitals, and parks. As shown in **Table 5.12-3** above, the noise ordinance establishes standards for residential uses of 40 L_{eq} during the hours of 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM and 55 L_{eq} during the hours of 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM for interior, and 45L_{eq} during the hours of 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM and 65 L_{eq} during the hours of 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM for exterior areas.

When evaluating changes in 24-hour community noise levels, a difference of 3 dBA is a barely perceptible increase to most people. A 5 dBA increase is readily noticeable, while a difference of 10 dBA would be perceived as a doubling of loudness. Because of the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance and differing individual experiences with noise comparison of a new noise source relative to the ambient to which one has adapted is an accepted method for determining a person's subjective reaction to a new noise source.

In general, the more a new noise exceeds the previously existing ambient noise level, the less acceptable the new noise will typically be judged. As such, the Federal Interagency Committee on Noise (FICON) developed guidance to be used for the assessment of project-generated increases in noise levels that take into account the ambient noise level. Although the FICON recommendations were specifically developed to assess aircraft noise impacts, these recommendations are often used in environmental noise impact assessments involving the use of cumulative noise exposure metrics, such as the average-daily noise level (i.e., CNEL).

In areas where the ambient noise levels are below 60 dBA, FICON identifies a readily perceptible increase of 5 dBA or greater from project-related noise to be a significant impact. In areas where the ambient noise levels range from 60 to 65 dBA, FICON considers a 3 dBA barely perceptible project-related noise level increase to be appropriate for most people. Where ambient noise levels already exceed 65 dBA, any increase in community noise levels louder than 1.5 dBA or greater is considered a significant impact, since it likely contributes to an existing noise exposure exceedance.

b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the equipment and methods employed. Operation of construction equipment causes ground vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. Buildings founded on the soil near the construction site respond to these vibrations with varying results, ranging from no perceptible effects

at the lowest levels, low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibrations at moderate levels, and slight damage at the highest levels.

The County currently does not have any adopted standards, guidelines, or thresholds relative to ground-borne vibration. As such, available guidelines from the FTA would be considered to assess impacts due to ground-borne vibration. While ground vibrations from construction activities do not often reach the levels that can damage structures, fragile buildings should receive special consideration. The construction vibration criteria include consideration of the building condition. The vibration damage criteria are shown above in **Table 5.12-1**.

5.12.4 METHODOLOGY

5.12.4.1 Construction Noise

Construction is anticipated to occur over approximately 30 months, beginning in April 2027 and ending in September 2029. Construction activities would include grading of the Project Site, which would occur over 6 months, building construction, which would occur over approximately 24 months, paving, which would occur over 1 month, and architectural coating (painting) which would occur over approximately 1 month. A variety of construction equipment would be used, including, but not limited to, tractors, loaders, backhoes, trenchers, cement and mortar mixers, cranes, excavators, scrapers, sweepers, dozers, and forklifts.

Construction activities typically generate noise from the operation of a variety of equipment types. Noise impacts from on-site construction activities were evaluated by determining the noise levels generated by different types of construction activity and calculating the construction-related noise level at nearby noise-sensitive receptor locations. The actual noise level would vary, depending upon the type of equipment, model, the type of work activity being performed, and the condition of the equipment.

To calculate construction noise levels, hourly activity or utilization factors (i.e., the percentage of normal construction activity that would occur, or construction equipment that would be active, during each hour of the day) are estimated based on the temporal characteristics of other previous and current construction projects. The hourly activity factors express the percentage of time that construction activities would emit average noise levels. Typical noise levels for each type of construction equipment were obtained from the FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model.[11]

An inventory of construction equipment, including the number and types of equipment, which would be operating simultaneously on the Project Site is shown in **Table 5.12-8: Construction Equipment**

11 United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. *FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model User's Guide Final Report*. January 2006. Accessed October 2025. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/noise/construction_noise/rcnm/rcnm.pdf.

Assumptions. It is unlikely that all pieces of construction equipment identified in **Table 5.12-8** would operate simultaneously in any single location during construction because equipment is generally operated only when needed and space constraints limit the equipment that can be used at any one time in a specific location.

TABLE 5.12-8: CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT ASSUMPTIONS

Phase	Off-Road Equipment Type	Amount	Usage Hours (per day)	Noise Level at 50 feet (dBA Leq 1-hour)	Calculated Average Noise Level (dBA Leq 1-hour)
Grading	Excavator	2	8	79.7	87.1
	Grader	1	8	81.0	
	Rubber Tired Dozer	1	8	77.7	
	Scraper	2	8	82.6	
	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	2	8	76.6	
Building Construction	Crane	1	7	72.6	82.8
	Forklifts	3	8	75.8	
	Generator Sets	1	8	77.6	
	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	3	7	78.4	
	Welders	1	8	70.0	
Paving	Pavers	2	8	77.2	81.6
	Paving Equipment	2	8	77.2	
	Rollers	2	8	76.0	
Architectural Coating	Air Compressors	1	6	73.7	73.7

Source: Refer to **Appendix S**: **Noise Study.**

The construction equipment reference noise levels, provided in **Table 5.12-8**, are based on measured noise data compiled by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and would occur when equipment is operating under full power conditions. However, equipment used on construction sites typically operates at less than full power. The acoustical usage factor is the percentage of time that each type of construction equipment is anticipated to be in full power operation during a typical construction day. These values are estimates and will vary based on the actual construction process and schedule.

Construction equipment operates at its noisiest levels for certain percentages of time during operation. As such, equipment would operate at different percentages over the course of an hour. During a construction day, the highest noise levels would be generated when multiple pieces of construction equipment are operated concurrently.

To characterize construction-period noise levels, the average (hourly Leq) noise level associated with each construction stage was calculated based on the quantity, type, and usage factors for each type

of equipment that would be used during each construction stage. These noise levels are typically associated with multiple pieces of equipment operating simultaneously.

As nearly all of the proposed Project construction equipment is mobile and will move around the site and the analysis evaluates noise occurring over a one-hour period (Leq), the modeling conservatively assumed that all of the construction equipment operating on site would be located at the location closest to the applicable sensitive receptor. Therefore, this modeling provides a reasonably conservative calculation of the maximum noise levels generated during construction.

Construction equipment operates at its noisiest levels for certain percentages of time during operation. As such, equipment would operate at different percentages over the course of an hour.[12] During a construction day, the highest noise levels would be generated when multiple pieces of construction equipment are operated concurrently.

5.12.4.2 Construction Equipment Vibration

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the equipment and methods employed. The operation of construction equipment causes ground vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. While ground vibrations from construction activities do not often reach the levels that can damage structures, fragile buildings must receive special consideration.

Impacts due to construction activities were evaluated by identifying vibration sources (i.e., construction equipment), measuring the distance between vibration sources and surrounding structure locations, and making a significance determination.

For quantitative construction vibration assessments related to building damage, vibration source levels for construction equipment are taken from the FTA *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*. Building damage would be assessed for each piece of equipment individually and assessed in terms of peak particle velocity.

The vibration source levels for various types of equipment are based on data provided by the FTA.

5.12.4.3 Construction Traffic Noise

The analysis of off-site construction traffic noise impacts focuses on: (1) identifying major roadways that may be used for construction worker commute routes or truck haul routes; (2) identifying the nature and location of noise-sensitive receptors along those routes; and (3) evaluating the traffic characteristics along those routes, specifically as related to existing traffic volumes.

12 Federal Highway Administration. *Traffic Noise Model*. 2006.

5.12.4.4 Operational Noise

Changes from 3 to 5 dBA may be noticed by some individuals who are extremely sensitive to changes in noise. An increase of greater than 5 dBA is readily noticeable, while the human ear perceives a 10 dBA increase in sound level to be a doubling of sound volume. A doubling of sound energy results in a 3 dBA increase in sound, which means that a doubling of sound wave energy (e.g., doubling the volume of traffic on a roadway) would result in a barely perceptible change in sound level.

Impacts related to stationary noise were evaluated using the noise model SoundPLAN,[13] which generates computer simulations of noise propagation from sources such as construction noise. SoundPLAN forecasts noise levels at specific receptors using sound power data and three-dimensional topographical data. Operational noise impacts from the outdoor pool area and rooftop decks of the proposed Project Site to the surrounding environment were evaluated to estimate possible increases in noise from ambient conditions.

Impacts related to roadway noise were evaluated by assessing potential road traffic noise impacts generated by implementation of the Project. Estimates of current road traffic noise levels were prepared to establish existing conditions as the baseline for the noise impact analysis. Traffic noise levels were modeled using the Federal Highway Administration Traffic Noise Model (FHWA TNM). The FHWA TNM calculates noise associated with a specific line source and the results characterize noise generated by motor vehicle travel along a specific roadway segment. The traffic noise impact analysis incorporates traffic volumes, vehicle mix, posted speed limits, roadway geometry, and site conditions. The modeled noise levels for each of the scenarios listed below are the maximum CNEL[14] calculated for the PM peak periods by the model for sensitive receptors assumed to be located adjacent to the street. These values represent the maximum potential noise levels to which sensitive receptors could be exposed from roadway traffic. Roadway noise levels were evaluated with respect to the following traffic scenarios:

- Existing (2025) conditions;
- Existing (2025) plus proposed Project conditions;
- Cumulative without proposed Project conditions; and
- Cumulative with proposed Project conditions.

13 SoundPLAN model is in compliance with ISO 9613-2 standards for assessing attenuation of sound propagating outdoors and general calculation method.

14 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is a weighted average of noise level over time. It is used to compare the noisiness of neighborhoods. CNEL is frequently used in regulations of airport noise impact on the surrounding community. A CNEL exceeding 65db is generally considered unacceptable for a residential neighborhood.

Noise impacts due to off-site motor vehicle travel were analyzed by comparing the projected increase in traffic noise levels from Existing without Project conditions to both Existing plus proposed Project and cumulative plus proposed Project to the applicable significance criteria.

For the purpose of this analysis, a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels would occur if a project would cause the noise level at adjacent land uses to increase by 5.0 dBA or more where noise levels would remain below the land use compatibility guidelines referenced in **Table 5.12-2** or increase by 3.0 dBA or more where noise levels would equal or exceed the land use compatibility guidelines referenced in **Table 5.12-2**.

5.12.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

On-Site Construction Equipment

Noise from construction activities would be affected by the amount of construction equipment, the location of this equipment, the timing and duration of construction activities, and the relative distance to noise-sensitive receptors. Construction activities that would occur during the construction phases would generate both steady-state and episodic noise that would be heard both on and off the Project Site. Each construction phase involves the use of different types of construction equipment and, therefore, has its own distinct noise characteristics. The Project would be constructed using typical construction techniques; no blasting or impact pile driving would be required.

The estimated construction noise levels were calculated for each of the analyzed receptors (refer to **Figure 5.12-6**) during each of the construction phases. As mentioned previously, given the physical size of the Project Site and logistical limitations, and with the construction equipment located at the construction area nearest to the affected receptors to present a conservative impact analysis. This is considered a worst-case evaluation because construction of the Project would typically use fewer pieces of equipment simultaneously at any given time as well as operating throughout the construction site (i.e., most of the time construction equipment would be operating at distances further away from the off-site receptors than assumed in the forecasting of Project construction noise levels). As such, Project construction would often generate lower noise levels than reported herein.

Table 5.12-9: Construction Maximum Noise Estimates presents the maximum predicted construction noise levels at each evaluated receptor during peak construction activity. As shown in

Table 5.12-9, the highest levels of construction noise would occur at Mirabella Estates and the Cahuilla Desert Academy located north and northeast of the Project Site. At these locations, the maximum predicted construction noise level would exceed the 5 dBA over ambient significance threshold by approximately 23.4 dBA under worst-case conditions, representing a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels at these sensitive receptors.

This predicted exceedance assumes that multiple pieces of heavy construction equipment are operating simultaneously at the portion of the Project Site closest to the receptor and represents a conservative scenario intended to evaluate the maximum potential noise exposure during peak construction activity. In practice, construction activities would occur throughout the Project Site, and equipment would typically operate at varying distances from nearby receptors. Therefore, construction noise levels experienced at off-site receptors would often be lower than the maximum levels presented in **Table 5.12-9**.

TABLE 5.12-9: CONSTRUCTION MAXIMUM NOISE ESTIMATES

Sensitive Receptors	Calculated Noise Level (Leq-1hour) by Construction Phase				Maximum Noise Level	Significance Threshold	Increase Above Noise Threshold
	Grading	Building Construction	Paving	Architectural Coating			
Mirabella Estates adjacent to the north (20 feet)	95.0	90.8	89.6	81.6	95.0	71.6	+23.4
Cavallo Ranch adjacent to the south (20 feet)	95.0	90.8	89.6	81.6	95.0	73.6	+21.4
Residential neighborhood to the west across Monroe Avenue (90 feet)	76.9	72.7	71.5	63.6	76.9	71.6	+5.3
Cahuilla Desert Academy to the northeast (20 feet)	95.0	90.8	89.6	81.6	95.0	71.6[1]	+23.4

Source: Refer to **Appendix S: Noise Study**

Note: [1] Ambient noise levels vary substantially across the school site. The northern portion near 52nd Avenue (Site 1) is exposed to roadway noise and has a measured ambient level of 66.6 dBA Leq, corresponding to a 5 dBA significance threshold of 71.6 dBA Leq. The southern portion of the school, at the remote athletic field, is more shielded and has a measured ambient level of 43.6 dBA Leq, corresponding to a significance threshold of 48.6 dBA Leq. Predicted construction noise levels at each receptor location were compared to the threshold applicable to that location.

The County of Riverside General Plan includes several policies intended to minimize temporary construction noise impacts on nearby sensitive receptors, including *Policies N 13.1* through *N 13.4*. Specifically, *Policy N 13.4* requires that all construction equipment utilize noise reduction features, such as mufflers and engine shrouds, that are no less effective than those originally installed by the manufacturer. Compliance with this policy would ensure that construction equipment operates with properly functioning noise control devices.

A substantial portion of construction equipment noise originates from the intake and exhaust components of gasoline and diesel engines. The use of properly maintained or optimal muffler

systems on construction equipment has been shown to reduce construction equipment noise levels by approximately 10 dBA or more.[15] In addition, damping of metal surfaces to address vibration-induced noise can achieve reductions of up to 5 dBA, and sound aprons, constructed of absorptive materials such as PVC, lead-filled fabric, or rubber and draped over equipment frames, can achieve reductions of up to 10 dBA for equipment requiring partial shielding or that must be regularly relocated.

Limiting the number of simultaneously operating heavy-duty construction equipment pieces to two would further reduce construction noise levels by approximately 1.5 dBA.

Application of these combined measures to the maximum predicted construction noise level of 95 dBA Leq would result in a reduced construction noise level of approximately 68.5 dBA Leq at the Mirabella Estates, Cavallo Ranch, and the Cahuilla Desert Academy receptors. Because this reduced level would be below the applicable 5 dBA over ambient significance threshold of 73.6 dBA Leq and 71.6 dBA Leq at these locations, temporary construction noise impacts associated with the Project would be less than significant.

In addition to the sensitive receptors identified above, the Project includes an at-grade or below-grade connection across Monroe Street linking the Project to the Madison Club community located immediately to the west in the City of La Quinta. Two connection options are under consideration: a bridge structure or a tunnel structure, both intended for golf cart and pedestrian use between the two communities. Under the bridge option, construction would involve installation of concrete abutments on each side of Monroe Street, construction of a center pier within the roadway median, and use of a crane to place precast concrete bridge segments. Under the tunnel option, construction would involve sequential partial closure and excavation of each half of Monroe Street, form-and-pour construction of the tunnel structure, backfill, and street restoration, performed in two stages to maintain partial roadway access throughout construction.

The maximum construction noise level evaluated for the Project, 95 dBA Leq, occurred during the grading phase, which involves larger and more numerous pieces of heavy equipment operating concurrently than would be required for either the bridge or tunnel connection option. Construction noise associated with the bridge or tunnel option is therefore not expected to exceed the maximum construction noise levels already evaluated in **Table 5.12-9** for the Project's grading phase. The nearest sensitive receptor to this Project component is the Madison Club residential community west of Monroe Street. Residences within Madison Club are set back a substantial distance from Monroe Street and are separated from the roadway by a perimeter wall, both of which would further reduce noise exposure at these residences relative to the grading phase conditions evaluated

15 FHWA. *Special Report—Measurement, Prediction, and Mitigation*. June 2017.

elsewhere in this analysis. On this basis, construction noise associated with either the bridge or tunnel connection option would be less than significant.

In addition, implementation of other applicable Riverside County General Plan noise policies, including measures that limit unnecessary equipment idling, maintain construction equipment in good working order, and encourage the use of quieter construction practices where feasible, would further reduce temporary construction noise levels beyond those conservatively assumed in this analysis. As such, temporary construction noise impacts associated with the Project would be less than significant.

Imperial Irrigation District (IID) Electrical Connection

The Project has been designed to operate using a private on-site power system consisting of natural gas-powered generators and battery energy storage systems. This design approach was selected because it is currently uncertain whether the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) electrical grid has sufficient available capacity to serve the Project. In addition, the specific IID substation that could potentially serve the Project has not been determined, as IID is currently constructing and planning several substations in the surrounding area.

If IID ultimately determines that electrical service can be provided to the Project, the facility could connect to the existing IID electrical grid. In such a scenario, electrical service would be extended to the Project Site through the installation of underground electrical conduit within existing public street rights-of-way. Although the conceptual connection route could extend up to approximately four miles, the installation activities would consist primarily of localized trenching within existing paved roadway corridors, placement of conduit, and restoration of the roadway surface.

These activities represent typical utility installation work that is similar in scope and equipment requirements to other trenching activities already evaluated as part of the Project's construction analysis. Construction of underground utility lines would not require specialized high-vibration equipment, blasting, or impact pile driving. Instead, the work would involve conventional trenching equipment operating sequentially along the roadway corridor. Because the work would occur incrementally along the route and would utilize equipment types and noise levels evaluated in this analysis, the potential construction noise impacts associated with installation of the electrical conduit would be comparable to or lower than the construction impacts previously analyzed for the Project Site.

Accordingly, installation of a potential IID electrical connection would not introduce new or substantially greater construction noise impacts beyond those evaluated in this analysis. Therefore, potential noise impacts associated with installation of underground electrical conduit within existing public rights-of-way would be less than significant.

Off-Site Construction Traffic

Construction of the Project would require worker, haul, and vendor truck trips to and from the site to work on the site and deliver supplies to the site. Trucks traveling to and from the Project Site would be required to travel along a haul route approved by the County. Preliminary earthwork estimates indicate that the Project will balance all grading on site during final engineering, avoiding the need for soil import or export and minimizing construction-related impacts such as traffic and emissions associated with hauling activities. At a maximum, approximately 49 worker trips and 18 vendor trips would take place per workday during the grading phase. Truck traffic would take the most direct route to the freeway ramp.

Noise associated with construction truck trips was estimated using the Caltrans FHWA Traffic Noise Model based on the maximum number of truck trips in a day. Project truck trips are conservatively estimated to include medium- and heavy-duty trucks and would generate noise levels of approximately 49.8 dBA to 54.7 dBA, respectively, measured at a distance of 25 feet from the adjacent sensitive receptor. The noise level increases from truck trips would not exceed the 65 L_{eq} (10 minute) exterior noise standards at residential land uses. Thus, off-site construction noise levels would be less than significant.

Operation

Roadway Noise

As discussed in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the Project Site is currently vacant. The proposed Project would develop 85 single-family residential lots, a golf course, internal roadways, utility connections, and landscaping. Open space areas have been incorporated into the design to enhance community aesthetics and provide buffers to adjacent land uses.

Table 5.12-10: Existing Plus Project Roadway Noise Levels illustrates the change in noise levels from traffic volumes and from traffic generated by the Project. The difference in traffic noise between existing conditions and existing plus Project conditions represents the increase in noise attributable to Project-related traffic. As shown in **Table 5.12-10**, the maximum noise level increase along the analyzed roadways was 0.4 dBA CNEL along Monroe Street south of 52nd Avenue. Consequently, Project-related traffic would not cause noise levels along the analyzed roadways to increase by more than 3.0 dBA. Additionally, new roadways would not create roads that would be above the normally acceptable sound levels. Thus, the proposed Project would not result in a permanent increase in noise levels above ambient levels in the vicinity of the Project Site in excess of the County's Noise Element and Noise Ordinance. Vehicle-related noise impacts would not be considered significant.

TABLE 5.12-10: EXISTING PLUS PROJECT ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS

Intersection Number	Roadway Segment	Existing, dBA CNEL		Difference	Significant Impact?
		Without Project	With Project		
Monroe Street					

TABLE 5.12-10: EXISTING PLUS PROJECT ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS					
Intersection Number	Roadway Segment	Existing, dBA CNEL		Difference	Significant Impact?
		Without Project	With Project		
1	North of 50th Avenue	62.3	62.5	+0.2	No
1	South of 50th Avenue	61.8	62.1	+0.3	No
2	North of 52nd Avenue	61.4	61.7	+0.3	No
2	South of 52nd Avenue	60.1	60.5	+0.4	No
5	North of Via La Serena	—	50.0	—	No
5	South of Via La Serena	—	36.9	—	No
6	North of 53rd Avenue	60.1	60.1	+0.0	No
6	South of 53rd Avenue	59.7	59.7	+0.0	No
50th Avenue					
1	East of Monroe Street	62.3	62.3	+0.0	No
1	West of Monroe Street	61.4	61.5	+0.1	No
Arabia Street					
3	North of 52nd Avenue	54.3	54.0	-0.3	No
3	South of 52nd Avenue	59.4	59.6	+0.2	No
Jackson Street					
4	North of 52nd Avenue	60.3	60.4	+0.1	No
4	South of 52nd Avenue	58.0	58.0	+0.0	No
Driveway G					
7	South of 53rd Avenue	—	46.5	—	No
52nd Avenue					
2	East of Monroe Street	62.0	62.1	+0.1	No
2	West of Monroe Street	61.4	61.5	+0.1	No
3	East of Arabia Street	62.3	62.3	+0.0	No
3	West of Arabia Street	61.1	61.3	+0.1	No
4	East of Jackson Street	60.8	60.8	+0.0	No
4	West of Jackson Street	62.3	62.4	+0.1	No
Via La Serena					
5	East of Monroe Street	—	50.2	—	No
53rd Avenue					
6	East of Monroe Street	51.0	51.0	+0.0	No
6	West of Monroe Street	46.1	46.1	+0.0	No
7	East of Driveway G	—	41.1	—	No
7	West of Driveway G	—	46.1	—	No

TABLE 5.12-10: EXISTING PLUS PROJECT ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS					
Intersection Number	Roadway Segment	Existing, dBA CNEL		Difference	Significant Impact?
		Without Project	With Project		

Note:
N/A = No Data.

Source: Refer to **Appendix S** for the Noise Study.

Stationary Noise

Operational activities associated with the Project would introduce several stationary and semi-stationary noise sources, including loading dock activities, vehicle circulation within parking areas, and auxiliary mechanical equipment associated with the battery energy storage system (BESS). Because the final site layout and equipment specifications have not yet been finalized, a conservative screening analysis was conducted to evaluate potential operational noise levels at the nearest off-site sensitive receptors.

Loading dock operations may generate noise from truck maneuvering, loading and unloading activities, liftgate operation, and intermittent idling of delivery vehicles. Based on typical operational characteristics documented in environmental noise studies and technical guidance, loading dock activities can generate noise levels of approximately 70 to 75 dBA at a distance of 50 feet during active loading and unloading events. Assuming a conservative attenuation rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance, noise levels from loading dock activities would decrease to approximately 64 to 69 dBA at 100 feet and 58 to 63 dBA at 200 feet.

Vehicle circulation within parking areas would also generate intermittent operational noise associated with vehicle engines, door closures, and tire movement on paved surfaces. Passenger vehicles typically generate noise levels ranging from 60 to 65 dBA at a distance of 50 feet during low-speed parking lot operations. Applying standard distance attenuation assumptions, noise levels from parking area activities would decrease to approximately 54 to 59 dBA at 100 feet and 48 to 53 dBA at 200 feet.

The proposed BESS would also include auxiliary equipment such as cooling fans, HVAC systems, and power conversion equipment (including inverters) necessary to regulate battery temperature and electrical output. These systems represent the primary potential operational noise sources associated with BESS facilities. Based on manufacturer specifications and operational characteristics of similar installations, cooling and inverter equipment associated with BESS systems typically generate noise levels ranging from approximately 60 to 70 dBA at a distance of 50 feet during normal operation.

To evaluate potential impacts, BESS equipment was conservatively assumed to operate continuously under full load conditions with the equipment located at the portion of the Project Site closest to the nearest residential receptors. Applying standard acoustical attenuation assumptions,

noise levels from BESS auxiliary equipment would decrease to approximately 54 to 64 dBA at 100 feet and 48 to 58 dBA at 200 feet.

The Riverside County General Plan establishes exterior stationary noise standards for residential land uses of 65 dBA Leq (10-minute) during daytime hours and 45 dBA Leq (10-minute) during nighttime hours. Under the conservative screening scenarios described above, operational noise from loading dock activities, parking areas, and BESS auxiliary equipment would comply with the County's daytime exterior noise standard at nearby sensitive receptors. In addition, these operational noise sources are intermittent in nature and would occur at varying distances from the nearest receptors, which would further reduce the potential for sustained noise exposure.

Because the operational noise levels associated with these stationary and semi-stationary sources would remain below the applicable Riverside County exterior noise standards, operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

On-Site Electric Generation System

The Project would include an on-site electric generation system consisting of several generator units. Based on manufacturer specifications, the generator units are rated to produce noise levels of less than 70 dBA at a distance of 3 meters (9.8 feet) and less than 65 dBA at a distance of 10 meters (32.8 feet) under normal operating conditions.[16]

To evaluate potential stationary noise impacts, a conservative screening analysis was conducted assuming the generator units could be located at the portion of the Project Site nearest the affected property line. This approach evaluates a worst-case scenario for receptors located in closest proximity to the Project boundary. Predicted noise levels at nearby receptors were estimated using standard acoustical propagation assumptions in which sound levels decrease by approximately 6 dBA for each doubling of distance from a stationary source over acoustically hard ground surfaces.

Under this conservative scenario, a generator producing 65 dBA at 32.8 feet would attenuate to approximately 59 dBA at 65 feet, 53 dBA at 131 feet, and 47 dBA at 262 feet. Based on these attenuation calculations, generator noise levels would decrease substantially with distance from the source and would be further reduced by architectural screening and integration of the generator system within the building design.

As mentioned previously, the Riverside County General Plan establishes exterior stationary noise standards for residential land uses of 65 dBA Leq (10-minute) during daytime hours and 45 dBA Leq (10-minute) during nighttime hours. Based on the conservative attenuation assumptions described above, operational noise from the on-site generators would comply with the applicable daytime

16 Meridian Consultants. *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Study*. October 2025. Appendix 2.0, "Generator Equipment Information." See **Appendix D**.

exterior noise standard at nearby receptors. In addition, the generators would be screened and integrated into the architectural design of the building, which would provide additional noise attenuation beyond the conservative screening analysis. Therefore, operational noise from the on-site electric generation systems would not exceed the County's exterior noise standards, and impacts would be less than significant.

HVAC Systems

The Project would introduce various stationary noise sources, including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment that may be located on rooftops, building sides, or ground-mounted mechanical pads. Typical HVAC equipment generates noise levels ranging from approximately 50 to 65 dBA at a distance of 3 feet, depending on equipment type and operating conditions.

To evaluate potential impacts at nearby receptors, a conservative attenuation rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance was applied. Using this attenuation rate, HVAC equipment producing 65 dBA at 3 feet would attenuate to approximately 59 dBA at 6 feet, 53 dBA at 12 feet, 47 dBA at 24 feet, and approximately 41 dBA at 48 feet. These calculations represent worst-case operating conditions assuming the loudest equipment operating continuously.

Based on these attenuation calculations, HVAC noise levels would be expected to decrease to approximately 35 to 45 dBA Leq at distances of approximately 25 feet or greater, with further reductions occurring at greater distances. Because residential structures within the Project would typically be separated by distances greater than 25 feet and mechanical equipment would be incorporated into building design features, HVAC noise levels would remain below the Riverside County exterior noise standards of 65 dBA Leq (10-minute) during daytime hours and 45 dBA Leq (10-minute) during nighttime hours.

Additionally, HVAC systems are exempt from the County noise standards pursuant to Riverside County Code of Ordinances Section 9.52.020 when associated with residential uses. Therefore, operational noise from HVAC systems would not result in a substantial increase in ambient noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors, and impacts would be less than significant.

Human Activity-Related Noise

Future residents located on the Project Site, as well as nearby sensitive receptors, may experience increases in noise due to an increase in human activity within the area either from people living on the premises, utilizing the on-site amenities including common areas, and the outdoor parklet. Potential residential noise includes people talking, doors slamming, stereos, and other noise associated with human activity. These noise sources are generated by Project occupants and are not considered significant under AB 1307.

Maximum permissible noise levels for residential uses range between 50 – 65 dBA with a conditionally acceptable range between 55–70 dBA, as determined by the General Plan Noise

Element. Overall, the noise generated by the Project's land uses would be consistent with the ambient noise levels at the Project Site, which range from 43.6 to 68.6 dB(A). Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

On-Site Construction Vibration

Table 5.12-11: On-Site Construction Vibration Impacts—Building Damage presents the estimated construction vibration levels associated with on-site construction activities in terms of the potential for structural damage to nearby buildings. Vibration levels were evaluated using the PPV metric and compared to the building damage significance threshold of 0.3 inches per second PPV, which represents the conservative damage threshold commonly applied to older residential structures.

As mentioned previously, the nearest off-site structures include the Mirabella Estates residential development located immediately north of the Project Site and the Cavallo Ranch residential development located immediately south of the Project Site. The closest structures associated with these developments are located approximately 20 feet from the Project Site boundary. Additional residential receptors are located to the west across Monroe Avenue at distances of approximately 90 feet from the Project Site boundary.

Construction vibration levels were calculated for the nearest receptors assuming that the vibration-generating equipment would operate at the portion of the Project Site closest to each receptor in order to evaluate a conservative worst-case condition. Under these assumptions, the predicted vibration levels at the nearest residential structures adjacent to the Project Site would remain below the building damage significance threshold of 0.3 PPV ips. Because vibration levels decrease rapidly with distance from the source, predicted vibration levels at residences located across Monroe Avenue would be substantially lower than those calculated for the closest receptors.

As shown in **Table 5.12-11**, the forecasted vibration levels resulting from on-site construction activities would not exceed the significance threshold of 0.3 PPV ips for any of the evaluated receptors. Therefore, construction-related vibration impacts associated with the potential for building damage would be less than significant.

TABLE 5.12-11: ON-SITE CONSTRUCTION VIBRATION IMPACTS—BUILDING DAMAGE

Nearest Off-Site Building Structures	Estimated Vibration Velocity Levels at the Nearest Off-Site Structures from the Project Construction Equipment					Significance Threshold (PPV ips)
	Large Bulldozer	Loaded Trucks	Jack-hammer	Small bulldozer	Vibratory Roller	
Mirabella Estates adjacent to the north (20 feet)	0.124	0.106	0.049	0.004	0.293	0.3
Cavallo Ranch adjacent to the south (20 feet)	0.124	0.106	0.049	0.004	0.293	0.3
Residential neighborhood to the west across Monroe Avenue (90 feet)	0.124	0.106	0.049	0.004	0.293	0.3
Cahuilla Desert Academy to the northeast (20 feet)	0.124	0.106	0.049	0.004	0.293	0.3

Source: US Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*. Refer to **Appendix S** for the Noise Study.

Off-Site Construction Vibration

In addition to on-site construction activities, construction delivery/haul trucks would generate ground-borne vibration as they travel along the Project's anticipated off-site truck travel routes. Based on the FTA data, the vibration generated by a typical heavy-duty truck would be approximately 71 VdB (0.015 PPV) at a distance of 75 feet from the truck.[17] This forecasted vibration level would be well below the most stringent building damage criteria of 0.12 PPV. Therefore, vibration impacts with respect to building damage from off-site construction truck travel on public roadways would be less than significant.

In addition, vibration-sensitive uses (e.g., residential, hotel) are located along Avenue 52 to the north, Arabia Street to the east, Avenue 54 to the south, and Monroe Avenue to the west. Ground-borne vibration levels generated by off-site construction truck travel would be below the 78 VdB significance threshold, as these uses are located more than 75 feet from the truck travel pathway. Thus, vibration impacts with respect to human annoyance from off-site construction truck travel would be less than significant for the vibration sensitive land uses located along these roadways.

Operation

Similar to existing conditions, the primary sources of vibration associated with operation would include passenger-vehicle circulation within the Project area and on-site truck activity. Ground-

17 FTA. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, FTA report no. 0123*. Figure 7-3.

borne vibration typically attenuates rapidly as a function of distance from the vibration source. As discussed above, typical road traffic-induced vibration levels are unlikely to be perceptible by people.[18] Trucks and buses typically generate ground-borne vibration velocity levels of approximately 63 VdB (at a 50-foot distance), and these levels could reach 72 VdB when trucks and buses pass over bumps in the road. A vibration level of 72 VdB is above the 60 VdB level of perceptibility. Furthermore, the majority of the Project's operation-related vibration sources, such as mechanical equipment, would incorporate vibration attenuation mounts as required by the particular equipment specifications. Therefore, operation would not substantially increase existing vibration levels in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site and vibration impacts associated with operation would be less than significant.

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

No Impact.

The nearest airport to the Project Site, Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport, is located 3.5 miles northwest; however, the Project Site is located outside of the 65 dBA CNEL noise contours of the airport.[19] Therefore, the Project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise. No impact would occur.

5.12.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

5.12.6.1 Construction

Noise

Noise impacts are localized in nature and decrease with distance. Cumulative construction noise impacts have the potential to occur when multiple construction projects in the local area generate noise within the same time frame and contribute to the local ambient noise environment. Based on noise levels generated by construction activities associated with the Project and the proximity of both on- and off-site receptors, construction noise from the Project would contribute to the cumulative noise environment. It is expected that, as with the Project, the related projects would implement RCMs, which would minimize any noise-related nuisances during construction. Therefore, combined construction noise impacts of the related projects and the Project's contribution would not cause a significant cumulative impact. Consequently, impacts would be less than significant.

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18 FTA. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, *FTA report no. 0123*.

19 Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission. *Chapter 3, Individual Airport Policies and Compatibility Maps*. JC, Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport. In *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Policy Document*. Amended September 2006. Accessed January 2026. https://rcaluc.org/sites/g/files/aldnop421/files/2023-06/JCR.pdf.

Vibration

As discussed above, vibration impacts are generally less than significant when the receptor is more than 25 feet from the vibration source. There are no identified projects anticipating construction concurrently with the Project and within 25 feet of the sensitive receptors that could be affected by construction. As such, there would be no cumulative sources of construction vibration and no cumulative impact. Impacts would be less than significant.

5.12.6.2 Operational

Table 5.12-12: Cumulative Plus Project Roadway Noise Levels illustrates the change in noise levels from traffic volumes and from traffic generated by the Project. The difference in traffic noise between existing conditions and cumulative plus Project conditions represents the increase in noise attributable to Project-related traffic and future conditions. As shown in **Table 5.12-12**, the maximum noise level increase along the analyzed roadways was 1.1 dBA CNEL along 53rd Avenue west of Monroe Street. Consequently, future traffic including Project traffic would not cause noise levels along the analyzed roadways to increase by more than 3.0 dBA compared to existing conditions. Additionally, new roadways would not create roads that would be above the conditionally acceptable sound levels. Thus, the proposed Project would not result in a permanent increase in noise levels above ambient levels in the vicinity of the Project Site. Vehicle-related noise impacts would not be considered significant.

TABLE 5.12-12: CUMULATIVE PLUS PROJECT ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS

Intersection Number	Roadway Segment	Existing, dBA CNEL	Cumulative, dBA CNEL	Difference	Significant Impact?
		Without Project	With Project		
Monroe Street					
1	North of 50th Avenue	62.3	62.8	+0.5	No
1	South of 50th Avenue	61.8	62.4	+0.6	No
2	North of 52nd Avenue	61.4	62.0	+0.6	No
2	South of 52nd Avenue	60.1	60.5	+0.4	No
5	North of Via La Serena	—	60.7	—	No
5	South of Via La Serena	—	60.1	—	No
6	North of 53rd Avenue	60.1	60.1	+0.0	No
6	South of 53rd Avenue	59.7	60.1	+0.4	No

TABLE 5.12-12: CUMULATIVE PLUS PROJECT ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS					
Intersection Number	Roadway Segment	Existing, dBA CNEL	Cumulative, dBA CNEL	Difference	Significant Impact?
		Without Project	With Project		
50th Avenue					
1	East of Monroe Street	62.3	62.8	+0.5	No
1	West of Monroe Street	61.4	62.4	+0.6	No
Arabia Street					
3	North of 52nd Avenue	54.3	54.5	+0.2	No
3	South of 52nd Avenue	59.4	58.7	-0.7	No
Jackson Street					
4	North of 52nd Avenue	60.3	61.0	+0.7	No
4	South of 52nd Avenue	58.0	59.5	+1.5	No
Driveway G					
7	South of 53rd Avenue	—	47.4	—	No
52nd Avenue					
2	East of Monroe Street	62.0	61.0	+0.7	No
2	West of Monroe Street	61.4	59.5	+1.5	No
3	East of Arabia Street	62.3	61.0	+0.7	No
3	West of Arabia Street	61.1	59.5	+1.5	No
4	East of Jackson Street	60.8	61.0	+0.7	No
4	West of Jackson Street	62.3	59.5	+1.5	No
Via La Serena					
5	East of Monroe Street	—	50.2	–	No
5	West of Monroe Street	—	50.5	–	No
53rd Avenue					
6	West of Monroe Street	46.1	46.9	+0.8	No

TABLE 5.12-12: CUMULATIVE PLUS PROJECT ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS

Intersection Number	Roadway Segment	Existing, dBA CNEL	Cumulative, dBA CNEL	Difference	Significant Impact?
		Without Project	With Project		
7	East of Driveway G	—	46.9	—	No
7	West of Driveway G	—	46.9	—	No

Note:
N/A = No Data.

Source: Refer to **Appendix S** for the Noise Study.

5.12.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.12.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

5.13 TRANSPORTATION

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) evaluates the potential for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (Project) to result in transportation and traffic impacts within the Coachella Valley, Riverside County (County), and surrounding communities. Information from the Ranch at Madison Transportation Analysis Report prepared by Fehr and Peers in July 2026 (**Appendix T**) is incorporated into this section.

5.13.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.13.1.1 Federal

There are no federal transportation regulations applicable to the Project.

5.13.1.2 State

Senate Bill 743

The purpose of Senate Bill (SB) 743, which became effective on July 1, 2020, is to streamline the review under CEQA for several categories of development projects, including infill projects in transit priority areas, and to balance the needs of congestion management with Statewide goals related to infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

SB 743 changed the metrics for determining impacts resulting from traffic. Formerly, environmental review of transportation impacts focused on the delay that vehicles experience at intersections and on roadway segments, known as Levels of Service (LOS). As a result of SB 743, the focus of transportation analysis shifted from driver delay to reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The State's goal is to encourage land use and transportation decisions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, encourage infill development, and improve public health through active transportation.

The California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI; formerly Office of Planning and Research [OPR]) has identified guidelines for projects, which may be screened and would therefore be exempt from a VMT analysis.[1]

Screening Criteria

- Retail projects up to 50,000 SF in floor area
- Projects generating less than 110 daily trips.

1 Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation. "Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA." Accessed December 2025. https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf.

- Residential and office projects located in low VMT areas. Low VMT is defined as 10% below the subarea VMT metrics for that area.
- Projects within a Transit Priority Area (TPA). A TPA is defined as locations within ½ mile of a major transit stop or station (e.g., Gold Line or Metrolink), or within ½ mile of a high-quality transit corridor with 15-minute or shorter headways during peak commute hours.
- Affordable housing developments or affordable housing units within mixed-use developments.
- Transportation projects that promote nonauto travel, improve safety, or improve traffic operations at current bottlenecks, such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, intersection traffic control, or widening at intersections to provide new turn lanes.

Public Resources Code Section 21099

SB 743 also added Section 21099 to the CEQA statute. PRC Section 21099(d)(1) provides that aesthetic and parking impacts of a residential, mixed-use residential, or employment center project on an infill site within a transit priority area shall not be considered significant impacts on the environment.

"Transit priority area" means an area within one-half mile of a major transit stop that is existing or planned, if the planned stop is scheduled to be completed within the planning horizon included in a Transportation Improvement Program or applicable regional transportation plan. PRC Section 21099 establishes criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts of projects within transit priority areas that promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses.

More specifically, High Quality TPAs (HQTAs) are defined as areas within one-half mile of a major transit stop that are existing or planned where a "major transit stop" is a "site containing an existing rail transit station, a ferry terminal served by either a bus or rail transit service, or the intersection of two or more major bus routes with a frequency of service interval of 15 minutes or less during the morning and afternoon peak commute periods" as defined in PRC Section 21064.3.

Congestion Management Program

To address public concern that traffic congestion was impacting the quality of life and economic vitality of the State, in 1990, Section 65089 of the California Government Code was adopted to require each county to prepare and adopt a CMP. The intent of the CMP is to provide the analytical basis for transportation decisions. The CMP meets federal requirements for a Congestion Management System (CMS) as required by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 and continued in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century in 1998, and SAFE, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity ACT—A Legacy for Users. Information regarding the Riverside County CMP is provided below.

Senate Bill 375

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375), signed in August 2008, enhances the State's ability to reach GHG emissions goals by directing the California Air Resources Board to develop regional GHG emission reduction targets to be achieved from passenger vehicles by 2020 and 2035. SB 375 aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG reduction targets, and affordable housing allocations.

Assembly Bill 1358

Assembly Bill (AB) 1358, the Complete Streets Act of 2008, requires that cities and counties identify how they will provide for the routine accommodation of all users of roadways, including motorists, passengers, bicyclists, individuals with disabilities, seniors, and users of public transportation. Planning and building complete streets are one way that cities and counties can meet this requirement. A complete street is a transportation facility that is planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe access for all roadway users. Passengers, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street.

5.13.1.3 Regional and Local

Southern California Association of Governments: 2024-2050 RTP/SCS

In compliance with SB 375, every four years the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) updates its Regional Transportation Plan for the 191-city SCAG region. In April 2024, SCAG's Regional Council adopted the 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) also known as Connect SoCal. Connect SoCal is a long-range visioning plan for the region's transportation system over the next 25 years that balances mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. Connect SoCal includes over 4,000 transportation projects ranging from highway improvements, railroad grade-separations, bicycle lanes, new transit hubs, and replacement bridges to reduce bottlenecks, improve the efficiency of the region's network and expand the mobility choices for everyone in the six-county southern California region.[2]

Connect SoCal groups its goals into four core categories—economy, mobility, environment, and healthy/complete communities. The plan explicitly addresses goals associated with housing, transportation technologies, equity, and resilience reflecting enhanced importance of these topics in the region linking them to potential performance measures and targets.[3]

2 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). *Connect SoCal*. 2024. Accessed December 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/connect-socal.

3 SCAG. *Connect SoCal*. 2024.

Riverside County Congestion Management Program

The Congestion Management Program (CMP) is intended to link land use, transportation, and air quality with reasonable growth management methods, strategies and programs that effectively utilize new transportation funds to alleviate traffic congestion and related impacts. The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) is the designated Congestion Management Agency (CMA) that prepares the Riverside County Congestion Management Program updates in consultation with local agencies, the County of Riverside, transit agencies, and sub-regional agencies like the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG).

The RCTC has designated a system of highways and roadways to include (at a minimum) all State Highway facilities within Riverside County and a system of principal arterials as the Congestion Management System (CMS). All State Highways within Riverside County have been designated as part of the CMP System of Highways and Roadways. The following facilities are designated as part of the Riverside CMP System of Highways and Roadways in the Coachella Valley:

- I-10 (San Bernardino County line to State line).

Coachella Valley Regional Arterial Program

CVAG administers the Coachella Valley Regional Arterial Program, which allocates Measure A and Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) funds for necessary improvements to the regional transportation system.

Measure A, approved by Riverside County voters in 1988, approved a half-cent increase in sales tax over a 20-year period to be used for transportation purposes. In November 2002, Riverside County voters approved a 30-year extension of Measure "A" (2009–2039). Measure A funds contribute a portion of the cost of transportation system improvements projected to be needed over the next 25 years.

The TUMF program was developed to generate additional funds to fund improvements to the regional arterial roadway system. The TUMF is a development impact assessment that provides funding for transportation improvements required to support new development based on the number of vehicle trips new development will generate. Approximately 55 percent of the funding provided by CVAG consists of TUMF funds with the remainder consisting of Measure A funds. CVAG prepares the Transportation Project Priority Study (TPPS) every five years to determine funding availability for improvements to regional arterials by prioritizing the eligible study segments based on an assessment of the need for improvement.

Available TUMF and Measure A revenues are applied to the TPPS projects in order of priority. Because a project's priorities set out in the TPPS control the order of funding, it also generally controls the approximate timeframe for each project.

To conform to CVAG policies, all CVAG member agencies require the construction of adopted road construction standard improvements for missing regional roads segments located adjacent to land development projects.

Riverside County General Plan

The applicable policies listed below are from the County of Riverside General Plan and are intended to provide for the movement of goods and people, including pedestrians, bicycles, transit, train, air and automobile traffic flows within and through the community. Efficient traffic circulation is important to economic viability and the creation and preservation of a quality living environment. The Circulation Element includes a range of policies to address the planned circulation system, levels of service, system design/construction/maintenance, pedestrian facilities, system access, and related design and operation issues.

C 1.2 Support development of a variety of transportation options for major employment and activity centers including direct access to transit routes, primary arterial highways, bikeways, park-n-ride facilities, and pedestrian facilities.

C 1.7 Encourage and support the development of projects that facilitate and enhance the use of alternative modes of transportation, including pedestrian-oriented retail and activity centers, dedicated bicycle lanes and paths, and mixed-use community centers

C 2.1 The following minimum target levels of service have been designated for the review of development proposals in the unincorporated areas of Riverside County with respect to transportation impacts on roadways designated in the Riverside County Circulation Plan (Figure C-1) which are currently County maintained, or are intended to be accepted into the County maintained roadway system:

LOS C shall apply to all development proposals in any area of the Riverside County not located within the boundaries of an Area Plan, as well as those areas located within the following Area Plans:

REMAP, Eastern Coachella Valley, Desert Center, Palo Verde Valley, and those non-Community Development areas of the Elsinore, Lake Mathews/Woodcrest, Mead Valley and Temescal Canyon Area Plans.

LOS D shall apply to all development proposals located within any of the following Area Plans: Eastvale, Jurupa, Highgrove, Reche Canyon/Badlands, Lakeview/Nuevo, Sun City/Menifee Valley, Harvest Valley/Winchester, Southwest Area, The Pass, San Jacinto Valley, Western Coachella Valley and those Community Development Areas of the Elsinore, Lake Mathews/Woodcrest, Mead Valley and Temescal Canyon Area Plans.

LOS E may be allowed by the Board of Supervisors within designated areas where transit-oriented development and walkable communities are proposed.

Notwithstanding the forgoing minimum LOS targets, the Board of Supervisors may, on occasion by virtue of their discretionary powers, approve a project that fails to meet these LOS targets in order to balance congestion management considerations in relation to benefits, environmental impacts and costs, provided an Environmental Impact Report, or equivalent, has been completed to fully evaluate the impacts of such approval. Any such approval must incorporate all feasible mitigation measures, make specific findings to support the decision, and adopt a statement of overriding considerations.

C 2.2 Require that new development prepare a traffic impact analysis as warranted by the Riverside County Traffic Impact Analysis Preparation Guidelines or as approved by the Director of Transportation. Apply level of service targets to new development per the Riverside County Traffic Impact Analysis Preparation Guidelines to evaluate traffic impacts and identify appropriate mitigation measures for new development.

C 2.3 Traffic studies prepared for development entitlements (tracts, public use permits, conditional use permits, etc.) shall identify project related traffic impacts and determine the significance of such impacts in compliance with CEQA and the Riverside County Congestion Management Program Requirements.

C 2.4 The direct project related traffic impacts of new development proposals shall be mitigated via conditions of approval requiring the construction of any improvements identified as necessary to meet level of service targets.

C 2.5 The cumulative and indirect traffic impacts of development may be mitigated through the payment of various impact mitigation fees such as County of Riverside Development Impact Fees, Road and Bridge Benefit District Fees, and Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fees to the extent that these programs provide funding for the improvement of facilities impacted by development.

C 3.1 Design, construct, and maintain Riverside County roadways as specified in the Riverside County Road Improvement Standards and Specifications. The standards shown in Figure C-4 may be modified by Specific Plans, Community Guidelines, or as approved by the Director of Transportation if alternative roadway standards are desirable to improve sustainability for the area.

C 3.5 Require all major subdivisions to provide adequate collector road networks designed to feed traffic onto General Plan designated highways

C 3.6 Require private developers to be primarily responsible for the improvement of streets and highways that serve as access to developing commercial, industrial, and residential areas. These may include road construction or

widening, installation of turning lanes and traffic signals, and the improvement of any drainage facility or other auxiliary facility necessary for the safe and efficient movement of traffic or the protection of road facilities.

C 3.16 Dedicate necessary rights-of-way as part of the land division and land use review processes.

C 3.23 Consider the utilization of traffic-calming techniques in the design of new community local street and road systems and within existing communities where such techniques will improve safety and manage traffic flow through sensitive neighborhoods.

C 3.24 Provide a street network with quick and efficient routes for emergency vehicles, meeting necessary street widths, turn-around radius, secondary access, and other factors as determined by the Transportation Department in consultation with the Fire Department and other emergency service providers.

C 4.1 Provide facilities for the safe movement of pedestrians within developments, as specified in the Riverside County Ordinances Regulating the Division of Land of the County of Riverside.

C 4.7 Make reasonable accommodation for safe pedestrian walkways that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements within commercial, office, industrial, mixed use, residential, and recreational developments.

C 6.3 Limit access points and intersections of streets and highways based upon the road's General Plan classification and function. Require that access points be located so that they comply with Riverside County's minimum intersection spacing standards. Under special circumstances the Transportation Department may consider exceptions to this requirement.

C 6.5 Provide common access via shared driveways and/or reciprocal access easements whenever access must be taken directly off a General Plan designated highway. Parcels on opposite sides of a highway shall have access points located directly opposite each other, whenever possible, to allow for future street intersections and increased safety.

C 15.3 Develop a trail system which connects Riverside County parks and recreation areas while providing links to open space areas, equestrian communities, local municipalities, and regional recreational facilities (including other regional trail systems) and ensure that the system contains a variety of trail loops of varying classifications and degrees of difficulty and length.

C 16.1 Implement the Riverside County trail system as depicted in the Bikeways and Trails Plan, Figure C-6.

C 16.4 Require that all development proposals located along a planned trail or trails provide access to, dedicate trail easements or right-of-way, and construct their fair share portion of the trails system. Evaluate the locations of existing and proposed trails within and adjacent to each development proposal and ensure that the appropriate easements are established to preserve planned trail alignments and trail heads.

C 17.3 Ensure that the bikeway system incorporates the following:

(a) Interconnection throughout and between cities and unincorporated communities.
(b) Appropriate lanes to specific destinations such as state or county parks.
(c) Appropriate opportunities for recreational bicycle riding and bicycle touring.
(d) Opportunities for bicycle commuting and golf cart commuting within a community, as appropriate for the terrain, traffic levels and proximity to surrounding destinations.
(e) Bikeways connecting to all urban transit centers and systems (bus stops and Metrolink stations) in the vicinity.
(f) Bicycle parking at transit stops and park-and-ride lots

East Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP)

The programs and policies of the ECVAP are supplemental to, and coordinate with, the policies of the General Plan Circulation Element.

ECVAP 12.2 Maintain Riverside County's roadway Level of Service standards as described in the Level of Service section 2.1 of the General Plan Circulation Element.

ECVAP 12.3 Separate vehicular traffic from pedestrian and equestrian traffic in order to avoid potential hazards and where traffic volumes justify the costs.

ECVAP 15.1 Protect the scenic highways in the Eastern Coachella Valley from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors section of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.

Riverside County Transportation Ordinances

Ordinances specifically applicable to the circulation system are presented below:

Ordinance No. 413 Vehicle Parking: Ordinance No. 413 establishes regulations to vehicle parking on Riverside County roadways.

Ordinance No. 452 Speed Limits: Ordinance No. 452 pertains to prima facie speed limits on Riverside County roadways and establishes or amends prima facie speed limits on certain Riverside County roads.

Ordinance No. 460 Subdivision of Land: Ordinance No. 460, in conjunction with the Subdivision Map Act, establishes regulations for the division of land and describes procedures. The ordinance also includes the provisions for the establishment of Road and Bridge Benefit Districts and associated fees.

Ordinance No. 461 Road Improvement Standards and Specifications: Ordinance No. 461 adopts Road Improvement Standards and Specifications.

Ordinance No. 499 Encroachments in County Highways: Ordinance No. 499, subject to the control of the Board of Supervisors, delegates to the Riverside County Transportation Director the administration of the use of county highways, including county roads, for excavations and encroachments; construction, operation, and maintenance of utility facilities; planting, maintenance, and removal of trees; and the issuance, modification, and revocation of permits for such uses.

Ordinance No. 500 Permissible vehicle weight on highways, roads, and bridges: Ordinance No. 500 establishes weight prohibitions and reductions for vehicles traveling along County roadways.

Ordinance No. 659 Development Impact Fee Program (DIF Program): Ordinance No. 659 establishes a development impact fee (DIF) for the development of infrastructure, including County roadways and the installation of traffic signals.

Ordinance No. 673 Coachella Valley Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Program: Ordinance No. 673 establishes a TUMF program for the Coachella Valley. The fees are collected by Riverside County and administered by the CVAG to make roadway improvements in the CVAG area that are needed to accommodate growth to year 2040. Facilities eligible for TUMF are designated by CVAG and updated periodically. The TUMF is solely used toward funding the engineering, construction, and purchasing of right-of-way for Regional System projects and any other purpose consistent with this ordinance. The fee may not be used for system maintenance.

5.13.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.13.2.1 Existing Conditions

The Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**) describes existing conditions of the surrounding street network; alternative transportation facilities, including public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems; and LOS in the vicinity of the Project Site, as summarized below.

5.13.2.2 Existing Street System

The existing regional and local transportation network is described below:

Highways

Regional roadways within the Project vicinity include:

- **State Route 111** (SR-111) is a State highway that runs in a north/south direction from Palm Springs at the northernmost end to the US-Mexico Border at the southernmost end. SR-111 functions as a major arterial connecting multiple cities within the Coachella Valley. SR-111 is located north and east of the Project Site and near the Project Site is generally a 4-lane facility, consisting of two (2) lanes in each direction. Access to SR-111 near the Project Site is provided at Monroe Street, Jackson Street, Avenue 50, and 52nd Avenue.
- **Interstate 10 Freeway** (I-10) is an interstate highway that runs in the east/west direction from Santa Monica at the westernmost end to Jacksonville, Florida at the easternmost end. Within the region, I-10 connects the Coachella Valley to the greater Los Angeles and Inland Empire region. I-10 is located north of the Project Site and near the Project Site is generally a 4-lane facility (two lanes in each direction). Access to I-10 near the Project Site is provided at Monroe Street and via State Highway 86.
- **State Route 86** (SR-86) is a State highway that runs in the north/south direction from Coachella at the northernmost end to the US-Mexico border at the southernmost end. Within the region, SR-86 provides an important freeway alternative to Highway 111 between the Coachella Valley and I-10. SR-86 is located east of the Project Site and is generally a 4-lane facility (two lanes in each direction) near the Project Site. Access to SR-86 near the Project Site is provided at Avenue 50 and 52nd Avenue.

Local Streets

Local access roads in the Project vicinity include:

- **Monroe Street**: Monroe Street is classified in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element as an Arterial Roadway which runs in the north/south direction along the western boundary of the Project Site. The posted speed limit on Monroe Street is generally 50 miles per hour. The western half of Monroe Street south of 52nd Avenue is within the jurisdiction of City of La Quinta and the eastern half is within the jurisdiction of the County.
- **Avenue 53**: Avenue 53 is classified in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element as a Collector east of Monroe Street and has no designation west of Monroe Street in the City of La Quinta, providing access to a residential neighborhood. Avenue 53 currently extends east from Monroe Street through the Project Site approximately 2 miles to Van Buren Street. There is no posted speed limit on Avenue 53.
- **Arabia Street**: Arabia Street is not classified in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element. Arabia Street is partially improved, extending south from Avenue 52, providing access to the Cahuilla Desert Academy middle school. The posted speed limit on Arabia Street is 25 miles per hour.
- **Avenue 52**: Avenue 52, an east/west roadway located north of the Project Site, is classified in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element as an Arterial Roadway. The posted speed limit on Avenue 52 is 55 miles per hour.

- **Jackson Street**: Jackson Street, a north/south roadway, is classified in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element as an Arterial Roadway. The posted speed limit on Jackson Street is 55 miles per hour.
- **Avenue 50**: Avenue 50, an east/west roadway, is classified in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element as an Arterial Roadway. The posted speed limit on Avenue 50 is 50 miles per hour.

5.13.2.3 Existing Project Site Access

Access to the Project Site is provided from Monroe Street and Avenue 53.

5.13.2.4 Alternative Transportation

Existing Public Transit Service

SunLine Transit Agency is Coachella Valley's public transit operator and operates local transit service across the Coachella Valley region. SunLine Transit Agency operates fixed route bus services. The nearest bus route services would be Route 6, which has a stop at Monroe Street and Avenue 48, and Route 8, which has a stop at Avenue 50 and Calhoun Street, approximately 2.2 miles to the northeast.

Existing Bicycle System

Bikeways

Caltrans standards are used to design bikeways by most jurisdictions throughout California, and the County of Riverside adheres to Caltrans bikeway standards. There are four classifications for bicycle facilities: Class I, Class II, Class III, and Class IV bikeways. A description of existing bicycle facilities located in the vicinity is discussed below.

- **Class I – Bike Path or Bike Trail**: Class I facilities are bicycle trails or paths that are off-street and separated from automobiles. There are no existing Class I Bikeways located within or near the Project Site.
- **Class II – Bike Lane**: Bike Lanes are designated for the use of bicycles and include bike lane signage, special lane lines, and pavement markings. There are three (3) Class II bike lanes located near the Project Site. There is a Class II bike lane on the west side of Monroe Street, between 52nd Avenue and Avenue 54. There is a Class II bike lane on the north side of 52nd Avenue, between Monroe Street and Jackson Street. There are Class II bike lanes present on both sides of the Avenue 53 roadway, between Monroe Street and Palazo.
- **Class III – Bike Routes**: This is a street for shared use by motor vehicles and bicyclists. While bicyclists have no exclusive use or priority, signage – both by the side of the street and stenciled on the roadway surface alerts motorists to bicyclists sharing the roadway space and denotes that the street is an official bike route. There are no existing Class III bike routes within or near the Project Site.
- **Class IV – Separated Bikeway**: Class IV bicycle facilities, sometimes called cycle tracks or separated bikeways, provide a right-of-way designated exclusively for bicycle travel adjacent to a roadway and are protected from vehicular traffic via separations (e.g. grade separation, flexible

posts, inflexible physical barriers, on-street parking). There are no existing Class IV bikeways near the Project Site.

Existing Pedestrian Facilities

Pedestrian facilities near the Project Site include sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals, and multiuse trails, as described below:

- Along Monroe Street from Avenue 54 to Mountain Spur Drive, there is a trail on the west side of the street. From Mountain Spur Drive to 52nd Avenue, there are sidewalks on the west side of the street.
- On the east side of Monroe Street from Avenue 54 to 52nd Avenue and on the west side from 52nd Avenue to Avenue 50, there are no sidewalks.
- On the west side of Monroe Street from 52nd Avenue to Avenue 50 there are sidewalks.
- On the north side of Avenue 50 there are sidewalks but on the south side there are no sidewalks.
- On 52nd Avenue, there are sidewalks on the north side of the street but not on the south side of the street.
- On Jackson Street, there are sidewalks present on the west side of the street but not on the east side of the street.
- Sidewalk exists on the east side of Arabia Street fronting the school between 52nd Avenue to the end of the cul-de-sac.

5.13.2.5 Level of Service (LOS)

Traffic operations have historically been evaluated using Level of Service (LOS), which qualitatively describes traffic flow conditions from a driver's perspective based on factors such as speed, delay, and maneuverability, as defined in the *Highway Capacity Manual, 7th Edition*. While Senate Bill 743 shifted the primary CEQA metric for determination of significant traffic impacts under CEQA from LOS to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), and LOS is no longer used to determine the significance of transportation impacts under CEQA, Riverside County utilizes LOS standards as a matter of General Plan policy. Accordingly, LOS information is provided herein for informational purposes only.

The County of Riverside utilizes a "LOS D or better" minimum standard in Western Coachella Valley and "LOS C or better" minimum standard in Eastern Coachella Valley. The "LOS C or better" standard was applied across all study intersections, per the County of Riverside Transportation Analysis Guidelines, including those with split jurisdiction between the County and the neighboring cities of La Quinta and Indio, such as Monroe Street at 52nd Avenue. Where these standards are not met, improvements may be required; however, the Board of Supervisors retains discretion to approve projects that do not achieve target LOS, provided appropriate environmental review has been completed, all feasible mitigation measures are incorporated, and findings (including a statement of overriding considerations, if applicable) are adopted.

Existing Year (2025) Intersections Operations

Existing lane configurations, signal timing, and traffic volumes were used to evaluate operations at the Project's study intersections under peak-hour conditions. The LOS results are summarized below in **Table 5.13-1: Existing Year (2025) Intersection LOS**. Intersection #2, Monroe Street and 52nd Avenue, currently operates at LOS E (43.3 seconds of delay) during the PM peak hour, indicating that the all-way stop control begins to experience longer queues and reduced progression under higher PM volumes. Intersection #3, Arabia Street and 52nd Avenue, operates at LOS F (56.1 seconds of delay) during the AM peak hour under the worst-case northbound approach, primarily due to heavy school-related traffic and limited gaps on 52nd Avenue. Although both intersections exhibit deficient operations, they do not meet the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) peak-hour traffic signal warrant under existing conditions. The side street and total entering volumes during the peak hour are not sufficient to satisfy the minimum volume thresholds. Therefore, neither intersection met the signal warrant.

TABLE 5.13-1: EXISTING YEAR (2025) INTERSECTION LOS

ID	Intersection	Control[2,3]	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
			LOS/Delay	LOS/Delay
1	**Monroe Street and Avenue 50**	Signalized	B / 16.0	B / 15.6
2	**Monroe Street and 52nd Avenue**	AWSC	C / 22.4	**E / 43.3**
3	**Arabia Street and 52nd Avenue**	SSSC	**F / 56.1[4]**	C / 21.5[4]
4	**Jackson Street and 52nd Avenue**	AWSC	C / 19.6	C / 17.5
5	**Monroe Street and Driveway A (Project)**	SSSC	A / 9.2	A / 9.1
6	**Monroe Street and Avenue 53**	SSSC	B / 13.5[5]	C / 15.2[5]
7	**Driveway G and Avenue 53 (Project)[1]**	SSSC	–	–

*Notes: Deficient roadway segment operations are noted in **bold** text.*

1. *Project driveway does not currently exist and is relevant to the scenario listed only.*
2. *SSSC: Side-Street Stop Control*
3. *AWSC: All-Way Stop Control*
4. *SSSC LOS reported by worst approach, worst approach is Northbound*
5. *SSSC LOS reported by worst approach, worst approach is Eastbound*

Source: Fehr & Peers. *Table 2*. "The Ranch at Madison Transportation Analysis Report." 2026. See **Appendix T**.

5.13.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.13.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

In order to assist in determining whether a project would have a significant effect on the environment, the County finds a project may be deemed to have a significant impact to traffic and transportation if it would:

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

b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b).

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

d. Result in inadequate emergency access?

5.13.4 METHODOLOGY

The transportation and circulation analysis is based in part on the Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**) prepared by Fehr & Peers for the Project. The report evaluates existing and future traffic conditions, including a VMT assessment and evaluation of the LOS at key intersections around the Project Site, and analyzes potential circulation impacts related to vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, and emergency access associated with the proposed Project development.

The VMT analysis evaluates the Project in accordance with the County's VMT analysis methodology using the RIVCOM Transportation Demand Model even though analysis is not required under the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines (TAG) based on the number of residential units included in the Project. The VMT analysis is consistent with the requirements of Senate Bill 743 (SB 743), the California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation's *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (December 2018).

5.13.4.1 Study Area and Scoping

The study area and methodology for the traffic analysis is defined in a scoping memorandum reviewed and approved by the County prior to the preparation of the Transportation Analysis Report. Study intersections were selected based on Project trip generation and distribution and consist of intersections where the Project is anticipated to contribute 50 or more peak-hour trips. The "50 peak-hour trip" criterion represents the minimum number of Project trips at which a typical intersection could be substantially affected by Project traffic.

Based on this criterion, a total of seven study intersections were selected for evaluation under Existing (2025), Opening Year (2030) Plus Project, and Opening Year (2030) Plus Project Plus Cumulative conditions. The intersections identified for analysis include:

1. Monroe Street and Avenue 50
2. Monroe Street and 52nd Avenue
3. Arabia Street and 52nd Avenue (Proposed Project)
4. Jackson Street and 52nd Avenue
5. Monroe Street and Driveway A (Proposed Project)
6. Monroe Street and Avenue 53

7. Driveway G and Avenue 53 (Proposed Project)

5.13.4.2 Intersection Analysis Methodology

Intersection operations were evaluated using the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Highway Capacity Manual (HCM), 7th Edition methodology. For signalized and all-way stop-controlled intersections, the HCM 7th Edition estimates the average control delay per vehicle. For side-street stop-controlled intersections, the HCM methodology estimates the worst-case approach delay. Based on the calculated control delay, each intersection is assigned a qualitative LOS letter grade ranging from LOS A (minimal delay) to LOS F (excessive delay). LOS E represents at-capacity operating conditions. **Table 5.13-2: Intersection Level of Service Criteria** summarizes the relationship between average delay per vehicle and LOS for signalized and unsignalized intersections.

TABLE 5.13-2: INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE CRITERIA

Level of Service	Description	Signalized	Unsignalized
		Delay (seconds/vehicle)	
A	Operations with very low delay occurring with favorable progression and/or short cycle length.	≤ 10.0	≤ 10.0
B	Operations with low delay occurring with good progression and/or short cycle lengths.	> 10.0 to 20.0	> 10.0 to 15.0
C	Operations with average delays resulting from fair progression and/or longer cycle lengths. Individual cycle failures begin to appear.	> 20.0 to 35.0	> 15.0 to 25.0
D	Operations with longer delays due to a combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, or high V/C ratios. Many vehicles stop and individual cycle failures are noticeable.	> 35.0 to 55.0	> 25.0 to 35.0
E	Operations with high delay values indicating poor progression, long cycle lengths, and high V/C ratios. Individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences.	> 55.0 to 80.0	> 35.0 to 50.0
F	Operation with delays unacceptable to most drivers occurring due to over saturation, poor progression, or very long cycle lengths.	> 80.0	> 50.0

Source: Fehr & Peers, Table 1, 2026. *Highway Capacity Manual 7th Edition* (Transportation Research Board, 2022).

The Fehr & Peers Synchro 12 traffic operations software was used to perform the HCM-based LOS calculations. Key analysis parameters were developed in accordance with the County Transportation Guidelines and include the following:

- Measured Peak-Hour Factors (PHF) were used for the Existing (2025) and Opening Year (2030) scenarios.

- Existing signal timing for applicable study intersections was obtained from the City of Indio and was utilized for both Existing (2025) and Opening Year (2030) Plus Project scenarios.
- A standard heavy vehicle factor of 2 percent was applied to all analysis scenarios.

5.13.4.3 Traffic Analysis Scenarios

AM and PM peak-hour LOS at the identified study intersections were studied for the following scenarios:

- Existing (2025) Conditions: Existing (2025) traffic volumes, lane geometries, and traffic signal timing.
- Opening Year (2030) Plus Project Conditions: Background traffic volumes during the Project's opening year with traffic volumes generated by the Project. The opening year volumes were developed by applying an ambient growth rate of 2% to the Existing (2025) traffic volumes.
- Opening Year (2030) Plus Project Plus Cumulative Projects Conditions: Opening Year Plus Project traffic volumes plus traffic generated by cumulative projects within a five-mile radius of the Project.

The cumulative scenario considers other approved projects consistent with the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines and the CEQA Guidelines. Section 15125 (a)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, which states that an EIR should describe physical environmental conditions as they exist at the time the notice of preparation for an EIR is published. The notice of preparation for the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan EIR was published in August 2025. A list of approved projects identified by the County in August 2025 is provided in Appendix E of the Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**).

The County's Guidelines also state that the cumulative scenario may include projects that are proposed and in the review process, but not yet approved, consistent with the guidance in Section 15130 (b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, which states that analysis of cumulative effects should consider either a summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, or a list of past, present and probable future projects. The list of approved projects are "past" projects, and proposed projects in the County's review process, but not yet approved, represent "present" projects. In April 2026, the owner of approximately 215 acres of property located east of the Project Site provided information to the County related to preliminary conceptual planning for a development project on this property. A general description of several alternative mixes of land uses being under consideration was provided. A formal application for this project has not been submitted to the County and, for this reason, this potential future project is not in the County's review process at this time. While the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines do not require that projects not submitted and in the County review process be considered in the cumulative scenario, the County is considering this as a "probable future" project in the local transportation analysis. A description of the uses assumed on this property for purposes of analysis,

based on the information provided by the owner of this property, is also provided in Appendix J of the Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**).

Project Trip Generation and Distribution

Trip Generation

Trip generation refers to the process of estimating the amount of vehicle traffic that would enter and exit a project. Estimates for the proposed Project were calculated for the weekday peak (one-hour) periods during the morning (AM) and evening (PM) commute when traffic volumes on the adjacent streets are typically the highest. Fehr & Peers used the Trip Generation Manual, 12th Edition (Institute of Transportation Engineers [ITE], 2025) to obtain trip rates for calculating the number of trips that the Project would generate on a typical weekday operation.

The Project is a proposed private residential community with 85 single-family residences and on-site private amenities, including a nine-hole golf course with a clubhouse, wellness center and spa, pools, racquet courts, and restaurants. The 85 units would be distributed across low-density residential, medium-density residential, and mixed-use planning areas; however, all will function as single-family residences.

The on-site private amenities are private, exclusively for residents and use by members of the Madison Club Community located on the west side of Monroe Street immediately west of the Project Site. A golf course tunnel or bridge crossing Monroe Street would be constructed to provide a connection between the Ranch at Madison and Madison Club communities, and most trips between the Ranch at Madison and the Madison Club communities will be by golf cart using this connection.

The on-site amenities will meet many of the day-to-day needs of residents, who are expected to remain on site to a greater degree than would occur with a standard, single-family residential community without these features. These residential-use characteristics will function similarly to the Madison Club. As a result, the Project would generate fewer external trips by residents than a standard single-family residential project. Approximately 151 employees would be associated with the golf course and other amenities. **Table 5.13-3: Trip Generation Rates** and **Table 5.13-4: Project Trip Generation** identify the trip generation rates for the Project.

Trip generation was based on ITE Trip Generation Manual (12th Edition) land use codes for Single-Family Detached Housing (ITE Code 210) and Golf Course (ITE Code 430). The ITE golf course land use rates inherently include trips associated with employees, maintenance staff, and other operational activities.

As described previously, the proposed homes would generate fewer trips than standard single-family homes as a result of the on-site amenities. For this reason, use of the standard Single-Family Detached Housing land use code is conservative.

The ITE Land Use Code is applicable to public golf courses. Because the proposed nine-hole golf course will be a private golf course, with use restricted to residents of the Ranch and Madison community, and members of the Madison and their guests, a 50-percent reduction was applied to account for trips made by employees and guests using the golf course. As shown in **Table 5.13-4**, with this 50-percent reduction the estimated trips for the golf course is 137 daily trips.

Because the other amenities proposed—including the wellness center and spa, pools, racquet courts, and restaurants—would also be private facilities that would not generate additional vehicle trips, the 173 daily trips assumed for the private nine-hole golf course is a conservative assumption that accounts for the trips associated with the golf course and other amenity facilities within the Project, including associated employee trips.

TABLE 5.13-3: TRIP GENERATION RATES

Land Use	Units	ITE Code	Qty	Daily Rate	AM Peak-Hour Rate			PM Peak-Hour Rate		
					Rate	*In*	*Out*	*Rate*	*In*	*Out*
Single-Family Detached Housing	Dwelling Units	210	85	9.09	0.75	27%	73%	0.97	63%	37%
Golf Course[1]	Holes	430	9	30.38	2.96	52%	48%	3.68	47%	53%

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2026. Table 3. **Appendix T**.

TABLE 5.13-4: PROJECT TRIP GENERATION

Land Use	Units	ITE Code	Qty	Daily Rate	Daily	AM Peak-Hour Rate			PM Peak-Hour Rate		
						Total	*In*	*Out*	*Total*	*In*	*Out*
Single-Family Detached Housing	Dwelling Units	210	85	9.09	773	64	17	47	82	52	30
Golf Course[1]	Holes	430	9	30.38	273	27	14	13	33	16	17
	Golf Course Trip with Internalization Rate[1]				137	14	7	7	17	8	9
	Weekday Totals:				**910**	**78**	**24**	**54**	**99**	**60**	**39**

[1] *Reduction of 50% applied as the proposed golf course is a private facility.*

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2026. **Appendix T**.

Trip Distribution and Assignment

Trip distribution reflects the most likely approach and departure paths to and from the Project Site. Distribution ratios were developed using regional and local travel patterns and were reviewed and validated through the approved scoping process. After generating and distributing Project trips, these trips were assigned to the study area roadway network consistent with standard traffic engineering practices.

VMT Methodology

The Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**) contains a VMT assessment that evaluates the Project in accordance with the County's VMT analysis methodology using the RIVCOM Transportation Demand Model even though not required under the County's Transportation Analysis Guidelines (TAG). This study is consistent with the requirements of Senate Bill 743 (SB 743), the California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation's *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (December 2018).

5.13.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Under CEQA, a project is considered consistent with an applicable plan if it is consistent with the overall intent of the plan and would not preclude the attainment of its primary goals. A project does not need to be in perfect conformity with each and every policy. Finally, any inconsistency with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy is only a significant impact under CEQA if the plan, ordinance, or policy was adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and if the inconsistency itself would result in a direct physical impact on the environment.

Roadway Facilities

The Project Site is located northeast and southeast of Monroe Street and Avenue 53 in the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa, Riverside County. Primary regional access to the Project Site is provided by I-10, SR-111, and SR-86. Local roadway access to the Project Site is provided by Monroe Street, Avenue 53, Arabia Street, 52nd Street, Jackson Street, and Avenue 50.

On-Site Roadway Improvements

As shown in **Figure 3.0-9: Vehicle Circulation Plan** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, on-site circulation would be provided by an internal system of two-way roadways that provide access from the driveways to dedicated parking spaces and the residential/recreational areas. The internal street network would consist of 28-feet wide private streets serving residential and recreation uses, supplemented by a 20-foot-wide private service access at the northern edge of the Project Site. The design and configuration of internal streets are intended to provide efficient vehicle circulation while minimizing grading and preserving the community character.

Off-Site Roadway Improvements

Monroe Street

The Project proposes vehicular access from Monroe Street (Driveway A and Driveway D) and Avenue 53 (Driveway G and Driveway H). Driveways A and G would provide access for residents and guests. Driveways D and H would be used for service, construction, and secondary emergency access.

Monroe Street would be improved along the County frontage to meet current County arterial standards of 119 feet wide, including an 18-foot raised median with 34 feet of paving and a 12-foot-wide landscape parkway on the west side, and 34 feet of paving, a five-foot-wide sidewalk, a seven-foot-wide landscape parkway, and an eight-foot-wide parkway adjacent trail on the east side of the right of way. The median extending along Monroe Street, across Avenue 53, is proposed to restrict access to Avenue 53 west of Monroe Street to right-in/right-out only. Monroe Street also includes a 14-foot-wide turn lane near the primary entry as well as a median break to allow left-turn movements into the Project's primary entry and into Serena Street.

Arabia Street

Additional access to the Project Site, and properties located east of the Project Site that have access from Avenue 53, would be provided via the proposed extension of Arabia Street to Avenue 53 and improvement of Arabia Street. The proposed improvements to Arabia Street were designed in coordination with Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) facilities staff and the Cahuilla Desert Academy School, located south of Avenue 53 and east of Arabia Street.

The Arabia Street extension would provide additional roadway access for emergency response to the Project Site and other nearby properties as well as circulation enhancements for the Cahuilla Desert Academy School.

Arabia Street would be extended south to Avenue 53 and widened to 66 feet consistent with the County's Enhanced Local Street standard. Improvements would include expanded pedestrian facilities, with the existing eastern sidewalk widened to approximately 11 feet, a new six-foot-wide sidewalk constructed along the western side of the roadway, and a two-foot-wide shoulder on the east side. The conceptual design for Arabia Street along the school frontage was developed after conducting field observation of morning and afternoon pick up and drop off conditions and a detailed review of existing conditions. Existing school site access and circulation conditions were similar to many other schools in the region, with congestion and queues that occur typically within the half hour before and after school start/dismissal. These conditions are complicated by the single access to the school site off Arabia Street (the Avenue 52 driveway is an exit only), the overlapping bus and passenger vehicle queueing during drop off and pick up, and the fact Arabia Street is currently a cul-de-sac, which further constrains circulation options.

During development of the conceptual design for improvements to Arabia Street, many of the access and circulation challenges associated with the school site would be improved with the extension and widening of Arabia Street to provide school traffic with a secondary approach to queue for student pick-up/drop-off.

With the proposed design, Arabia Street would generally operate with one through travel lane in each direction. In areas where school drop-off/pick-up activity, turning movements, or traffic queuing is anticipated, auxiliary queuing lanes would be provided in each direction. These queuing lanes would

function as temporary auxiliary lanes to accommodate slowing or stopped vehicles and would taper and merge back into a single through lane prior to the next intersection, maintaining a one-lane-per-direction configuration outside of these focused improvement areas. Additional improvements include enhanced signage, pavement markings, bollards, and traffic calming features to improve pedestrian safety near Cahuilla Desert Academy.

As detailed below in the LOS analysis, development under the proposed Project would reduce LOS at the intersection of 52nd Avenue and Arabia Street to less than the County's acceptable LOS of LOS C or better. Installation of a traffic signal at 52nd Avenue at Arabia Street is proposed as part of the Project to ensure this intersection operates at LOS C or better.

Avenue 53

Avenue 53 would be constructed to its required 76-foot Local Street section along the Project frontage and extended east to connect to Arabia Street. This segment of Avenue 53 would include 12 feet of paving, an 18-foot-wide landscape parkway on the north side, a five-foot parkway adjacent sidewalk, 20 feet of paving, and a two-to-three-foot landscape parkway on the south side. Avenue 53 would end at Driveway G, which would provide a secondary gated entry to the Project Site. Vacation of the segment of Avenue 53 between Monroe Street through the Project Site is proposed.

Driveway Access

Access to the Project is proposed located on Monroe Street and Avenue 53. Primary access to the Project would be provided from Monroe Street via a private street (Driveway A) aligned with Via La Serena Street. Via La Serena provides access to the Carmela neighborhood on the west side of Monroe Street in La Quinta.

Installation of a traffic signal is proposed at this intersection to allow full turn access into and out of the Project Site and the Carmela neighborhood, Extension of the existing median on Monroe Street south past the existing intersection of Avenue 53/Via La Serena Street is also proposed. As a result, the Avenue 53 and Monroe Street intersection will provide right-in, right-out access only from the west leg of Avenue 53.

Secondary access is proposed from Avenue 53 (Driveway G) and would provide full access for vehicles. Community maintenance entry/exit access points are provided along Monroe Street (Driveway D) and Avenue 53 (Driveway H), which are intended for exclusive use by maintenance/employees/emergency only. All driveways will be gated.

The secondary access at Avenue 53 and Driveway G would operate with full unsignalized access and low traffic volumes consistent with a local roadway. Speed limits and sight distance would meet County design criteria, and no operational deficiencies were identified. Driveways D and H would be restricted from regular vehicular uses and would not affect traffic operations. The Project's proposed

driveway configurations, roadway geometry and access would be consistent with the County transportation design standards and would not conflict with applicable roadway circulation policies.

Level of Service

As described above, although SB 743 changed metrics for determining traffic impacts and analysis on LOS is no longer required, the County General Plan policy sets forth LOS standards for different parts of the County, including the ECVAP. Thus, LOS was evaluated to determine whether the Project would conflict with adopted transportation policies related to roadway operations. Consistent with Riverside County Transportation Analysis Guidelines, LOS D or better is considered acceptable for roadway and intersection operations.

As discussed above in **Table 5.13-1**, Existing Year (2025) intersection operations were evaluated and the Project's Transportation Analysis Report found that two study intersections operate at LOS D or worse under existing conditions.

Opening Year (2030) intersection operations were evaluated using the HCM methodology. Opening year lane configurations and intersection control types changed as summarized below:

- The Project proposes to vacate Avenue 53 between Monroe Street and the eastern Project extent. Existing traffic volumes were redistributed to reflect this change.
- The Project will extend Arabia Street between 52nd Avenue and Avenue 53. As a result, existing traffic volumes were redistributed to reflect this change.
- Additional lanes and signals were added at select locations based on the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and City of Indio Capital Improvement Program (CIP), as listed below. The City of Indio was contacted to confirm the anticipated completion status of the roadway improvements listed below. Responses were provided by Donn Uyeno, Principal Civil Engineer, City of Indio Public Works Department, on June 24, 2026 (see **Appendix T**). All three improvements are anticipated to be completed by or near the 2030 horizon year, as discussed below.
  - RTP ID 3A07056 / City Project ST2004: Widen Avenue 50 from two to four lanes between Jefferson Street and the eastern City Limits east of Jackson Street (2030). The project is divided into two segments. Segment 1, between Jefferson Street and Madison Street, is at 100% design and construction is anticipated to begin in May 2027, with completion prior to 2030. Segment 2, between Madison Street and Botella Place (just west of Jackson Street), is currently at 65 percent design with construction anticipated to begin in 2028 and be completed in mid-2030. While this segment is not confirmed to be complete prior to the 2030 horizon year, it is included as an assumed improvement given that completion is anticipated to occur concurrent with the analysis year.
  - RTP ID 3A07052 / City Project ST2004: In the City of Indio, widen Avenue 50 from Monroe Street to Jackson Street from three to four lanes, including a center median/left turn lane, new sidewalk along the southside, and bike lanes along both sides (2030). This improvement is encompassed within ST2004 Segment 2 described above. Per the City of Indio,

construction is anticipated to be completed in mid-2030 and is included as an assumed improvement on a conditional basis consistent with the discussion above.

- RTP ID 3A07086 / City Project TS1901: In the City of Indio, widen Jackson Street from approximately 0.5 miles north of Avenue 50 to approximately 0.25 miles south of 52nd Avenue from three to four lanes, including sidewalk along the east side, bike lanes along both sides, and new traffic signals at Avenue 50, Avenue 51, and 52nd Avenue (2025). This improvement corresponds to Phase 2 of City Project TS1901, which is currently in the right-of-way acquisition phase with PS&E at 99 percent complete. Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2026 and be completed in spring 2028, prior to the 2030 horizon year.

Traffic signal timings, peak hour factors and heavy vehicle percentages were left unchanged from existing conditions.

As shown in **Table 5.13-5: Opening Year (2030) Proposed Project Intersection LOS**, intersection operations were also evaluated under Opening Year (2030) Plus Project and Plus Project Plus Cumulative Project conditions.[4]

TABLE 5.13-5: OPENING YEAR (2030) PROPOSED PROJECT INTERSECTION LOS

ID	Intersection	Control[1,2,3]	Peak Hour	Opening Year with Project		Opening Year with Project and Cumulative Projects	
				LOS/Delay	*Side Street Stop Worst Movement*	*LOS/Delay*	*Side Street Stop Worst Movement*
1	**Monroe Street and Avenue 50**	Signalized	AM	B / 15.7		B / 17.2	
			PM	B / 14.9		B / 16.3	
2	**Monroe Street and 52nd Avenue**	Signalized	AM	A / 7.3		A / 8.9	
			PM	A / 7.7		B / 10.9	
3	**Arabia Street and 52nd Avenue**	SSSC	AM	**F / 50.5**	NB	**F / 78.2**	NB
			PM	**D / 34.9**	NB	**F / 50.2**	NB
4	**Jackson Street and 52nd Avenue**	Signalized	AM	B / 15.8		B / 16.4	
			PM	B / 15.5		B / 16.4	
5	**Monroe Street and Driveway A (Proposed Project)**	Signalized	AM	A / 4.1	EB	A / 4.0	WB
			PM	A / 4.0	WB	A / 3.9	WB
6	**Monroe Street and Avenue 53**	SSSC	AM	A / 9.6	EB	B / 10.1	EB
			PM	A / 9.5	EB	B / 10.3	EB
7	**Driveway G and Avenue 53 (Proposed Project)**	SSSC	AM	A / 9.2	NB	A / 9.3	NB
			PM	A / 8.7	NB	A / 8.7	NB

Notes:

1. AWSC: All-Way Stop Control

4 Detailed results are summarized in Table 5 of the Project's *Transportation Analysis Report*.

TABLE 5.13-5: OPENING YEAR (2030) PROPOSED PROJECT INTERSECTION LOS

ID	Intersection	Control[1,2,3]	Peak Hour	Opening Year with Project		Opening Year with Project and Cumulative Projects	
				LOS/Delay	*Side Street Stop Worst Movement*	*LOS/Delay*	*Side Street Stop Worst Movement*

2. SSSC: Side-Street Stop Control
3. Deficient roadway segment operations are noted in bold text.

Source: Fehr & Peers. Table 5. *The Ranch at Madison Transportation Analysis Report*. 2026. See **Appendix T**.

Under the Opening Year (2030) Plus Project scenario, the following intersection is forecasted to operate below acceptable LOS D standards:

- Intersection #3 (Arabia Street and 52nd Avenue) during the AM peak hour.

Under the Opening Year (2030) Plus Project and Cumulative Projects scenario, the following intersections are forecasted to operate below LOS D during both the AM and PM peak hours:

- Intersection #3 (Arabia Street and 52nd Avenue).

All other study intersections would operate at acceptable service levels of LOS D or better under both the Opening Year (2030) Plus Project and Opening Year (2030) Plus Project and Cumulative Project conditions. As described in the Project's Transportation Analysis Report, the Project would not worsen LOS conditions relative to the cumulative baseline at any study intersection.

Feasible measures were identified to improve intersection operations at deficient intersections to an acceptable LOS (LOS D or better).

- At Intersection #3, 52nd Avenue at Arabia Street, a signal warrant analysis was also conducted and the warrant was met in the AM Peak Hour for Opening Year (2030) Plus Project Plus Cumulative Projects Scenario. Ultimately, improvements to this intersection were needed and the installation of a traffic signal improves the intersection to operate above the LOS C threshold. The Applicant would fund 100 percent of the cost of the traffic signal improvement at this intersection and, for this reason, no "fair share" calculation is provided for this applicant-funded improvement.

Table 5.13-6: Opening Year (2030) Proposed Project with Improvements LOS compares intersection operations without and with improvements under improvements. The calculated Project fair share contribution towards these improvements is based on the formula outlined in the County's Guidelines. See the Transportation Analysis Report prepared for the Project (see **Appendix T**).

TABLE 5.13-6: OPENING YEAR (2030) PROPOSED PROJECT WITH IMPROVEMENTS LOS

Intersection	Peak Hour	Opening Year (2030) Plus Project		Opening Year (2030) Plus Project and Cumulative Projects		Opening Year (2030) Plus Project w/ Improvement		Opening Year (2030) Plus Project and Cumulative w/ Improvement		Fair Share %
		LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	
3. Arabia St and 52nd Avenue	AM	**F**	**50.5**	**F**	**78.2**	A	7.8	A	8.0	1.8%
	PM	**D**	**34.9**	**F**	**50.2**	A	6.0	A	6.0	21.5%

Notes: Percent of fair share at the intersection is calculated using peak-hour volumes.
*Potentially deficient intersection operations are noted in **bold text.***

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2026. **Appendix T**.

Queueing Assessment Summary

Intersection turn-movement queueing was evaluated at the study intersections (signalized and all-way stop-controlled) using HCM 7th Edition methodologies. Storage capacities were compared against 95th percentile queue estimates prepared using the Synchro 12 software. Excessive queueing is defined as a 95th percentile queue that exceeds the available turn-bay storage. As shown in **Table 5.13-7: Proposed Project Intersection Queuing Assessment Summary**, the 95th percentile queues under all scenarios and both peak hours are contained within the available storage, and no excessive queuing was identified.

TABLE 5.13-7: PROPOSED PROJECT INTERSECTION QUEUING ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

ID	Intersection	OY (2030) +Project	OY (2030) +Project w/ Imp.	OY (2030) +Project +Cumulative	OY (2030) +Project +Cumulative w/ Imp.
1	**Monroe St & 50th Ave**	X	X	X	X
2	**Monroe St & 52nd Ave**	X	X	X	X
3	**Arabia St & 52nd Ave**	N/A	X	N/A	X
4	**Jackson St & 52nd Ave**	X	X	X	X
5	**Monroe St & Driveway A**	X	X	X	X

Note:
X = No Excessive Queue

Source: Fehr & Peers. 2026. Table 6. See **Appendix T**.

Transit Facilities

Public transit service in the Project vicinity is provided by the SunLine Transit Agency, which operates fixed-route bus service throughout the Coachella Valley. The nearest transit service includes Route 6 at Monroe Street and Avenue 48 and Route 8 at Avenue 50 and Calhoun Street. Although the Project is not directly served by an on-site bus stop, the availability of nearby transit routes provides residents with access to regional transit service. The Project would not remove, obstruct, or

otherwise interfere with existing or planned transit facilities and would not conflict with regional transit policies.

Bicycle Facilities

Existing bicycle facilities near the Project Site include Class II bike lanes on Monroe Street, 52nd Avenue, and Avenue 53. The Project would enhance bicycle connectivity by adding a buffered Class II bicycle lane along the Monroe Street frontage, which would directly connect to existing bicycle facilities north of the Project Site, and along 52nd Avenue and Avenue 54. These improvements would expand the existing bicycle network and improve multimodal connectivity within the Project area. Thus, the Project's proposed bicycle facilities would not conflict with, and would support the County and regional bicycle transportation policies.

Pedestrian Facilities

Existing pedestrian facilities in the Project vicinity include sidewalks along portions of Monroe Street, Avenue 50, 52nd Avenue, Jackson Street, and Arabia Street. However, several existing roadway segments contain sidewalk gaps. As shown in **Figure 3.0-10: Non-Vehicular Circulation Plan** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the Project would contain a comprehensive trail and pedestrian path system that is carefully planned to respect the natural terrain, encourage modes of non-vehicular circulation, by providing connectivity between the recreational facilities, residential areas, open space, and the existing off-site pathways and sidewalks. The Project would also include pedestrian improvements, including five-foot sidewalks along Monroe Street, five-foot sidewalks along Avenue 53, and five-foot sidewalks along the west side of Arabia Street, which would close an existing gap adjacent to the Cahuilla Desert Academy. The proposed sidewalks along Monroe Street and Avenue 53 would add to the existing pedestrian network around the Project Site vicinity. The proposed trail and path system consists of the following:

Multiuse Path

The Multiuse Path would be located around the Amenity Village and provides access and connectivity to the amenities within PA 1. In connection to the broader network of trails within the community, this 10-foot-wide concrete/decomposed granite path encourages members, residents, and their guests to circulate without using their vehicles.

Perimeter Trail

The Perimeter Trail is an eight-foot-wide compacted decomposed granite trail within PAs 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13 and encircles and bisects the community.

Public Trail

The Public Trail is an eight-foot-wide compacted decomposed granite trail along Monroe Street, Arabia Street and Avenue 53 connects on-site trails with off-site trails.

Golf Cart Path and Crossing

A network of eight-foot-wide concrete Cart Paths connects the golf course holes and runs between residential neighborhoods, creating a multi-loop system throughout the community. Additionally, a grade-separated golf cart crossing is proposed within Monroe Street that would allow pedestrians and golf carts safe travel and access to amenities between the proposed Ranch at Madison and existing Madison Club communities; the crossing may consist of either an underground tunnel or an above-grade bridge.

Emergency Vehicle Access

Emergency vehicle access was evaluated in the Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T)** for consistency with the California Fire Code, which requires multiple fire apparatus access routes for Projects exceeding 62,000 square feet, minimum access widths of 24 feet, and appropriate separation between access points.

The Project would provide four vehicle access points along Monroe Street and Avenue 53, and additional roadway access via Arabia Street. These access locations would provide multiple ingress and egress options for emergency response and would meet Fire Code separation requirements. All driveways would be gated and designed to the County Fire Department specifications. Final design would be reviewed by County Engineering and Fire officials prior to approval.

Additionally, the Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T)** analyzes fire access travel times from the three closest fire stations to the Project Site, Stations 70, 86 and 79. Under two different scenarios which route to both the primary and secondary driveways, fire protection personnel would be able to reach the Project Site within the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)'s four-minute standard for arrival of the first engine company at a fire suppression incident. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with emergency access policies and would provide adequate emergency circulation consistent with adopted safety standards.

Consistency with County Transportation Ordinances

As shown in **Table 5.13-8: Project Consistency with County Transportation Ordinances**, the Project would be consistent with transportation related County ordinances.

TABLE 5.13-8: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ORDINANCES

Ordinance	Consistency Analysis
Ordinance No. 413 Vehicle Parking: Ordinance No. 413 establishes regulations to vehicle parking on Riverside County roadways.	**Consistent.** The Project would provide on-site parking in compliance with the County and applicable municipal parking standards and would not result in parking within County rights-of-way. The Project would be consistent with this ordinance.
Ordinance No. 452 Speed Limits: Ordinance No. 452 pertains to prima facie speed limits on Riverside County	**Consistent.** The Project would not modify the posted speed limits and would not introduce roadway conditions

TABLE 5.13-8: PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ORDINANCES

Ordinance	Consistency Analysis
roadways and establishes or amends prima facie speed limits on certain Riverside County roads.	that would conflict with adopted speed regulations. The Project would be consistent with this ordinance.
Ordinance No. 460 Subdivision of Land: Ordinance No. 460, in conjunction with the Subdivision Map Act, establishes regulations for the division of land and describes procedures. The ordinance also includes the provisions for the establishment of Road and Bridge Benefit Districts and associated fees.	**Consistent.** The Project would be subject to County subdivision review and approval and would comply with all applicable roadway dedication and improvement requirements. The Project would be consistent with this ordinance.
Ordinance No. 461 Road Improvement Standards and Specifications: Ordinance No. 461 adopts Road Improvement Standards and Specifications.	**Consistent.** All proposed roadway improvements, driveways, and access points would adhere to County standards and would be reviewed and approved by appropriate County departments. The Project would be consistent with this ordinance.
Ordinance No. 499 Encroachments in County Highways: Ordinance No. 499, subject to the control of the Board of Supervisors, delegates to the Riverside County Transportation Director the administration of the use of county highways, including county roads, for excavations and encroachments; construction, operation, and maintenance of utility facilities; planting, maintenance, and removal of trees; and the issuance, modification, and revocation of permits for such uses.	**Consistent.** Any Project work within County rights-of-way would require an encroachment permit and would be subject to County review and approval. The Project would comply with all applicable encroachment permitting requirements.
Ordinance No. 500 Permissible vehicle weight on highways, roads, and bridges: Ordinance No. 500 establishes weight prohibitions and reductions for vehicles traveling along County roadways.	**Consistent.** Construction and operational traffic associated with the Project would be subject to applicable weight restrictions and permitting requirements. The Project would not conflict with this ordinance.
Ordinance No. 659 Development Impact Fee Program (DIF Program): Ordinance No. 659 establishes a development impact fee (DIF) for the development of infrastructure, including County roadways and the installation of traffic signals.	**Consistent.** The Project would be required to pay applicable DIF in accordance with County requirements. The Project would be consistent with this ordinance.
Ordinance No. 673 Coachella Valley Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Program: Ordinance No. 673 establishes a TUMF program for the Coachella Valley. The fees are collected by Riverside County and administered by the CVAG to make roadway improvements in the CVAG area that are needed to accommodate growth to year 2040. Facilities eligible for TUMF are designated by CVAG and updated periodically. The TUMF is solely used toward funding the engineering, construction, and purchasing of right-of-way for Regional System projects and any other purpose consistent with this ordinance. The fee may not be used for system maintenance.	**Consistent.** The Project would be required to pay applicable TUMF in accordance with County Ordinance No. 673 and CVAG requirements. The Project would be consistent with this ordinance.

While the proposed Project includes a request to vacate the segment of Avenue 53 within the Project Site, this modification to the roadway would not conflict with the overall intent of the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element or disrupt regional connectivity as the traffic impact analysis concludes that all intersections in the area would continue to operate at an acceptable level of service without the segment of Avenue 53 within the Project Site and the off-site roadway improvements proposed as part of the Project.

These proposed off-site improvements, shown on **Figure 3.0-8: Off-Site Vehicular Circulation Improvements**, in **Section 3.0, Project Description**, include the extension and improvement of Arabia Street from Avenue 52 to Avenue 53 to provide alternative access for properties located east of the Project Site that currently have access to Avenue 53. In addition, new traffic signals are proposed at the intersections of Avenue 52 and Arabia Street and on Monroe Street at the proposed main entry to the Project on Monroe Street aligned with La Serena Street. Widening of the portion of Monroe Street adjacent to the Project is proposed.

Widening and improvement of the existing segment of Arabia Street south of Avenue 52 is proposed with the extension of Arabia Street south to Avenue 53.

The Project would not conflict with any adopted plans, policies, ordinances, or programs addressing the circulation system. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 (b), transportation impacts are evaluated based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rather than roadway level of service. A Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Assessment was prepared for the Project (**Appendix T**) in accordance with SB 743, the Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts, and the County of Riverside Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines for Level of Service and Vehicle Miles Traveled.

The Project was evaluated against the County's VMT screening criteria to determine whether a detailed VMT analysis would be required. Under the County's Small Project screening criterion, single-family residential projects with 110 dwelling units or fewer are presumed to result in a less than significant VMT impact. The Project would include 85 single-family residential units, which is below the applicable screening threshold. In addition, the Project includes private, resident-serving amenities such as a nine-hole golf course, wellness center, and restaurants that are intended exclusively for use by residents and their guests. These on-site amenities are anticipated to reduce external vehicle trips compared to conventional residential development by meeting many day-to-day needs internally. However, although the Project qualified for and received approval under the

screening criteria, a full VMT assessment was voluntarily conducted to substantiate the conclusion that the Project would result in a less than significant transportation impact.

The VMT analysis utilized the Western Riverside County Council of Governments' RIVCOM travel demand model, which is consistent with the SCAG Connect SoCal 2020 Regional Transportation Plan and includes a 2018 base year and 2045 forecast year. Project inputs included 85 single-family residential units, based on an assumed household size of 3.06 persons, and 151 on-site employees[5] associated with the Project's private amenities. VMT was calculated using the Production/Attraction (PA) methodology, which estimates total weekday VMT generated by trips with at least one end in the Project area and evaluates travel based on trip purpose. Consistent with County guidance, residential uses were evaluated using home-based (HB) VMT per resident, while employment uses were evaluated using home-based work (HBW) VMT per employee. External-internal and internal-external trips were excluded to maintain consistency with the County's threshold framework.

Riverside County VMT data was reviewed for the 2018 base year and the 2045 forecast year, and an interpolated estimate was developed for the existing year (2025) to represent current conditions for Riverside County and the Project. **Table 5.13-9: Project VMT and VMT Thresholds in Riverside County** summarizes the VMT forecasts. The Riverside County VMT thresholds are established by home-based VMT divided by either residents or employees.

TABLE 5.13-9: PROJECT VMT AND VMT THRESHOLDS IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Scenario	Riverside County	Unincorporated Riverside County	Project
Model Base Year 2018			
Home-Based VMT	35,050,392	7,683,776	3,534
Home-Based Work VMT	13,858,582	1,787,373	2,983
Residents	2,358,439	377,528	261
Employees	755,143	78,760	151
HB VMT/Resident	14.86	20.35	13.54
HBW VMT/Employee	18.35	22.69	19.76
Existing Year 2025 Interpolation			
Home-Based VMT	41,390,884	9,150,899	3,456
Home-Based Work VMT	17,328,618	2,316,387	2,817
Residents	2,634,802	424,241	261
Employees	848,710	95,230	151
HB VMT/Resident	**15.71**	21.57	13.24

5 151 employees would consist of three for the main guard house; three for the secondary guardhouse; six for the racquet/courts/admin; 50 for the farm-to-table; one for the event barn; 16 for the activity lagoon; eight for the fitness center; eight for the wellness spa; four for the starter shack; one for the back-of-house area; and 51 for the golf course.

TABLE 5.13-9: PROJECT VMT AND VMT THRESHOLDS IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY			
Scenario	**Riverside County**	**Unincorporated Riverside County**	**Project**
HB VMT/Employee	**20.42**	24.32	18.65
Future Year 2045			
Home-Based VMT	59,506,576	13,342,680	3,233
Home-Based Work VMT	27,243,007	3,827,857	2,341
Residents	3,424,410	557,707	261
Employees	1,116,046	142,286	151
HB VMT/Resident	17.38	23.92	12.39
HBW VMT/Employee	24.41	26.90	15.51
VMT Exceeds Threshold?		**No**	

*Note: **Bold** represents the County's threshold of significance. The Riverside County VMT thresholds are established by home-based VMT divided by either residents or employees, adhering to the County of Riverside TIA Guidelines.*

Source: Fehr & Peers – 2026. **Appendix T**.

Based on 2025 existing conditions, the Project is estimated to generate 13.24 home-based VMT per resident, which is approximately 15.7 percent below the County threshold of 15.71, and 18.65 home-based work VMT per employee, which is approximately 8.6 percent below the County threshold of 20.42. Because the Project's VMT metrics fall below applicable thresholds for both residential and employment uses, the Project would not result in a significant transportation impact related to VMT. This conclusion is further supported by comparisons to unincorporated Riverside County benchmarks, where the Project also remains below applicable thresholds. The Project's relatively low VMT is attributable in part to its self-contained design and provision of on-site amenities, which are expected to reduce the need for external vehicle trips. Therefore, no further VMT analysis is required, and the Project would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) and would result in a less than significant impact.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

Construction of the Project would temporarily increase vehicle trips associated with construction workers and material deliveries and could result in short-term roadway constraints or temporary circulation disruptions. These conditions could temporarily introduce localized roadway hazards during construction activities. Although construction activities associated with the development of the Project would temporarily introduce construction vehicles, these activities would be regulated through standard construction traffic control plans, flagging operations, and permitted haul routes. Further, these activities would be temporary in nature and would not result in long-term hazardous

conditions. Thus, construction-related traffic effects, including roadway hazards and temporary circulation disruptions, would be less than significant.

Operation

The Project's access and circulation system was evaluated through the Project's Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**) prepared by Fehr & Peers. These analyses reviewed proposed driveway locations, access, roadway alignments, traffic control, site circulation and pedestrian and bicycle access. The Project proposes site access via Driveway A on Monroe Street, Driveway G on Avenue 53 (secondary access), and additional emergency access points at Driveways D and H. The proposed driveways and internal roadways are designed to meet or exceed the Riverside County roadway design standards, the California Fire Code access requirements, and the County sight-distance and driveway spacing criteria. The Project Site is within flat terrain with no sharp curves, blind driveways, or constrained intersection geometry. Driveway spacing and internal circulation design would maintain adequate stopping sight distance, turning radii, and queueing capacity.

Traffic operation analyses indicate that intersections with Project access would operate at acceptable levels of service under existing, opening year, and cumulative conditions. Standard site design, striping, signage, and traffic control measures required by the County would be implemented at the time of improvement plan approval. No unusual conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, or transit users are anticipated.

Further, a review of inbound trips to the Project under cumulative conditions would determine the number of cars per minute queueing and thus the size requirements for the full access turning movement. Since the peak-hour trips are no greater than 60 trips per hour (and would be further split between the primary/secondary entry/exit) there could be a maximum of one vehicle per minute. The geometric sizing of turn pockets into the Project will be determined through final design approvals and would not preclude the Project from allowing full access. Preliminary assessment would suggest a 50- to 75-foot minimum turn pocket which would provide queueing capacity for two to three vehicles.

Accordingly, the Project would not introduce hazardous roadway geometry or incompatible roadway uses during long-term operation. Impacts would be less than significant.

d. Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than Significant Impact.

Construction

Construction of the Project Site and off-site improvements, including the extension of and improvement to Arabia Street and the installation of the golf cart tunnel/bridge, could result in temporary, localized disruptions to the surrounding roadway network. These activities may necessitate short-term lane closures, minor detours, or temporary narrowing of travel lanes, which

could potentially affect emergency vehicle response times or access in the immediate vicinity during active construction phases.

However, the Project is legally required to comply with Riverside County Ordinance No. 457 (regulating grading standards and physical site access) and Ordinance No. 499 (regulating encroachments and temporary traffic modifications within County public rights-of-way). As required by these ordinances, the Project Applicant is required to prepare a comprehensive Construction Management Plan (CMP) and project-specific Traffic Control Plan (TCP). These plans must be reviewed and approved by the Riverside County Transportation Department and the Riverside County Fire Department prior to the issuance of any grading, building, or encroachment permits.

In accordance with Riverside County Road Standards (Ordinance No. 461) and the latest edition of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD), the CMP and TCP will outline mandatory operational protocols to guarantee continuous, unobstructed emergency access throughout all phases of construction. These standard protocols would include but are not limited to: mandatory advanced notification (minimum 48 to 72 hours) to local emergency service providers (including the Riverside County Fire Department and Riverside County Sheriff's Department) regarding any planned temporary lane closures or detours; the deployment of certified traffic control personnel (flagging); and the strategic placement of traffic-bearing steel plates over excavations or the implementation of temporary detours. Because compliance with these established municipal regulations is mandatory and built directly into the County's standard permitting process, potential temporary construction-related impacts to emergency access would be less than significant, and no formal CEQA mitigation measures are required.

Operation

Emergency vehicle access for the Project was evaluated based on the Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**) prepared by Fehr & Peers. These studies assessed site access geometry, driveway configurations, roadway connectivity, and adherence to emergency access standards.

The Project would include the following four emergency access points on the Project Site:

- Monroe Street: Driveway A (Primary Access)
- Monroe Street: Driveway D (Maintenance/Emergency-only Access)
- Avenue 53: Driveway G (Secondary Access)
- Avenue 53: Driveway H (Maintenance/Emergency-only Access)

The Project's proposed emergency access was reviewed for consistency with the California Fire Code, which requires:

- Two separate fire apparatus access roads for developments exceeding 62,000 square feet;
- A minimum fire lane width of 24 feet; and

- Adequate spacing between access points equal to at least one-half the maximum site diagonal.

The Project would exceed Fire Code requirements by providing multiple access points from two separate roadways, Monroe Street and Avenue 53. Final driveway widths and turning radii would be reviewed and approved by County Engineering and Fire officials at the time of final design to ensure continued compliance.

The proposed Arabia Street extension would provide secondary circulation around the existing school, improve queue management during school pick-up/drop-off, and would reduce localized congestion that could otherwise impede emergency vehicles.

The LOS analysis evaluated traffic volumes at Project driveways under Opening Year (2030) plus Project and Cumulative Projects and concluded that the Project would operate at acceptable LOS A-C at both Driveway A and Driveway G. Thus, congestion would not restrict emergency vehicle movement.

Additionally, the Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T)** provided fire access travel times based on the three closest fire stations – Stations 70, 86 and 79. Under two different scenarios which route to both the primary and secondary driveways, fire protection personnel would be able to reach the Project Site within the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)'s four-minute standard for arrival of the first engine company at a fire suppression incident.

The Project's proposed emergency access points and circulation, the Project's proposed Arabia Street extension, and conformance to the California Fire Code would ensure the Project would not result in inadequate emergency access. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

5.13.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative transportation impacts were evaluated using the Project's Transportation Analysis Report (**Appendix T**), which analyzed cumulative traffic conditions based on County's General Plan horizon year and regional growth assumptions. The cumulative analysis accounts for ambient background growth and traffic generated by approved or reasonably foreseeable development projects in the Project vicinity, consistent with the County Transportation Analysis Guidelines and the CVAG regional travel demand model.

Regional cumulative growth was incorporated into the analysis using ambient annual growth assumptions applied to existing traffic volumes, along with traffic from cumulative development projects identified in coordination with County planning and engineering staff. Traffic forecasts evaluated cumulative Opening Year (2030) conditions with cumulative projects and long-range horizon conditions consistent with regional planning assumptions.

5.13.6.1 Cumulative LOS

As discussed above, all study intersections are forecast to operate at or below the County's LOS C standard with projected growth in the area and the addition of traffic from past, present, and probable future projects considered in the cumulative traffic analysis scenario with the improvements proposed as part of the Project. Therefore, the Project would not cause or substantially contribute to the forecast cumulative LOS deficiencies in the surrounding roadway network.

Traffic conditions in the vicinity of the Project Site are also temporarily affected each spring and sometimes in fall by music festival events held at the Empire Polo Club located northwest of the Project Site and Vista Santa Rosa. The City of Indio approved a Major Music Festival Permit regulating the operation of the Coachella Music and Arts and Stagecoach Country Music Festivals held each April on consecutive weekends and an additional event allowed on up to two consecutive weekends each October. This permit requires preparation and approval by the City of a series of operation plans for these festivals, including a Transportation Management Plan (TMP), Police Department Operations Plan, Fire Department Incident Plan, and Emergency Plan, prior to each event. The comprehensive TMP addresses Temporary Road Closures; Ingress and Egress Routes; Shuttle Bus and Taxi/Parent Drop-Off & Pick Up Routes; Parking Operations and Access/Egress for Camping, Day Parking and Staff Parking; Traffic Signage; Temporary Traffic Control Procedures and Locations, including use of temporary traffic signals; Temporary traffic lane reassignments (with traffic cones); Temporary traffic signal timing, Deployment of traffic control personnel to direct traffic; Shuttle Operations; Pedestrian and Bicycle Flow and Control; and a Neighborhood Resident Plan addressing access for residents of neighborhoods located around the festival site. The Neighborhood Resident Plan includes provision of advance notice and information regarding project impacts and traffic control measures to residents who live in neighborhoods around the site of the festivals. This notification informs affected residents of the temporary changes in circulation and access during these events. TMPs have been prepared and implemented since 2013 for these festival events. The required preparation and implementation of updated operational plans for these events by the City of Indio will address changes in conditions in the area, including maintaining adequate access to any new neighborhoods developed in Vista Santa Rosa, such as the Proposed Project and other probable future projects, and the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 within the Project Site, to avoid any temporary significant cumulative traffic impacts during these events in April and October.

5.13.6.2 VMT

The Project would include 85 single-family residential units and 151 employees. Using the County's VMT model, RIVCOM, the Project's VMT metrics fall below applicable thresholds for both residential and employment uses. As such, the Project would not contribute to significant cumulative VMT impacts.

5.13.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

The Project would result in less than significant transportation impacts and no mitigation measures are required.

5.13.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts associated with traffic and transportation would be less than significant.

5.14 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) addresses the potential for implementation of the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (Project) to affect tribal cultural resources within the Project Site and in the immediate surrounding area. Cultural resources are also discussed in **Section 5.5** of this Draft EIR. Mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level are identified. Tribal cultural resources include places, objects, and settlements that reflect group or individual religious, archaeological, or architectural activities. Such resources provide information on scientific progress, environmental adaptations, group ideology, or other human advancements. This section incorporates information from the Tribal Consultation process (SB 18 and AB 52), conducted by the County of Riverside Tribal Liaison and the Cultural Resource Assessment cited below:

- Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI), *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment of an approximate 71-ha (175-acre) Cultural Resource Study within Vista Santa Rosa, Riverside County, California*, May 15, 2025. See **Appendix G**.
- GPA250005 SP00408 TTM39179. SB 18 and AB 52 Tribal Consultation Summary. See **Appendix U**.

5.14.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.14.1.1 Federal

Archaeological Resources Protection Act

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979[1] (ARPA) regulates the protection of archaeological resources and sites that are on federal lands and Tribal lands. ARPA mandates consultation procedures before initiation of archaeological research on Tribal lands or research involving Tribal cultural resources. Indian tribes are required to be notified of possible harm to or destruction of sites having religious or cultural significance to that group. Permits to excavate or remove archaeological resources from Tribal lands require the consent of the Tribal Government owning or having jurisdiction over those lands. The permit must include terms and conditions as may be requested by the affected Tribal Government(s). ARPA stipulates that any exchange or ultimate disposition of archaeological resources excavated or removed from Indian lands must be subject to the consent of the Indian or Indian tribe owning or having jurisdiction over such lands.

1 United States Code, Title 16, Section 470aa–470mm, *Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.* Public Law 96-95, as amended.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act is a federal law passed in 1990 that provides a process for museums and federal agencies to return certain Native American cultural items, such as human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony to lineal descendants and culturally affiliated Tribal Governments.

5.14.1.2 State

Senate Bill 18 (SB 18)

California State Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), signed into law in September 2004 and implemented March 1, 2005, requires cities and counties to notify and consult with California-recognized Native American Tribes about proposed local land use planning decisions for the purpose of protecting Traditional Tribal Cultural Places. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research was mandated to amend its General Plan Guidelines to include the stipulations of SB 18 and to add advice for consulting with California Native American Tribes.

Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52)

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 provides for the consideration of tribal cultural resources during the CEQA process by adding or amending the PRC Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21084.2, 21084.3, and 5097.94. This bill specifies that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined, is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. The Bill requires a lead agency to begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project prior to determining whether a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), or Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required for a project. This requirement is applicable if the tribe has requested the Lead Agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency of proposed projects in that geographic area and the tribe requests consultation. The bill also specifies examples of mitigation measures that may be considered to avoid or minimize impacts on tribal cultural resources.

(a) "Tribal cultural resources" are either of the following:

(1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:

(A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR);

(B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1;

(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 Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this

paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

(b) A cultural landscape that meets the criteria of subdivision (a) is a tribal cultural resource to the extent that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape.

(c) A historical resource described in Section 21084.1, a unique archaeological resource as defined in subdivision (g) of Section 21083.2, or a "nonunique archaeological resource" as defined in subdivision (h) of Section 21083.2 may also be a tribal cultural resource if it conforms with the criteria of subdivision (a).

California Public Resources Code

In addition to the PRC sections affected by AB 52, several other sections regulate cultural resources. California PRC Sections 5020–5029.5 establish the criteria for the CRHR, create the California Historic Landmarks Committee, and authorize the Department of Parks and Recreation to designate Registered Historical Landmarks and Registered Points of Historical Interest. They also establish criteria for the protection and preservation of historic resources. Several other sections of the California PRC also provide protection of cultural resources. Sections 5097–5097.6 provide guidance for state agencies in the management of archaeological, paleontological, and historical sites affected by major public works projects on state land.

Subsections 5097.9–5097.991 establish regulations for the protection of Native American religious places and establish the NAHC. They also require that California Native American remains and associated grave artifacts be repatriated and that notification of discovery of Native American human remains be made by the NAHC to an MLD. Subsections 5097.993–5097.994 establish fines, or both fine and imprisonment, for the unlawful excavation, removal, or destruction of Native American archaeological or historic sites on public or private lands.

Senate Bill 922

Senate Bill 922 exempts from California Public Records Act information pertaining to Native American graves, cemeteries, archaeological sites, and sacred places in the possession of the California NAHC and other state or local agencies.

Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 4307

Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 4307 prohibits individuals from removing, injuring, defacing, or destroying any object of paleontological, archaeological, or historical interest or value.

Penal Code, Title 14, Section 622.5

Penal Code, Title 14, Section 622.5 establishes as a misdemeanor offense for any person, other than the owner, who willfully damages or destroys archaeological or historic features on public or privately-owned land.

California Health and Safety Code, Sections 7050.5-7052 and 8010-8011

Section 7050.5 requires that construction or excavation be stopped in the vicinity of discovered human remains until the coroner can determine whether the remains are those of a Native American. If determined to be Native American, the coroner must contact the NAHC within 24 hours. Section 7052 of the Health and Safety Code states that it is a felony to disturb Native American burials. Section 8010-8011 establishes a state repatriation policy to ensure that all California Indian human remains, and cultural items are treated with dignity and respect and encourages voluntary disclosure and return of remains and cultural items by publicly funded agencies and museums in California.

5.14.1.3 Regional and Local

County of Riverside

The applicable policies listed below are from the County of Riverside General Plan, and are intended to ensure the preservation of cultural, tribal cultural, historical, archaeological, paleontological, geological, and educational resources in the County.

OS 19.1 Cultural resources (both prehistoric and historic) are a valued part of the history of the County of Riverside.

OS 19.2 The County of Riverside shall establish a Cultural Resources Program in consultation with Tribes and the professional cultural resources consulting community that, at a minimum, would address each of the following: application of the Cultural Resources Program to projects subject to environmental review; government-to-government consultation; application processing requirements; information database(s); confidentiality of site locations; content and review of technical studies; professional consultant qualifications and requirements; site monitoring; examples of preservation and mitigation techniques and methods; curation and the descendant community consultation requirements of local, state and federal law.

OS 19.3 Review proposed development for the possibility of cultural resources and for compliance with the cultural resources program.

OS 19.5 Exercise sensitivity and respect for human remains from both prehistoric and historic time periods and comply with all applicable laws concerning such remains.

5.14.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.14.2.1 Ethnographic Setting

The Indigenous group that occupied the northern Coachella Valley during the post-European contact period was the Desert Cahuilla, who along with the Mountain Cahuilla of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains and the Pass Cahuilla of the San Gorgonio Pass region, constituted the ethnographic Cahuilla. The Cahuilla spoke a language of the Takic branch of Northern Uto-Aztecan, and the Desert Cahuilla spoke a distinct dialect of Cahuilla. There have been few archaeological studies of the historical-period Cahuilla, but testing at the former Mission Creek Indian Reservation, approximately 53.7 km (33.4 miles) northwest of the Project Site, identified occupations stretching from the Late Prehistoric period into the early twentieth century. Similarly, excavations at Tahquitz Canyon (Bean et al. 1995), 34.5 km (21.4 miles) northwest of the Project Site, found a large village complex dating to AD 1600–1870.[2]

The Cahuilla people were traditionally organized into moieties, clans, and lineages, with each lineage occupying its own village and managing distinct resources. This social structure supported access to a wide range of habitats and promoted economic independence among villages. The Desert Cahuilla relied heavily on mesquite as a staple food but also utilized over 150 plant species for various purposes, such as agave, pinyon, and acorns. Fishing and resource gathering took place around ancient Lake Cahuilla, which served as an important cultural and subsistence area prior to its recession. Animal resources ranged from large game in the mountains to small desert fauna. Seasonal transhumance was practiced, with groups moving between valley-floor settlements and mountain resource zones depending on plant harvesting cycles and hunting opportunities. They practiced fishing in ancient Lake Cahuilla, used fish traps, and also adopted limited agriculture, later incorporating European-introduced crops. Their lifestyle began to shift with European contact, leading to involvement in ranching and wage labor, as well as a sharp population decline due to disease and out-migration.

The Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, a federally recognized tribe culturally affiliated with the Desert Cahuilla, is among the smaller bands that reestablished their tribal identity after significant demographic and political challenges. Established under the Mission Indian Relief Act of 1891, the small reservation near Coachella faced severe demographic decline, at one point reduced to a single tribal member. The reservation today occupies approximately 259 acres near Coachella and remains culturally affiliated with Desert Cahuilla traditional territory. However, a revival in the 1990s under Roberta Augustine's descendants led to the re-establishment of tribal governance and economic

2 Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI). *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment of an approximate 71-ha (175-acre) Cultural Resource Study within Vista Santa Rosa, Riverside County, California*, May 15, 2025. See **Appendix G**.

development, notably the opening of the Augustine Casino in 2002. The contemporary tribe continues to play a role in cultural preservation and community involvement in the Coachella Valley.[3]

The ethnographic discussion focuses on the Desert Cahuilla and affiliated bands because the Project Site is located within the traditionally documented territory of the Cahuilla people. As part of the Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment, multiple tribes with potential cultural affiliation were contacted. Only the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians provided general recommended mitigation measures, and no tribes identified tribal cultural resources within the Project Site or requested additional consultation. Accordingly, this section provides regional ethnographic context for the culturally affiliated group.

5.14.2.2 Existing Conditions

The Project Site is along the far-northwestern end of the Coachella Valley, between the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south and southeast and the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north. The Valley is part of the Colorado Desert geomorphic province, an area that includes both sides of the lower Colorado River and the Coachella and Imperial Valleys of California.[4]

The approximately 174-acre Project Site consists primarily of fallowed agricultural land, agricultural reservoirs, and disturbed desert terrain associated with previous agricultural use. An abandoned date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a former 1970s residence and related structures. The Project Site also contains a small nursery operation; a vacant mobile home, and several nonresidential outbuildings and trailers associated with the abandoned date farm operation are located within APN 780-010-013.

As further detailed below in *Section 5.14.4: Methodology*, the Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment (**Appendix G**) conducted a records search with the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University in order to identify any previous archaeological projects and previously recorded archaeological resources within the Project Site. A request for a Sacred Lands File search to the NAHC was also submitted, which produced negative results. Additionally, a pedestrian survey was conducted on the Project Site. The Project Site was found to be largely undeveloped and most of the Project Site has been previously graded and tilled as agricultural land. As detailed in **Section 5.5: Cultural Resources** of this Draft EIR, the Phase I Report did not identify any tribal cultural resources within the Project Site.

3 SRI, 2025. *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment*. See **Appendix G**.

4 SRI, 2025. *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment*. See **Appendix G**.

5.14.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.14.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine whether a project would have a significant effect on the environment (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). The potential for the Project to result in impacts associated with tribal and cultural resources is based on the following:

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

i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or

ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

5.14.4 METHODOLOGY

5.14.4.1 Archaeological Records Search

The Phase I Cultural Resources Study was prepared for the Project Site by SRI that included a records search conducted through the CHRIS at the SCIC located at San Diego State University on November 27, 2024 (see **Appendix G**). The goal of the records search was to review any previous archaeological projects that may have been conducted within the Project Site and to identify previously recorded archaeological resources located on the property. The records search looked at all reports from archaeological work executed within a 1-mile radius of the Project Site. The records search was conducted by examining USGS topographic maps held by the SCIC that show the locations of previous cultural resource surveys and known archaeological sites. The records search also included consultation of the catalogs of sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and/or designated California Historical Landmarks.

Additional archival research included reviewing primary and secondary sources for information pertinent to historical-period activities in the Project Site. As part of the archival search, SRI staff consulted the online USGS collection of Historical Topographic Maps, online United States Department of Interior (USDI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM)/ General Land Office (GLO) records, and historical aerial imagery for information regarding specific historical-period land use in and around the Project Site.

Part of the records search and literature review involved contacting the NAHC for a list of traditional-use areas or sacred sites within the Project area and a list of specific Native American groups or individuals who could provide additional information. The NAHC provided a list of 23 contacts from 11 tribes who could provide additional information. SRI sent a letter to all 23 contacts on November 13, 2024.

5.14.4.2 Pedestrian Survey

A pedestrian survey of the Project Site was conducted from December 2 to December 5, 2024, by a single field archaeologist, Alyssa R. Canoff, M.A., RPA. The survey was completed by walking north-south oriented transects spaced at 49-foot intervals across the Project Site. The progress of the survey was monitored with a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) unit and high-resolution aerial photographs. During the survey, transect starting and stopping points were guided by GNSS technology. The field archaeologist also used the GNSS unit to record and map all identified cultural resources encountered within each transect and photographed each artifact. Photographs documented the artifacts within their geological and locational contexts, as well as the surrounding areas. Field observations were made at each site and included data such as measurements and a detailed description of each artifact encountered.

5.14.4.3 Consultation with Native American Tribes

SB 18

In compliance with SB 18, on March 7, 2025, Riverside County requested a Sacred Lands File search and a consultation list from the NAHC of tribes whose historical extent includes the Project area. Based upon the SB 18 Consultation list provided by NAHC, Project notices were sent on March 7, 2025, to 24 Native American Tribal Representatives.

AB 52

In accordance with AB 52, the County mailed consultation notification letters to all tribes that had requested prior notification on March 7, 2025.

5.14.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

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

i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

A records search conducted by SRI through the CHRIS identified 21 previously recorded cultural resources (including 13 archaeological sites consisting of prehistoric lithic scatters, ceramic scatters, habitation debris, and one multicomponent site) within a 1-mile radius of the Project Site. None of these resources are located within the Project Site boundaries, and the Project Site had not been previously surveyed prior to the current study. Of the previously recorded resources, only one site (CA-RIV-6823), a multicomponent habitation site with human cremations and associated refuse, has been recommended eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources due to its integrity and research potential. CA-RIV-6823 is located outside the Project Site, and no tribal cultural resources have been identified within the Project Site.[5]

A pedestrian cultural resources survey was completed for the Project, and no artifacts or tribal cultural resources were observed on site. Historic-period concrete footings and refuse dating to 1968 and 1972 were identified but determined to be ineligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources.

The NAHC Sacred Lands File (SLF) search returned no known sacred lands. The NAHC provided a list of 23 tribal contacts across 11 tribes who could provide additional information on cultural resources within the Project area. SRI reached out to each of the 23 contacts for further information. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians noted that the Project area lies within the Tribe's traditional-use area and requested a cultural resources survey, submittal of documentation, and both archaeological and tribal monitoring during ground-disturbing activities. The Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians indicated that they were not aware of resources that would be affected and recommended NAHC notification if discoveries occur. The Quechan Indian Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation stated that they did not wish to comment and referred to local tribes. No additional responses were received from the remaining contacted tribes. No tribal cultural resources were identified through this process in the Phase I Cultural Resources Study.[6]

However, the Phase I Cultural Resources Study conducted for the Project found the site has a moderate to moderately high sensitivity for subsurface tribal cultural resources due to its location near the former shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla. Several prehistoric sites, including habitation areas and cremation sites are documented within the search radius, indicating that tribal cultural materials may be present beneath the ground surface. Thus, the County standard Conditions of Approval (COA) shall be applied to the Project through the implementation of Mitigation Measures (MM) **MM TCR-1** through **MM TCR-2** and **MM CUL-1** through **MM CUL-4**.

5 SRI, 2025. *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment*. See **Appendix G**.

6 SRI, 2025. *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment*. See **Appendix G**.

In addition, consultation with Native American Tribes was conducted pursuant to SB 18 and AB 52. 24 Native American Tribal Representatives were contacted on March 7, 2025, pursuant to SB 18. SB 18 consultations were requested by the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians. The Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians noted that the Project Site lies within the Chemehuevi Traditional Use Area and stated that while no known resources are recorded, archaeological materials may be present; the Tribe requested to initiate consultation. Project information and meeting invitations were sent on September 24, 2025, with follow-up emails on October 16 and 23, 2025; no further response was received, and consultation was concluded on November 6, 2025. Pursuant to AB 52, Project notices were mailed to all requested tribes on March 7, 2025. Several tribes responded to consultation notices, while others did not respond. The Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians indicated they were not aware of any specific cultural resources within the Project area that would be affected. The Quechan Indian Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation stated they did not wish to comment and deferred to local tribes. The Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians deferred comments to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. Other contacted tribes did not provide a response. No tribe identified specific tribal cultural resources within the Project Site during SB 18 or AB 52 consultation. Although no tribal cultural resources were identified during consultation, the Project area has a high sensitivity for cultural resources.

Based on the tribal consultation process and the resulting requests for a Native American monitor, procedures for the treatment of discovered artifacts, and protocols for the unanticipated discovery of human remains, these requirements are incorporated into the Project through the COAs as implemented in **MM TCR-1** through **MM TCR-2** and **MM CUL-1** through **MM CUL-4.** Implementation of these mitigation measures would ensure that potential impacts to any unanticipated tribal cultural resources are avoided or minimized. With these measures, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

As discussed in the Project's Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment, the NAHC Sacred Lands File search returned no recorded sacred lands, and SRI contacted 23 tribal representatives from 11 tribes. Out of the contacts, three (3) Tribes responded, and none identified site-specific tribal cultural resources.[7] Under SB 18, the County issued notices on March 7, 2025, and the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians requested SB 18 consultation. Under AB 52, notices were mailed on March 7, 2025. Tribal responses varied and included statements that no specific cultural resources were

7 SRI, 2025. *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment*. See **Appendix G**.

known (e.g., Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians), deferral to other tribes (e.g., Quechan Indian Tribe), and limited responses or no response from other contacted tribes. The Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians indicated the Project Site lies within a Traditional Use Area, noted that while no known resources are recorded, archaeological materials may be present, and requested formal consultation. Consultation was concluded on November 6, 2025. No tribe identified the Project Site as a tribal cultural resource under PRC Section 5024.1. Accordingly, consultation did not result in the identification of a tribal cultural resources determined by a tribe to be significant under PRC Section 5024.1.

As noted in the Cultural Resources Study, no prehistoric resources were identified on site during pedestrian survey, and the only resource encountered from 1968 and 1972 was determined not eligible for listing. Nevertheless, the geoarchaeological analysis indicates the Project Site possesses a moderate to moderately high sensitivity for subsurface cultural deposits due to its proximity to the ancient Lake Cahuilla shoreline. In addition, prehistoric sites within the larger records-search radius include cremation and habitation areas, indicating that tribal cultural resources have the potential to exist below surface levels.

Accordingly, ground-disturbing activities could encounter previously unknown tribal cultural resources. California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98, requires that any unanticipated discovery of human remains be treated with dignity and in accordance with established procedures, including immediate notification of the county coroner, consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission, and involvement of a Most Likely Descendant to determine the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Implementation of **MM CUL-1** and **MM CUL-5** would ensure proper consultation, monitoring, and disposition of any tribal cultural resources determined by the County, in consultation with Native American tribes, to be significant under Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c). Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporation.

5.14.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The geographic scope of the cumulative analysis for tribal cultural resources includes the Project Site and surrounding areas within the County of Riverside. Cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources could occur if the Project, in coordination with other development in the region, would result in a significant adverse effect to tribal cultural resources. The County General Plan contains Open Space Policies to reduce or minimize the effects of prospective development on cultural resources. However, the Open Space policies do not provide performance standards to protect buried cultural resources. Thus, the General Plan EIR provides Mitigation Measures 4.7.1A through 4.7.1C in order to preserve cultural resources. Mitigation Measure 4.7.1A outlines procedures to be followed in the event that human remains are encountered. Mitigation Measure 4.7.1B describes avoidance as the preferred treatment for cultural resources and outlines related procedures for avoidance during development. Mitigation Measure 4.7.1C outlines procedures if avoidance and/or

preservation is not possible. The General Plan EIR found that implementation of the policies in the proposed General Plan and proposed General Plan mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts on cultural resources to a less than significant level.

As described in **Section 5.5: Cultural Resources** of this Draft EIR, a cultural and tribal cultural review was completed for the Project Site, including a records search, Sacred Lands File check, review of available ethnographic and tribal information, and consultation with local Native American tribes, pursuant to SB 18. This coordination did not identify any known tribal cultural resources on or adjacent to the Project Site. Therefore, the Project is not anticipated to contribute to a cumulative loss of tribal cultural resources.

However, unanticipated tribal cultural resources could be encountered during ground-disturbing activities, and the Project would be required to implement the provided mitigation measures. With implementation of mitigation, potential impacts to previously unknown tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

As regional development occurs, future projects within the County would also be subject to compliance with CEQA, AB 52 consultation requirements, and applicable state and local regulations governing the protection of tribal cultural resources. These regulatory requirements ensure that tribal cultural resources are identified and protected, and that inadvertent discoveries are treated appropriately. Therefore, when considered together with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, the Project's incremental contribution to cumulative impacts on tribal cultural resources would not be cumulatively considerable.

5.14.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures would further reduce tribal cultural resource impacts during construction of the Project:

MM TCR-1 Native American Monitor

Before the issuance of grading permits, the developer/permit applicant shall enter into Native American Monitor agreement(s) with the consulting tribe(s) for the appropriate number of Native American Monitor(s). In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor(s), the Native American Monitor(s) shall attend the pregrading meeting with the contractors to provide cultural sensitivity training for all construction personnel. In addition, an adequate number of Native American Monitor(s) shall be on site during all initial ground-disturbing activities and excavation of soils in each portion of the Project Site, including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading, and trenching. In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor(s), the Native American Monitor(s) have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt the ground-disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources. Activities will be documented in Tribal

Monitoring Notes, which will be required to be submitted to the County Archaeologist before Grading Permit Final Inspection. The developer/permit applicant shall submit a fully executed copy of the agreement(s) to the County Archaeologist to ensure compliance with this condition of approval. Upon verification, the County Archaeologist shall clear this condition. This agreement shall not modify any condition of approval or mitigation measure.

MM TCR-2 Tribal Monitoring Notes

Before Grading Permit Final Inspection, a complete set of Tribal Monitoring Notes shall be submitted to the County Archaeologist. Upon receipt and approval of the notes, the condition will be cleared.

MM CUL-1 Unanticipated Resources

The developer/permit holder or any successor in interest shall comply with the following for the life of this permit. If, during ground-disturbance activities, unanticipated cultural resources (see third bullet in list below) are discovered, the following procedures shall be followed:

- All ground-disturbance activities within 30 m (100 feet) of the discovered cultural resource shall be halted and the Project Archaeologist (see below) shall call the County Archaeologist immediately upon discovery of the cultural resource. A meeting shall be convened between the developer, the Project Archaeologist (see fourth bullet in list below), the Native American tribal representative, and the County Archaeologist to discuss the significance of the find. At the meeting of the aforementioned parties, a decision is to be made, with the concurrence of the County Archaeologist, as to the appropriate treatment (e.g., documentation, recovery, avoidance) for the cultural resource. Resource evaluations shall be limited to nondestructive analysis.
- Further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until the appropriate treatment has been accomplished.
- A cultural resource site is defined, for this condition, as being a feature and/or three or more artifacts in close association with each other. Tribal Cultural Resources are also considered cultural resources.
- If not already employed by the Project developer, a County-approved archaeologist and a Native American Monitor (see below) from the consulting tribe(s) shall be employed by the Project developer to assess the significance of the cultural resource, attend the meeting described above, and continue monitoring of all future site grading activities as necessary.

MM CUL-2 Project Archaeologist/Archaeological Monitors

Before issuance of grading permits, the applicant/developer shall provide evidence to the County Planning Department that a County-certified professional archaeologist (Project Archaeologist) has been contracted to implement a Cultural

Resource Monitoring Program (CRMP). A cultural resource monitoring plan shall be developed that addresses the details of all activities and provides procedures that must be followed in order to reduce the impacts to cultural, tribal cultural, and historic resources to a level that is less than significant as well as to address potential impacts to undiscovered buried archaeological resources associated with this Project. A fully executed copy of the contract and a digitally signed copy of the monitoring plan shall be provided to the County Archaeologist to ensure compliance with this condition of approval.

Working directly under the Project Archaeologist, an adequate number of qualified Archaeological Monitors shall be present to ensure that all earthmoving activities are observed. These Archaeological Monitors shall be on site during all grading activities for areas to be monitored, including off-site improvements. Inspections will vary based on the rate of excavation, the materials excavated, and the presence and abundance of artifacts and features.

The Project Archaeologist may submit a detailed letter to the County during grading requesting a modification to the CRMP if circumstances are encountered that reduce the need for monitoring.

MM CUL-3 Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report

Before Grading Permit Final Inspection, a Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report shall be submitted that complies with the Riverside County Planning Department's requirements for such reports for all ground-disturbing activities associated with this grading permit. The report shall follow the County of Riverside Planning Department Cultural Resources (Archaeological) Investigations Standard Scopes of Work posted on the Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) website. The report shall include results of any feature relocation or residue analysis required, as well as evidence of the required cultural sensitivity training for the construction staff held during the required pregrading meeting and evidence that any artifacts have been treated in accordance to procedures stipulated in the cultural resource monitoring plan. The report will also include the Tribal Monitoring notes as a confidential appendix. Once approved by the County Archaeologist, the Project Archaeologist shall provide a copy to the consulting tribes and the SCIC.

MM CUL-4 Artifact Disposition

In the event that cultural resources are identified during ground-disturbing activities, the landowner(s) shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources (including sacred items, burial goods, and human remains) and provide evidence to the satisfaction of the County Archaeologist that all archaeological materials recovered during the archaeological investigations (including collections made during an earlier project, such as testing of archaeological sites that took place years ago) have been handled through one of the following methods.

1. Historic Resources: All historic archaeological materials recovered during the archaeological investigations (this includes collections made during an earlier project, such as testing of archaeological sites that took place years ago), shall be curated at the Western Science Center, a Riverside County curation facility that meets State Resources Department Office of Historic Preservation Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Resources ensuring access and use pursuant to the Guidelines.

2. Precontact Resources: A fully executed reburial agreement with the appropriate culturally affiliated Native American tribe(s) or band(s). This shall include measures and provisions to protect the reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloging, analysis, and special studies have been completed on the cultural resources. Details of contents and location of the reburial shall be included in the Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report. The details of any disposition of artifacts shall be documented in the Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report.

Deed Restrictions

At the conclusion of all construction activities, the Project proponent and the landowner shall record a deed restriction on the reburial location, if used, with the County to restrict development of these areas in the future. Deed restrictions shall not disclose the nature of the avoidance areas. A copy of the deed restriction(s) shall be submitted to the County planning staff as proof of compliance before the issuance of certificates of occupancy for the Project.

MM CUL-5 Human Remains

If human remains are found on this site, the developer/permit holder or any successor in interest shall comply with State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. Pursuant to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, if human remains are encountered, no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98(b), remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and their disposition has been made. If the Riverside County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the NAHC shall be contacted by the County Coroner within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the NAHC shall identify the Most Likely Descendant. The Most Likely Descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation with the property owner concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in PRC Section 5097.98. Photography of human remains or associated resources shall be prohibited.

5.14.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

With implementation of **MM TCR-1** through **MM TCR-2** and **MM CUL-1** through **MM CUL-5**, impacts associated with tribal cultural resources would be less than significant. Therefore, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts relating to tribal cultural resources have been identified.

5.15 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This section addresses the potential impacts of the Project on water service, sewer service, dry utilities, and solid waste collection and disposal. Pursuant to the requirements of SB 610, a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) (included in **Appendix Q**) was prepared by CVWD and approved by the CVWD Board on January 13, 2026. CVWD also completed Sanitary Sewer Hydraulic Modeling to determine the available capacity in the existing sewer system to accommodate wastewater generated by the Project. Correspondence from CVWD on the results of this modeling is included as **Appendix U: Sanitation Sewer System Hydraulic Modeling Results.**

5.15.1 REGULATORY SETTING

5.15.1.1 Federal

Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401 regulates the discharges of pollutants into "waters of the US" from any point or nonpoint source.

In 1972, the CWA was amended to prohibit the discharge of pollutants to waters of the United States unless the discharge is in compliance with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The CWA focused on tracking point sources, primarily from wastewater treatment facilities and industrial waste dischargers, and required implementation of control measures to minimize pollutant discharges. The CWA was amended again in 1987 to provide a framework for regulating municipal and industrial stormwater discharges. In November 1990, the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) published final regulations that establish application requirements for specific categories of industries, including construction projects that encompass greater than or equal to 5 acres of land. The Phase II Rule became final in December 1999, thus expanding regulated construction sites to those greater than or equal to 1 acre. The regulations require that stormwater and non-stormwater runoff associated with construction activity which discharges either directly to surface waters or indirectly through municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) must be regulated by an NPDES permit. In the State of California, the program is administered by the local Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) was established in 1974 to protect the quality of drinking water in the U.S. This law focuses on all waters actually or potentially designated for drinking use, whether from above ground or underground sources. The SDWA authorizes the EPA to establish minimum standards to protect water systems to comply with these primary (health-related) standards. Under the Act, the US EPA also establishes minimum standards for state programs to protect underground sources of drinking water from endangerment by underground injection fluids.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

This law was enacted in 1976 and is the principal federal law in the United States governing the disposal of solid waste and hazardous waste. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) oversees waste management regulation pursuant to Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Under RCRA, however, states are authorized to carry out many of the functions of the federal law through their own hazardous waste programs and laws, if they are at least as stringent (or more so) than the federal regulations. Thus, the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) manages the State of California's solid waste and hazardous materials programs pursuant to US EPA approval.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Program

The NPDES permit program was established in the Clean Water Act (CWA) to regulate municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters of the United States. Discharge from any point source is unlawful unless the discharge is in compliance with an NPDES permit. Federal NPDES permit regulations have been established for broad categories of discharges, including point-source municipal waste discharges and nonpoint-source stormwater runoff. NPDES permits generally identify effluent and receiving water limits on allowable concentrations and/or mass emissions of pollutants contained in the discharge; prohibitions on discharges not specifically allowed under the permit; and provisions that describe required actions by the discharger, including industrial pretreatment, pollution prevention, self-monitoring, and other activities.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 gave FERC additional responsibilities in this capacity. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable in all 50 states.

5.15.1.2 State

California Water Boards

California's Water Boards consist of the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and the RWQCB. The mission of the Water Boards is to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations. Together they are authorized to implement the federal Clean Water Act in California. The Project Site is located under the jurisdiction of the Colorado River Basin RWQCB, Region 7.

State Water Resources Control Board General Construction Permit

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has adopted a Statewide Construction General Permit (Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ) for stormwater discharges associated with construction activity. These regulations prohibit the discharge of stormwater from construction projects that include one acre or more of soil disturbance. Construction activities subject to this permit include clearing, grading, and other disturbance to the ground, such as stockpiling or excavation, that results in soil disturbance of at least one acre of total land area. Individual developers are required to submit Permit Registration Documents (PRDs) to the SWRCB for coverage under this general permit prior to the start of construction. The PRDs include a Notice of Intent (NOI), risk assessment, site map, Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), annual fee, and a signed certification statement. The PRDs are submitted electronically to the SWRCB via the Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS) website. This general Construction General Permit requires all dischargers to (1) develop and implement a SWPPP, which specifies best management practices (BMPs) to be used during construction of the project; (2) eliminate or reduce non-stormwater discharge to stormwater conveyance systems; and (3) develop and implement a monitoring program of all specified BMPs. The two major objectives of the SWPPP are to (1) help identify the sources of sediment and other pollutants that affect the water quality of stormwater discharges and (2) to describe and ensure the implementation of BMPs to reduce or eliminate sediment and other pollutants in stormwater as well as non-stormwater discharges.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act established the principal State program for water quality control. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act also authorized the SWRCB to implement the provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act. The act divided the State into nine RWQCB areas. Each RWQCB implements and enforces provisions of the Porter-Cologne Act and the CWA subject to policy guidance and review by the SWRCB. The Porter-Cologne Act requires each RWQCB to develop a Basin Plan for all areas within its region. The Basin Plan is the basis for each RWQCB's regulatory programs.

Urban Water Management Planning Act

The Urban Water Management Planning Act (UWMPA) (Water Code, Section 10610 et. seq.) requires urban water suppliers that provide water for municipal purposes to more than 3,000 customers, or more than 3,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of water, to prepare an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). The intent of UWMP is to assist water supply agencies in water resource planning given their existing and anticipated future demands. A UWMP must include a water supply and demand assessment comparing the total water supply available to the water supplier with the total projected water use over a 20-year period. It is also mandatory that the management plans be updated every five years. In recognition of the State requirements, six (6) urban water suppliers in the Coachella Valley, (CVWD, Coachella Water Authority, Desert Water Agency, Indio Water Authority, Mission

Springs Water District, and Myoma Dunes Mutual Water Company) collaboratively prepared the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional UWMP.[1]

State Water Quality Control Board Order No. 2006-0003-DWQ

Order No. 2006-0003-DWQ was adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board on May 2, 2006. This order provides federal and State agencies, municipalities, counties, districts, and other public entities waste discharge requirements for sanitary sewer systems.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (2014)

In 2014, the State legislature enacted the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), which established a comprehensive framework for the sustainable management of groundwater resources in California. SGMA requires the formation of local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) to manage groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and to prepare and implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) or approved alternatives that achieve long-term groundwater sustainability.

The Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin is classified by DWR as a medium-priority basin and includes several subbasins, including the Indio Subbasin. The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), Desert Water Agency (DWA), Coachella Water Authority (CWA), and Indio Water Authority (IWA) have been designated by DWR as GSAs within their respective service areas in the Indio Subbasin and coordinate groundwater management activities pursuant to SGMA.

In lieu of preparing a GSP, the Indio Subbasin GSAs prepared an Alternative Plan pursuant to SGMA. On July 17, 2019, DWR determined that the Alternative Plan for the Indio Subbasin satisfied the objectives of SGMA. Consistent with SGMA requirements, the GSAs prepared and submitted the 2022 Indio Subbasin Alternative Plan Update, which was submitted to DWR on December 29, 2021. On June 27, 2024, DWR approved the 2022 Alternative Plan Update, finding that it continues to satisfy the objectives of SGMA. Groundwater conditions, management actions, and sustainability metrics for the Indio Subbasin are monitored and reported in accordance with SGMA requirements.

California Water Code, Title 22

The California Water Code requires the Department of Health Services (DHS) to establish water reclamation criteria. In 1975, the DHS prepared Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations. Title 22 regulates production and use of recycled water in California by establishing three categories of recycled water:

- primary effluent, which typically includes grit removal and initial sedimentation or settling tanks;

1 Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD). "Urban Water Management Planning." Accessed October 2025. https://www.cvwd.org/543/Urban-Water-Management-Planning.

- adequately disinfected, oxidized effluent (secondary effluent), which typically involves aeration and additional settling basins; and
- adequately disinfected, oxidized, coagulated, clarified, filtered effluent (tertiary effluent), which typically involves filtration and chlorination.

In addition to defining recycled water uses, Title 22 also defines requirements for sampling and analysis of effluent and requires specific design requirements for plants.

The Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SB X7-7)

SB X7-7 was enacted in November 2009, requiring all water suppliers to increase water use efficiency. Specifically, the legislation sets an overall goal of reducing per capita urban water use by 20 percent by December 31, 2020. The State is required to make incremental progress toward this goal by reducing per capita water use by at least 10 percent by December 31, 2015. Effective 2016, urban retail water suppliers who do not meet the water conservation requirements established by this bill are not eligible for State water grants or loans. Subsequent legislation has expanded upon these conservation requirements.

Senate Bill 610 and Senate Bill 221

SB 610 and SB 221, amended into State law effective January 1, 2002, improve the linkage between certain land-use decisions made by cities and counties and water supply availability. SB 610 requires that specified large development projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) include a WSA in the environmental review process. SB 221 requires verification of sufficient water supply prior to approval of certain subdivision maps under the Subdivision Map Act.

Pursuant to California Water Code Section 10912, projects subject to SB 610 include, among others, residential developments of more than 500 dwelling units; mixed-use developments that include qualifying land uses; or projects that would demand an amount of water equivalent to or greater than that required by a 500-dwelling unit residential development. A WSA evaluates whether a public water system's total projected water supplies available during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry water years over a 20-year projection would be sufficient to meet the projected water demands of the proposed project, in addition to existing and planned future demands. Pursuant to the requirements of SB 610, a WSA was prepared for the Project and includes a comprehensive assessment of historical demands, and a projection of future demands based on forecasted development of the County's service area.

California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)

CalRecycle is responsible for implementing State solid waste management, recycling, and waste diversion programs pursuant to the California Public Resources Code and Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations. CalRecycle administers programs intended to reduce landfill disposal,

promote recycling and composting, and ensure that solid waste handling and disposal facilities operate in a manner protective of public health and the environment.

Assembly Bill 341

Approved in 2011, AB 341 amended the California Public Resources Code (Section 42649 et seq.) to address solid waste diversion (i.e., recycling) targets to decrease the amount of waste going to landfills and thus extend their usable lives. AB 341 requires cities and counties to include source reduction, recycling, and composting in their integrated waste management plans (IWMP). In addition, under AB 341 cities are required to "divert 50% of all solid waste from landfill disposal or transformation [e.g., incineration] by January 1, 2000, through source reduction, recycling and composting activities." By 2020, the target rises to "not less than 75% of solid waste."

Assembly Bill 939

AB 939, the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, established a statewide policy goal of diverting at least 50 percent of solid waste from landfill disposal through source reduction, recycling, and composting activities. Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by comparing solid waste disposal rates for a jurisdiction with target disposal rates; actual rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939. AB 939 also requires California counties to show 15 years of disposal capacity for all jurisdictions in the county or show a plan to transform or divert its waste.

Assembly Bill 1327

The California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act (Assembly Bill (AB) 1327, Public Resources Code Section 42900 et seq.) requires areas to be set aside for collecting and loading recyclable materials in development projects. The act required the California Integrated Waste Management Board to develop a model ordinance for adoption by any local agency requiring adequate areas for collection and loading of recyclable materials as part of development projects. Local agencies are required to adopt the model or an ordinance of their own.

Senate Bill 1374

SB 1374, codified in PRC Section 42919, was signed in 2002. SB 1374 requires jurisdictions to divert 50 percent to 75 percent of all construction and demolition waste from landfill and that jurisdictions include in their annual AB 939 report a summary of the progress made in diverting construction and demolition waste. The legislation also required that CalRecycle adopt a model ordinance for diverting 50 to 75 percent of all construction and demolition waste from landfills.

Senate Bill 1383

Senate Bill 1383 sets methane emissions reduction targets to be met through the reduction of organic waste disposed by 75% by 2025 and the rescue of 20% of currently disposed surplus food by 2025. Compliance with SB 1383 requires residential developments to have organic waste services provided. Local jurisdictions must educate residents on proper use of organic waste services.

Assembly Bill 1826

AB 1826 requires jurisdictions to implement an organic waste recycling program for businesses, including outreach, education, and monitoring of affected businesses. Additionally, each jurisdiction is to identify a multitude of information, including barriers to organic waste recycling facilities, as well as closed or abandoned sites that might be available for new organic waste recycling facilities. AB 1826 defines "organic waste" as food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, non-hazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed in with food waste. It also defines a "business" as a commercial or public entity, including, but not limited to, a firm, partnership, proprietorship, joint stock company, corporation, or association that is organized as a for-profit or nonprofit entity, or a multifamily residential dwelling consisting of five or more units. In January 2017, businesses that generated 4 cubic yards or more of organic waste per week were subject to this requirement. In September 2020, CalRecycle reduced this threshold to 2 cubic yards of solid waste (i.e., total of trash, recycling, and organics) per week generated by covered businesses.

Assembly Bill 32 and Related Legislation

AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, requires a sharp reduction of GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, which is consistent with the California Climate Action Team, which works to coordinate Statewide efforts to implement global warming emission reduction programs and the State's Climate Adaptation Strategy after the passing of AB 32. To achieve these goals, AB 32 mandates that CARB establish a quantified emissions cap and institute a schedule to meet the cap; implement regulations to reduce Statewide GHG emissions from stationary sources consistent with the California Climate Action Team strategies; and develop tracking, reporting, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that reductions are achieved. To reach the reduction targets, AB 32 requires CARB to adopt—in an open, public process—rules and regulations that achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG reductions.

Climate Change Scoping Plan

CARB approved a Climate Change Scoping Plan (Scoping Plan) on December 11, 2008, as required by AB 32. The Scoping Plan proposed a "comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall carbon GHG emissions in California, improve our environment, reduce our dependence on oil, diversify our energy sources, save energy, create new jobs, and enhance public health."[2] The Scoping Plan had a range of GHG reduction actions, including direct regulations; alternative compliance mechanisms; monetary and nonmonetary incentives; voluntary actions; market-based mechanisms, such as a cap-and-trade system; and an AB 32 implementation regulation to fund the program.

2 California Air Resource Board (CARB). *Climate Change Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change*. December 2008. Accessed October 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/adopted_scoping_plan.pdf.

The Scoping Plan called for a "coordinated set of strategies" to address all major categories of GHG emissions.[3] Transportation emissions were to be addressed through a combination of higher standards for vehicle fuel economy, implementation of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, and greater consideration to reducing trip length and generation through land use planning and transit-oriented development. Buildings, land use, and industrial operations were encouraged and, sometimes, required to implement energy efficiency practices. Utility energy supplies will change to include more renewable energy sources through implementation of the Renewables Portfolio Standard. Established in 2002 under Senate Bill (SB) 1078, the California Renewables Portfolio Standards (RPS) were accelerated in 2006 under SB 107, which required that, by 2010, at least 20 percent of electricity retail sales come from renewable sources. In April 2016, the California Energy Commission (CEC) updated the RPS pursuant to SB 350, intended to set the new target 50 percent renewables by 2030.[4] This will be complemented with an emphasis on local generation, including rooftop photovoltaics and solar hot water installations. Additionally, the Scoping Plan emphasized opportunities for households and businesses to save energy and money through increasing energy efficiency. It indicated that substantial savings of electricity and natural gas would be accomplished through improving energy efficiency.

Subsequent to the adoption of the Scoping Plan, a lawsuit was filed challenging CARB's approval of the Scoping Plan Functional Equivalent Document (Supplemental FED). On May 20, 2011 (Case No. CPF-09-509562), the court found that the environmental analysis of the alternatives in the Supplemental FED to the Scoping Plan was not sufficient under CEQA. CARB staff prepared a revised and expanded environmental analysis of the alternatives, and the Supplemental FED to the Scoping Plan was approved on August 24, 2011. The Supplemental FED to the Scoping Plan indicated that the potential exists for adverse environmental impacts associated with implementation of the various GHG emission reduction measures recommended in the Scoping Plan.

CARB updated the Scoping Plan in May 2014 (2014 Scoping Plan). The 2014 Scoping Plan adjusted the 1990 GHG emissions levels to 431 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (MMTCO2e); the updated 2020 GHG emissions forecast is 509 MMTCO2e, which credited for certain GHG emission reduction measures already in place (e.g., the RPS). The 2014 Scoping Plan also recommended a 40 percent reduction in GHG emissions from 1990 levels by 2030, and a 60 percent reduction in GHG emissions from 1990 levels by 2040.

3 CARB. *Climate Change Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change*. p. ES-7.

4 California Energy Commission (CEC). *Revised Final Express Terms for POUs RPS Regulations*. Title 20, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Chapter 13, Enforcement Procedures for the Renewables Portfolio Standard for Local Publicly Owned Electric Utilities. Approved April 12, 2016. Docket No. 14-RPS-01, TN 211017. Accessed October 2025. https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/GetDocument.aspx?tn=211017&DocumentContentId=11487.

The 2017 Scoping Plan,[5] approved on December 14, 2017, builds on previous programs and takes aim at the 2030 target established by the 2016 SB 32 (Pavley), which is further discussed below. The 2017 Scoping Plan outlines options to meet California's aggressive goals to reduce GHGs by 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. In addition, the Scoping Plan incorporates the State's updated RPS requiring utilities to procure 50 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030. It also raises the State's Low Carbon Fuel Standard and aims to reduce emissions of methane and hydrofluorocarbons by 40 percent from 2013 levels by 2030 and emissions of black carbon by 50 percent from 2013 levels.

California Public Utilities Commission

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulates privately owned electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water, railroad, rail transit, and passenger transportation companies, in addition to authorizing video franchises. CPUC is responsible for regulating electric utility rates, electric power procurement and generation, some electric infrastructure, ratepayer-funded energy efficiency programs, and other areas. The CPUC evaluates the necessity for additional power generation by the regulated utilities in California in both the long and short term, accomplished using public input, data provided by the utilities, the California Energy Commission, the California Independent System Operator (CAISO), and following the regulations of the Commission, the Public Utilities Code, and FERC. CPUC has primary ratemaking jurisdiction over the funding of distribution related expenditures generally for power lines of 66 kV (kilovolts) or less. While CPUC does not have ratemaking responsibility for transmission lines, CPUC does have a substantial role in permitting transmission and substation facilities.

CPUC regulates natural gas rates and natural gas services, including in-state transportation over the utilities' transmission and distribution pipeline systems, storage, procurement, metering, and billing. Additionally, CPUC regulates telecommunications and broadband operations and infrastructure in the State, being responsible for licensing, registration, and the processing of tariffs on local exchange carriers, competitive local carriers, and non-dominant interexchange carriers. It is also responsible for registration of wireless service providers and franchising of video service providers, among other duties.

Senate Bill 97

Senate Bill (SB) 97, approved on August 24, 2007, requires the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to prepare and develop guidelines for the mitigation of GHG emissions or the effects thereof, including but not limited to effects associated with transportation and energy consumption.[6] These guidelines were required to be transmitted to the Natural Resources Agency by July 1, 2009, to be

5 CARB. *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*. November 2017. Accessed October 2025. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scoping_plan_2017.pdf.

6 California Legislative Information. *Senate Bill No. 97*. August 24, 2007. Accessed October 2025. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=200720080SB97.

certified and adopted by January 1, 2010. OPR submitted the Proposed Draft Guideline Amendments for Greenhouse Gas Emissions to the Secretary for Natural Resources on April 13, 2009. The California Natural Resources Agency conducted formal rulemaking in 2009 on December 30 of that year and adopted the Guideline Amendments, which address the specific obligations of public agencies when analyzing GHG emissions under CEQA to determine a project's effects on the environment.

The Natural Resources Agency is required to periodically update the guidelines to incorporate new information or criteria established by CARB pursuant to AB 32. SB 97 applies retroactively to any environmental impact report, negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or other document required by CEQA that has not yet been certified.

Senate Bill 1368

To limit carbon emissions associated with electrical energy consumed in California, SB 1368 prohibits purchase arrangements for energy for periods of longer than five years from resources that exceed the emissions of a relatively clean, combined cycle natural gas power plant. A coal-fired plant cannot meet this standard because such plants emit roughly twice as much carbon as combined cycle natural gas power plants. Accordingly, SB 1368 effectively prevents California's utilities from investing in, financially supporting, or purchasing power from new coal plants located in or out of the State. Thus, implementation of SB 1368 is anticipated to reduce GHG emissions associated with California's energy demand by effectively prohibiting California utilities from purchasing power from out-of-state producers that cannot satisfy the required performance standard for GHG emissions.

5.15.1.3 Regional and Local

Regional Water Quality Control Board

The *Porter-Cologne Act*, Section 13000, directs each RWQCB to develop a water quality control plan (Basin Plan) for all areas within its region. The Basin Plan is the basis for each RWQCB's regulatory program. The County and Project Site are part of the jurisdiction of the Colorado River Basin (CRB) RWQCB (Region 7). The CRB RWQCB has adopted a Basin Plan in accordance with criteria contained in the CWA, Porter-Cologne Act, and other pertinent State and federal rules and regulations. The intent of the Basin Plan is to preserve and enhance water quality and protect the beneficial uses of all regional waters. The intended beneficial use of water determines the water quality objectives. For example, the quality requirements for irrigation water are different from drinking water. The CRB RWQCB implements the Basin Plan through regulatory, monitoring and enforcement actions related to waste discharge requirements for appropriate persons and groups; these can include individuals, communities, or businesses whose waste discharges may affect water quality. These requirements can be either State Waste Discharge Requirements for discharge to land, or federally delegated NPDES permits for discharges to surface water. Discharges are required to meet water quality objectives and, thus, protect beneficial uses.

Coachella Valley Water District

CVWD provides domestic water, wastewater, non-potable water (recycled wastewater and Colorado River water), irrigation/drainage, and stormwater and groundwater management services to a major portion of the Coachella Valley. CVWD service area is approximately 1,000 square miles, mostly within the central and eastern Coachella Valley in Riverside County, but also extends into Imperial and San Diego counties. CVWD is governed and regulated under the Regional Board and is subject to its policies and regulations regarding proper wastewater disposal techniques.

Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan

CVWD is a water supplier and is required to prepare a UWMP in accordance with the California Urban Water Management Planning Act. The Act requires every "urban water supplier" to prepare and adopt a Plan to provide a legal framework for long-term water management to ensure sufficient water supplies to meet existing and future demands. It also requires periodic review of the Plan by the County at least once every five years and any amendments or changes which are indicated by the review. The six (6) urban water suppliers in the Coachella Valley, CVWD, Coachella Water Authority, Desert Water Agency, Indio Water Authority, Mission Springs Water District, and Myoma Dunes Mutual Water Company collaboratively prepared the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional UWMP.[7] The latest UWMP provides the region with a reliable action plan for long-term resource planning to ensure adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future water supply needs. In addition, the 2020 UWMP incorporates water supply reliability determinations resulting from potential prolonged drought, regulatory revisions, and/or changing climatic conditions.

Sanitary Sewer Management Plan

The Sanitary Sewer Management Plan (SSMP) describes the management of CVWD's sewer collection system and minimizes the number of sanitary sewer overflows. The SSMP is required by State Water Resources Control Board Order No. 2006-003, Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Sanitary Sewer Systems (WDR 2006-0003) enacted May 2, 2006. The purpose of WDR 2006-0003 is to reduce sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). CVWD's sanitary sewer overflows are not unusual or above average compared to other agencies in the State.

The SSMP will provide a properly managed, operated and maintained sanitary sewer system. All portions of CVWD's wastewater collection systems will be managed, operated, and maintained to provide adequate capacity to convey the peak wastewater flows, to minimize the frequency of SSOs, mitigate the impacts that are associated with any SSO that may occur, meet all applicable regulatory notifications and reporting requirements, provide exceptional customer service to the residents and businesses served.

7 CVWD. "Urban Water Management Planning."

The SSMP is organized in ten chapters that cover items such as operation and maintenance programs, design and performance provisions, Overflow Emergency Response Plan, Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Control Plan, System Evaluation and Capacity Assurance Plan, monitoring, measurement and program modification, audits, and communications programs.

CVWD Standards and Guidelines

CVWD developed standards and design guidelines, which include the CVWD Development Design Manual (DDM). The most recent version of the DDM was updated on October 8, 2024.[8] The DDM provides comprehensive procedural and technical requirements for the planning, design, and construction of CVWD service infrastructure for new development. CVWD Sanitation and Irrigation and Drainage Rules and Regulations are incorporated into the DDM, and they provide general provisions and standards for the development of wastewater systems in CVWD. CVWD Standard Specifications for the Construction of Sanitary Sewer Systems are also incorporated into the DDM. These provide specification standards for the development of new wastewater systems within the CVWD service area. Additionally, construction methods, materials and disposal of products would also be subject to current standards established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, Regional Water Quality Control Board and any other local, State, or federal agencies having authority in their respective jurisdictions.

CVWD Sanitation Fees

CVWD Ordinance No. 1373 requires new developments to pay for capital construction costs for new sanitation facilities through the Sanitation Capacity Rate (SCR). Wastewater flows are calculated on a case-by-case basis and are expressed in terms relative to the discharge of equivalent dwelling unit (EDUs), which represent the typical wastewater discharge associated with a single-family residential unit. The number of EDUS assigned to a development is determined by CVWD based on land use type and project design and is confirmed during project-level engineering review and permitting. The SCR was created as a funding mechanism for the construction of wastewater collection system and wastewater treatment infrastructure.

Riverside County Integrated Waste Management Plan

The RCWMD manages and oversees compliance with a variety of permits necessary for the operation of their active landfills in Riverside County. The Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) outlines and codifies the goals, policies, and programs the County of Riverside and its cities are implementing to create an integrated and cost-effective waste management system that complies with the provisions of AB 939 and its diversion mandates. The CIWMP is composed of the Riverside Countywide Summary Plan and the Riverside Countywide Siting Element, a Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE), a Nondisposal Facility Element (NDFE), and a Household

8 CVWD. "Development Design Manual." Accessed October 2025. http://www.cvwd.org/208/Development-Design-Manual.

Hazardous Waste Element (HHWE) for the County and cities within the County. Each component provides information regarding solid waste and hazardous waste disposal and recycling.

Riverside County Broadband Master Plan

The County developed the Broadband Master Plan to document strategies to connect the County's residents to high-speed, reliable, and affordable broadband service. The County also compiled a Broadband Funding Opportunities Report, which outlines various federal and state funding programs available to the County.[9]

County of Riverside 2020 General Plan

The County's 2020 General Plan (General Plan) contains the following relevant policies related to utilities:

Land Use Element

LU 5.1 Ensure that development does not exceed the ability to adequately provide supporting infrastructure and services, such as libraries, recreational facilities, educational and day care centers transportation systems, and fire/police/medical services.

LU 5.2 Monitor the capacities of infrastructure and services in coordination with service providers, utilities, and outside agencies and jurisdictions to ensure that growth does not exceed acceptable levels of service.

LU 5.3 Review all projects for consistency with individual urban water management plans.

Safety Element

S 4.4 Discourage development and activities in areas with limited water and access roads, unless adequate measures are implemented.

S 4.22 Ensure that the Riverside County Fire Department has appropriate municipal staffing and Office of the Fire Marshall staff to address development pressure and adequately respond to expected future fire protection needs. (AI 59)

Open Space Multipurpose Element

OS 2.2 Encourage the installation of water-conserving systems such as dry wells and graywater systems, where feasible, especially in new developments. The installation of cisterns or infiltrators shall also be encouraged to capture

9 RivCo Connect. *Riverside County Broadband Master Plan*. August 2023. Accessed October 2025. https://rivcoconnect.org/sites/g/files/aldnop351/files/2023-08/Riverside%20County%20Broadband%20Master%20Plan_v7.pdf?utm_.

rainwater from roofs for irrigation in the dry season and flood control during heavy storms.

OS 3.4 Review proposed projects to ensure compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits and require them to prepare the necessary Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP).

OS 4.4 Incorporate natural drainage systems into developments where appropriate and feasible.

Healthy Communities Element

HC 18.9 Encourage the location and design of new developments to visually enhance and not degrade the character of the surrounding area through consideration of the following concepts.

- Application of water conservation techniques, such as groundwater recharge basins, use of porous pavement, drought-tolerant landscaping, and water recycling, as appropriate.

HC 18.11 In coordination with service agencies, limit or prohibit new development or activities in areas lacking water and access roads in the absence of a plan to address such deficiencies to meet the needs of both new development and within existing disadvantaged communities. Work with community partners and service agencies to establish future plans to meet needs for potential community growth in areas lacking water and road infrastructure.

HC 22.2 Develop a stormwater capture system in areas that do not have the appropriate curb and gutter infrastructure.

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. SCAG is the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for this region, which encompasses more than 38,000 square miles. SCAG is a regional planning agency and a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG is also the regional clearinghouse for projects requiring environmental documentation under federal and State law. In this role, SCAG reviews proposed development and infrastructure projects to analyze their impacts on regional planning programs. As the southern California region's MPO, SCAG cooperates with SCAQMD, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and other agencies in preparing regional planning documents. SCAG has developed regional plans to achieve specific regional objectives, including the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) component pursuant to State law.

Coachella Valley Association of Governments Desert Cities Energy Partnership

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) is a sub-regional organization within the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). CVAG operates as part of larger jurisdictional or regional teams within the Coachella Valley, made up of ten cities, Riverside County, and two Native American Indian tribes. CVAG initiated the Desert Cities Energy Partnership with SCE and SoCalGas through an Agreement effective in January 2010. The First Amendment to the agreement between CVAG and the utilities to continue the partnership through December 31, 2014, was authorized by the CVAG Executive Committee in December 2012. Since then, the Second through Fifth Amendments to the agreement extended the Partnership each year and provided an authorized budget. The Fifth Amendment was approved to extend the program to December 2018, including a reduction in the SCE budget amount for the Desert Cities Energy Partnership. SCE, SoCalGas, and the CPUC continue to evaluate the benefits as well as the future of these partnerships.

The goal of the Desert Cities Energy Partnership is "to help local governments effectively lead their communities to increase energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect air quality and ensure that their communities are more livable and sustainable." The partnership provides performance-based opportunities for the Coachella Valley jurisdictions to demonstrate energy efficiency leadership in our communities through energy saving actions.

The Coachella Valley Energy Commission, created by Imperial Irrigation District (IID), is tasked with providing immediate and diverse local representation by Coachella Valley stakeholders for the unique energy needs of the greater Coachella Valley portion of the IID's energy service area. Its focus includes the development of a long-term strategic plan for continued energy service to the Coachella Valley following the 2033 expiration of the 99-year lease between IID and the CVWD.

County of Riverside Municipal Code

New construction in the unincorporated areas of Riverside County is subject to a "Development Impact Fee" program, codified in Chapter 4.60 of the County Ordinance Code (Ordinance No. 659). Ordinance No. 659 establishes a policy requiring fees for new construction in order to support infrastructure and public facility needs generated by growth. The purpose of the Development Impact Fee is to ensure that new development pays its fair share for services that are needed to meet demand.

5.15.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

5.15.2.1 Existing Conditions

Utilities and service systems are made available by a range of private companies, private enterprises acting as public utilities, and public agencies in the County. Major utilities and service systems

providers include the following: the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), Southern California Edison (SCE), IID, the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), Frontier, and Spectrum.

Water

The Project Site is located within the service area of the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), which serves as the primary public water supplier for the Eastern Coachella Valley region. CVWD provides potable water for municipal, industrial, and agricultural uses and operates an integrated water supply system that includes groundwater, imported surface water, and recycled water resources.

The primary source of potable water supplies in the CVWD service area consists of groundwater extracted from the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. Imported surface water supplies delivered via the Colorado River Aqueduct system provide a secondary source of water. Groundwater supplies are managed in coordination with regional water management agencies pursuant to adopted planning and management documents. Imported water supplies include Colorado River water delivered through the Coachella Canal, and the State Water Project supplies when available.

The Project Site is located within the Indio Subbasin of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin, which is designated by the California Department of Water Resources as a medium-priority groundwater basin. Groundwater conditions within the Indio Subbasin are managed by multiple Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, including CVWD, in accordance with SGMA and the approved Indio Subbasin Alternative Plan.

Existing water demands with CVWD's service area include municipal, agricultural, and recreational uses, supported by a combination of groundwater pumping, imported water deliveries, conservation measures, and groundwater recharge activities. CVWD has implemented long-term water management strategies, including conservation programs, infrastructure improvements, and groundwater recharge using imported water, to enhance water supply reliability and sustainability.

Potable water demand projections for the CVWD's service area are summarized in **Table 5.15-1: CVWD Projected Urban Retail Potable Demands**. A summary of existing and planned urban water supply volumes by source are presented in **Table 5.15-2: CVWD Projected Urban Water Supplies**. CVWD's total current urban water demand is 108,659 AF for 2024, including 99,266 AF of groundwater and 9,393 AF of recycled water.

Every urban water supplier is required to assess the reliability of water service provided to its customers under normal, dry, and multiple dry water years. A 'Normal Year' represents the water supplies a supplier considers available during normal conditions, which could be a single year, or averaged range of years that most closely represents the average water supply available. A 'Single Dry Year' is the year that represents the lowest water supply available. 'Five-Consecutive Year

Drought' is the driest five-year historical sequence for the water supplier, which may be the lowest average water supply available for five (5) years in a row.

The following tables from the 2020 Regional UWMP provides CVWD's projected water supplies and demands in a normal year, single-dry year, and multiple-dry years. The 2020 Regional UWMP states that CVWD will be able to meet demands under all water year scenarios between 2025 to 2045 during normal years, single dry year, and multiple dry years as shown in **Table 5.15-3** through **Table** 5.15-5**.**

TABLE 5.15-1: CVWD PROJECTED URBAN RETAIL POTABLE DEMANDS

Use Type	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Single-Family	60,142	63,824	67,331	69,816	71,695
Multifamily	6,873	7,245	7,742	8,267	9,045
CII	7,060	7,244	7,438	7,709	7,985
Landscape	34,193	36,205	38,226	39,865	41,516
Other	1,457	1,563	1,670	1,755	1,840
Losses	13,736	14,501	15,222	15,670	16,085
Total	**123,461**	**130,582**	**137,629**	**143,081**	**148,166**

Source: RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Water Supply Assessment for Madison Club East*. September 2025. See **Appendix Q**.

TABLE 5.15-2: CVWD PROJECTED URBAN WATER SUPPLIES

Water Supply	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Groundwater	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
Recycled Water	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
Total	**137,061**	**144,982**	**152,729**	**158,981**	**164,966**

Source: RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Water Supply Assessment for Madison Club East*. September 2025. See **Appendix Q**.

TABLE 5.15-3: NORMAL YEAR SUPPLY AND DEMAND (AFY)

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Supply Totals	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
Groundwater	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
Recycled Water	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
Demand Totals	**137,061**	**144,982**	**152,729**	**158,981**	**164,966**
Potable Water Demand	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
Recycled Water Demand	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
Difference	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Notes: CVWD and the other Regional UWMP agencies collaborate on groundwater management plans for long-term sustainability. During a normal year, single-dry year, or five-dry year period, the agencies could produce additional groundwater if demands exceeded the estimates shown here.

Source: RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Water Supply Assessment for Madison Club East*. September 2025. See **Appendix Q**.

TABLE 5.15-4: DRY YEAR SUPPLY AND DEMAND (AFY)					
	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Supply Totals	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
Groundwater	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
Recycled Water	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
Demand Totals	**137,061**	**144,982**	**152,729**	**158,981**	**164,966**
Potable Water Demand	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
Recycled Water Demand	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
Difference	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Notes:
CVWD and the other Regional UWMP agencies collaborate on groundwater management plans for long-term sustainability. During a normal year, single-dry year, or five-dry year period, the agencies could produce additional groundwater if demands exceeded the estimates shown here.
Water supplies during the single-dry year are 100 percent reliable. CVWD's groundwater replenishment program replenishes the basin to increase groundwater storage during wet years and that supply is available for use during dry years. Thus, the supply and demand comparison for the single-dry year is the same as the normal year.

Source: RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Water Supply Assessment for Madison Club East*. September 2025. See **Appendix Q**.

TABLE 5.15-5: MULTIPLE DRY YEAR SUPPLY AND DEMAND (AFY)						
		2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
1st Year	Supply Totals	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Groundwater	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Demand Totals	**137,061**	**144,982**	**152,729**	**158,981**	**164,966**
	Potable Water Demand	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water Demand	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Difference	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
2nd Year	Supply Totals	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Groundwater	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Demand Totals	**137,061**	**144,982**	**152,729**	**158,981**	**164,966**
	Potable Water Demand	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water Demand	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Difference	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
3rd Year	Supply Totals	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Groundwater	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Demand Totals	**137,061**	**144,982**	**152,729**	**158,981**	**164,966**
	Potable Water Demand	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water Demand	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800

TABLE 5.15-5: MULTIPLE DRY YEAR SUPPLY AND DEMAND (AFY)						
		2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
	Difference	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
4th Year	Supply Totals	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Groundwater	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Demand Totals	**137,061**	**144,982**	**152,729**	**158,981**	**164,966**
	Potable Water Demand	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water Demand	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Difference	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
5th Year	Supply Totals	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Groundwater	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Demand Totals	**137,061**	**144,982**	**152,729**	**158,981**	**164,966**
	Potable Water Demand	123,461	130,582	137,629	143,081	148,166
	Recycled Water Demand	13,600	14,400	15,100	15,900	16,800
	Difference	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Notes:
Similar to the single-dry year, the multiple-dry year water supply reliability is 100 percent. Thus, the supply and demand comparison for the multiple-dry years is the same as the normal year. CVWD and the other Regional UWMP agencies collaborate on groundwater management plans for long-term sustainability. During a normal year, single-dry year, or five-dry year period, the agencies could produce additional groundwater if demands exceeded the estimates shown here.

Source: RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Water Supply Assessment for Madison Club East*. September 2025. See **Appendix Q**.

An 8-inch main water line is located at intersection of Vista Serena and Monroe Streets, approximately 643 linear feet from the northerly Project boundary. The Project Site consists primarily of fallow agricultural land, infiltration basins, and desert terrain disturbed by with previous agricultural use. A date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site. In the southern portion of the Project Site, three concrete foundations remain from a residence built in the 1970s and related structures. The Project Site also contains ornamental landscaping, including lawns, shade trees, and palms; a modern mobile home, and several modern, nonresidential outbuildings and trailers.

Wastewater

The Project Site is within the service boundary of CVWD for wastewater conveyance and treatment. CVWD provides wastewater service for a large portion of the Coachella Valley including the communities of Bombay Beach, Cathedral City, Indian Wells, La Quinta, Mecca, North Shore, Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage, Thermal, Thousand Palms and other unincorporated areas. CVWD has an agreement to accept flows from a portion of Desert Water Agency's service area in Palm Springs. **Table 5.15-6: Wastewater Treated by CVWD** shows the wastewater treated by CVWD from 2019 through 2024. CVWD operates five (5) Water Reclamation Plants (WRPs), as shown in **Table 5.15-7:**

Water Reclamation Plants (WRPs) & Non-Potable Water. WRP 1 and WRP 2 are smaller lagoon facilities that serve the communities of Bombay Beach and North Shore, respectively. WRP-4 is in Thermal and provides service to the lower portion of the sanitation system. WRP-4 discharges secondary effluent under an NPDES permit to the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel. WRP-7 and WRP-10 provide service to the northern portions of the system and are located in Indio and Palm Desert, respectively. These facilities provide tertiary treatment, and recycled water is distributed to area golf courses and other large landscape customers.[10] The collection system includes over 1,000 miles of buried pipelines and over 17,000 manholes. The majority of gravity sewers are vitrified clay pipe (VCP). There are over 150 miles of pressurized force mains receiving sewage from the 34 lift stations. The majority of the force mains are polyvinylchloride (PVC) pipe. The CVWD collects approximately 3.4 billion gallons of wastewater annually. The water is treated through a multi-step process at two (2) of the five (5) wastewater treatment plants. This process filters out solids, organic materials, and chemicals.[11] The Project Site is within the WRP-7 service area, which is located at Avenue 38 and Madison Street. The WRP-7 includes a 5.0 mgd secondary treatment facility with current tertiary treatment capacity of 2.5 mgd (2,800 AFY). The off-site pumping capacity of the WRP-7 recycled water pump is approximately 4,500 gpm. In the summer, peak demands exceed the pumping capacity of 4,000 gpm, which typically serves Sun City and 500 gpm which serves the community of Shadow Hills.[12] An existing 12-inch sewer trunk line is located within the raised median of Monroe Street, and access is available near the Via La Serena Street/Monroe Street intersection.

TABLE 5.15-6: WASTEWATER TREATED BY CVWD

Wastewater (AF)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
WRP-1	19	16	18	24	22	21	19
WRP-2	12	16	13	15	16	17	17
WRP-4	5,900	6,065	6,353	6,452	6,440	6,117	6,450
WRP-7	3,275	3,246	3,236	3,287	3,375	3,420	3,551
WRP-10	10,124	9,663	9,238	8,980	9,235	9,309	9,452
Total	**19,330**	**19,006**	**18,858**	**18,758**	**19,088**	**18,884**	**19,489**

Source: RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Water Supply Assessment for Madison Club East*. September 2025. See **Appendix Q**.

10 CVWD. "Development Design Manual."

11 CVWD. "Recycled/Nonpotable Water." Accessed October 2025. https://www.cvwd.org/164/Recycled-Nonpotable-Water.

12 CVWD. *2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan*. June 30, 2021. Accessed October 2025. https://www.cvwd.org/DocumentCenter/View/5482/Coachella-Valley-RUWMP.

TABLE 5.15-7: WATER RECLAMATION PLANTS (WRPS) & NON-POTABLE WATER			
Facility	Plant Capacity (mgd)	Tertiary Treatment Capacity (mgd)	Number of Non-Potable Water Customers
WRP-1	0.15	0.0	0
WRP-2	0.033	0.0	0
WRP-4	9.9	0.0	0
WRP-7	5.0	2.5	2
WRP-10	18.0	15.0	18
Total	**33.083**	**17.5**	**20**

Source: CVWD. *Development Design Manual*. October 2024. Accessed March 2025. https://www.cvwd.org/DocumentCenter/View/4206/Development-Design-Manual-PDF?bidId=.

Stormwater Conveyance

The CVWD manages and maintains regional stormwater and flood control facilities in the eastern Coachella Valley and surrounding unincorporated areas. The Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCF&WCD) coordinate with CVWD for regional flood control planning, NPDES compliance and countywide drainage policies. According to the Project's Preliminary Hydrology Report (**Appendix O**), the Project Site's drainage flows in a sheet pattern from the northwest corner to the southeast corner, with no drainage structures in place. To the north of the site, there is both a vacant and developed lot. It is assumed that the developed lot detains their runoff on site while the vacant lot sheet flows to the southeast as well. The CVWD has existing underground tile drain lines both on and adjacent to the site.

Solid Waste

The Riverside County Waste Management Department (RCWMD) is responsible for the efficient and effective landfill disposal of non-hazardous county waste. To accomplish this, the RCWMD operates five active landfills and administers a contract agreement for waste disposal at the private El Sobrante Landfill.[13] RCWMD also oversees several transfer station leases, as well as a number of recycling and other special waste diversion programs.

All of the active landfills currently located in Riverside County are rated as Class III landfills according to Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).[14] Such landfills only accept nonhazardous, municipal solid waste. Franchise solid waste collection companies are granted permits to collect commercial and residential waste throughout unincorporated Riverside County under Riverside County's general operating authority. In addition, County landfills accept waste collected in

13 Riverside County Department of Waste Resources. "Landfill Regulations." Accessed October 2025. https://rcwaste.org/landfill-regulations.

14 California Code of Regulations. Division 2. Title 27. Chapter 3. Subchapter 2. Article 3. Section 20260.

incorporated cities. Within these cities, solid waste is either collected by the city as a municipal service or collected by private firms pursuant to a franchise agreement with the city.

Solid waste not dumped directly in a landfill is deposited temporarily in several transfer stations throughout Riverside County. The region's transfer stations play a vital role in accommodating throughput to landfills, serving as collection and separation points for solid waste and recyclables. Transfer stations also help reduce traffic congestion and provide flexibility for hauling waste to distant landfills or processing plants outside the region when appropriate.

Solid waste services are provided to the County by Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services (Burrtec).[15] Under Burrtec's contract with the County, solid waste generated by the Project would be transported to one of the transfer stations utilized by Burrtec and then enter the Riverside County waste stream and be sent to one of the Riverside County landfills in unincorporated Riverside County. **Table 5.15-8: Existing Riverside County Landfills** outlines estimated closure dates and capacities of landfills that can serve the County and Project. Aside from a modern mobile home and several nonresidential outbuildings located within APN 780-010-013, the Project Site consists of vacant agricultural land and does not generate solid waste.

TABLE 5.15-8: EXISTING RIVERSIDE COUNTY LANDFILLS

Landfill Sites	Estimated Closure Year	Permitted Capacity (tons/day)	Maximum Permitted Capacity (cubic yards)	Remaining Capacity (cubic yards)
Badlands	2022	4,000	34,400,000	12,700,000
Blythe	2047	400	6,229,670	3,834,470
Desert Center	2087	60	115,341	35,714
El Sobrante	2045	16,054	184,930,000	145,530,000
Lamb Canyon	2029	5,500	38,935,653	19,242,950
Mecca Landfill II	2098	400	452,182	6,371
Oasis	2055	400	1,097,152	433,779
Total			**266,159,998**	**181,783,284**

Source: Riverside County Waste Management Department. "Landfills." Accessed March 2025. https://rcwaste.org/landfill-regulations.

Dry Utilities

Section 5.3: Air Quality, **Section 5.6: Energy**, and **Section 5.8: Greenhouse Gas Emissions** of this Draft EIR provide greater detail for estimated utility usage and associated environmental impacts. This section provides focused summaries of information found throughout this Draft EIR associated with the capacities of, and the projected demands of the Project on electricity, natural gas, and

15 Riverside County Department of Waste Resources. "Riverside County Waste Hauler Franchise Area Lookup." Map. Accessed October 2025. https://www.arcgis.com/apps/InformationLookup/index.html?appid=1915d0754a1040e8be4bac8518edcdf9.

telecommunications infrastructure. Energy use reductions are associated with efficient infrastructure; therefore, this topic is also discussed in this section.

Electricity

The IID provides electric service to a 6,471 square mile service territory, including all of Imperial County along with portions of San Diego and Riverside counties. IID provides electric service to the eastern portion of the Coachella Valley, including the area the Project Site is located in. The CEC estimated the IID service area would consume approximately 3,870 GWh of electricity in 2024. IID produces and obtains electricity from various sources, including renewables such as biomass, biowaste, geothermal, hydroelectric, solar, and wind.

As discussed in **Section 3.0, Project Description**, The proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan includes an Energy Plan that identifies two options to meet the energy needs of the Project. The first option is to obtain power from IID through IID electrical distribution system serving the area, The second option is to construct an on-site private power generation system (Private Power System) consisting of natural gas-powered linear generators, battery energy storage system (BESS) units to meet peak energy demands and provide reserve power, and on-site solar generation.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is a combustible mixture of simple hydrocarbon compounds (primarily methane) that is used as a fuel source. Natural gas consumed in California is obtained from naturally occurring reservoirs, mainly located outside the State, and delivered through high-pressure transmission pipelines. The natural gas transportation system is a nationwide network and, therefore, resource availability is typically not an issue. Natural gas satisfies almost one-third of the State's total energy requirements and is used in electricity generation, space heating, cooking, water heating, industrial processes, and as transportation fuel. Natural gas is primarily measured in terms of cubic feet (cf), or millions of cubic feet (MMcf), as well as in terms of British thermal units (Btu), and Therms.[16]

According to the CEC's California Energy Consumption Database, the State of California consumed approximately 11,711 million therms (equivalent to approximately 11,711,000 MMcf) of natural gas in 2022,[17] with demand projected to rise to 13,254 million Therms (13,254,000 MMcf) in 2035,[18] the furthest year of currently available projections.

SoCalGas is the natural gas purveyor for the Project Site. The SoCalGas service area reaches 21.8 million consumers through 5.9 million meters in more than 500 communities, covering an area of

16 One Therm is equivalent to 100,000 British thermal units (BTU) or 100 kBTU. A Therm is approximately the energy equivalent of burning 100 cubic feet (1 cf) of natural gas. The conversion of kBTU to cubic feet uses the factor of 1 cf to 1.037 kBTU.

17 CEC. "California Energy Consumption Database, Gas Consumption by County." Accessed October 2025. https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx.

18 CEC. "California Energy Demand, 2023-2049." Accessed October 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report/2021-integrated-energy-policy-report.

approximately 24,000 square miles throughout Central and Southern California.[19] The SoCalGas planning area had a natural gas throughput of 2,291 MMcf per day in 2024,[20] with throughput projected to be 2,055 MMcf per day in 2040 and capacity projected to be 3,775 MMcf per day in 2040, the furthest year of currently available projections.[21]

SoCalGas provides regional and local distribution lines in the County and its SOI and provides natural gas for space heating, domestic and commercial hot water, cooking, and air conditioning applications. Together, CPUC and FERC regulate SoCalGas' natural gas distribution and conveyance activities. FERC is an independent federal agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. CPUC regulates natural gas rates and natural gas services, including in-state transportation over the utilities' transmission and distribution pipeline systems, storage, procurement, metering, and billing. The availability of natural gas services is dependent upon current conditions of gas supply and regulatory policies. The Project Site is within the SoCalGas service area and is currently undeveloped with no natural gas facilities on site.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications services in the County are provided by various companies. Spectrum provides cable service, and telephone service, formerly provided by Verizon, is now offered by Frontier Communications. Both companies are regulated by CPUC. A wide array of products and telecommunication services for residential and commercial uses are offered by both, including internet services, wireless services, television technology utilizing digital fiber optic technology, and satellite technology. The Project Site is primarily vacant and undeveloped with no telecommunications facilities on site.

5.15.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.15.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The CEQA Guidelines include thresholds to determine whether a project would have a significant effect on the environment (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines). Additional criteria from the Riverside County Environmental Assessment guidelines have been incorporated as threshold c and e detailed below. A project would have a significant impact if it would:

a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage systems, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects.

19 Southern California Gas (SoCalGas). "Company Profile." Accessed October 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/about-us/company-profile.

20 SoCalGas. *2025 California Gas Report Supplement*. Accessed October 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/2025-07/2025-CA-Gas-Report-FINAL.pdf.

21 SoCalGas. *2024 California Gas Report*. Accessed October 2025. https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/2024-08/2024-California-Gas-Report-Final.pdf.

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

c. Would the project result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment or storm water drainage facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental impacts?

d. Would the project result in determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the providers' existing commitments?

e. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded power, natural gas or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

f. 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.

g. Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes including the County Integrated Waste Management Plan.

5.15.4 METHODOLOGY

Potential impacts to utilities and service systems were evaluated by comparing projected utility demand to existing infrastructure in order to determine if additional infrastructure would be required related to water use, generation of wastewater, and solid waste generation. Information regarding the current intake capacity of each facility was gathered to determine if the existing transfer stations and landfills in Riverside County could accommodate solid waste generated by the Project.

5.15.4.1 Project Design Features

The following Project Design Features (PDFs), identified in the WSA approved by CVWD, would be implemented as part of the Project with regard to water supply and infrastructure.

PDF WAT- 1: In addition to applicable regulatory requirements, Project developers will be required to implement the following measures in order to assure the most efficient use of water resources and to meet and maintain the 2010 CVWMP Update goals throughout the life of the Project. The Project will incorporate the following features as included in the Project's WSA (see **Appendix Q**):

- To the greatest extent practicable, native plant materials and other drought-tolerant plants shall be used in all non-turf areas of Project landscaping. Large expanses of lawn and other water-intensive landscaped areas shall be kept to the minimum necessary and consistent with the functional and aesthetic needs of the Project, while providing soil stability to resist erosion.
- The installation and maintenance of efficient on-site irrigation systems will minimize runoff and evaporation and maximize effective watering of plant roots. Drip irrigation and moisture detectors will be used to the greatest extent practicable to increase irrigation efficiency.

- The use of low-flush toilets and water-conserving showerheads and faucets shall be required in conformance with Section 17921.3 of the Health and Safety Code, Title 20, California Code of Regulations Section 1601(b), and applicable sections of Title 24 of the State Code.

PDF WAT- 2: The irrigation system has been planned to meet the standards of a modern golf course irrigation system and enable precise water management through multiple measures as listed:

- The irrigation system will feature individual irrigation head control, allowing precise control over each sprinkler.
- A central control computer system will be implemented to manage all sprinkler heads and valves efficiently.
- An on-site weather station will be integrated into the system, enabling the irrigation program to provide the exact amount of water needed based on real-time weather conditions.
- During challenging water restriction episodes, the system will have the capability to exclusively water greens and trees, if required.
- Modern control monitoring through internet-based software will be incorporated into the pumping facilities for efficient monitoring and control.
- The design of the irrigation system will adhere to the stringent criteria identified by CVWD.

5.15.5 PROJECT IMPACTS

a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage systems, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects.

Less Than Significant Impact.

Potable water service to the Project Site would be provided by the CVWD. The Project Site is not currently served by on-site potable water infrastructure; however, existing CVWD water mains are located within the vicinity of the Project Site. New on-site water distribution lines would be established to serve the Project. Construction impacts associated with the installation of the on- and off-site connections are expected to be confined to trenching and related construction activities would be temporary and limited. All improvements related to water service would be completed in accordance with City and CVWD standards which would preclude any interruptions in existing service of the surrounding properties.

An existing 8-inch main water line is located at Via La Serena Street and the northbound Monroe Street intersection, approximately 643 linear feet from the northerly Project boundary. An 8-inch potable water line would be extended from this public connection under Monroe Street to serve the Project Site.at two connection points; the Project primary entrance (Via La Serena) and at the

northwest corner of the Project Site, within Driveway D, as shown on **Figure 3.0-9: Vehicle Circulation Plan** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR.

Based on the WSA, the projected total water demand for the Project Site would be approximately 669 acre-feet per year (AFY), or 3.84 acre-feet per acre. CVWD's long-term water management planning ensures that adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future water needs within its service area. CVWD's five-year average urban water demand from 2020 to 2024 was 98,756 AFY, and the projected urban water demand by 2045 is 148,166 AFY. This Project water demand of 669 AFY accounts for approximately one percent of the total planned increases by 2045 based on the current conditions as represented by the average urban water demand of 98,756 AFY from 2020 to 2024. The WSA provides an assessment of the availability of sufficient water supplies during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years over a 20-year projection to meet the projected demands of the Project.

With respect to wastewater facilities, the Project would receive wastewater collection from CVWD in addition to water service. The Project would include construction of a private on-site sewer system consisting of approximately 2.4 miles of 8-inch gravity sewer pipeline and a dedicated private on-site lift station. The on-site sewer system would connect by gravity sewer pipeline along Monroe Street at two locations: at the intersection with Via La Serena and approximately 800 feet south of Avenue 53. The proposed pipeline alignments are based on the Project's engineering plans and would be designed and constructed in accordance with CVWD Development Design Manual requirements.

Wastewater generated by the Project would be conveyed to CVWD's existing wastewater collection system and ultimately treated at CVWD Water Recycling Plant (WRP) 7. Wastewater would be conveyed through CVWD's existing sewer system, including 12-inch pipelines along Monroe Street, and conveyed southerly via 18- to 33-inch pipelines. At 62nd Avenue, flows would be conveyed easterly through 33-inch to 42-inch pipelines and ultimately discharged to CVWD Water Reclamation Plant No. 4. Based on the Project's Sanitation Sewer System Hydraulic Modeling Results (see **Appendix U)**, the Project would generate approximately 127 EDUs, which were evaluated under peak-hour dry weather flow conditions using CVWD design criteria, as shown below in **Table 5.15-9: Proposed EDU and Calculated Sewer Flows**. The hydraulic modeling analysis confirmed that the existing on-site and downstream sewer conveyance system has sufficient capacity to accommodate Project-generated wastewater flows. No new or expanded off-site wastewater conveyance or treatment facilities, and no off-site sewer improvements would be required to serve the Project.

TABLE 5.15-9: PROPOSED EDU AND CALCULATED SEWER FLOWS

Area	Total EDU	Average Annual Dry Weather Flow (gpm)	Peak-Hour Dry Weather Flow (gpm)
Single-Family Residential Homes	85	11.8	23.6
Farm to Table	7	1	2.1

TABLE 5.15-9: PROPOSED EDU AND CALCULATED SEWER FLOWS			
Area	Total EDU	Average Annual Dry Weather Flow (gpm)	Peak-Hour Dry Weather Flow (gpm)
Event Barn	15	2.1	4.2
Club Facility	9	1.3	2.5
Starter Shack Commercial Facility	1	0.1	0.3
Back of House	8	1.1	2.2
Lagoon	1	0.1	0.3
Total	**127**	**18**	**35**

Source: CVWD. *The Ranch at Madison Development Sanitation Sewer System Hydraulic Modeling Results*. May 12, 2026. See **Appendix U**.

The hydraulic modeling analysis confirmed that the existing on-site and downstream sewer conveyance system has sufficient capacity to accommodate Project-generated wastewater flows. No new or expanded off-site wastewater conveyance or treatment facilities, and no off-site sewer improvements would be required to serve the Project.

As described in the Preliminary Hydrology Study (see **Appendix O**), the Project Site consists of primarily vacant agricultural land with existing sheet flow drainage patterns that flow from northwest to southeast. No existing formal drainage structures are present on site. Underground tile drain lines are managed by the CVWD, located within and adjacent to the Project Site. The Project would include construction of on-site storm drain infrastructure and five (5) water quality/detention basins designed to fully retain and manage the 100-year 24-hour storm event in accordance with the RCF&WCD. The proposed drainage system would hydrologically isolate the Project Site, retaining 100 percent of on-site runoff and preventing discharge to adjacent properties or existing off-site systems.

Construction of the on-site drainage improvements would occur within the Project boundaries and in previously disturbed areas associated with site development. The Project would coordinate with CVWD to evaluate existing tile drain lines and to determine if they should remain active or be properly removed in accordance with CVWD requirements. No expansion or relocation of off-site regional stormwater facilities would be required, and the Project would not increase downstream runoff or otherwise necessitate new or expanded regional drainage infrastructure. Thus, the Project would not result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded stormwater drainage facilities that could cause significant environmental impacts.

All water, wastewater, and stormwater improvements associated with the Project would be constructed in accordance with County and CVWD design and engineering standards. The Project would be subject to applicable Riverside County development regulations, including the County's Low Impact Development (LID) requirements and preparation of a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), which ensure on-site retention, infiltration, and treatment of runoff is consistent with RCF & WCD standards.

Accordingly, existing water, wastewater, and stormwater facilities have sufficient capacity to serve the Project. The Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact.

Short-term demand for water may occur during excavation, grading, and construction activities on site. Construction activities would require water primarily for dust mitigation purposes, mixing concrete, cleaning equipment, and other related construction activities. These activities would occur incrementally throughout construction of the Project and are temporary in nature. Water from the existing potable water lines in the vicinity of the Project Site would be used. Short-term construction activities would require minimal water and are not expected to have any adverse impacts on the existing water system or available water supplies.

The Project's domestic water supplies and associated landscape irrigation supplies would be provided from groundwater from the Indio Subbasin in the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin via CVWD's potable water distribution system, which would serve all indoor and private landscape uses. Canal water and/or well water would serve the golf course and the community common area and streetscape landscape.

Development of the Project would result in an overall increase in water demand from the Project Site during operation. The Project's water consumption projections are based on the analysis contained in the Project's Water Supply Assessment (WSA) prepared for the Project (see **Appendix Q**). As shown in **Table 5.15-10: Projected Total Water Demand**, the total projected water demand for the Project is 668.67 AFY, including indoor and outdoor use for the residential and nonresidential areas. This quantity is approximately 0.4 percent of the total water projected to be supplied by the CVWD in 2045 (164,966 AFY).

TABLE 5.15-10: PROJECTED TOTAL WATER DEMAND

Planning Area	Land Area (Acres)	Indoor Residential Demand (AFY)	Indoor Commercial & Industrial Demand (AFY)	Outdoor Irrigation Demand (AFY)	Outdoor Recreational Demand (AFY)	Total Water Demand (AFY)
1	11.9	2.46	12.66	14.25	0.00	29.38
2	7.1	1.11	0.00	3.40	0.00	4.51
3	10.8	1.72	0.00	5.17	0.00	6.90
4	6.5	0.99	0.00	3.11	0.00	4.10
5	5	1.85	0.00	2.40	0.00	4.24

TABLE 5.15-10: PROJECTED TOTAL WATER DEMAND

Planning Area	Land Area (Acres)	Indoor Residential Demand (AFY)	Indoor Commercial & Industrial Demand (AFY)	Outdoor Irrigation Demand (AFY)	Outdoor Recreational Demand (AFY)	Total Water Demand (AFY)
6	2.8	1.11	0.00	1.34	0.00	2.45
7	3.3	1.23	0.00	1.58	0.00	2.81
8	1.4	0.00	2.56	0.67	0.00	3.23
9	6.1	0.00	0.35	0.00	32.47	32.81
10	15.2	0.00	0.00	0.00	80.91	80.91
11	6.8	0.00	0.00	0.00	36.19	36.19
12	11	0.00	0.00	0.00	58.55	58.55
13	75.1	0.00	2.85	0.00	399.74	402.59
Circulation	10.7	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	**173.8**	**10.47**	**18.42**	**31.93**	**607.85**	**668.67**

Source: RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC. *Water Supply Assessment for Madison Club East*. September 2025. See **Appendix Q**.

Projected urban water demand in the 2020 UWMP for the year 2045 is anticipated to be 148,166-acre feet. The Project's estimated water demand of 668.67 AFY would represent approximately less than one percent of the total anticipated urban demand of 148,166 af in CVWD's urban water system projected for 2045.

As previously shown above, **Table 5.15-3** through **Table** 5.15-5 provide CVWD's projected water supplies and demands in a normal year, single dry year, and multiple dry years. CVWD will be able to meet current and future urban water demands needed during normal, single dry, and multiple dry years over at least the next 20 years.

As outlined in the 2020 UWMP, and as previously shown above in **Table 5.15-1** through **Table** 5.15-2, CVWD anticipates that supply within the CVWD service area will be sufficient to meet current and future projected urban water demand needs. The 2020 UWMP accounts for new development within the service area and found that the water district has enough water to meet the anticipated demand through the year 2045. CVWD is able to forecast future population growth within the CVWD service area through 2045 by assessing 2010 U.S. Census Data, DWR's Population Tool, the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) 2024 Connect SoCal Regional Transportation Plan, and seasonal occupancy data from the Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The WSA prepared for the Project concludes that there is substantial evidence to support a determination that there will be sufficient water supplies to meet the demands of the Project, as well as for future demands of the Project plus all forecasted demands in the next 20 years, based on the CVWD's approved long-range plans.

The Project includes landscape guidelines, which emphasize noninvasive, drought-tolerant plant materials. The landscape and irrigation plan and system would comply with all CVWD and County ordinances related to water efficiency, including County ordinance No. 859, Water Efficient Landscaping, which establishes standards for landscape design, installation, and maintenance to reduce water use and prevent waste from inefficient irrigation systems. The Project would utilize other conservation measures, such as automated irrigation systems. Furthermore, the Project would incorporate Project Design Features **PDF WAT-1** and **PDF WAT-2**, which contain Project-specific water conservation measures. With adherence to federal, State, and local requirements related to water use, and incorporation of Project Design Features, the Project would have less than significant impacts related to water supply.

c. Would the project result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment or storm water drainage facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental impacts?

Less Than Significant Impact.

As described above, wastewater from the Project would be treated at CVWD WRP-7, located at Avenue 38 and Madison Street. WRP-7 includes a 5.0 MGD secondary treatment facility with current tertiary treatment capacity of 2.5 mgd (2,800 AFY). According to the 2020 Regional UWMP, WRP-7 treated 3,236 AF of wastewater in 2020. Based on the Project's Sanitation Sewer System Hydraulic Modeling Results (see **Appendix U**), the Project's wastewater generation was evaluated using EDUs and peak-hour dry weather flow criteria. The hydraulic modeling analysis confirmed that the existing wastewater collection and treatment system, including WRP-7, has sufficient capacity to accommodate Project-generated wastewater flows. Accordingly, the Project would not require new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities.

An existing 12-inch sewer trunk line is located within the raised median of Monroe Street, and access is available near the Via La Serena Street/Monroe Street intersection. A new wastewater connection will be made and run easterly through Driveway A. Construction impacts associated with the installation of the on- and off-site connections are expected to be confined to trenching and related construction activities would be temporary and limited. All improvements related to wastewater service would be completed in accordance with County and CVWD standards which would preclude any interruptions in existing service of the surrounding properties.

The County's General Plan includes policies to address the effects of future development on wastewater facilities, which ensure adequate wastewater facilities as development occurs. Implementation of the General Plan policies related to wastewater services would reduce effects of development to a less than significant level. Land Use Policy 5.1 ensures that development does not exceed the ability to adequately provide supporting wastewater infrastructure and services. Land Use Policy 5.2 monitors the capacities of the wastewater infrastructure and services in coordination with service providers, outside agencies, and jurisdictions to ensure that projected growth does not

exceed acceptable levels of service. Land Use Policy 9.1 requires that new development contribute its "fair share" to fund wastewater infrastructure and public facilities. Within the County, all new development projects are required to pay Development Impact Fees (DIFs), pursuant to Ordinance No. 659, which contributes to the costs of constructing, upgrading, and maintaining wastewater treatment facilities within the County. Countywide growth projected under the County's General Plan could necessitate the construction of new or expanded wastewater facilities over the planning horizon. However, the environmental impacts of any such future expansion are speculative because the specific location, nature and magnitude of future facilities are not yet known. Any future wastewater infrastructure projects that are proposed to serve new development would be subject to environmental review under CEQA to assess potential impacts associated with their construction and operation.

In addition, future development would be required to implement stormwater management measures consistent with the County's LID requirements and prepare a WQMP where applicable. These measures ensure that runoff is managed on site through methods such as infiltration, retention, and treatment, in accordance with standards established by the RCF & WCD. The County's General Plan goals and policies support provisions of adequate wastewater and stormwater infrastructure to accommodate future development. Accordingly, implementation of these requirements would ensure that the Project and other future development would not exceed the capacity of existing wastewater or stormwater facilities.

Therefore, existing wastewater treatment facilities would have sufficient capacities to accommodate wastewater generated by the Project, as confirmed by CVWD's hydraulic modeling. The Project would not result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

d. Would the project result in determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the providers' existing commitments?

Less Than Significant Impact.

The Project Site is located in a primarily urbanized area that is served by the existing wastewater system. As described in *Existing Conditions* above, the Project Site is within the CVWD service area. An existing 12-inch sewer trunk line is located within the raised median of Monroe Street, and access is available near the Via La Serena Street/Monroe Street intersection. A new wastewater connection will be made and run easterly through Driveway A.

Wastewater generated by the Project would be conveyed to CVWD WRP-7 for treatment. Based on the Sewer System Hydraulic Modeling conducted by CVWD (see **Appendix U**), the Project's wastewater generation was evaluated using EDUs and peak-hour dry weather flow criteria. The hydraulic modeling analysis confirmed that the existing wastewater collection system has sufficient

capacity to accommodate Project-generated wastewater flows in addition to CVWD's existing commitments.

Accordingly, CVWD has determined that adequate wastewater conveyance and treatment capacity exists to serve the Project, and no new or expanded off-site wastewater facilities or improvements are required, and, for this reason, the impact of the Project would be less than significant.

e. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded power, natural gas or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Less Than Significant Impact.

The Project Site is located in a primarily urbanized area that is served by existing electrical, natural gas, and telecommunication infrastructure. The Project Site is located within IID electric service area. The existing IID electrical infrastructure along Monroe Street does not currently have sufficient capacity to serve the Project.

The proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan includes an Energy Plan that identifies two options to meet the energy needs of the Project. The first option is to obtain power from IID through the IID electrical distribution system serving the area. The second option is to construct an on-site private power generation system (Private Power System) consisting of natural gas-powered linear generators, battery energy storage system (BESS) units to meet peak energy demands and provide reserve power, and on-site solar generation. Natural gas service would be provided to the Project Site from existing Southern California Gas lines located near the Project Site.

As power from IID is not anticipated to be available at the time development of the Project begins, initial energy needs would be met by the on-site power generation system designed for the Project. As the Project develops, energy needs will be met with power from IID, if available.

The on-site power generation and storage system has been designed to meet the peak energy demands for the Project of approximately 3.2 MW and about 6,260,000 kWh of annual energy use. The system designed to meet the full energy needs of the Project, if IID power is not available or used, would include nine natural gas-powered Mainspring 250kW linear generators, three 1.0 MW/2.5 MWh batteries, and 200kW of covered parking solar PV. As designed this system has multiple levels of built-in redundancy to accommodate any operational changes that may occur over time. Natural gas service would be provided to the Project from the existing SoCal Gas infrastructure in the surrounding area.

An area 130 feet by 150 feet in size (less than half an acre) can accommodate the generators, batteries, transformers, and associated infrastructure to meet the full energy demands of the Project. Construction and operation of the on-site generation facilities would result in typical on-site construction activities and operational effects that are addressed in **Sections 5.3: Air Quality, 5.6: Energy, 5.8: Greenhouse Gases,** and **5.12: Noise.**

IID issued a Will-Serve Letter (**Appendix AA**) indicating that electrical service can be extended to the Project, subject to preparation and approval of a Customer Service Proposal (CSP) including a detailed load analysis and final engineering design. To serve the Project Site, IID would need to construct improvements to IID infrastructure, including the installation of additional conduit and related facilities along Monroe Street and other public streets. Upgrading IID's existing facilities would involve construction in public right-of-way and private easements that would result in only temporary construction impacts in previously disturbed areas. The specific location and design of such facilities would be determined by IID. Electrical distribution facilities constructed by IID are typically located within existing or planned utility corridors and rights-of-way and are designed to comply with applicable environmental, safety, and regulatory requirements. Construction-related impacts would be temporary in nature and would occur in areas that are already disturbed or designated for utility use. All improvements related to utility services would be completed in accordance with County and utility provider standards. Any future electrical infrastructure would be constructed in compliance with applicable regulations and would be subject to separate environmental review, as required.

These improvements may include expansion of IID's existing Avenue 58 Substation through installation of additional transformer capacity, substation switchgear, and associated facilities, as well as construction of new distribution feeders, backbone lines, and conduit systems to connect the Project Site to the IID electrical grid.

In addition, the installation of on-site electrical infrastructure, including distribution lines, transformers, conduit and vault systems, and related appurtenances, would also be required. All required improvements, including substation upgrades, transmission and distribution facilities, and associated easements or right-of-way dedications, would be designed and constructed in accordance with IID standards. Consistent with IID requirements, the Project Applicant would be responsible for the costs associated with these improvements.

The Will-Serve Letter identifies the need for a new substation on or near the Project Site. An area in the southwest corner of the Property on Monroe Street would be reserved for IID to construct, operate, and maintain a potential future electric substation (Potential Future IID Substation) that would serve the Project and surrounding area. IID may only use the Potential Future IID Substation site to provide electrical services to the Project and potentially other properties in the vicinity of the Project, with pro-rata contributions from those property owners.

Title 24 requirements, as well as energy efficiency requirements related to achieving the SB 350 goals, would help to reduce Project-related energy demand and resultant impacts on the existing distribution systems. Further, submittal, review, and approval of Project plans through the County and relevant utility providers would ensure future utility demands would be manageable. Any further

need for infrastructure upgrades would be accomplished through the required design review and approval of electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication plans for the Project through the County and the appropriate regulatory agencies and utility providers. The Project is not anticipated to require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded electricity, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities that would cause significant environmental impacts. Impacts would be less than significant.

f. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

Less Than Significant Impact.

Solid waste disposal and recycling services for the County is provided by Burrtec. Solid waste and recycling from the Project would be hauled to a transfer station utilized by Burrtec. Waste from the transfer station is then sorted and sent to one of the Riverside County landfills in unincorporated Riverside County. The Project and future projects related to the County have been included in the County's General Plan growth projections and forecasted solid waste capacity. The Project proposes to develop a master-planned golf course community with 85 dwelling units, a multiuse community center, a private, 9-hole golf course, private access roads, and a 3.5-acre substation site on 173.85 acres. As shown in **Table 5.15-11: Estimated Solid Waste Generation**, the Project would generate approximately 190 tons of solid waste per year, or approximately 0.52 tons per day. Burrtec provided a will-serve letter that confirmed that they would be able to adequately serve the Project Site for solid waste pickup (**Appendix V**).

TABLE 5.15-11: ESTIMATED SOLID WASTE GENERATION

Building Type	Units	Rate	Solid Waste (lbs./day)	Solid Waste (tons/year)
Residential	85 dwelling units	12.23 lb./household/day	1,039.55	189.72
Total			**1,039.55**	**189.72**

Note: The solid waste generation rates do not take into account required solid waste reductions.

Source: CalRecycle. Estimated Solid Waste Generation Rates. Accessed January 2026. https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/WasteCharacterization/General/Rates.

Waste generated by future development on the Project Site would be sent to the Indio/Coachella Valley Transfer Station. According to CalRecycle, the Coachella Valley Transfer Station currently has a permitted maximum tonnage of 1,100 tons per day (tpd) of solid waste and a maximum capacity of 12,685 cubic yards per day.[22] The Oasis and Desert Center landfills are located nearest to the Project Site, approximately 24.3 miles south and 48.8 miles east of the Project Site respectively. The Oasis

22 CalRecycle. "SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details, Coachella Valley Transfer Station (33-AA-0248)." Accessed October 2025. https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/2305?siteID=2426.

Landfill has a remaining capacity of 433,779 cubic yards and Desert Center Landfill has a remaining capacity of 35,714 cubic yards.[23]

The Project's solid waste generation of approximately 190 tons of solid waste per year,[24] or approximately 0.52 tons per day is approximately 0.05 percent of the daily capacity of the Coachella Transfer Station, which averages 1,100 tpd of solid waste.[25] The 0.52 tons of solid waste per day would then be transferred to either the Oasis Landfill, which has a daily permitted capacity of 400 tons and an estimated closure of 2055 or the Desert Center Landfill, which has a daily permitted capacity of 60 tons and an estimated closure date of 2087. The Project would contribute approximately 0.13 percent and 0.87 percent of the daily intake permitted at Oasis and Desert Center, respectively. Accordingly, the Project would be served by a landfill with sufficient capacity to accommodate the Project's solid waste needs and would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards. Further, the County's General Plan EIR states that the amount of landfill capacity needed for the buildout of the County in approximately 40 years is directly in line with the County's projected increased landfill need.[26] Accordingly, County buildout would not create demands for waste management services that exceed the capabilities of the County's waste management system. In addition, the Project implements the requirements of the County's General Plan Update EIR. Impacts would be less than significant.

g. Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes including the County Integrated Waste Management Plan.

Less Than Significant Impact.

The Project would be consistent with the applicable regulations associated with solid waste. The Project would also comply with AB 939, AB 341, AB 1826, SB 1383, and County waste diversion goals as presented in the County Municipal Code, as applicable. Required adherence would maximize waste stream diversions and help reduce solid waste disposal impacts related to compliance with federal, State, and local regulations related to the solid waste generated from future development in accordance with the County's General Plan. Since the Project would comply with federal, State, the County's General Plan Update EIR, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste, impacts would be less than significant.

23 Riverside County Waste Management Department. "Landfills." Accessed March 2025. https://rcwaste.org/landfill-regulations.

24 Refer to **Appendix C**.

29 CalRecycle. "SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details, Coachella Valley Transfer Station (33-AA-0248)."

26 County of Riverside, Transportation and Land Management Agency. *General Plan Environmental Impact Report*. Volume I. Accessed October 2025. https://planning.rctlma.org/general-plan-environmental-impact-report-volume-i#1.0.

5.15.6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Implementation of the General Plan would increase utility services, including water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, solid waste, and other utility facilities.

The WSA prepared for the Project concludes that there is substantial evidence to support a determination that there will be sufficient water supplies to meet the demands of the Project, as well as the future demands of the Project plus all forecasted demands in the next 20 years. The Project, therefore, would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact on available water supplies.

The General Plan EIR identified that impacts to wastewater services and facilities, water quality issues associated with septic systems and solid waste collection and disposal services and facilities would result in a less than significant impact.

The County and other jurisdictions would continue to evaluate the levels of service needed and the funding sources available to meet increases in demand. Ongoing coordination among local agencies, including the CVWD, will ensure that growth is supported by adequate infrastructure and resources. Local and regional planning efforts to accommodate future development would continue to minimize cumulative effects on utility services to a less-than-significant level.

Future projects would also be subject to individual environmental review and approval. New development projects within the CVWD service area that reach certain thresholds will be required to complete Water Supply Assessments. These WSAs for new projects would evaluate the quality and reliability of existing and projected water supplies, as well as alternative sources of water supply and measures to secure alternative sources if needed. Through CVWD's 2020 UWMP process, the CVWD will meet all new demand for water due to projected population growth to the year 2045, through a combination of water conservation, recycling, and other ongoing groundwater management strategies. Based on the above information and the analysis contained in this section, CVWD would be able to supply the water demand of the Project, as well as future growth associated with the buildout of the County's General Plan. Cumulative impacts on water supply would be less than significant.

Projects are required to comply with applicable State and local waste diversion and recycling regulations, including CalRecycle mandates and County programs. Related projects within the County and nearby jurisdictions would also adhere to local recycling and waste diversion programs. The County will also continue to implement solid waste reduction and diversion programs, including expansion of existing recycling programs to incorporate construction and demolition debris. The County and other jurisdictions would continue to maximize the use of existing disposal and recycling facilities and plan for future waste diversion capacity, consistent with State waste reduction mandates. As analyzed in the County's General Plan EIR and summarized above, cumulative impacts related to solid waste generation and landfill capacity would be less than significant.

Other existing utility infrastructure would require site-specific evaluation prior to project implementation, and any necessary upgrades would occur through the County's development review process in coordination with relevant utility providers and regulatory agencies. Similarly, related projects, as listed in **Section 4.0**: **Environmental Setting** of this Draft EIR, would undergo CEQA review to confirm that utility expansions, including electrical substations and telecommunication facilities, do not result in significant unmitigated impacts. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to utilities and infrastructure would be less than significant.

5.15.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

5.15.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

No mitigation is required. Impacts would remain less than significant.

6.0 ALTERNATIVES

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) provides a comparative analysis of the environmental effects of alternatives to the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (Project). This analysis has been prepared in accordance with the guidance provided by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project, or to the location of the Project, that would feasibly attain most of the basic Project Objectives while avoiding or substantially lessening any of the significant environmental impacts of the Project. An EIR must include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed Project. This section identifies and describes alternatives to the proposed Project, evaluates the environmental impacts that would result from each of these alternatives and whether the alternative would meet the Project objectives, and compares these with the proposed Project, as required by CEQA.

Key provisions of the State CEQA Guidelines[1] relating to this alternatives analysis are summarized below:

- The discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location that 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 costlier.
- The No Project Alternative shall be evaluated along with its impact. The No Project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published. Additionally, the analysis shall discuss what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.
- If the project is a development project on an identifiable property, the No Project Alternative is the circumstance under which the project does not proceed. Discussion of this alternative shall compare the environmental effects of the property remaining in its existing state to the environmental effects that would occur if the project were approved. If disapproval of the project under consideration would result in predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project, this No Project consequence should be discussed. In certain instances, the No Project Alternative means "no build," wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained. However, where failure to proceed with the project will not result in preservation of existing environmental conditions, the analysis should identify the practical results of not approving the project rather than create and analyze a set of artificial assumptions that would be required to preserve the existing physical environment.[2]

1 California Code of Regulations. Title 14. *CEQA Guidelines*. Section 15126.6.

2 California Code of Regulations. Title 14. *CEQA Guidelines*. Section 15126.6.

- The range of alternatives required in an EIR is governed by a "rule of reason;" therefore, the EIR must evaluate only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. The alternatives shall be limited to ones that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.
- For alternative locations, only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR.
- An EIR need not consider an alternative whose effects cannot be reasonably ascertained and whose implementation is remote and speculative.[3]
- The range of feasible alternatives to a proposed project is to be selected and discussed in a manner that fosters meaningful public participation and informed decision-making. Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the applicant could reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site.[4]

6.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Project would allow development of a proposed private, master-planned residential golf community on approximately 174 acres in the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa in the Coachella Valley in Riverside County (County). The Project would allow development of up to 85 single-family homes, a centrally located Mixed Use Area with resident-serving recreational and wellness amenities, and a private 9-hole golf course integrated with extensive open space and trails. The Specific Plan establishes the land use regulations, design framework, and supporting infrastructure improvements necessary to guide the orderly development of the community. Further description of the Project is provided in **Section 3.0**: **Project Description** of this Draft EIR.

The Project objectives include:

- Ensure the orderly and sensitive development of the Project Site as a unified residential development with a private street system.
- Develop Planning Area standards to facilitate the efficient implementation of a planned residential development that creates an attractive design balancing neighborhood compatibility with housing and recreational uses.
- Construct a master-planned resort community containing a variety of land uses, including Mixed Use, Low-Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Open Space Recreation.
- Create high-quality amenity spaces in an Amenity Village, including a Wellness Center, golf course, sports fields, courts, and pool, that benefit residents and members of the adjacent Madison Club to the west.

3 California Code of Regulations. Title 14. *CEQA Guidelines*. Section 15126.6(f)(3).

4 California Code of Regulations. Title 14. *CEQA Guidelines*. Section 15126.6(f)(1).

- Provide a high-quality 9-hole golf course and related amenities for residents and members of the adjacent Madison Club to the west.
- Provide a primary access to the community from Monroe Street aligning with the existing entry to the Carmela residential neighborhood on the west side of Monroe Street, secondary access from Avenue 53 and extension and improvement of Arabia Street, and connection to the adjacent Madison Club to the west via either a golf club tunnel under Monroe Street, or a golf cart bridge over Monroe Street.
- Implement classic architectural styles that pull from the surrounding desert landscape.
- Promote an active and healthy atmosphere through the Project design and amenities.
- Provide opportunities for Project residents to connect to existing open space and trail infrastructure near the site via the Project's extensive trail network and mixed-use paths.
- Offer a diverse range of housing options with generously sized units, including Estate Lots and Golf Villas, in addition to more moderately sized Village Units, creating more efficient and affordable products.

6.2 SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS

In accordance with Section 15126.6(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, alternatives to the Project were identified to provide additional information on ways to avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts of the proposed Project as identified and described in **Section 4.0: Environmental Impact Analysis** of this DEIR.

Table 6.0-1: Environmental Impact Summary presents a summary of findings for each topic analyzed in this DEIR for the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project. As shown, potential significant impacts are identified to agricultural resources, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, and tribal cultural resources during construction. The potentially significant impacts to agricultural resources would occur due to the conversion of approximately 170 acres of land designated as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Local Significance to non-agricultural use. The potentially significant impacts to biological resources would occur as construction-related activities, including ground disturbing activities, could result in the disturbance or loss of potential burrowing owl habitat or the accidental take of an individual if present at the time of construction. Additionally, ground disturbing activities conducted during the avian nesting season could impact nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code. The potentially significant impacts to cultural resources and tribal cultural resources would occur because ground-disturbing activities associated with Project construction could encounter previously unknown archaeological, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources, as the Project Site has a moderate to moderately high sensitivity for subsurface archaeological and tribal cultural resources due to its location near the former shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla. The potentially significant impacts to geology and soils would occur if the Project does not implement recommendations outlined in the Project's Geotechnical Investigation. Measures are identified to mitigate all of these impacts to less than significant except for impacts to agricultural resources.

After construction is complete, no significant impacts are identified for occupancy and use of the Project.

TABLE 6.0-1: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SUMMARY

Topic	Potentially Significant Impact?		Mitigated to less than Significant?	Unavoidable Significant Impact?
	Construction	Operation		
Aesthetics	No	No	N/A	N/A
Agricultural Resources	Yes	No	No	Yes
Air Quality	No	No	N/A	N/A
Biological Resources	Yes	No	Yes	No
Cultural Resources	Yes	No	Yes	No
Energy	No	No	N/A	N/A
Geology and Soils	Yes	No	Yes	No
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	No	No	N/A	N/A
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	No	No	N/A	N/A
Hydrology and Water Quality	No	No	N/A	N/A
Land Use and Planning	No	No	N/A	N/A
Noise	No	No	N/A	N/A
Transportation	No	No	N/A	N/A
Tribal Cultural Resources	Yes	No	Yes	No
Utilities and Service Systems	No	No	N/A	N/A

6.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT EVALUATED IN DETAIL

Section 15126.6(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed and the reasons for eliminating alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR is failure to meet most of the basic Project objectives, infeasibility, or inability to avoid or substantially reduce significant environmental impacts. One alternative to the Project was initially considered but was determined to be infeasible for the reasons discussed below and this alternative is not evaluated in detail.

6.3.1 Alternative Site

This alternative would involve the development of the proposed Project on a different site. Given that the Project Applicant neither owns or controls any other property in the vicinity of the Project Site, the ability of the applicant to find and purchase an alternative site on which to develop the Project is considered speculative. Additionally, it is unknown if development of an alternative site could fulfill a majority of the Project Objectives. Further, the selection of an alternative site would not necessarily

avoid the potential impacts during construction identified for the proposed Project. As indicated in CEQA 15126.6(c), "among factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are (i) failure to meet most of the project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts." The relocation of the Project to an alternative site would not be feasible because the ability of the applicant to obtain an alternative site of the size necessary to accommodate the Project is both difficult and speculative and because development on an alternative site would not avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project, specifically the impact on agricultural resources as other properties in the Vista Santa Rosa community in the Coachella Valley, where the Project Site is located, generally have similar agricultural resource characteristics. Similarly, development of the Project on an alternative site within the surrounding areas would not avoid or substantially lessen other significant impacts identified for the Project, including impacts related to biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, geology and soils, or construction-related effects, as sites in the vicinity generally share similar environmental conditions and constraints. For these reasons, an off-site alternative is not evaluated in detail.

6.3.2 Agricultural Uses

This alternative would involve the entire Project Site being retained and utilized for agricultural uses. Implementation of this alternative would require amendments to the General Plan and zoning designations to retain agricultural land use designations across the site and would avoid the conversion of agricultural land associated with the Project.

This alternative was considered but not evaluated in detail because it would not meet the basic Project Objectives, including the provision of housing, implementation of the adopted Specific Plan, and development consistent with the County's planned growth strategy for the area. Retaining the site entirely for agricultural use would preclude development of residential uses and supporting infrastructure envisioned under the County's General Plan and would not achieve the Project's purpose of facilitating orderly development within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan.

In addition, this alternative would be inconsistent with the County's Housing Element and would not contribute to meeting the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) obligations. Retaining the site exclusively for agricultural use would eliminate residential development capacity at a site planned for urban development, and would require downzoning of the property, which would conflict with State housing law, including provisions of the Housing Crisis Act that limit the ability of local jurisdictions to reduce residential density on sites identified for housing.

For these reasons, although Agricultural Uses Alternative would avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impact related to the conversion of agricultural land, it was determined infeasible and was not evaluated in further detail pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c).

6.4 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED

As discussed above, the Project would result in significant impacts prior to mitigation to agricultural resources, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, and tribal cultural resources during construction. Measures are identified to mitigate all of these impacts to less than significant except for impacts to agricultural resources.

The County identified a range of alternatives for analysis in this EIR to evaluate whether each could avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental impacts of the Project while also meeting the basic Project Objectives. In addition to the No Project Alternative (Alternative 1), three development alternatives were identified for evaluation. Because the proposed Project requires a Foundation General Plan Amendment and Zone Change, Alternative 2 - Existing General Plan: Agricultural and Low Density Residential examines development that would be allowed by the current General Plan land use designations for the Project Site. Alternative 3 - Residential Project with No Golf Course examines residential development of the Project Site without a golf course. Because the proposed Project includes the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 within the Project Site, Alternative 4 – Avenue 53 Realignment examines realigning Avenue 53 within the Project Site with the other uses included in the Project as proposed.

The following alternatives were selected for evaluation in this EIR:

1. Alternative 1 - No Project/No Development
2. Alternative 2 – Existing General Plan: Agriculture and Low Density Residential
3. Alternative 3 – Residential Project with No Golf Course
4. Alternative 4 – Avenue 53 Realignment

Further description of each of these alternatives is provided below with a comparison of the impacts of the Project and the alternatives selected for further evaluation is provided in this section for each of the environmental topics addressed in the DEIR. This comparison of impacts assumes, for each topic, that the Mitigation Measures identified in this DEIR for the Project would also be incorporated into the alternatives as applicable.

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines, the discussion of the environmental effects of the alternatives in an EIR may be less detailed than provided for in the Project but should be sufficiently detailed to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the Project.[5]

5 California Code of Regulations. Title 14. *CEQA Guidelines*. Section 15126.6(d).

6.4.1 Alternative 1 — No Project/No Development

Alternative Description

The State CEQA Guidelines require consideration of a No Project alternative, with the definition of this alternative to be based on several factors, including consideration of what is likely to occur if the Project is not approved. As required by CEQA, the analysis of the No Project Alternative should examine the impacts that might occur if the Project Site is left in its existing condition, as well as what may reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the Project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services. Alternative 2 Existing General Plan: Agricultural and Low Density Residential, considers development of the Project Site as allowed by the existing General Plan land use designations for the Project Site. The No Project Alternative examines maintaining existing conditions.

As described in *Section 3.3.1*, *Existing Site Conditions and Land Use Designations*, the approximate 174-acre Project Site currently consists primarily of fallow agricultural land, agricultural reservoirs, and disturbed desert terrain associated with prior agricultural use. An abandoned date palm grove is located in the northeastern portion of the site, and the southern portion of the Project Site contains remnants of a former residence, including concrete foundations and related structures. The Project Site also includes a small date palm grove, a vacant mobile home, and several nonresidential outbuildings and trailers associated with the former agricultural operations.

Under the No Project Alternative, no Specific Plan, Foundation General Plan Amendment, Change of Zone, Tentative Tract Map, or other discretionary approvals associated with the Project would occur. The Project Site would remain subject to the existing Riverside County General Plan land use designations of Agriculture (AG) and Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR), as well as the existing zoning designations that permit agricultural uses and very low-density residential development. While agricultural uses could continue under this Alternative, some areas would remain fallow or be subject to intermittent agricultural activity, consistent with existing conditions and recent land use patterns in surrounding areas. Limited rural residential uses consistent with existing zoning could also occur; however, no comprehensive master-planned development, resort-oriented amenities, or urban-level infrastructure improvements would be anticipated under the No Project Alternative.

Comparative Impact Evaluation

Aesthetics

No development would occur on the Project Site with this alternative. No grading, construction activities, or development of buildings, infrastructure, lighting, or landscaping would occur, and the existing visual character of the Project Site and surrounding area would remain unchanged. The Project Site would likely remain in its current condition, consisting of fallowed agricultural land,

infiltration basins, disturbed desert terrain, existing date palms, and limited existing structures and landscaping.

As no development would occur, there would be no alteration of existing scenic vistas, no removal or damage to scenic resources, and no changes to the visual character or quality of public views of the site or its surroundings. Additionally, no new sources of nighttime lighting or glare would be introduced, and existing dark-sky conditions in the area would be maintained. As such, Alternative 1 would avoid all aesthetic impacts associated with the development of the Project. However, because the Project would not result in significant aesthetic impacts, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant aesthetic impacts when compared to the Project.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The Project Site contains approximately 138 acres of land designated as Prime Farmland and approximately 32 acres of Farmland of Local Importance. Under Alternative 1, no development would occur on the Project Site. Accordingly, implementation of Alternative 1 would avoid the conversion of agricultural farmland to urban uses. With the No Project Alternative, the Project Site would remain in its current and primarily vacant condition. Although the Project Site is not currently used for agricultural production, continued, or reinitiated agricultural production across the Project Site is considered unlikely based on the prolonged fallow condition of the land, the presence of abandoned agricultural infrastructure, and the absence of recent large-scale agricultural operations. Limited or intermittent agricultural activity could occur on portions of the site consistent with existing zoning; however, no substantial expansion or intensification of agricultural production would be anticipated under Alternative 1. Alternative 1 would avoid the significant impact of the Project on agricultural resources.

Air Quality

With Alternative 1, no construction activities or construction-related vehicle trips would occur; and the short-term emissions related to construction activities would be avoided. Since the Project would not be built on the Project Site, all emissions generated by operation of the Project would also be avoided. The Project would not result in significant air quality impacts and, for this reason, this Alternative would not avoid significant air quality impacts because the Project would not result in significant impacts.

Biological Resources

Under Alternative 1, the existing biological character of the Project Site would remain unchanged. No construction, grading, vegetation removal, or ground-disturbing activities would occur, and existing site conditions would be maintained. The Project Site has been subject to historic agricultural disturbance and routine vegetation management. Because the Project would not be developed under Alternative 1, any potential construction-related disturbances to biological resources, including potential effects on special-status wildlife species or nesting birds would be avoided. However, because the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts to biological resources

with mitigation, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant biological resource impacts when compared to the Project.

Cultural Resources

No grading or ground-disturbing activities would occur with the No Project Alternative, and existing site conditions would remain unchanged; therefore, no archaeological or other subsurface cultural resources would be disturbed. With the Project, potential impacts to cultural resources would be reduced to less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Because no significant cultural resource impacts would occur with the Project, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant impacts when compared to the Project.

Energy

With the No Project Alternative, short-term energy consumption related to construction activities would be avoided. Since the Project would not be developed, energy consumption from operation of the Project would also be avoided. As the Project would be built and operated in a manner determined to be consistent with federal, State, and local regulations, energy conservation impacts were determined to be less than significant. As the proposed Project would result in less-than-significant impacts, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant energy impacts that would occur with the proposed Project.

Geology and Soils

With Alternative 1, the Project Site would remain in its existing condition, and no grading, excavation, or construction activities would occur. As a result, Alternative 1 would avoid short-term construction-related effects associated with geologic and soil conditions, including exposure to seismic hazards, erosion, or landform alterations. The Project would implement regulatory requirements and mitigation measures, and impacts related to seismic hazards, soil erosion, ground stability, liquefaction, subsidence, and paleontological resources were determined less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Because the Project would not result in significant geology and soils impacts with mitigation, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant geology and soils impacts that would occur with the Project.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

No construction activities or construction related vehicle trips would occur with Alternative 1. Accordingly, greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) related to temporary construction activities would be avoided. As the Project would not be built or operated, GHGs from operation of the Project would also be avoided. As the proposed Project would result in less-than-significant impacts, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant GHG impacts that would occur with the proposed Project.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

With the No Project Alternative, the Project Site would remain in its existing condition, and no grading, construction, or operational activities would occur. As a result, potential, short-term hazards associated with construction activities, including the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials would be avoided. Implementation of the Project would be subject to applicable federal, State, and local regulations governing hazardous materials management, including compliance with hazardous materials handling, storage, and disposal requirements, and thus, Project impacts would be less than significant. Because the Project would not result in significant hazards or hazardous materials impacts, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant hazards and hazardous materials impacts that would occur with the Project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

With Alternative 1, the Project Site would remain in its existing condition, and no grading or development would occur. Existing stormwater flows across the Project Site would not be altered, and existing hydrologic and drainage patterns would remain unchanged. As a result, hydrology and water quality impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Project would not occur. As the proposed Project would result in less-than-significant impacts, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant hydrology and water quality impacts that would occur with the Project.

Land Use and Planning

Under Alternative 1, there would be no changes to existing land use conditions on the Project Site, as no development would occur. Alternative 1, like the Project, would not divide an established community. With approval of a Foundation General Plan Amendment and Zone Change, the Project would be consistent with the County's land use and planning framework and would advance these policies. Because the Project would not result in significant land use or planning impacts, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant land use and planning impacts when compared to the Project.

Noise

No construction activities would occur with this Alternative, and potential temporary noise impacts from construction would be avoided. As Alternative 1 would not result in new development, there would be no increase in traffic. In addition, Alternative 1 would not include the introduction of stationary noise sources such as mechanical equipment, recreation areas, or parking lots. Measures have been identified to mitigate all potential noise impacts identified for the Project. As the proposed Project would result in less-than-significant noise impacts, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant noise impacts that would occur with the proposed Project.

Transportation

Under Alternative 1, no development would occur on the Project Site. As a result, no new vehicle trips would be generated, and no increases in long-term traffic volumes, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), or

demand on the local or regional circulation system would occur. Existing roadway conditions and traffic operations would remain unchanged. The VMT impact and other transportation effects of the Project would be less than significant. For this reason, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen a significant impact that would occur with the Project.

Tribal Cultural Resources

With the No Project Alternative, the Project Site would remain in its current condition, and no grading, ground disturbance, or development activities would occur. As a result, the potential to disturb or damage any known or unknown tribal cultural resources, including subsurface resources, sacred places, or cultural landscapes, would be avoided. The Project Site is located in an area with moderate to moderately high sensitivity for subsurface tribal cultural resources due to its proximity to the former shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla. With the Project, ground-disturbing activities could encounter previously unknown tribal cultural resources, and mitigation measures were identified to ensure impacts would be reduced to less than significant. Because no ground disturbance would occur under Alternative 1, the potential for impacts to tribal cultural resources would be avoided. However, as the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts with mitigation incorporated, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen a significant impact to tribal cultural resources that would occur with implementation of the Project.

Utilities and Service Systems

Water Service and Supply

With Alternative 1, development of the Project Site would not occur so there would be no increase in demand for water supplies. Accordingly, Alternative 1 would result in a reduced water demand compared to the Project. The estimated water demand for the Project, as evaluated in the Water Supply Assessment (WSA) reviewed and approved by the Coachella Valley Water District, which determined adequate water supplies are available to serve the Project. As the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen significant impacts to water service and supply that would occur with the Project.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment

With the No Project Alternative, development of the Project Site would not occur and there would be no increase in wastewater compared to existing conditions. With the Project, wastewater generation would be less than significant because adequate wastewater collection and treatment capacity is available. Because no significant wastewater impacts would occur under the Project, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant impacts related to wastewater service.

Dry Utilities (Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications)

Under Alternative 1, development of the Project Site would not occur. Therefore, Alternative 1 would result in no demand for electricity, natural gas, or communication services/infrastructure. Under the Project, demand for dry utilities would be less than significant because adequate utility capacity and

infrastructure are available. Because no significant dry utility impacts would occur under the Project, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant impacts related to dry utilities.

Solid Waste

No development on the Project Site would occur with the No Project Alternative and, for this reason, no solid waste would be generated with this Alternative. With the Project, solid waste generation would result in less-than-significant impacts, because adequate landfill capacity and waste collection services are available. Because no significant solid waste impacts would occur with the Project, Alternative 1 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant solid waste impacts.

Summary of Comparative Impacts

A summary comparison of impacts associated with the Project Alternatives is provided in **Table 6.0-15: Comparison of Alternatives to Project**. As described above, the No Project/No Development Alternative would avoid all of the potential environmental effects of the Project without the need for any mitigation. Therefore, Alternative 1 would substantially lessen the proposed Project's significant impacts related to Agricultural Resources.

Relationship to Project Objectives

As no development would occur under this Alternative, none of the Project objectives would be achieved with the No Project Alternative.

6.4.2 Alternative 2 — Existing General Plan Agriculture and Low-Density Residential Alternative

Alternative Description

The Existing General Plan Alternative (Alternative 2) evaluates development of the Project Site with the uses allowed by the current General Plan land use designations of Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG). RC: LDR allows one to two dwelling units per acre (du/ac), while AG allows one dwelling unit per parcel, provided the parcel is at least 10 acres.

As shown in **Figure 3.0-4: Existing General Plan Land Use** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the Project Site consists of six parcels. Based on County Assessor data,[6] the three parcels designated RC:LDR parcels (APNs 780-020-001, -002, and -003) total approximately 97 acres, allowing about 96 to 192 dwelling units. The three AG-designated parcels (780-101-012, -013, and -014) are approximately 38.2, 19.4, and 19.41 acres, totaling 77 acres, are allowed one dwelling

6 Riverside County Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder. "Property Search." *RivCoView*. Accessed December 2025. https://rivcoview.rivcoacr.org/#/Property-Search.

unit on each parcel. Therefore, the existing General Plan land use designations for the Project Site would allow development of up to 195 dwelling units on the Project Site.

Under the Riverside County General Plan, residential development on parcels designated Agriculture (AG) is intended to occur in conjunction with ongoing agricultural use of the parcel, rather than as a standalone residential subdivision. Thus, any residential units developed on AG-designated parcels under Alternative 2 would be expected to be associated with and subordinate to continued agricultural operations, consistent with General Plan policies intended to preserve agricultural land and support agricultural productivity. While the intensity and type of agricultural use could vary by parcel, residential development on AG-designated land would not be anticipated to occur independently of agricultural activity.

As with the proposed Project, Alternative 2 would include options to meet the energy needs of the Project through use of available power from the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) electrical distribution system serving the area combined with an on-site power generation system including natural gas-powered generators, battery energy storage system (BESS) units to meet peak energy demands and provide reserve power and on-site solar generation. The on-site power generation and storage system would be designed to meet the peak energy demands for Alternative 2.

Comparative Impact Evaluation

Aesthetics

With Alternative 2, development of the Project Site would occur in accordance with the existing General Plan land use designations of RC:LDR and AG. With this Alternative development would consist of low-density residential uses and agricultural operations distributed across large parcels and would generally reflect the rural development pattern anticipated by the County for areas designated RC:LDR and AG.

Unlike the Project, Alternative 2 would not include a master-planned layout or consolidated on-site recreational amenities including the golf course or centralized open space/recreation areas included in the Project. Instead, development would likely occur incrementally on a parcel-by-parcel basis, resulting in a more dispersed and fragmented visual pattern across the site. In addition, development under Alternative 2 could result in greater residential development on individual parcels than would occur with the proposed Project, particularly within areas designated RC:LDR, where residential densities of up to two dwelling units per acre are permitted under the General Plan.

Visual changes under Alternative 2 would include the introduction of residences and accessory structures, driveways, fencing, and limited landscaping. These features would be generally consistent with existing rural residential and agricultural development in the surrounding area, resulting in no significant impacts to scenic vistas. Compared to the Project, Alternative 2 would likely result in less cohesive site design and fewer unified landscape and lighting features than would

occur with the Project as proposed, which would be developed in accordance with the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan

No state scenic highways or officially designated scenic corridors are located within or adjacent to the Project Site, and development under Alternative 2 would occur within an area already planned by the County for rural residential and agricultural uses. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Aesthetic impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Aesthetics.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Under Alternative 2, development of the Project Site would occur in accordance with existing General Plan land use designations, including Agriculture (AG) on the northern portion of the site and Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) on the southern portion. The Project Site contains approximately 138 acres of land designated as Prime Farmland and approximately 32 acres of Farmland of Local Importance. The Project Site includes approximately 77 acres designated AG; however, not all land designated AG is classified as Prime Farmland.

As identified in the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) data and shown in **Figure 5.2-1: Important Farmland Categories** in **Section 5.2: Agricultural Resources** of this Draft EIR, the Project Site contains areas mapped as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and land not classified as farmland. Under Alternative 2, while all AG-designated parcels would retain their agricultural land designation, only those portions of the AG-designated land that are mapped as Prime Farmland would reduce impacts to Prime Farmland.

Based on FMMP mapping, approximately 48 acres of Prime Farmland would remain undeveloped and retain agricultural land use under Alternative 2. The remaining AG-designated acreage includes lands classified as Farmland of Local Importance or non-Prime farmland categories, which are not considered Prime Farmland under CEQA. Accordingly, Alternative 2 would result in the preservation of a portion of the Project Site's Prime Farmland, but would not preserve all AG-designated land as Prime Farmland.

Residential development under Alternative 2 would still occur on RC:LDR parcels and would still result in conversion of land from agricultural or open rural uses to residential uses, and agricultural operations on the northern parcels could still be affected by the introduction of adjacent residential uses, such as through land use conflicts, dust, noise, and restrictions on farming practices.

Overall, Alternative 2 would result in reduced impacts to agricultural resource impacts compared to the Project by retaining agricultural land use designations and preserving a portion of the Prime Farmland on the northern parcels of the Project Site. However, because residential development would still occur and not all Prime Farmland on the site would be preserved, significant and unavoidable impacts to agricultural resources would remain.

Air Quality

Construction activities for both Alternative 2 and the Project would produce combustion emissions from various sources, such as on-site heavy-duty construction vehicles, vehicles hauling materials to and from the site, loose dirt from paved site access roadways, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Exhaust emissions from construction activities on site would vary daily as construction activity levels change. Grading activities produce fugitive dust emissions (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) from soil-disturbing activities. It is anticipated that grading activities for the entire Project Site would remain similar to the Project. As discussed in **Section 5.3: Air Quality**, construction emissions associated with the Project would not exceed SCAQMD emission thresholds and would therefore not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Alternative 2 includes a greater number of residential units at 195 than the 85 units included in the proposed Project. As shown in **Table 6.0-2: Alternative 2 Construction Air Quality Emissions**, under Alternative 2 construction emissions for VOC, NO_x, and CO would be higher, and VOC emissions would exceed SCAQMD thresholds due to the increase in use of architectural coatings.

TABLE 6.0-2: ALTERNATIVE 2 CONSTRUCTION AIR QUALITY EMISSIONS

Source	VOC	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	pounds/day					
Maximum Alternative 2 Emissions	72.3	36.0	47.9	0.1	5.1	2.6
Maximum Proposed Project Emissions	4.3	35.6	45.4	0.1	6.3	2.6
Net Difference	68.0	0.4	2.5	0.0	+1.2	0.0
SCAQMD Mass Daily Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold exceeded?	**Yes**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes:
CO = carbon monoxide; NO_x = nitrogen oxides; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; SOx = sulfur oxides; VOC = volatile organic compound.

Similar to the Project, operational emissions generated by both stationary and mobile sources would result from normal day-to-day activities associated with the uses under Alternative 2. Source emissions would be generated by the consumption of natural gas by the potential on-site power generation system and landscape maintenance. Mobile emissions would be generated by the motor vehicles traveling to and from the Project Site. As discussed in **Section 5.3: Air Quality**, the Project operational emissions would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds. The estimated operational emissions based on the proposed uses for Alternative 2 are shown in **Table 6.0-3: Alternative 2 Operational Air Quality Emissions**. As shown, operational emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for VOC, NO_x, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$.

TABLE 6.0-3: ALTERNATIVE 2 OPERATIONAL AIR QUALITY EMISSIONS						
Source	VOC	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	pounds/day					
Alternative 2						
Alternative 2 Emissions – On-site Power Generation System	15.2	5.9	50.8	0.2	8.3	2.3
Alternative 2 Emissions – IID Power	15.2	5.9	50.8	0.1	8.3	2.3
Proposed Project						
Proposed Project Emissions – On-site Power Generation System	8.3	3.3	15.1	0.1	4.3	1.2
Proposed Project Emissions – IID Power	6.4	3.3	20.7	<0.1	4.3	1.2
Net Difference						
Alternative 2 Emissions – On-site Power Generation System	6.9	2.6	35.7	0.1	4.0	1.1
Alternative 2 Emissions – IID Power	8.8	2.6	30.1	0.1	4.0	1.1
SCAQMD Mass Daily Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NOx = nitrogen oxides; PM10 = particulate matter less than 10 microns; PM2.5 = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; SOx = sulfur oxides; VOC = volatile organic compound

Source: Meridian. *Alternative 2 (On-site Power System) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix X1.**
Meridian. *Alternative 2 (IID Power) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix X2.**

As discussed in **Section 5.3: Air Quality**, residential uses are located adjacent to the Project Site. The maximum daily emissions during construction and operation of Alternative 2 were compared to the SCAQMD localized significance thresholds (LST). As shown in **Table 6.0-4: Alternative 2 Localized Construction and Operational Emissions**, emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD LST thresholds.

TABLE 6.0-4: ALTERNATIVE 2 LOCALIZED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS				
Source	NOx	CO	PM10	PM2.5
	On-Site Emissions (pounds/day)			
Construction				
Alternative 2 total maximum emissions	25.6	27.3	3.4	1.9
Proposed Project total maximum emissions	35.0	40.2	3.7	2.2
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*14*	*8*
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No

TABLE 6.0-4: ALTERNATIVE 2 LOCALIZED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS

Source	NOx	CO	PM10	PM2.5
	On-Site Emissions (pounds/day)			
Operational				
On-site Power Generation System				
Alternative 2 area/energy emissions	1.8	11.8	0.1	0.1
Proposed Project area/energy emissions	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.1
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*4*	*2*
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No
IID Power				
Alternative 2 area/energy emissions	1.8	11.8	0.1	0.1
Proposed Project area/energy emissions	1.1	0.6	0.1	0.1
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*4*	*2*
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NO_X = nitrogen oxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns.

Source: Meridian. *Alternative 2 (On-site Power System) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix X1.**
Meridian. *Alternative 2 (IID Power) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix X2.**

Alternative 2 would result in incrementally greater Air Quality impacts than the Project and regional construction emissions would result in significant impacts.

Biological Resources

With Alternative 2, agricultural operations and development of low-density residences would occur, which would involve grading and other ground disturbance in portions of the Project Site. As described in **Section 5.4: Biological Resources**, the undeveloped condition and existing vegetation on the Project Site provide potential habitat for burrowing owls and nesting migratory birds. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 2 would require incorporation of **MM BIO-1** (Burrowing Owl Focused Survey), **MM BIO-2** (Pre-Construction Focused Bat Survey), and **MM BIO-3** (Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code Compliance), which require focused surveys and adherence to applicable state and federal wildlife protection regulations prior to construction. These measures would ensure that burrowing owls, roosting bats, active nests, and protected bird species are avoided or appropriately protected and that any potential impacts are reduced to less-than-significant levels. With implementation of **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-3**, impacts to biological resources under Alternative 2 would be similar to the Project and reduced to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Biological Resources impacts when compared to the Project.

Cultural Resources

The Project Site has moderate to moderately high sensitivity for subsurface archaeological and tribal cultural resources due to its proximity to the former shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla. Under Alternative 2, development of residences on both the AG and RC:LDR parcels would require grading and other ground-disturbing activities, which could result in the unanticipated discovery of cultural resources. With implementation of **MM CUL-1** through **MM CUL-7**, procedures for identification, evaluation, and treatment of any cultural resource discoveries would be required, reducing potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Cultural Resources impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Cultural Resources with mitigation incorporated.

Energy

Alternative 2 would include more residential development than the Project, which would result in an increased demand for electricity and transportation fuels during construction, and an increased demand for electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuels during operation. Construction of the proposed Project would require the use of various forms of energy. **Table 6.0-5: Alternative 2 Summary of Fuel Use During Construction** summarizes the quantity of petroleum fuels that would be consumed during construction. As shown in **Table 6.0-5**, Alternative 2 would consume 104,802 gallons of fuel during construction. Additionally, approximately 3,613 kWh of electricity would be used during construction for water conveyance for dust control, and it was assumed that one temporary light tower (1,000 watts) would be used per 20 acres of the Project Site, resulting in approximately nine (9) light fixtures resulting in approximately 16,875 kWh of electricity used for lighting, for a total of 20,433 kWh of electricity used during construction.[7]

TABLE 6.0-5: ALTERNATIVE 2 SUMMARY OF FUEL USE DURING CONSTRUCTION

Fuel Type	Quantity (Gallons)
Off-Road Construction Equipment	60,086
Construction Worker	28,512
Construction Vendor (MDH & HHD Trucks)	16,204
Alternative 2 Total	**104,802**
Proposed Project Total	**77,093**

Energy consumption in support of, or related to, Alternative 2 operations would include transportation energy demands (energy consumed by residents, employees, and patron vehicles

7 Each temporary light fixture was assumed to have a connected load of 1,000 watts and to operate for up to three hours per day over approximately 250 workdays per year to account for early morning, winter, or safety-related lighting needs. 9 light fixtures*1,000 watts*250 workdays* 3 hours per day* 30-month construction schedule = 16,875 kWh.

accessing the Project Site), facilities energy demands (energy consumed by building operations and site maintenance activities), and natural gas consumed by the on-site power generation.

Operations-related fuel consumption was calculated using the annual VMT from the air quality and greenhouse gas analyses' CalEEMod output, and using information generated from CARB's 2021 EMFAC model**.** It is estimated that 114,138 gallons of gasoline and 78,147 gallons of diesel fuel would be consumed per year for the operation of buildout that would result from the development of the proposed Project. As such, there would be an increase in fuel consumption due to the increase in residential units.

As described above, Alternative 2 includes a modular on-site power generation system designed to partially or fully meet the Project need for electricity. The estimated annual electricity use for Alternative 2 is approximately 6,466,819 kWh compared to the 6,641,000 kWh of electricity for the proposed Project. IID estimates that electricity consumption within its planning area will be approximately 4,166 GWh annually by 2030, when the Project would be fully built out.[8] If IID supplies electricity to the Project, the Project would account for less than 0.01 percent of the 2030 annual consumption forecast in the IID planning area. As such, the Project would account for a negligible portion of the projected annual consumption in IID's planning area.

Natural gas would be provided by Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). Based on the 2024 California Gas Report, California Energy and Electric Utilities estimates natural gas supply within SoCalGas' planning area will be approximately 1,377,875 MMcf per year in 2030.[9] With the on-site power generation system, the Project would consume an estimated 47,854 MMBtu (46.1 MMcf) per year of natural gas. Additionally, other operational uses on the Project Site, including appliances, would consume 3,022,967 kBTU (2.9 MMcf) consumed per year, for a total of 49.0 MMcf per year. Under this scenario, the proposed Project would continue to account for less than 0.01 percent of the 2030 annual forecasted supply in SoCalGas' planning area.

This Alternative would be constructed and designed in accordance with the most current version of Title 24, California's Energy Efficiency Standards for buildings and the State Energy Conservation Standards, as would the proposed Project. These standards include minimum energy efficiency requirements related to buildings, mechanical systems (e.g., HVAC and water heating systems), indoor and outdoor lighting, and illuminated signs. Therefore, this alternative would continue to follow local, State, and federal regulatory compliance for energy standards and therefore would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction or

8 California Energy Commission (CEC). "California Energy Demand, 2024-2040. CEDU 2024 Baseline Forecast – IID." Accessed November 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report-iepr/2024-integrated-energy-policy-report-0.

9 Southern California Gas (SoCalGas). *2024 California Gas Report*. Accessed January 2026. https://www.socalgas.com/sites/default/files/2024-08/2024-California-Gas-Report-Final.pdf.

operation. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Energy impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Energy.

Geology and Soils

Similar to the Project, implementation of Alternative 2 would involve site preparation, grading, trenching, and foundation construction, which could result in erosion, sedimentation, and exposure of geologic and soil hazards. Development under Alternative 2 would be required to comply with the most current California Building Code (CBC) standards addressing seismicity, liquefaction, subsidence, and expansive soils. As with the Project, **MM GEO-1** would be implemented to reduce potential geologic and soil hazards, and **MM GEO-2** would require procedures for the identification, evaluation, and treatment of any paleontological resource discoveries, reducing potential impacts to less than significant. Alternative 2 would also be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and comply with applicable erosion control requirements. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Geology and Soils impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Geology and Soils with mitigation incorporated.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction activities for both Alternative 2 and the Project would produce combustion GHG emissions from various sources, such as on-site heavy-duty construction vehicles, vehicles hauling materials to and from the site, loose dirt from paved site access roadways, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Exhaust emissions from construction activities on site would vary daily as construction activity levels change. The estimated construction emissions under Alternative 2 are shown in **Table 6.0-6: Alternative 2 Construction GHG Emissions.** As shown, construction GHG emissions would be lesser when compared to the Project.

TABLE 6.0-6: ALTERNATIVE 2 CONSTRUCTION GHG EMISSIONS

Source	Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year
Alternative 2 Emissions	986
Proposed Project Emissions	1,229
Net Difference	*(243)*

Notes: GHG = greenhouse gas; $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Alternative 2 would generate GHG emissions from a number of individual sources during postconstruction (operational) use of the buildings and related activities (e.g., landscape maintenance). Similar to the Project, operational GHG emissions generated by both stationary and mobile sources would result from normal day-to-day activities associated with the uses under Alternative 2. Under this Alternative there would be an increase in development of residential units

compared to the Project, which would result in an increase in demand for electricity, natural gas and transportation during operation. As shown in **Table 6.0-7: Alternative 2 Annual Operational GHG Emissions**, Alternative 2 would decrease the amount of GHG emissions.

TABLE 6.0-7: ALTERNATIVE 2 ANNUAL OPERATIONAL GHG EMISSIONS

Source	Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year
Alternative 2	
Alternative 2 Emissions – On-site Power Generation System	2,799
Alternative 2 Emissions – IID Power	1,750
Proposed Project	
Proposed Project – On-site Power Generation System	3,510
Proposed Project – IID Power	2,304
Net Difference	
On-site Power Generation System	(711)
IID Power	(554)

Notes: GHG = greenhouse gas; $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Source: Meridian. *Alternative 2 (On-site Power System) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix X1.**
Meridian. *Alternative 2 (IID Power) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix X2.**

This Alternative would be required to adhere to regulatory compliance measures designed to reduce GHG emissions including the County General Plan, County Climate Action Plan, CALGreen Building Codes, Title 24 requirements, and the County's Code of Ordinances. Moreover, this alternative would continue to include features that are considered to be consistent with the reduction quantities identified in the County's CAP and would garner at least 100 points. Additionally, this alternative would not conflict with applicable plans including the CARB Climate Change Scoping Plan and SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS as Alternative 2 is planned development. As such, this alternative would not conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant GHG impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to GHG.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Based on the Phase I Environmental Site Assessments and subsequent Phase II soil sampling conducted for the Project Site, testing confirmed that detected pesticide-related constituents associated with historical agricultural uses were below applicable residential screening thresholds. Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would involve residential construction activities, which would require the use, transport, storage, and disposal of limited quantities of hazardous materials, such as fuels, lubricants, solvents, paints, and concrete-related materials. These materials are commonly used during construction and would be regulated under applicable federal, State, and local laws.

Implementation of Alternative 2 would also be subject to applicable federal, State, and local regulations governing the handling and management of hazardous materials. With compliance with these regulations and standard construction and operational practices, impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be less than significant. While Alternative 2 would allow a greater number of residential units compared to the Project, it would not introduce new or unusual hazardous materials uses, and emergency access would be required to comply with Riverside County Fire Department and applicable building and fire code standards. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Hazards and Hazardous Materials impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The Project Site is not located within a 100-year floodplain; according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), the site is located within an Area of Minimal Flood Hazard (Zone X).

Construction activities under Alternative 2 would involve grading, excavation, and other ground-disturbing activities that could result in temporary surface water quality runoff and short-term water quality impacts, which could be considered potentially significant during construction. However, implementation of regulatory measures similar to the Project would minimize surface water runoff from the Project Site and reduce degradation of surface water runoff and water quality, in compliance with the NPDES Program. Development of the Project Site would increase the amount of impervious surfaces resulting in an increase of long-term surface water runoff. With the implementation of specified BMPs and detention features, the Project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff from the site in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Hydrology and Water Quality impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Hydrology and Water Quality.

Land Use and Planning

Implementation of Alternative 2 would result in the development of the Project Site in accordance with the existing AG and RC:LDR land use designations. With Alternative 2, the Project Site could accommodate up to approximately 195 residential dwelling units, which represents a greater number of units than the Project, which would include up to 85 residential units. While Alternative 2 would allow for increased residential development potential compared to the Project, development would occur at low residential densities consistent with the rural character envisioned under the General Plan and would remain compatible with surrounding agricultural and low-density residential land uses.

Alternative 2 would not create land use conflicts, divide an established community, or conflict with adopted regional or local land use plans because development would occur under the Project Site's

existing General Plan land use designations. As a result, no discretionary land use amendments would be required, and development would remain consistent with County land use policies. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Land Use and Planning impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Land Use and Planning.

Noise

Both Alternative 2 and the Project would require earthmoving activities during construction and would involve the use of heavy equipment, such as air compressors, backhoes, generators, graders, pavers, rollers, and scrapers. Construction under Alternative 2 would differ from the Project, as this Alternative would include 110 additional residential units. As discussed in **Section 5.12: Noise,** roadway traffic is the primary sources of noise within Riverside County. Construction noise levels that would be generated by the Project would exceed the 5 dBA above ambient threshold at the sensitive receptors located near the Project Site without the implementation of technically feasible noise reduction measures. Construction noise from the proposed Project would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of regulatory compliance measures, which require the use of optimal muffler systems.

Similar to the Project, the implementation of **RCM-1** would be required in order to minimize temporary construction noise impacts on nearby sensitive receptors. Additionally, both this alternative and the proposed Project would comply with **RCM-2**, compliance with Section 9.52.020 of the County Code of Ordinances by ensuring that construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 PM and 6:00 AM during the months of June through September, and construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 PM and 7:00 AM during the months of October through May.

Additionally, similar to the Project, Construction of the Project would require worker, haul, and vendor truck trips to and from the site to work on the site and delivery supplies to the site. The noise level increases from truck trips would be below the significance threshold of 65 Leq (10-minute). Construction noise would be less than significant for both this alternative and the proposed Project with compliance with the regulatory compliance measures for minimizing temporary construction noise.

Operation of low-density housing and agricultural operations under Alternative 2 would be similar to the agriculture and residential noise levels in the surrounding area and would be required to follow the County's operational noise regulations. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Noise impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Noise.

Transportation

Implementation of Alternative 2 would allow development of up to approximately 195 residential dwelling units, which would generate a greater number of vehicle trips than the Project. Vehicular

access under Alternative 2 would rely on the existing roadway network serving the Project Site, with access and circulation improvements required to comply with County standards for residential development.

Compared to the Project, construction under Alternative 2 would involve similar types of construction activities, including grading, utility installation, roadway improvements, and building construction. However, because Alternative 2 would include a greater number of residential units distributed across multiple parcels, construction activities could occur over a longer duration and in a more dispersed manner than under the Project. As a result, construction-related traffic, including construction worker trips and haul trips, could be incrementally greater than those associated with the Project. Nevertheless, construction traffic under Alternative 2 would be subject to applicable County requirements and traffic control measures, and construction-related transportation impacts would remain less than significant, similar to the Project.

Alternative 2 would generate higher daily and peak-hour traffic volumes and would result in greater vehicle miles traveled (VMT) due to the higher number of dwelling units. As a result, traffic-related effects such as roadway congestion and intersection delay would be incrementally greater than with the Project. Alternative 2 would not screen out of a detailed VMT evaluation under County guidelines. Development under Alternative 2 would be subject to CEQA transportation review and required to comply with applicable County transportation standards and mitigation requirements. The extent to which mitigation may be required would be determined through Project-level VMT analysis.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Alternative 2 would involve residential development and associated ground-disturbing activities similar in nature to those of the Project. Although Alternative 2 would allow for a greater number of residential units than the Project, development would occur in a dispersed, low-density manner consistent with agricultural and rural residential land uses.

As with the Project, ground-disturbing activities under Alternative 2 could result in impacts to previously unidentified tribal cultural resources, if present. Accordingly, the same Tribal Cultural Resource mitigation measures and regulatory requirements identified for the Project, including compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) consultation requirements and implementation of inadvertent discovery procedures would apply to Alternative 2. With implementation of these measures, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources under Alternative 2 would be reduced to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Tribal Cultural Resources impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Tribal Cultural Resources with mitigation incorporated.

Utilities and Service Systems

Water Service and Supply

Under Alternative 2, development of the Project Site would occur as allowed by with the existing General Plan land use designations of AG and RC:LDR. Water demand under this Alternative would be generated by a combination of low-density rural residential development and potential agricultural operations. Water service for Alternative 2 would be provided consistent with County water supply planning assumptions that are based on buildout under the adopted General Plan.

The County and CVWD's water supply planning framework accounts for residential development and agricultural uses permitted under the General Plan designations applicable to the Project Site and therefore would be sufficient to accommodate development under Alternative 2. As with the Project, future development under Alternative 2 would be required to demonstrate the availability of adequate water supplies and comply with all applicable water service provider requirements and regulatory approvals in effect at the time of development.

Alternative 2 would be subject to the same regulatory requirements, water supply verification processes, and project design standards as the Project. Although the form and distribution of water demand under Alternative 2 may differ from the Project due to the absence of centralized recreational facilities, and given that agricultural water use would depend on future landowner decisions, there is no evidence that development under Alternative 2 would exceed the water supply assumptions evaluated for General Plan buildout. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant water service or supply impacts when compared to the Project.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment

Under Alternative 2, wastewater collection and treatment services would be provided by the CVWD, consistent with the Project. An existing 12-inch sewer trunk line located within the raised median of Monroe Street would serve the Project Site, with access available near the Via La Serena Street/Monroe Street intersection. A new wastewater connection would be constructed and would convey flows easterly through Driveway D. Like the Project, wastewater generated under Alternative 2 would be conveyed to CVWD's Water Reclamation Plant No. 7 (WRP-7) for treatment. Wastewater generation relates to water demand, and water demand under Alternative 2 would depend on future landowner decisions regarding residential landscaping and agricultural operations. As with the Project, development under Alternative 2 would be required to demonstrate adequate wastewater collection, conveyance, and treatment capacity and comply with all applicable CVWD requirements at the time of development. Accordingly, while the form and distribution of wastewater generation under Alternative 2 may differ from the Project, development under Alternative 2 would be subject to the same regulatory requirements and infrastructure capacity evaluations, and wastewater collection and treatment impacts would remain less than significant.

Dry Utilities (Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications)

Alternative 2 would increase the number of residential units when compared to the Project. Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would require the extension of electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure to serve development within the Project Site. Like the Project, Alternative 2 would also require the construction of a portion of the on-site power generation system designed for the Project. Like the Project, energy needs will be met with power from IID, if available, or expansion of the on-site power generation and storage system. Dry utility services would be provided by the applicable utility providers, and infrastructure improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with County and utility provider standards.

Similar to the Project, Alternative 2 would require submittal, review, and approval of utility plans through the County and relevant utility providers, which would ensure that future electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications demands would be manageable. Any additional infrastructure upgrades associated with Alternative 2 would be addressed through the required design review and approval processes. Impacts related to electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure under Alternative 2 would be similar to those of the Project and would be less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant dry utilities impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 2 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to dry utilities.

Solid Waste

With Alternative 2, development of the Project Site would include approximately 195 residential dwelling units. Solid waste generation under Alternative 2 would be associated primarily with residential development and would be similar in type to that generated under the Project. Compared to the Project, Alternative 2 would result in an overall increase in solid waste generation due to a greater number of residential units that could be developed under existing General Plan designations; however, solid waste generation would remain consistent with County waste generation characteristics and disposal capacity.

Solid waste generated by Alternative 2 would be collected and disposed of in accordance with applicable County requirements and would be served by either Oasis Landfill or the Desert Center Landfill, consistent with current County waste management practices. According to CalRecycle, the Oasis Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of approximately 433,779 tons, and the Desert Center Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of approximately 35,714 tons. Although Alternative 2 would generate incrementally greater solid waste compared to the Project due to the increased number of residential units, available landfill capacity at the Oasis and Desert Center landfills is sufficient to accommodate solid waste generated by Alternative 2. Therefore, Alternative 2 would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, and solid waste impacts would remain less than significant, similar to the Project. Although Alternative 2 would result

in incrementally greater solid waste impacts than the Project, these effects would not change the impact conclusions identified for the Project.

Summary of Comparative Impacts

A summary comparison of impacts associated with the Project Alternatives is provided in **Table 6.0-15: Comparison of Alternatives to Project**. Due to increased residential development, Alternative 2 would result in incrementally greater impacts when compared to the Project with respect to Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems. Impacts related to Alternative 2 would be similar with respect to Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources. Impacts related to Agricultural Resources would be reduced compared to the Project by maintaining the AG land use designation in the northern portion of the Project Site; however, such impacts would still be significant and unavoidable given the development of residential uses on Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance.

Relationship to Project Objectives

Alternative 2 would partially meet some of the Project Objectives but would not fully achieve the overall intent of the Project. While this Alternative would allow residential development of the Project Site consistent with existing General Plan land use designations, it would not implement a comprehensive Specific Plan or master-planned development approach as proposed under the Project.

Alternative 2 would partially meet the objective of ensuring the orderly development of the Project Site by allowing residential development supported by basic infrastructure. However, development would occur on a parcel-by-parcel basis and would not provide an integrated land use framework or coordinated planning structure.

Alternative 2 would not meet the Project Objective of developing a cohesive, master-planned, or mixed-use community. This Alternative would not include mixed-use development, centralized amenities, or a unified site design intended to create a cohesive community.

Alternative 2 would not meet the Project Objective of providing integrated recreational amenities or land use arrangements intended to promote recreation. Recreational opportunities under this Alternative would be limited and would not include a coordinated system of amenities, trails, or community facilities.

Alternative 2 would not meet the Project Objective of providing a diverse range of housing types and densities. Residential development would be limited to low-density housing consistent with existing General Plan designations and would not include the variety of housing types.

Alternative 2 would partially meet objectives related to land use compatibility by allowing residential development on Agriculture-designated parcels in a manner intended to remain subordinate to agricultural operations. However, this Alternative would not preserve agricultural land in long-term active production and would not avoid the conversion of agricultural land associated with residential development.

In summary, Alternative 2 would partially meet objectives related to residential development and land use compatibility, but would not meet the majority of the Project Objectives, particularly those related to master-planned development, recreational amenities, housing diversity, and the creation of a cohesive community.

6.4.3 Alternative 3—Residential Project with No Golf Course Alternative

Alternative Description

The Residential Project with No Golf Course Alternative (Alternative 3) examines the impacts that would result from the development of a residential community, at the same land use density as the Project (1.8 du/ac). A conservative estimate is that at least 15% of the gross acreage for the Project Site will be dedicated to the roads, dry and wet utilities, water quality and drainage facilities, and landscaping. Therefore, Alternative 3 would have approximately 267 residential units on 148 acres. This represents substantially more than the 85 residential units in the Project (85 units) and exceeds the 195 units currently allowed under the existing General Plan land use designations for the Project Site.

While the southern portion of the Project Site is designated Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR), which allows up to two dwelling units per acre, the northern portion of the site is designated Agriculture (AG). Implementation of Alternative 3 would therefore require a Foundation General Plan Amendment and corresponding Zone Change to redesignate the AG portion of the site to a residential designation consistent with RC:LDR and a zoning classification capable of accommodating the proposed density, such as R-1-20000 (Single-Family Residential, 20,000-square-foot minimum lot size).

Alternative 3 would include options to meet the energy needs of the Project through use of available power from the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) electrical distribution system serving the area combined with an on-site power generation system including natural gas-powered generators, battery energy storage system (BESS) units to meet peak energy demands and provide reserve power and on-site solar generation. The on-site power generation and storage system would be designed to meet the peak energy demands for Alternative 3.

Comparative Impact Evaluation

Aesthetics

With Alternative 3, the Project Site would be developed as a residential community at a density of approximately 1.8 dwelling units per acre across approximately 85 percent of the site, resulting in development of approximately 267 residential units.

Visually, Alternative 3 would result in a more intensive and uniform residential development pattern across the Project Site compared to the Project. Residential structures, internal roadways, driveways, lighting, fencing, and landscaping would be distributed throughout the site. Unlike the Project, which consolidates development and incorporates large areas of open space and recreational amenities such as a golf course to break up building mass and preserve expansive open views, Alternative 3 would replace those open areas with additional residential development. As a result, Alternative 3 would increase overall building coverage and the perception of urbanization across the site.

The elimination of the golf course and associated recreational open space would reduce landscaped open areas and long-distance internal views that contribute to visual relief under the Project. Although individual residential buildings would likely be similar in scale to those proposed under the Project, the increased number of units and their distribution across the site would result in greater overall building massing, more extensive grading, and increased nighttime lighting, thereby altering the rural and open visual character of the area to a greater degree than the Project. However, the scale, character, and density of development under Alternative 3 would generally be consistent with existing residential neighborhoods located to the west of the Project Site.

No State Scenic Highways or officially designated scenic corridors are located within or adjacent to the Project Site; however, Alternative 3 would represent a more pronounced visual change from existing conditions due to the intensity and spatial extent of development. While aesthetic impacts under Alternative 3 would be addressed through site design, landscaping, and applicable County development standards, the overall visual effects would be greater than those associated with the Project.

Accordingly, although aesthetic impacts under Alternative 3 would remain less than significant, these impacts would be incrementally greater than would occur with the Project.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Implementation of this Alternative would require redesignation of the portions of the Project Site currently designated AG to a residential land use designation. As a result, Alternative 3 would convert the entire Project Site from agricultural and rural land uses to urban residential development.

Similar to the Project, Alternative 3 would result in the permanent loss of agricultural land through conversion to urban uses. Although the Project includes recreational and open space components

such as a golf course, Alternative 3 would replace these features with additional residential development, resulting in a comparable level of agricultural land conversion. Neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would retain agricultural land uses on the Project Site.

Because Alternative 3 would result in development of the entire Project Site, impacts related to the conversion of agricultural land, potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses, and the long-term loss of farmland would be similar to those of the Project. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Agricultural resources impacts when compared to the Project, as both Alternative 3 and the Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to Agricultural Resources.

Air Quality

Construction activities for both Alternative 3 and the Project would produce combustion emissions from various sources, such as on-site heavy-duty construction vehicles, vehicles hauling materials to and from the site, loose dirt from paved site access roadways, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Exhaust emissions from construction activities on site would vary daily as construction activity levels change. Grading activities produce fugitive dust emissions (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) from soil-disturbing activities. It is anticipated that grading activities for the entire Project Site would remain similar to the Project. As discussed in **Section 5.3: Air Quality**, construction emissions associated with the Project would not exceed the SCAQMD's emission thresholds and would therefore not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutants. As shown in **Table 6.0-8: Alternative 3 Construction Air Quality Emissions**, Alternative 3 construction emissions for VOC, NO_x, CO, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ would be higher than with the proposed Project, and VOC emissions would exceed SCAQMD thresholds due to the increase in use of architectural coatings.

TABLE 6.0-8: ALTERNATIVE 3 CONSTRUCTION AIR QUALITY EMISSIONS

Source	VOC	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	pounds/day					
Maximum Alternative 3 Emissions	98.9	36.3	50.2	0.1	5.5	2.6
Maximum Proposed Project Emissions	4.3	35.6	45.4	0.1	6.3	2.6
Net Difference	94.6	0.7	4.8	0.0	0.8	0.0
SCAQMD Mass Daily Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold exceeded?	**Yes**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NOx = nitrogen oxides; PM10 = particulate matter less than 10 microns; PM2.5 = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; SOx = sulfur oxides; VOC = volatile organic compound.

Similar to the Project, operational emissions generated by both stationary and mobile sources would result from normal day-to-day activities associated with the uses under Alternative 3. Source

emissions would be generated by the consumption of natural gas by the potential on-site power generation system and landscape maintenance. Mobile emissions would be generated by the motor vehicles traveling to and from the Project Site. As discussed in **Section 5.3: Air Quality**, the Project's operational emissions would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds. The estimated operational emissions based on the proposed uses for Alternative 3 are shown in **Table 6.0-9: Alternative 3 Operational Air Quality Emissions**. As shown, operational emissions would be higher compared to the Project for all criteria pollutants due to the increase in residential units on the Project Site.

TABLE 6.0-9: ALTERNATIVE 3 OPERATIONAL AIR QUALITY EMISSIONS

Source	VOC	NO_x	CO	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	pounds/day					
Alternative 3						
Alternative 3 Emissions – On-site Power Generation System	20.7	7.4	69.3	0.1	11.3	3.0
Alternative 3 Emissions – IID Power	20.7	7.4	69.3	0.1	11.3	3.0
Proposed Project						
Proposed Project Emissions – On-site Power Generation System	8.3	3.3	15.1	0.1	4.3	1.2
Proposed Project Emissions – IID Power	6.4	3.3	20.7	0.1	4.3	1.2
Net Difference						
Alternative 3 Emissions – On-site Power Generation System	12.4	4.1	54.2	--	7.0	1.8
Alternative 3 Emissions – IID Power	14.3	4.1	28.0	--	7.0	1.8
SCAQMD Mass Daily Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NOx = nitrogen oxides; PM10 = particulate matter less than 10 microns; PM2.5 = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns; SOx = sulfur oxides; VOC = volatile organic compound.

Source: Meridian. *Alternative 3 (On-site Power System) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix Y1.**
Meridian. *Alternative 3 (IID Power) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix Y2.**

As discussed in **Section 5.3: Air Quality**, residential uses are located adjacent to the Project Site. The maximum daily emissions during construction and operation of Alternative 2 were compared to the SCAQMD localized significance thresholds (LST). As shown in **Table 6.0-10: Alternative 3 Localized Construction and Operational Emissions**, emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD LST thresholds.

TABLE 6.0-10: ALTERNATIVE 3 LOCALIZED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS

Source	NO_x	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
	On-Site Emissions (pounds/day)			
Construction				
Alternative 3 total maximum emissions	25.6	27.3	3.4	1.9
Proposed Project total maximum emissions	25.6	27.3	5.0	2.0
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*14*	*8*
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No
Operational				
On-site Power Generation System				
Alternative 3 area/energy emissions	1.8	15.8	0.1	0.1
Proposed Project area/energy emissions	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.1
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*4*	*2*
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**
IID Power				
Alternative 3 area/energy emissions	1.8	15.8	0.2	0.1
Proposed Project area/energy emissions	1.1	0.6	0.1	0.1
LST threshold	*304*	*2,292*	*4*	*2*
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; NO_X = nitrogen oxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter less than 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter less than 2.5 microns.

Source: Meridian. *Alternative 3 (On-site Power System) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix Y1.**
Meridian. *Alternative 3 (IID Power) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix Y2.**

Alternative 3 would result in incrementally greater Air Quality impacts than the Project and construction would result in significant impacts.

Biological Resources

With Alternative 3, development would involve grading and other ground disturbing activities across the Project Site. As described in **Section 5.4: Biological Resources**, the undeveloped condition and existing vegetation on the Project Site provide potential habitat for burrowing owls and nesting migratory birds. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 3 would require incorporation of **MM BIO-1** (Burrowing Owl Focused Survey), **MM BIO-2** (Pre-Construction Focused Bat Survey), and **MM BIO-3** (Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code Compliance), which require focused surveys and adherence to applicable state and federal wildlife protection regulations prior to construction. These measures would ensure that burrowing owls, roosting bats, active nests, and protected bird species are avoided or appropriately protected and that any potential impacts are reduced to less-than-significant levels. With implementation of **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-3**,

impacts to Biological Resources under Alternative 3 would be reduced to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Biological Resources impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Biological Resources with mitigation.

Cultural Resources

The Project Site has moderate to moderately high sensitivity for subsurface archaeological and tribal cultural resources due to its proximity to the former shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla. Under Alternative 3, development of the Project Site would require grading and other ground-disturbing activities, which could result in the unanticipated discovery of cultural resources. With implementation of **MM CUL-1** through **MM CUL-7**, procedures for identification, evaluation, and treatment of any cultural resource discoveries would be required, reducing potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Cultural Resources impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Cultural Resources with mitigation.

Energy

Alternative 3 would include more residential development than the Project, which would result in an increased demand for electricity and transportation fuels during construction, and an increased demand for electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuels during operation. Construction of the proposed Project would require the use of various forms of energy. **Table 6.0-11: Alternative 3 Summary of Fuel Use During Construction** summarizes the quantity of petroleum fuels that would be consumed during construction. As shown in **Table 6.0-11**, Alternative 3 would consume 120,743 gallons of fuel during construction. Additionally, approximately 3,613 kWh of electricity would be used during construction for water conveyance for dust control, and it was assumed that one temporary light tower (1,000 watts) would be used per 20 acres of the Project Site, resulting in approximately nine (9) light fixtures resulting in approximately 16,875 kWh of electricity used for lighting, for a total of 20,433 kWh of electricity used during construction.[10]

TABLE 6.0-11: ALTERNATIVE 3 SUMMARY OF FUEL USE DURING CONSTRUCTION

Fuel Type	Quantity (Gallons)
Off-Road Construction Equipment	60,086
Construction Worker	38,279
Construction Vendor (MDH & HHD Trucks)	22,378
Alternative 3 Total	**120,743**
Proposed Project Total	**77,093**

10 Each temporary light fixture was assumed to have a connected load of 1,000 watts and to operate for up to three hours per day over approximately 250 workdays per year to account for early morning, winter, or safety-related lighting needs. 9 light fixtures*1,000 watts*250 workdays* 3 hours per day* 30-month construction schedule = 16,875 kWh.

Energy consumption in support of, or related to, Alternative 3 operations would include transportation energy demands (energy consumed by residents, employees, and patron vehicles accessing the Project Site), facilities energy demands (energy consumed by building operations and site maintenance activities), and natural gas consumed by the on-site power generation.

Operations-related fuel consumption was calculated using the annual VMT from the air quality and greenhouse gas analyses' CalEEMod output, and using information generated from CARB's 2021 EMFAC model**.** It is estimated that 156,281 gallons of gasoline and 107,001 gallons of diesel fuel would be consumed per year for the operation of buildout that would result from the development of the proposed Project. As such, there would be an increase in fuel consumption due to the increase in residential units.

As described above, Alternative 3 includes a modular on-site power generation system designed to partially or fully meet the Project need for electricity. The estimated annual electricity use for Alternative 3 is approximately 8,854,568 kWh compared to the 6,641,000 kWh of electricity for the proposed Project. IID estimates that electricity consumption within its planning area will be approximately 4,166 GWh annually by 2030, when the Project would be fully built out.[11] If IID supplies electricity to the Project, the Project would account for less than 0.01 percent of the 2030 annual consumption forecast in the IID planning area. As such, the Project would account for a negligible portion of the projected annual consumption in IID's planning area.

Natural gas would be provided by Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). Based on the 2024 California Gas Report, California Energy and Electric Utilities estimates natural gas supply within SoCalGas' planning area will be approximately 1,377,875 MMcf per year in 2030.[12] With the on-site power generation system, the Project would consume an estimated 65,524 MMBtu (63.2 MMcf) per year of natural gas. Additionally, other operational uses on the Project Site, including appliances, would consume 9,495,672 kBTU (9.5 MMcf) consumed per year, for a total of 72.7 MMcf per year. Under this scenario, the proposed Project would continue to account for less than 0.01 percent of the 2030 annual forecasted supply in SoCalGas' planning area.

However, this Alternative would be constructed and designed in accordance with the most current version of Title 24, California's Energy Efficiency Standards for buildings and the State Energy Conservation Standards. These standards include minimum energy efficiency requirements related to building envelope, mechanical systems (e.g., HVAC and water heating systems), indoor and outdoor lighting, and illuminated signs. Therefore, this alternative would continue to follow local, State, and federal regulatory compliance for energy standards and therefore would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction or operation.

11 CEC. "California Energy Demand, 2024-2040. CEDU 2024 Baseline Forecast – IID." Accessed November 2025. https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/reports/integrated-energy-policy-report-iepr/2024-integrated-energy-policy-report-0.

12 SoCalGas. *2024 California Gas Report*.

Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Energy impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to energy use.

Geology and Soils

Similar to the Project, implementation of Alternative 3 would involve site preparation, grading, trenching, and foundation construction, which could result in erosion, sedimentation, and exposure of geologic and soil hazards. Development under Alternative 3 would be required to comply with the most current California Building Code (CBC) standards addressing seismicity, liquefaction, subsidence, and expansive soils. As with the Project, **MM GEO-1** would be implemented to reduce potential geologic and soil hazards, and **MM GEO-2** would require procedures for the identification, evaluation, and treatment of any paleontological resource discoveries, reducing potential impacts to less than significant. Alternative 3 would also be required to prepare and implement a SWPPP and comply with applicable erosion control requirements. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Geology and Soils impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Geology and Soils with mitigation incorporated.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction activities for both Alternative 3 and the Project would produce combustion GHG emissions from various sources, such as on-site heavy-duty construction vehicles, vehicles hauling materials to and from the site, loose dirt from paved site access roadways, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Exhaust emissions from construction activities on site would vary daily as construction activity levels change. Alternative 3 includes the development of additional residential uses in place of the golf course compared to the Project. The estimated construction emissions under Alternative 3 are shown in **Table 6.0-12: Alternative 3 Construction GHG Emissions.** As shown, construction GHG emissions would be lesser when compared to the Project.

TABLE 6.0-12: ALTERNATIVE 3 CONSTRUCTION GHG EMISSIONS

Source	Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year
Alternative 3 Emissions	986
Proposed Project Emissions	1,229
Net Difference	***(243)***

Notes: GHG = greenhouse gas; $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Alternative 3 would generate GHG emissions from a number of individual sources during postconstruction (operational) use of the buildings and related activities (e.g., landscape maintenance). Similar to the Project, operational GHG emissions generated by both stationary and mobile sources would result from normal day-to-day activities associated with the uses under

Alternative 3. As shown in **Table 6.0-13: Alternative 3 Annual Operational GHG Emissions**, although Alternative 3 would increase residential units compared to the proposed Project, Alternative 3 would decrease GHG emissions due to the elimination of energy-intensive amenities, including the golf course and associated operational energy demands.

TABLE 6.0-13: ALTERNATIVE 3 ANNUAL OPERATIONAL GHG EMISSIONS

Source	Unmitigated $MTCO_2e$ per year
Alternative 3	
Alternative 3 Emissions – On-site Power Generation System	2,799
Alternative 3 Emissions – IID Power	2,210
Proposed Project	
Proposed Project – On-site Power Generation System	3,510
Proposed Project – IID Power	2,304
Net Difference	
On-site Power Generation System	(711)
IID Power	(94)

Notes: GHG = greenhouse gas; $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Source: Meridian. *Alternative 3 (On-site Power System) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix Y1.**
Meridian. *Alternative 3 (IID Power) Custom Report*. 2026. See **Appendix Y2.**

This Alternative would be required to conform with applicable regulatory compliance measures designed to reduce GHG emissions, including the County General Plan, County Climate Action Plan, CALGreen Building Code, Title 24 requirements, and the County's Code of Ordinances. Moreover, this alternative would continue to include features that are considered to be consistent with the reduction quantities identified in the County's CAP and would garner at least 100 points. Additionally, this alternative would not conflict with applicable plans including CARB's Climate Change Scoping Plan or SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS. As such, this alternative would not conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Greenhouse Gas impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Greenhouse Gas.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Based on the Phase I Environmental Site Assessments and subsequent Phase II soil sampling conducted for the Project Site, testing confirmed that detected pesticide-related constituents associated with historical agricultural uses were below applicable residential screening thresholds. Similar to the Project, Alternative 3 would involve residential construction activities, which would require the use, transport, storage, and disposal of limited quantities of hazardous materials, such as fuels, lubricants, solvents, paints, and concrete-related materials. These materials are commonly

used during construction and would be regulated under applicable federal, State, and local laws. Implementation of Alternative 3 would also be subject to applicable federal, State, and local regulations governing the handling and management of hazardous materials. With compliance with these regulations and standard construction and operational practices, impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be less than significant. While Alternative 3 would allow a greater number of residential units compared to the Project, it would not introduce new or unusual hazardous materials uses, and emergency access would be required to comply with Riverside County Fire Department and applicable building and fire code standards. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Hazards and Hazardous Materials impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The Project Site is located within Zone X. Construction activities under Alternative 3 would involve grading, excavation, and other ground-disturbing activities that could result in temporary surface water quality runoff and short-term water quality impacts, which could be considered potentially significant during construction. However, implementation of regulatory measures similar to the Project would minimize surface water runoff from the Project Site and reduce degradation of surface water runoff and water quality, in compliance with the NPDES Program. Development of the Project Site would increase the amount of impervious surfaces resulting in an increase of long-term surface water runoff. With the implementation of specified BMPs and detention features, the Project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff from the site in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Hydrology and Water Quality impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Hydrology and Water Quality.

Land Use and Planning

With Alternative 3, the Project Site would be developed with residential uses at a density of approximately 1.8 dwelling units per acre, resulting in residential development distributed across nearly the entire site. While the southern portion of the Project Site is designated RC:LDR under the County's General Plan and would be consistent with the proposed residential density, the northern three parcels are currently designated AG. Implementation of Alternative 3 would therefore require a Foundation General Plan Amendment to redesignate the AG portion of the site to RC:LDR, as well as a corresponding Zone Change to a residential zoning designation capable of accommodating the proposed density, such as R-1-20000.

Compared to the Project, which proposes a comprehensive Specific Plan and clustered development pattern that consolidates residential uses and incorporates large areas of open space and recreational amenities, Alternative 3 would result in a more uniform and expansive residential land use pattern. Residential development would extend across areas currently designated for

agricultural use, eliminating existing land use distinctions within the Project Site and increasing the overall intensity of residential development relative to the existing General Plan land use designations.

With approval of the required Foundation General Plan Amendment and Zone Change, Alternative 3 would not result in land use conflicts, divide an established community, or conflict with surrounding land uses. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Land Use and Planning impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Land Use and Planning.

Noise

Both Alternative 3 and the Project would include earthmoving activities during construction and would involve the use of heavy equipment, such as air compressors, backhoes, generators, graders, pavers, rollers, and scrapers. Construction under Alternative 3 would differ from the Project, as this Alternative would eliminate the golf course and would increase the number of residential units to 267. As discussed in **Section 5.12: Noise,** roadway traffic is identified as one of the most pervasive sources of noise within Riverside County. Construction noise levels were found to exceed the 5 dBA above ambient threshold at the sensitive receptors located near the Project Site without the implementation of technically feasible noise reduction measures. Construction noise from the proposed Project would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of regulatory compliance measures including the County's General Plan policies, which requires the use of optimal muffler systems.

Similar to the Project, the implementation of **RCM-1** would be required in order to minimize temporary construction noise impacts on nearby sensitive receptors. Additionally, both this alternative and the proposed Project would comply with **RCM-2**, compliance with Section 9.52.020 of the County Code of Ordinances by ensuring that construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 PM and 6:00 AM during the months of June through September, and construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 PM and 7:00 AM during the months of October through May.

Additionally, similar to the Project, Construction of the Project would require worker, haul, and vendor truck trips to and from the site to work on the site and delivery supplies to the site. The noise level increases from truck trips would be below the significance threshold of 65 Leq (10-minute). Construction noise would be less than significant for both this alternative and the proposed Project with compliance with the regulatory compliance measures for minimizing temporary construction noise.

Operation of low-density housing under Alternative 3 would be similar to the residential noise levels in the surrounding area and would be required to follow the County's operational noise regulations. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Noise impacts when

compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant noise impacts.

Transportation

Implementation of Alternative 3 would allow development of up to approximately 267 residential dwelling units, which would generate a greater number of vehicle trips than the Project. Vehicular access under Alternative 3 would rely on the existing roadway network serving the Project Site, with access and circulation improvements required to comply with County standards for residential development.

Compared to the Project, Alternative 3 would be expected to generate higher daily and peak-hour traffic volumes and greater vehicle miles traveled (VMT) due to the increased number of residential units. As a result, traffic-related effects such as roadway congestion and intersection delay would be incrementally greater than under the Project. Transportation impacts under Alternative 3 would be evaluated pursuant to CEQA and County transportation guidelines, including VMT criteria. While Alternative 3 would be subject to applicable County transportation standards and review, the need for mitigation would be determined through Project-level transportation analysis. Accordingly, Alternative 3 could result in greater transportation impacts than the Project, but the significance of such impacts and the need for mitigation would be addressed through detailed VMT analysis.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Alternative 3 would involve residential development and associated ground-disturbing activities similar in nature to those of the Project. As with the Project, ground-disturbing activities under Alternative 3 could result in impacts to previously unidentified tribal cultural resources. Accordingly, the same Tribal Cultural Resource mitigation measures and regulatory requirements identified for the Project, including compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) consultation requirements and implementation of inadvertent discovery procedures would apply to Alternative 3. With implementation of these measures, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources under Alternative 3 would be reduced to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Tribal Cultural Resources impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Tribal Cultural Resources with mitigation.

Utilities and Service Systems

Water Service and Supply

Water demand with Alternative 3 would be generated primarily by residential uses, including indoor household use and outdoor irrigation associated with individual residential lots and common landscaped areas. Compared to the Project, Alternative 3 would eliminate the proposed golf course and associated water features, which are continuous sources of irrigation demand. However, Alternative 3 would include a greater number of residential units distributed across the Project Site,

each of which could include irrigated landscaping. As a result, while the type and distribution of water demand under Alternative 3 would differ from the Project, overall water demand would not necessarily be lower and could be comparable to or greater than for the Project.

As with the Project, development under Alternative 3 would be required to demonstrate the availability of sufficient water supplies and comply with all applicable requirements of the water service provider at the time of development approval. Accordingly, although water demand under Alternative 3 would differ from the Project, there is no evidence that Alternative 3 would result in new or more severe water supply impacts. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant water service or supply impacts when compared to the Project.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment

Under Alternative 3, wastewater collection and treatment services would be provided by the CVWD, consistent with the Project. An existing 12-inch sewer trunk line located within the raised median of Monroe Street would serve the Project Site, with access available near the Via La Serena Street/Monroe Street intersection. A new wastewater connection would be constructed and would convey flows easterly through Driveway D. Like the Project, wastewater generated under Alternative 3 would be conveyed to CVWD Water Reclamation Plant No. 7 (WRP-7) for treatment. Although Alternative 3 would result in incrementally greater wastewater impacts than the Project, these effects would not avoid a significant impact as the Project will not result in significant impacts on wastewater conveyance or treatment facilities.

Dry Utilities (Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications)

Alternative 3 would increase the number of residential units when compared to the Project. Similar to the Project, Alternative 3 would require the extension of electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure to serve development within the Project Site. Dry utility services would be provided by the applicable utility providers, and infrastructure improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with County and utility provider standards.

Similar to the Project, Alternative 3 would require submittal, review, and approval of utility plans through the County and relevant utility providers, which would ensure that future electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications demands would be manageable. Any additional infrastructure upgrades associated with Alternative 3 would be addressed through the required design review and approval processes. Impacts related to electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure under Alternative 3 would be similar to those of the Project and would be less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant dry utilities impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 3 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to dry utilities.

Solid Waste

With Alternative 3, development of the Project Site would include approximately 267 residential dwelling units. Solid waste under Alternative 3 would be associated primarily with residential development and would be similar in type to that generated under the Project. Compared to the Project, Alternative 3 would result in an overall increase in solid waste generation due to a greater level of residential development; however, solid waste generation would remain consistent with County waste generation characteristics and disposal capacity.

Solid waste generated by Alternative 3 would be collected and disposed of in accordance with applicable County requirements and would be served by either the Oasis Landfill or the Desert Center Landfill, consistent with current County waste management practices. According to CalRecycle, the Oasis Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of approximately 433,779 tons, and the Desert Center Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of approximately 35,714 tons. Although Alternative 3 would generate incrementally greater solid waste compared to the Project due to the increased number of residential units, available landfill capacity at the Oasis and Desert Center landfills is sufficient to accommodate solid waste generated by Alternative 3. Therefore, Alternative 3 would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, and solid waste impacts would remain less than significant, similar to the Project. Although Alternative 3 would result in incrementally greater solid waste impacts than the Project, neither this alternative nor the Project would result in significant impacts.

Summary of Comparative Impacts

A summary comparison of impacts associated with the Project Alternatives is provided in **Table 6.0-15: Comparison of Alternatives to Project**. Due to increased residential development, Alternative 3 would result in incrementally greater impacts when compared to the Project with respect to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems. Impacts related to Alternative 2 would be similar with respect to Agricultural Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources.

Relationship to Project Objectives

Alternative 3 would partially meet some of the Project Objectives but would not fully achieve the overall intent of the Project.

Alternative 3 would generally meet the objective of ensuring the orderly development of the Project Site, as residential development would occur through a planned residential layout supported by necessary infrastructure. However, because development under Alternative 3 would consist solely of residential uses distributed across the site, this Alternative would not fully meet the objective of developing Planning Area standards to facilitate the efficient implementation of a planned, mixed-use residential community.

Alternative 3 would not meet the objective of constructing a master-planned resort community that includes a variety of land uses such as mixed use, low- and medium-density residential, and open space recreation. This Alternative eliminates the golf course, amenity village, wellness center, and other centralized recreational and mixed-use components that are fundamental to the Project's master-planned design concept.

Although Alternative 3 would include residential development, it would only partially meet the objective of providing a diverse range of housing options, as it would not necessarily provide generously sized units integrated with amenity spaces or a defined mix of housing types comparable to the Project. In particular, Alternative 3 does not ensure that a specified portion of units would be downsized or more affordable, nor does it include a defined program to provide a range of housing options as proposed under the Project.

Alternative 3 would not meet the objective of creating high-quality amenity spaces in a centralized Amenity Village or providing a coordinated system of recreational facilities benefiting residents and members of the adjacent Madison Club. Recreational opportunities under Alternative 3 would be limited to typical residential neighborhood amenities rather than an integrated, community-wide system of recreational and wellness facilities.

While Alternative 3 would incorporate architectural styles compatible with the surrounding desert landscape and could be visually compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods, it would not fully meet the objective of providing an integrated design that balances neighborhood compatibility with housing and recreational demands at a community scale.

In summary, Alternative 3 would partially meet objectives related to residential development and neighborhood compatibility, but would not meet the majority of the Project Objectives, particularly those related to mixed-use development, centralized recreational amenities, housing diversity, and creation of a cohesive master-planned resort community.

6.4.4 Alternative 4—Avenue 53 Realignment

Alternative Description

The Avenue Realignment Alternative (Alternative 4) examines the impacts that would result from retaining the existing Project objectives but eliminates the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 through the Project Site. Avenue 53 bisects the Project Site from the western boundary, adjacent to Monroe Street to the eastern boundary of the Project. The vacation portion is approximately 2,617 feet in length and 60 feet wide, resulting in the potential loss of 157,020 sq. ft. (3.6 acres) of land available for single-family homes and recreational amenities. Avenue 53 would eliminate residential lots 4, 5, and 6, within Planning Area 9; 4 residential condominium units, in Planning Area 2, lots 13 and 14, within Planning Area 6, and lots 23 and 24, in Planning Area 5. With Alternative 4, the 9-hole golf course would be retained; however, retention of Avenue 53 would constrain the overall site layout

and limit flexibility in integrating the golf course design with the residential development. Arabia Street would not be extended and improved with this alternative. The continuation of Avenue 53, through the Project Site, also eliminates ingress and egress from the Project Site, through Driveway G, to Arabia Street and eliminates the development of Planning Area 8. This alternative includes 61 residential units, including 55 residential lots and 6 residential condominium units. **Figure 6.0-1: Alternative 4 Site Plan** depicts the site plan of Alternative 4.

Alternative 4 would include options to meet the energy needs of the Project through use of available power from the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) electrical distribution system serving the area combined with an on-site power generation system including natural gas-powered generators, battery energy storage system (BESS) units to meet peak energy demands and provide reserve power and on-site solar generation. The on-site power generation and storage system would be designed to meet the peak energy demands for Alternative 4.

Comparative Impact Evaluation

Aesthetics

With Alternative 4, the Project's overall land use concept and design objectives would be retained; however, the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 would not occur, and the roadway would remain as a public street bisecting the Project Site. Retention of Avenue 53 would reduce the amount of land available for residential development and recreational amenities, resulting in a lower overall development intensity compared to the Project.

Visually, Alternative 4 would alter the cohesiveness and continuity of the Project's master-planned design. The presence of Avenue 53 through the center of the site would introduce a prominent linear infrastructure element that would visually divide the Project Site into northern and southern portions. This division would extend beyond visual effects and would disrupt the continuity of the community experience by physically separating activity areas with a public roadway. This condition would interrupt long internal views, open space continuity, and the integrated visual relationship between residential areas and recreational amenities proposed under the Project, and would reduce the sense of a unified, internally connected community despite potential tunnel or crossing connections beneath the roadway.

Compared to the Project, Alternative 4 would result in fewer residential units and reduced building massing, which would lessen the overall visual intensity of development. However, the retention of Avenue 53 would increase the visibility of roadway infrastructure, including pavement, signage, lighting, and vehicular activity, thereby introducing a more transportation-oriented visual element within the site. In addition, retention of Avenue 53 would reduce the amount of contiguous open space and alter the cohesiveness of landscaped areas within the Project Site compared to the Project.

Although Alternative 4 would include the architectural styles, landscaping, and design features of the Project consistent with County development standards and the Project's design guidelines, the internal visual character would be less unified and resort-oriented than the Project. Views from within the Project Site would include greater exposure to roadway elements, and the retained roadway would diminish the sense of enclosure and internal separation from surrounding roadways that the Project is designed to achieve.

No State Scenic Highways or officially designated scenic corridors are located within or adjacent to the Project Site. Accordingly, although aesthetic impacts under Alternative 4 would remain less than significant, they would be incrementally greater than those of the Project.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Under Alternative 4, the Project's overall land use concept and design objectives would be retained; however, the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 would not occur, resulting in a reduction in developable area, residential units, and recreational amenities. Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 would involve urban development across the Project Site and would convert existing agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.

Although Alternative 4 would result in fewer residential units and a smaller overall development footprint compared to the Project, it would still result in the permanent conversion of agricultural land within the Project Site to residential, roadway, and recreational uses. Retention of Avenue 53 would not preserve agricultural operations or maintain land in active agricultural production, and no portion of the Project Site would remain available for long-term agricultural use following buildout.

Because Alternative 4 would result in development of the Project Site, impacts related to the conversion of agricultural land, potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses, and the long-term loss of farmland would be similar to those of the Project. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant impact of the Project on agricultural resources.

Air Quality

Construction activities for both Alternative 4 and the Project would produce combustion emissions from various sources, such as on-site heavy-duty construction vehicles, vehicles hauling materials to and from the site, loose dirt from paved site access roadways, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Exhaust emissions from construction activities on site would vary daily as construction activity levels change. Grading activities produce fugitive dust emissions (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) from soil-disturbing activities. It is anticipated that grading activities for the entire Project Site would remain similar to the Project as the entire site would still require grading. As discussed in **Section 5.3: Air Quality**, construction emissions associated with the Project would not exceed the SCAQMD's emission thresholds and would therefore not result in a cumulatively considerable net



SOURCE: VITA – 2026.

FIGURE **6.0-1**

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Alternative 4 Site Plan

427-001-24

increase of any criteria pollutants. As such, Alternative 4 would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutants.

Similar to the Project, operational emissions generated by both stationary and mobile sources would result from normal day-to-day activities associated with the uses under Alternative 4. Source emissions would be generated by the consumption of natural gas by the potential on-site power generation system and landscape maintenance. Mobile emissions would be generated by the motor vehicles traveling to and from the Project Site. As discussed in **Section 5.3: Air Quality**, the Project's operational emissions would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds. As described above, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Air Quality impacts when compared to the Project, as both Alternative 4 and the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to Air Quality.

Biological Resources

With Alternative 4, development would involve grading and other ground disturbing activities on the Project Site. As described in **Section 5.4: Biological Resources**, the undeveloped condition and existing vegetation on the Project Site provide potential habitat for burrowing owls and nesting migratory birds. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 4 would require incorporation of **MM BIO-1** (Burrowing Owl Focused Survey), **MM BIO-2** (Pre-Construction Focused Bat Survey), and **MM BIO-3** (Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code Compliance), which require focused surveys and adherence to applicable state and federal wildlife protection regulations prior to construction. These measures would ensure that burrowing owls, roosting bats, active nests, and protected bird species are avoided or appropriately protected and that any potential impacts are reduced to less-than-significant levels. With implementation of **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-3**, impacts to Biological Resources under Alternative 4 would be reduced to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Biological Resources impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Biological Resources with mitigation.

Cultural Resources

The Project Site has moderate to moderately high sensitivity for subsurface archaeological and tribal cultural resources due to its proximity to the former shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla. Under Alternative 4, development of the Project Site would require grading and other ground-disturbing activities, which could result in the unanticipated discovery of cultural resources. With implementation of **MM CUL-1** through **MM CUL-7**, procedures for identification, evaluation, and treatment of any cultural resource discoveries would be required, reducing potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Cultural Resources impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Cultural Resources with mitigation.

Energy

Under Alternative 4, the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 would not occur, which would result in a reduction in overall developable area and a modest decrease in the number of residential units compared to the Project. As a result, demand for electricity and transportation fuels during construction would be slightly reduced, with a comparable reduction in operational energy demand associated with residential uses. However, the overall energy consumption patterns under Alternative 4 would remain similar to those of the Project, and differences in energy demand would be minor.

Moreover, this Alternative would be constructed and designed in accordance with the most current version of Title 24, California's Energy Efficiency Standards for buildings and the State Energy Conservation Standards. These standards include minimum energy efficiency requirements related to building envelope, mechanical systems (e.g., HVAC and water heating systems), indoor and outdoor lighting, and illuminated signs. Therefore, this alternative would continue to follow local, State, and federal regulatory compliance for energy standards and therefore would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction or operation. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Energy impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant energy impacts.

Geology and Soils

Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 would involve site preparation, grading, trenching, and foundation construction, which could result in erosion, sedimentation, and exposure of geologic and soil hazards. Development under Alternative 4 would be required to comply with the most current California Building Code (CBC) standards addressing seismicity, liquefaction, subsidence, and expansive soils. As with the Project, **MM GEO-1** would be implemented to reduce potential geologic and soil hazards, and **MM GEO-2** would require procedures for the identification, evaluation, and treatment of any paleontological resource discoveries, reducing potential impacts to less than significant. Alternative 4 would also be required to prepare and implement a SWPPP and comply with applicable erosion control requirements. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Geology and Soils impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Geology and Soils with mitigation.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction activities for both Alternative 4 and the Project would produce combustion GHG emissions from various sources, such as on-site heavy-duty construction vehicles, vehicles hauling materials to and from the site, loose dirt from paved site access roadways, and motor vehicles transporting the construction crew. Exhaust emissions from construction activities on site would vary daily as construction activity levels change. Alternative 4 would eliminate the proposed vacation

of Avenue 53 through the Project Site, incrementally reducing the number of residential units and golf course holes. The estimated construction emissions under Alternative 4 would be lower than that of the proposed Project due to the reduced development footprint.

Alternative 4 would generate GHG emissions from a number of individual sources during postconstruction (operational) use of the buildings and related activities (e.g., landscape maintenance). Similar to the Project, operational GHG emissions generated by both stationary and mobile sources would result from normal day-to-day activities associated with the uses under Alternative 4. However, under this Alternative there would be a decrease in development of residential units compared to the Project, which would result in a reduction in demand for electricity, natural gas, and transportation during operation. As such, the overall impacts of this alternative would be slightly reduced compared to the Project due to a decrease in energy consumption.

This Alternative would be required to adhere to regulatory compliance measures designed to reduce GHG emissions such as the County General Plan, CALGreen Building Codes, Title 24 requirements, and the County's Code of Ordinances. Moreover, this alternative would continue to include features that are considered to be consistent with the reduction quantities identified in the County's CAP and would garner at least 100 points. Additionally, this alternative would not conflict with applicable plans including CARB's Climate Change Scoping Plan or SCAG's 2024–2050 RTP/SCS. As such, this alternative would not conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Alternative 4 would result in reduced impacts to GHG compared to the proposed Project. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Greenhouse Gas Emissions impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Based on the Phase I Environmental Site Assessments and subsequent Phase II soil sampling conducted for the Project Site, testing confirmed that detected pesticide-related constituents associated with historical agricultural uses were below applicable residential screening thresholds. Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 would involve residential construction activities, which would require the use, transport, storage, and disposal of limited quantities of hazardous materials, such as fuels, lubricants, solvents, paints, and concrete-related materials. These materials are commonly used during construction and would be regulated under applicable federal, State, and local laws. Implementation of Alternative 4 would also be subject to applicable federal, State, and local regulations governing the handling and management of hazardous materials. With compliance with these regulations and standard construction and operational practices, impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be less than significant. Alternative 4 would not introduce new or unusual hazardous materials uses, and emergency access would be required to comply with Riverside County Fire Department and applicable building and fire code standards. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Hazards and Hazardous

Materials impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The Project Site is located within Zone X. Construction activities under Alternative 4 would involve grading, excavation, and other ground-disturbing activities that could result in temporary surface water quality runoff and short-term water quality impacts, which could be considered potentially significant during construction. However, implementation of regulatory measures similar to the Project would minimize surface water runoff from the Project Site and reduce degradation of surface water runoff and water quality, in compliance with the NPDES Program. Development of the Project Site would increase the amount of impervious surfaces resulting in an increase of long-term surface water runoff. With the implementation of specified BMPs and detention features, the Project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff from the site in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Hydrology and Water Quality impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Hydrology and Water Quality.

Land Use and Planning

Implementation of Alternative 4 would retain Avenue 53 through the Project Site, resulting in a modification to the site layout and a reduction in developable land area compared to the Project. While Alternative 4 would continue to implement the overall Project objectives, retention of Avenue 53 would reduce the amount of land available for residential development and recreational amenities, resulting in a reduced residential yield and modified site design relative to the Project.

Alternative 4 would not introduce new land uses or land use incompatibilities and, like the Project, would still require implementation of the Project, which requires discretionary approvals including a Foundation General Plan Amendment, change of zone, tentative tract map, and a development agreement. Development under this Alternative would remain consistent with applicable Riverside County General Plan policies and land use designations with the implementation of the Specific Plan. Although retention of Avenue 53 would alter internal circulation and eliminate certain residential lots, the Alternative would not divide an established community or conflict with adopted land use plans, policies, or regulations.

Because Alternative 4 would involve a similar land use framework but reduced development intensity compared to the Project, land use and planning impacts would be less than significant. Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant land use and planning impacts that would occur with the Project.

Noise

Both Alternative 4 and the Project would include earthmoving activities during construction and would involve the use of heavy equipment, such as air compressors, backhoes, generators, graders, pavers, rollers, and scrapers. Construction under Alternative 4 would differ from the Project, as this Alternative would eliminate the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 through the Project Site, reducing the amount of residential units. As discussed in **Section 5.12: Noise,** roadway traffic is identified as one of the most pervasive sources of noise within Riverside County. Construction noise levels were found to exceed the 5 dBA above ambient threshold at the sensitive receptors located near the Project Site without the implementation of technically feasible noise reduction measures. Construction noise from the proposed Project would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of regulatory compliance measures including the County's General Plan policies, which requires the use of optimal muffler systems.

Similar to the Project, the implementation of **RCM-1** would be required in order to minimize temporary construction noise impacts on nearby sensitive receptors. Additionally, both this alternative and the proposed Project would comply with **RCM-2**, compliance with Section 9.52.020 of the County Code of Ordinances by ensuring that construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 PM and 6:00 AM during the months of June through September, and construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 PM and 7:00 AM during the months of October through May.

Additionally, similar to the Project, Construction of the Project would require worker, haul, and vendor truck trips to and from the site to work on the site and delivery supplies to the site. The noise level increases from truck trips would be below the significance threshold of 65 Leq (10-minute). Construction noise would be less than significant for both this alternative and the proposed Project with compliance with the regulatory compliance measures for minimizing temporary construction noise.

Operation of Alternative 4 would have similar or lower operational noise levels of the Project due to the reduction of residential dwelling units and would be required to follow the County's operational noise regulations. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Noise impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant noise impacts.

Transportation

Alternative 4 transportation impacts are analyzed in **Appendix T**. **Table 6.0-14: Opening Year (2030) Alternative 4 Intersection LOS** includes the level of service (LOS) of Alternative 4's study intersections under the scenarios of opening year with Project and opening with Project and cumulative projects.

TABLE 6.0-14: OPENING YEAR (2030) ALTERNATIVE 4 INTERSECTION LOS

ID	Intersection	Control[1,2,3]	Peak Hour	Opening Year with Project		Opening Year with Project and Cumulative Projects	
				LOS/Delay	*Side Street Stop Worst Movement*	*LOS/Delay*	*Side Street Stop Worst Movement*
1	**Monroe Street and Avenue 50**	Signalized	AM	B / 16		B / 17.5	
			PM	B / 15		B / 16.5	
2	**Monroe Street and 52nd Avenue**	Signalized	AM	A / 7.6		A / 9.3	
			PM	A / 7.9		B / 11.4	
3	**Jackson Street and 52nd Avenue**	Signalized	AM	B / 16.1		B / 16.8	
			PM	B / 15.2		B / 16.1	
4	**Monroe Street and Via La Serena Street**	SSSC	AM	A / 9.3		A / 9.9	
			PM	A / 9.4		B / 10.3	
5	**Monroe Street and Avenue 53**	SSSC	AM	B / 14.0	EB	C / 19.4	EB
			PM	C / 17.0	EB	**D / 28.5**	EB
6	**Driveway A and Avenue 53 (Project Alternative)**	SSSC	AM	A / 9.1	NB	A / 9.1	NB
			PM	A / 9.3	NB	A / 9.3	NB
7	**Driveway G and Avenue 53 (Project Alternative)**	SSSC	AM	A / 8.7	NB	A / 8.7	NB
			PM	A / 8.9	NB	A / 8.9	NB

Notes:

1. *AWSC: All-Way Stop Control*
2. *SSSC: Side-Street Stop Control*
3. *Deficient roadway segment operations are noted in bold text.*

Source: Fehr & Peers. Table A. *The Ranch at Madison Transportation Analysis Report*. 2026. See **Appendix T**.

As shown above, Intersection #5, Monroe Street at Avenue 53, Would operate under the County's LOS standard during peak PM hours. However, the west leg of Intersection #5 could be restriped to provide a dedicated eastbound left-turn lane and a shared eastbound through/right lane, replacing the previous configuration of a shared eastbound left/through (EBL/T) and eastbound right (EBR) lane. This improvement would ensure that the intersection would operate at a LOS C for both AM and PM peak hours under the opening year (2030) plus Project and cumulative projects scenario, ensuring LOS impacts would be less than significant.

Implementation of Alternative 4 would retain Avenue 53 through the Project Site, resulting in changes to site circulation and access compared to the Project. Retention of Avenue 53 would reduce the amount of developable land and eliminate certain residential lots and recreational features, thereby reducing the overall residential unit count and associated trip generation relative to the Project.

Because Alternative 4 would result in fewer residential units, VMT would be reduced compared to the Project. Although internal circulation patterns and access points would differ due to retention of Avenue 53 and elimination of certain ingress and egress locations, overall transportation demand on

the local and regional roadway network would be lower than under the Project. Alternative 4 would continue to comply with applicable circulation plans and roadway design standards. With implementation of required roadway improvements and adherence to County transportation requirements, impacts to roadway operations and safety would remain less than significant. While Alternative 4 would alter site access and circulation, it would not introduce new transportation conflicts or substantially worsen traffic conditions compared to the Project. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant transportation impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant transportation impacts.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Alternative 4 would involve ground-disturbing activities similar in nature to those of the Project. As with the Project, ground-disturbing activities under Alternative 4 could result in impacts to previously unidentified tribal cultural resources, if present. Accordingly, the same Tribal Cultural Resource mitigation measures and regulatory requirements identified for the Project, including compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) consultation requirements and implementation of inadvertent discovery procedures would apply to Alternative 4. With implementation of these measures, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources under Alternative 4 would be reduced to less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant Tribal Cultural Resources impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to Tribal Cultural Resources with mitigation.

Utilities and Service Systems

Water Service and Supply

With Alternative 4, the Project would be modified to retain Avenue 53 as a public roadway bisecting the Project Site, resulting in a reduced development footprint and a decrease in the number of residential units to approximately 61 units, compared to 85 units under the Project. As a result, water demand under Alternative 4 would be reduced relative to the Project.

Water demand under Alternative 4 would be generated by residential uses and associated landscaping and amenities; however, the reduction in residential units and the elimination of portions of the golf course and other recreational amenities would decrease long-term irrigation and potable water demand compared to the Project.

As with the Project, development under Alternative 4 would be required to demonstrate the availability of adequate water supplies and comply with all applicable water service provider requirements at the time of development approval. Accordingly, Alternative 4 would not result in new or more severe impacts to water service or supply. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant water supply impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to water supply.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment

Under Alternative 4, wastewater collection and treatment services would be provided by the CVWD, consistent with the Project. An existing 12-inch sewer trunk line located within the raised median of Monroe Street would serve the Project Site, with access available near the Via La Serena Street/Monroe Street intersection. A new wastewater connection would be constructed and would convey flows easterly through Driveway D. Like the Project, wastewater generated under Alternative 4 would be conveyed to CVWD's Water Reclamation Plant No. 7 (WRP-7) for treatment. With fewer residential dwelling units, Alternative 4 would generate less wastewater compared to the Project. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant wastewater collection and treatment impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to wastewater collection and treatment.

Dry Utilities (Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications)

Alternative 4 would decrease the number of residential units when compared to the Project. Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 would require the extension of electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure to serve development within the Project Site. Dry utility services would be provided by the applicable utility providers, and infrastructure improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with County and utility provider standards.

Similar to the Project, Alternative 4 would require submittal, review, and approval of utility plans through the County and relevant utility providers, which would ensure that future electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications demands would be manageable. Any additional infrastructure upgrades associated with Alternative 4 would be addressed through the required design review and approval processes. Impacts related to electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications infrastructure under Alternative 4 would be similar to those of the Project and would be less than significant. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant dry utilities impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to dry utilities.

Solid Waste

Under Alternative 4, development of the Project Site would reduce residential development and would include approximately 61 residential dwelling units. As Alternative 4 would reduce residential development, solid waste generated would be reduced, when compared to the Project.

Solid waste generated by Alternative 4 would be collected and disposed of in accordance with applicable County requirements and would be served by either the Oasis Landfill or the Desert Center Landfill, consistent with current County waste management practices. According to CalRecycle, the Oasis Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of approximately 433,779 tons, and the Desert Center Landfill has a remaining permitted disposal capacity of approximately 35,714 tons. Alternative 4 would reduce solid waste compared to the Project due to the decreased

number of residential units, and available landfill capacity at the Oasis and Desert Center landfills is sufficient to accommodate solid waste generated by Alternative 4. Therefore, Alternative 4 would not avoid or substantially lessen any significant solid waste impacts when compared to the Project, as neither Alternative 4 nor the Project would result in significant impacts related to solid waste.

Summary of Comparative Impacts

A summary comparison of impacts associated with the Project Alternatives is provided in **Table 6.0-15: Comparison of Alternatives to Project**. Due to a decrease in residential and recreational development, Alternative 4 would result in incrementally less impacts when compared to the Project with respect to Air Quality, Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems. Impacts related to Alternative 4 would be similar with respect to Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, and Tribal Cultural Resources. No significant impacts would be avoided or substantially reduced with Alternative 4.

Relationship to Project Objectives

Alternative 4 would meet some of the Project Objectives but would not fully achieve the overall intent of the Project. Under this Alternative, the Project would continue to provide an orderly residential community with architectural styles generally compatible with the surrounding desert landscape, and development would occur in a manner consistent with County standards. Accordingly, Alternative 4 would partially meet the objectives related to orderly and sensitive development of the Project Site, neighborhood compatibility, and implementation of architectural styles reflective of the surrounding desert environment.

However, retention of Avenue 53 through the Project Site would physically divide the site and reduce the effectiveness of the Project's master-planned design. As a result, Alternative 4 would not fully meet the objectives related to developing a cohesive, master-planned resort community that integrates mixed uses, residential neighborhoods, and open space and recreational amenities. The continuation of Avenue 53 would eliminate or constrain portions of open space areas, and Planning Area 8, thereby limiting the ability to provide a fully integrated amenity village, recreational facilities, and trail connections. Therefore, Alternative 4 would only partially meet the objectives related to creation of high-quality amenity spaces, provision of a 9-hole golf course and related amenities, promotion of an active and healthy lifestyle, and connection of open space and trail infrastructure.

In addition, Alternative 4 would not meet the Project Objective of providing a primary access point to the community from Monroe Street that aligns with the existing entry to the Carmela residential neighborhood and the adjacent Madison Club. Retention of Avenue 53 would eliminate the proposed access configuration and internal circulation necessary to align access points between the Project and the Madison Club, thereby limiting function connectivity and coordinated access between two communities.

In summary, while Alternative 4 would support orderly residential development and general neighborhood compatibility, it would only partially meet several key Project Objectives and would not meet the objective related to coordinated access alignment with the Madison Club. Because retention of Avenue 53 would constrain site planning, reduce residential yield, fragment the Project Site, and diminish integration of residential and recreational uses, Alternative 4 would be less effective than the Project in achieving the Project's overall vision and objectives.

6.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

As previously discussed, analysis of a reasonable range of Alternatives is required by CEQA. The purpose of the Alternatives analysis is to explain potentially feasible ways to avoid or minimize the significant effects identified for the Project. Furthermore, State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6(e)(2) requires an EIR to identify an environmentally superior Alternative among those evaluated in an EIR.

A summary comparison of impacts associated with the Project Alternatives is provided in **Table 6.0-15: Comparison of Alternatives to Project**. As indicated in **Table 6.0-15**, the first line compares the impacts of each alternative with the impacts of the Project. The second line below compares the level of significance of the Alternative impacts to the level of significance of the Project impacts. Of the Alternatives considered in this DEIR section, the No Project/No Development Alternative is environmentally superior to the other Alternatives, because this Alternative would avoid the significant and unavoidable impacts identified for the Project.

According to the State CEQA Guidelines, if the No Project/No Development Alternative is identified as the environmentally superior Alternative, the DEIR is also required to identify an environmentally superior among the other Alternatives.

Of the other Alternatives considered, Alternative 2, Existing General Plan: Agriculture and Low-Density Residential Alternative, would be considered environmentally superior, because it would result in the greatest incremental reduction of the overall level of impacts when compared to the Project. Alternative 2 would avoid discretionary land use changes. Alternative 2 would continue to allow agricultural operations on the northern parcels of the Project Site, which would substantially lessen impacts to agricultural resources compared to the Project.

However, while Alternative 2 would reduce overall impacts compared to the Project, certain impacts would be incrementally greater under this Alternative due to an increase in the number of residential units that could be developed under existing General Plan land use designations. In particular, localized increases in impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, transportation, and utilities and service systems could occur as a result of dispersed residential development on a parcel-by-parcel basis. These incremental increases would remain less than or similar to the impacts associated with the Project and would not result in new or more severe significant impacts.

However, Alternative 2 would not provide a master-planned or mixed-use development pattern and, therefore, would not offer integrated recreational amenities or land use arrangements intended to promote recreation and healthy lifestyles consistent with the County's General Plan goals and policies. Overall, Alternative 2 would reduce impacts to agricultural resources, but would not meet a majority of the Project objectives.

With respect to the Project Objectives, Alternative 2 would partially meet objectives related to orderly development and residential land use by allowing development consistent with existing General Plan designations. Alternative 2 would also partially meet objectives related to preservation of agricultural resources by avoiding discretionary land use changes and allowing continued agricultural operations on portions of the Project Site. However, Alternative 2 would not meet objectives related to development of a cohesive, master-planned resort community, including objectives to provide an integrated mix of land uses, centralized recreational amenities, an amenity village, and a coordinated open space and trail network. Development under Alternative 2 would occur incrementally and on a parcel-by-parcel basis, which would not support the creation of a unified master-planned community or integrated recreational facilities.

Furthermore, Alternative 2 would not meet the Project Objective to provide a primary access point aligned with the existing entry to the Carmela residential neighborhood and the adjacent Madison Club. Because development under Alternative 2 would occur independently across multiple parcels and would not include a coordinated circulation framework, the Alternative would not facilitate aligned or shared access points between the Project Site and the Madison Club.

Accordingly, while Alternative 2 would be environmentally superior when compared to the Project due to its overall reduction in environmental impacts, it would only partially meet a limited number of Project Objectives and would not meet several key objectives related to master-planned design, recreational integration, coordinated access, and community connectivity.

TABLE 6.0-15: COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES TO PROJECT					
Environmental Issue Area	Project	Alternative 1 No Project/No Development	Alternative 2 Existing General Plan	Alternative 3 Residential with No Golf Course	Alternative 4 Avenue 53 Realignment
Aesthetics	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Similar (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Similar (Less than Significant)
Agricultural and Forestry Resources	Significant and Unavoidable	Reduced (No impact)	**Reduced (Significant and Unavoidable)**	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)
Air Quality	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)
Biological Resources	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Reduced (No impact)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)
Cultural Resources	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Reduced (No impact)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)
Energy	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)
Geology and Soils	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Reduced (No impact)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)	Similar (Less than Significant with Mitigation)
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)
Hydrology and Water Quality	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Similar (Less than Significant)	Similar (Less than Significant)	Similar (Less than Significant)
Land Use and Planning	Less than Significant	Greater (Less than Significant)	Similar (Less than Significant)	Similar (Significant and Unavoidable)	Similar (Less than Significant)
Noise	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Reduced (No impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)

TABLE 6.0-15: COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES TO PROJECT					
Environmental Issue Area	Project	Alternative 1 No Project/No Development	Alternative 2 Existing General Plan	Alternative 3 Residential with No Golf Course	Alternative 4 Avenue 53 Realignment
Transportation	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)
Water Service and Supply	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)
Wastewater Collection and Treatment	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)
Dry Utilities (Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications)	Less than Significant	Reduced (No Impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)
Solid Waste	Less than Significant	Reduced (No impact)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Greater (Less than Significant)	Reduced (Less than Significant)

7.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) provides a summary discussion of additional considerations required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines that are not addressed in detail within the individual environmental topic sections. Specifically, this section includes: (1) significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the Project is implemented (**Section 7.1**); (2) significant irreversible environmental changes resulting from Project implementation (**Section 7.2**); (3) growth-inducing impacts associated with the Project (**Section 7.3**); and (4) effects determined not to be significant and therefore not discussed in detail elsewhere in the Draft EIR (**Section 7.4**). Collectively, these subsections provide context for the Project's long-term environmental implications, including the commitment of nonrenewable resources, potential secondary impacts, and the extent to which the Project would influence future development patterns.

7.1 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

As required by the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*, this section identifies the significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed Project is implemented. The State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) requires this discussion to:

> *Describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.*[1]

The only significant and unavoidable impact identified in this Draft EIR for the proposed Project is the permanent conversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural uses. The Project Site contains approximately 138 acres of Prime Farmland and 32 acres of Farmland of Local Importance, as identified in the State Important Farmland Map for Riverside County prepared by the California Department of Conservation. Development of the Project would convert these 170 acres of farmland to residential, mixed-use, recreational, and open space uses. While portions of the Project Site are fallow or disturbed and the southern portion is already designated for non-agricultural (residential) use by the Riverside County General Plan, the conversion of 170 acres of important farmland is a significant impact under CEQA.

No feasible mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. While agricultural conservation easements have been considered as a potential mitigation strategy, recent California Court of Appeal decisions have determined that such measures do not avoid or substantially lessen the project-specific impact associated with the on-site conversion of agricultural land. For example, in *King and Gardiner Farms, LLC v. County of Kern et al. (2020) 45 Cal.App.5th 814*, the court found that entering into an agricultural conservation easement does not replace converted farmland or reduce a project's impact on agricultural land because it does not offset the loss of agricultural land. Similarly, *V Lions Farming, LLC v. County of Kern (2024) 100 Cal.App.5th 412* found that ACEs do not ensure "no net loss" and do not avoid or lessen direct agricultural land conversion impacts.

Consistent with adopted Riverside County General Plan policies, the Project's conversion of agricultural land falls within the allowable limits of the current Agriculture Foundation Amendment Cycle; however, this policy consistency does not avoid the permanent loss of important farmland.

1 California Code of Regulations. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines*, Section 15126.2(c).

Accordingly, the Project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact on agricultural resources.

Notwithstanding the significant and unavoidable impact associated with the conversion of agricultural land, the Project is being proposed to implement the objectives of the County of Riverside General Plan and Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan by developing a master-planned residential and recreational community. The Project would provide a mix of housing types, including low-, medium-, and estate residential units, along with a range of amenities such as an Amenity Village, wellness center, golf course, and recreational facilities. In addition, the Project would establish an integrated network of open space and trails and promote an active and healthy community environment. The Project is designed to ensure orderly and compatible development of the site while providing recreational, housing, and community benefits. As such, the Project is considered desirable and warranted despite the identified significant and unavoidable impact.

7.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

The CEQA Guidelines state "[u]ses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely."[1] Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts, such as highway improvement that provides access to a previously inaccessible area, generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with a project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to ensure that such current consumption is justified. For these reasons, EIRs are required to identify any significant irreversible environmental effects of Project implementation that cannot be avoided.

Implementation of the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (Project) would irreversibly commit approximately 174 acres of the vacant and undeveloped Project Site for residential and open space/recreational uses. The irreversible environmental changes of this urbanization include conversion of farmland, incremental degradation of the regional air quality, additional noise created by traffic generated by the Project, incremental demands for public services and utilities, and changes to the visual environment that will not likely be reversed. As detailed in **Section 7.1: Environmental Effects Which Cannot be Avoided**, the only unavoidable significant impact of the Project would be the conversion of farmland to urban uses as there are no feasible mitigation measures that would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Irreversible environmental changes would result from the consumption of nonrenewable resources during construction and operation of the Project. Nonrenewable resources such as sand, gravel, and steel and renewable resources such as lumber would be consumed during Project construction. Energy, fossil fuels, oils, and natural gas would be irreversibly committed during construction. These same resources are used for vehicles and heating/cooling equipment during operations. The continued use of these resources associated with Project operations represents a long-term obligation. The energy consumed in developing and maintaining the site for urban use may be considered a permanent investment.

Construction of the Project would consume limited amounts of certain types of lumber; other raw materials in steel; metals such as copper and lead; aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt such as sand and stone; water; petrochemical construction materials such as plastic; petroleum-based construction materials; and other similar slowly renewable or nonrenewable resources. Additionally, fossil fuels for construction vehicles and equipment would be consumed. In terms of Project operations, the following slowly renewable and nonrenewable resources would be required:

1 California Public Resources Code. Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines*, Section 15126(c).

natural gas and electricity, petroleum-based fuels, fossil fuels, and water. The California Administrative Code regulates the amount of energy consumed by new development for heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting purposes. Nevertheless, the consumption of these resources would represent a long-term commitment of those resources.[2]

The commitment of resources required for the construction and operation of the Project would limit the availability of such resources for future generations or for other uses during the life of the Project. However, continued use of such resources is consistent with the anticipated growth and planned changes on the Project Site and within the general vicinity.

The Project would also result in an increased commitment of certain public services to the proposed land uses, including the provision of police, fire, and emergency medical services, water supply services, wastewater treatment services, dry utilities, and solid waste disposal. However, as indicated in the respective sections of this Draft EIR, impacts associated with these public services would be less than significant.

In addition, the Project would result in a long-term, irreversible change to the nature of the Project Site. The vacant and undeveloped character of the site would be transformed into a residential community. However, as discussed in **Section 5.4: Biological Resources**, the Project Site does not contain habitat suitable for protected species and would not impact a Habitat Conservation Area.

Project implementation will cause an increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) within County standards for the Project when combined with ambient growth in the vicinity. The increased number of vehicle trips will contribute to the degradation of air quality. However, the Project air quality analysis indicates that impacts to air quality would be less than significant.

A secondary impact that results from increased traffic is an increase in ambient noise levels. Currently, the area surrounding the Project is developed with relatively medium ambient noise levels related to adjacent residential development surrounding the area. Once the Project constructs roadway improvements and introduces Project traffic on those roads, the noise levels will increase, including along roadway segments next to existing sensitive receptors. However, this increase would not significantly impact sensitive receptors and would be similar to existing development.

The contribution of the Project to State, national, and global greenhouse gases (GHG) emission inventories and the resultant effect on global climate change is evaluated on a cumulative basis. Secondary impacts result from fuel consumption in the form of air pollution, which degrades air quality in general and contributes to the formation of GHGs that cumulatively affect global warming. Human activities associated with industrial/manufacturing, utilities, transportation, residential, and

2 California Administrative Code, Title 24.

agricultural sectors contribute to GHG emissions. While the Project would generate GHG emissions, its contribution was found not to be cumulatively considerable.

7.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

7.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.2(e) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, as amended, requires an EIR to include a discussion of whether and how a project could directly or indirectly foster economic growth, population growth, or the construction of additional housing in the surrounding environment and any resulting impacts on the environment. This discussion should address projects that would remove obstacles to population growth and consider any characteristics of a project which may encourage or facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. Section 15126.5(e) of the CEQA Guidelines emphasizes that growth in an area should not be considered beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance. This section discusses the potential for the proposed Project to induce additional growth in accordance with this section of the CEQA Guidelines.

In general terms, a project may foster spatial, economic, or population growth in a geographic area if it results in the following:[1]

- Remove an impediment to growth (e.g., the establishment of an essential public service or the provision of new access to an area);
- Create economic expansion or growth (e.g., construction of additional housing, changes in revenue base, employment expansion, etc.);
- Involve a precedent-setting action (e.g., an innovation, a change in zoning or general plan designation); or
- Develop or encroach into an isolated or adjacent undeveloped or open space area.

7.3.2 REMOVE AN IMPEDIMENT OF GROWTH

Growth in an area may occur when physical barriers (such as lack of infrastructure or access) or planning barriers (such as restrictive zoning or land use designations) are removed. Physical impediments generally include the absence of adequate roadways, water supply, wastewater conveyance, or other essential public services. Planning impediments may include General Plan or zoning designations that do not permit development or limit the types or intensities of land uses that may occur.

As described in **Section 3.0: Project Description,** the proposed Project would include a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change and approval of the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan. The General Plan land use changes for the Project Site would change from Light Agriculture, One-Family

1 California Public Resources Code. Title 14. Division 6. "Chapter 3." *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines*, Section 15126(e).

Dwellings, Residential Agriculture, and Open Area Combining Zone – Residential Developments, to Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Community Development: Mixed Use Area, and Open-Space Recreation.

The Project Site would be developed similar in terms of development character to the surrounding area, which contains residential uses and supporting infrastructure. Construction of the Project would require the modification of off-site infrastructure and the development of on-site infrastructure in order to support the proposed land uses.

Because the Project Site is already served by municipal services, including water and wastewater service supplied by the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), electrical service by the Imperial Irrigation District (IID), and existing roadways along Monroe Street, 52nd Avenue, Jackson Street, and Avenue 54 – development of the Project would not require major expansion or extension of infrastructure that would remove an obstacle to growth in surrounding areas. Avenue 53 would be constructed to its required 60-foot Local Street section along the Project frontage and extended east to connect to Arabia Street and Monroe Street would be widened and improved to meet applicable Riverside County roadway standards. These localized improvements to existing streets would not remove an impediment to growth that would induce additional growth. Other improvements constructed as part of the proposed Project would be limited to on-site facilities required to serve the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan and would not induce growth beyond that associated with the Project.

In addition, the Project includes the proposed vacation of a portion of Avenue 53. The vacation of Avenue 53 would not remove an impediment to growth in the surrounding area, as the roadway does not currently function as a primary access route for regional circulation and alternative access would continue to be provided via Monroe Street and other surrounding roadways. The modification of Avenue 53 is intended to accommodate the internal circulation and design of the Project and would not expand access to previously inaccessible areas or facilitate new off-site development. Therefore, the proposed vacation of Avenue 53 would not induce additional growth or remove a constraint to growth in the surrounding area.

For these reasons, the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan would not remove a physical or planning impediment to growth or facilitate additional development beyond what is already allowed under the County's long-range planning framework.

7.3.3 ECONOMIC GROWTH

The second criterion for considering potential for a project to induce growth is economic considerations. The proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan would regulate the development of up to 85 single-family residential units, a private 9-hole golf course, and associated improvements including open space, recreational facilities, and multimodal transportation facilities within the

approximately 174-acre Project Site within the unincorporated community of La Quinta and the Eastern Coachella Valley Area of western Riverside County.

Unincorporated areas of Riverside County, including the Project Site, are estimated to have a population of approximately 386,000 residents as of 2019, and is projected to increase to approximately 454,717 residents in 2050.[2] The Project would represent 0.41% of this expected population growth between 2025 and 2050 in unincorporated Riverside County. It is expected that the labor force from 2019 to 2050 would increase by approximately 61,700 employees.[3]

In the short term, the Project would generate temporary construction employment opportunities. It is expected that the majority of the temporary construction jobs that would be created by implementation of the proposed Ranch at Madison Specific Plan would be filled by local construction workers. For this reason, the temporary construction jobs created by the proposed Project are not likely to result in direct population growth in the County. The employment growth associated with the Project would be consistent with planned employment growth in the County and would be consistent with SCAG employment projections.

In addition to short-term construction employment, the Project would introduce long-term population and employment associated with residential occupancy and operation of on-site amenities. The Project would include up to 85 residential units, which, based on an average household size of 3.06 persons,[4] would result in an estimated increase of approximately 261 residents. Compared to Riverside County's projected population increase from approximately 2,495,640 in 2025 to 2,992,000 by 2050 (an increase of approximately 496,000 persons), the Project's contribution would represent a negligible fraction of anticipated regional growth.

Operation of the proposed golf course, wellness center, and associated amenities would also generate approximately 151 employees. These positions would be typical of similar residential and recreational developments and are anticipated to be filled by the existing local labor force. As such, the Project would not induce substantial population growth beyond what is already planned for the region.

Therefore, while the Project would contribute incrementally to population and employment growth, such growth would be consistent with adopted regional and local planning projections and would not result in substantial growth-inducing impacts.

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2 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). "Demographics and Growth Forecast." *Final Connect SoCal 2024*. Accessed December 2025. https://scag.ca.gov/connect-socal.

3 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). "Demographics and Growth Forecast." *Final Connect SoCal 2024*.

4 State of California, Department of Finance. "E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2020-2025." 2025. Accessed January 2026. https://dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/e-5-population-and-housing-estimates-for-cities-counties-and-the-state-2020-2025/.

7.3.4 PRECEDENT-SETTING ACTION

A project may also induce additional growth, if it would involve the approval of a precedent-setting action, such as a general plan amendment or zone change that could have implications for other properties, or that could make it easier for other properties to develop.

The proposed Project would involve the adoption of a Specific Plan and related General Plan Amendment and Zone Change approval applicable only to the approximately 174-acre Project Site within Vista Santa Rosa community in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area of unincorporated Riverside County. Existing land use designations of the Project Site are Rural Community: Low Density Residential (RC:LDR) and Agriculture (AG). While the AG designation is intended to preserve agricultural lands, the RC: LDR designation allows for low-density residential development and non-agricultural uses. While the Project would result in the conversion of designated farmland to non-agricultural uses, the Project Site is already planned, in part, for nonagricultural development under existing General Plan designations.

The Project would implement policies of the County General Plan and the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan by establishing the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan, which provides a planned residential community with open space and recreational amenities and regulates future development through site-specific Planning Areas, development standards, and design guidelines. As discussed in **Section 5.2: Agriculture and Forestry Resources,** a portion of the Project is designated for non-agricultural uses. The Project would include a General Plan Amendment to redesignate the site from RC:LDR and AG to Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Community Development: Mixed Use Area, and Open Space Recreation. These regulatory tools would apply specifically to the Project Site and would formalize an evolution of the adopted land use policy, rather than the introduction of an unplanned or isolated development that would be applied elsewhere in the County.

With adoption of the General Plan Amendment and associated entitlements, the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan would become the zoning for the Project Site and would ensure the Project is carried out in a manner consistent with the County's General Plan and regulatory framework. Nonetheless, the Project would be consistent with planned population growth in the County and with SCAG population projections. Further, the Project would not establish new land use entitlements that could be readily replicated on surrounding uses, nor would it reduce development constraints or approval requirements for other sites outside of the Project Site.

As discussed in **Section 5.2: Agriculture and Forestry Resources**, agricultural land conversion within Riverside County is regulated through the General Plan's Agriculture Foundation Amendment cycle, which permits conversion of up to seven percent of designated agricultural land within the Eastern and Western Coachella Valley Area Plans during each 2.5-year cycle. The Project's proposed conversion would occur within this established regulatory framework and would not exceed the allowable conversion threshold. Based on current County data, cumulative approved and pending

conversions, including the Project, remain substantially below the seven-percent limit. Accordingly, the Project would not establish a new precedent for agricultural land conversion beyond what is already anticipated and regulated under the General Plan.

For these reasons, approval of the Project would not represent precedent setting actions that would induce additional growth beyond that already anticipated and planned for under the County's General Plan and Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan.

7.3.5 DEVELOP OR ENCROACH INTO UNDEVELOPED OR OPEN SPACE AREAS

The Project Site is located in the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa, which contains residential uses and is located west and south of similar residential/golf course communities in the Cities of La Quinta and Indio. The proposed uses within the Project Site would be consistent and compatible with existing and planned land uses surrounding the Project Site, including existing residential golf-course community to the west, and residential and open space uses to the north, and agricultural uses along with estate residential lots, and special event center type uses to the south and east. Therefore, development of the Project would create a cohesive community of residential uses that are well-connected with the surrounding community.

Furthermore, as discussed in **Section 5.4: Biological Resources,** the Project Site is not located within any regional wildlife corridors/linkages or CVMSHCP conservation areas. The Project Site is isolated from regional wildlife corridors and linkages, and there are no riparian corridors, creeks, or useful patches of stepping-stone habitat (natural areas) within or connecting the Project Site to the CVMSHCP conservation areas. Therefore, the Project would not involve the development within an area designated as open space.

7.3.6 CONCLUSION

The Project would not result in the removal of an impediment to growth or involve the approval of precedent setting actions that could result in additional growth in the area the Project Site is located in. In addition, the proposed Project would neither cause growth (i.e., new employment) nor accelerate development in an undeveloped area that exceeds projected/planned levels for the year of Project buildout as the proposed Project would be consistent with the adopted employment, housing, and population policies of the SCAG 2024 RTP/SCS, and the County General Plan and Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. The Project would develop an existing undeveloped property with uses consistent with applicable County plans and would not involve the development of open space areas. For these reasons, the potential for the Project to induce additional growth is considered low and the potential for additional environmental impacts to result from additional growth that could be induced by the Project is considered less than significant.

7.4 EFFECTS NOT FOUND TO BE SIGNIFICANT

7.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The County of Riverside (County), as Lead Agency for the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (Project), has prepared this Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. CEQA Guidelines Section 15128 requires a brief discussion of any potential environmental effects that were found not to be significant during preliminary review of a project pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 and, for this reason, are not analyzed in detail in the Draft EIR.

The Project was evaluated using the 2026 State CEQA Guidelines, including the significance criteria in Appendix G, which provides the State's current framework for identifying potential environmental effects.

Based on the technical studies, regulatory review, and environmental setting presented in this Draft EIR, certain topic areas were determined to have no impact or no potential for significant impacts under CEQA. As allowed under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15063 and 15143, detailed analysis of these topics is not required.

The following discussion addresses Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Wildfire, which were evaluated and determined not to result in significant environmental effects.

7.4.2 MINERAL RESOURCES

a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?

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

No Impact.

The County's General Plan includes a Land Use designation for Open Space–Mineral Resource (OS-MIN) that is intended to accommodate mineral extraction and processing uses where significant resources are present. The County's intent in adopting such designations is to recognize areas where mineral resources exist and could be extracted in a manner compatible with other land uses and environmental protections. The Project Site's land use designations are Agriculture and Low Density Residential. Further, there are no active oil or gas wells within or immediately adjacent to the Project

Site.[1] Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of a state or locally important mineral resource, resulting in no impacts.

7.4.3 POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

Less than Significant Impact.

As shown in **Figure 3.0-4**: **Existing General Plan Land Use** in **Section 3.0: Project Description** of this Draft EIR, the Project Site consists of six parcels. Based on County Assessor data,[2] the three RC:LDR parcels (APNs 780-020-001, -002, and -003) total approximately 96.84 acres, which would allow development of approximately 96 to 192 dwelling units. The three AG-designated parcels (APNs 780-010-012, -013, and -014), which are 38.2, 19.4, and 19.41 acres, respectively, could each accommodate one dwelling unit. In total, the Project Site could accommodate up to 195 dwelling units under existing General Plan designations. In contrast, the Project would develop a maximum of 85 dwelling units, well below the site's allowable capacity. As of 2025, it is estimated that the County has a population of approximately 2,495,640 people and has 3.06 people per household.[3] By 2050, the County is expected to have a population of 2,992,000 people.[4] With 85 dwelling units and approximately 3.06 people per household, the Project is anticipated to increase the population of the County by 261 people. In addition, the Project would generate employment associated with construction activities and long-term operation of on-site amenities (e.g., wellness center, golf course, food and beverage services, and recreational facilities). As described in **Section 3.0: Project Description**, the Project is anticipated to include approximately 151 employees during the operational phase of the Project. These positions would be typical of similar residential and recreational developments and are anticipated to be filled by the existing local labor force.

The Project also includes roadway improvements to Monroe Street, Arabia Street, and Avenue 53 to provide site access and meet current County roadway and safety standards. These improvements consist of localized widening and the addition of turn lanes, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and the extension of Arabia Street from its current terminus south to Avenue 53. While these improvements would enhance circulation and safety in the immediate Project area by providing access to the

1 Department of Conservation. "CalGEM GIS Powered by WellSTAR." GIS database. 2026. Accessed January 2026. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/doggr/wellfinder/.

2 County of Riverside. Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder. "RivCoView." 2025. Accessed January 2026. https://rivcoview.rivcoacr.org/#/Property-Search.

3 State of California, Department of Finance. "E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2020-2025." 2025. Accessed January 2026. https://dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/e-5-population-and-housing-estimates-for-cities-counties-and-the-state-2020-2025/.

4 Southern California Association of Governments. *Connect SoCal – Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report*. 2024. Accessed January 2026. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/23-2987-tr-demographics-growth-forecast-final-040424.pdf

Project Site and neighboring properties, these local street improvements would not increase regional roadway capacity or provide new access to undeveloped areas outside the Project. Accordingly, these transportation improvements would not induce growth beyond that already anticipated under adopted land use plans.

Furthermore, access to the Project's amenities would be limited to residents and members of the adjacent Madison Club and would not serve the general public. As such, the Project would not induce additional population growth beyond that associated with planned residential development and on-site employment.

Therefore, the Project would not result in substantial unplanned population growth, including growth associated with on-site employment or ancillary uses. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project Site does not contain any existing residences or occupied structures. Although graded building pads are present, no housing or residents would be displaced by Project implementation. Accordingly, the Project would not displace people or housing or require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and impacts would be less than significant.

7.4.4 PUBLIC SERVICES

a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Less than Significant Impact.

7.4.4.1 Fire Protection

Fire protection services to the Project Site are provided by the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). Fire stations serving the unincorporated portion of the Coachella Valley that the Project Site is located in include:

- Station 86, 46-990 Jackson Street, Indio – 4.3 minute response time to Project Site
- Station 39, 86-911 Avenue 58, Thermal – 8.4 minute response time to Project Site
- Station 81, 37-955 Washington St., Palm Desert – 13.4 minute response time to Project Site
- Station 40, 91-350 Avenue 66, Mecca – 14.4 minute response time to Project Site

Construction

Construction activities would generate temporary increases in traffic from construction workers, equipment deliveries, and hauling of materials, and could require temporary lane closures for utility installation and site access improvements. These activities could temporarily affect emergency vehicle access and response times in the vicinity of the Project Site. However, construction would be subject to standard County requirements, including traffic control plans, flagging operations, and approved haul routes to maintain emergency access at all times. Construction-related disruptions would be temporary and would not create long-term hazardous conditions. Therefore, adequate emergency access would be maintained during construction, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Operation of the Project would increase demand for fire protection and emergency medical services due to the addition of new residents, on-site employees and activity associated with Project uses and amenities. However, the Project would develop 85 residential units, which is substantially less than the up to 195 dwelling units allowed under the site's existing General Plan designations, generating a proportionately lower demand for fire protection services than the amount of development allowed by the current General Plan.

As described in **Section 3.0: Project Description**, the Project is anticipated to include approximately 151 employees associated with operation of the wellness center, golf course, food and beverage services and recreational amenities. These positions would be typical of similar residential and recreational developments and are anticipated to be filled by the existing local labor force. In addition, access to Project amenities would be limited to residents and members of the adjacent Madison Club, and would not be available to the general public. These users would represent a limited and controlled service population typical of private residential communities and would not result in substantial increases in emergency service demand beyond that accounted for through standard planning assumptions.

All development in Riverside County is required to comply with adopted fire, building, and life-safety standards. The Project would be required to comply with the County Fire Code, including the California Building Code (Title 24, Part 2) and the California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9), as adopted and amended by the County. Project design would be reviewed and approved by RCFD to ensure that emergency access, water supply, fire flow, and hydrant spacing meet applicable standards. All water mains and fire hydrants would be constructed in accordance with County Ordinances No. 460 and No. 787, subject to RCFD approval.

In addition, the Project would be required to pay applicable Development Impact Fees (DIFs) pursuant to County Ordinance No. 659, which funds the acquisition and expansion of fire stations, equipment, apparatus, and other capital facilities needed to serve new development. These fees

ensure that new development contributes its fair and proportionate share toward maintaining adequate fire protection service levels as growth occurs.

A Fiscal Impact Analysis[5] prepared for the Project determined that the Project would generate a substantial net fiscal surplus to the County's Fire Fund as shown in **Table 7.4-1: Ranch at Madison Fiscal Impact** below. Fiscal impacts are presented for Years 20, 25, and 30 to reflect long-term, stabilized conditions following Project buildout. These time horizons are commonly used in fiscal impact analyses to evaluate recurring revenues and service costs once development is fully occupied and operating, rather than during early construction or transition periods. Fire service revenues generated by the Project are projected to exceed fire service costs by approximately $360,893 per year, demonstrating that the Project would more than offset its demand for fire protection services. Fire protection services can be provided from the existing fire stations serving the area and the construction of new fire stations or expansion of existing facilities is not required to maintain adequate service levels.

TABLE 7.4-1: RANCH AT MADISON FISCAL IMPACT

Fund	Fiscal Category	Buildout Year 20	Buildout Year 25	Buildout Year 30
General Fund (includes Police Fund)	Recurring Revenue	$1,935,582	$1,764,634	$1,711,527
	Recurring Costs	$116,243	$116,243	$116,243
	Surplus/(Deficit)	*$1,819,339*	*$1,648,391*	*$1,595,284*
Fire Fund	Recurring Revenue	$431,298	$418,697	$406,465
	Recurring Costs	$70,405	$70,405	$70,405
	Surplus/(Deficit)	*$360,893*	*$348,292*	*$336,059*
Library Fund	Recurring Revenue	$105,521	$102,438	$99,446
	Recurring Costs	$5,840	$5,840	$5,840
	Surplus/(Deficit)	*$99,681*	*$96,598*	*$93,606*
Transportation Fund	Recurring Revenue	$15,422	$15,422	$15,422
	Recurring Costs	$7,946	$7,946	$7,946
	Surplus/(Deficit)	*$7,476*	*$7,476*	*$7,476*
Net Fiscal Impact of the Project	Recurring Revenue	$2,487,823	$2,417,434	$2,349,102
	Recurring Costs	$200,434	$200,434	$200,434
	Surplus/(Deficit)	*$2,287,388*	*$2,217,000*	*$2,148,668*

Source: Development, Planning & Financing Group (DPFG). *Fiscal Impact Analysis for the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan*. 2025. See **Appendix Z**.

5 Development Planning & Financing Group. *Fiscal Impact Analysis for the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan*. 2025. See **Appendix Z**.

With compliance with applicable fire codes, infrastructure requirements, and payment of required fees, and given the Project's net positive fiscal contribution to fire protection services, the Project would not increase response times, degrade fire protection facilities, or impair the RCFD ability to serve the Project Site or surrounding area. Therefore, fire protection impacts would be less than significant.

7.4.4.2 Police Protection

Police protection services to the Project Site are provided by the Riverside County Sheriff's Department (RCSD). The closest RCSD station to the Project Site, Station 88, is approximately four miles southeast.[6]

Construction

Construction activities would generate temporary increases in traffic from construction workers, equipment deliveries, and hauling of materials, and could require temporary lane closures for utility installation and site access improvements. These activities could temporarily affect emergency vehicle access and response times in the vicinity of the Project Site. However, construction would be subject to standard County requirements, including traffic control plans, flagging operations, and approved haul routes to maintain emergency access at all times. Construction-related disruptions would be temporary and would not create long-term hazardous conditions. Therefore, adequate emergency access would be maintained during construction, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Operation of the Project would increase demand for law enforcement services due to the addition of new residents, on-site employees, and activity within the Project Site. However, the Project would develop 85 residential units, which is substantially less than the up to 195 dwelling units allowed under the existing General Plan designations for the site, generating a proportionately lower demand for police protection services than the amount of development allowed by the current General Plan.

As discussed above, the Project would include on-site employees and limited access for members of the adjacent Madison Club; however, these uses would be private and controlled, and would not introduce substantial new service population beyond that typical of residential development.

All development in the County is subject to review and approval by the RCSD to ensure adequate public safety access, visibility, circulation, and compliance with applicable security and safety standards. Project design features, including street layout, lighting, and access points, would be reviewed to ensure they do not impede law enforcement response or patrol activities.

6 Riverside County Sheriff's Department. "Thermal Station." 2026. Accessed January 2026. https://www.riversidesheriff.org/616/Thermal-Station.

In addition, the Project would be required to pay applicable Development Impact Fees pursuant to County Ordinance No. 659, which funds public safety facilities, equipment, and other capital improvements needed to serve new development. These fees ensure that new development contributes its fair and proportionate share toward maintaining adequate law enforcement service levels as growth occurs.

As shown in **Table 7.4-1** above, the Fiscal Impact Analysis prepared for the Project determined that the Project would generate sufficient revenues to fully offset its demand for sheriff services. Police service costs associated with the Project were calculated using the County's service standard of one deputy per 1,000 residents, and Project-generated revenues were found to exceed these costs, demonstrating that no expansion of sheriff facilities or staffing would be required to serve the Project.

With compliance with applicable County requirements, payment of required fees, and the Project's net positive fiscal contribution to law enforcement services, the Project would not increase response times, require the construction of new or expanded police facilities, or impair the RCSD's ability to provide adequate service to the Project Site or surrounding area. Therefore, impacts related to police protection would be less than significant.

7.4.4.3 Schools

The Project Site is located within the Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD), a public school district, and operates multiple schools across grade levels, including several elementary, middle, and high schools serving the Project vicinity.

Table 7.4-2: Estimated Student Generation from the Project below details CVUSD's student generation rates for elementary, middle, and high schools based on the number of dwelling units. The Project proposes 85 dwelling units, resulting in approximately 49 students comprised of 26 elementary school students, eight middle school students and 15 high school students.

TABLE 7.4-2: ESTIMATED STUDENT GENERATION FROM THE PROJECT

School Level	Student Generation Rate (students per dwelling unit)	Project Dwelling Units	Students Generated
Elementary School	0.2942	85	26
Middle School	0.0849	85	8
High School	0.1742	85	15
Total K–12	**—**	**85**	**49 students**

Source: Coachella Valley Unified School District. *Fee Justification Study*. 2022. Accessed January 2026. https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1667510285/cvusdus/yqk5hsau0ixfqot1kezu/CVUSDFeeJustReportDraft11-2-2022Final.pdf.

All residential development within CVUSD is subject to the State's statutory school mitigation fee requirements under Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) and related statutes. Prior to issuance of building permits,

the Project would be required to pay applicable school impact fees to CVUSD, which are used to fund expansion of school facilities, acquisition of land, and related capital improvements necessary to serve students generated by new housing. Payment of these fees ensures that the Project contributes its fair share toward the costs of needed educational facilities, in accordance with state law and District policy.

Given the Project's size, population estimate, and projected student generation, and because the Project would be required to pay applicable statutory school fees under SB 50, it would not result in significant unmet demand for school facilities. The Project's incremental addition of students is anticipated to be accommodated through existing capacity and fee-funded improvements, and impacts related to school facilities would be less than significant.

7.4.4.4 Parks

The Project is estimated to increase the County's population by 261 people. On-site employees and Madison Club members would utilize private on-site recreational amenities and would not increase demand for public park facilities. Under County Ordinance No. 460, a ratio of five acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents is the park planning standard. Under this standard, the Project would be required to have 1.3 acres of parkland. The Project provides approximately 115.6 acres designated Open Space–Recreation within Planning Areas 8 through 13. These areas include landscaped open areas, trails, and recreational green spaces that function as park-like amenities for residents. Because the Project's 115.6 acres of parkland greatly exceed the 1.3 acres of parkland needed to serve the Project's population under the County's standard, the Project would not create a deficiency in parkland or require expansion of off-site public parks, resulting in less than significant impacts.

7.4.4.5 Other Public Facilities

The Project Site is served by the Riverside County Library System (RCLS), which operates multiple public library branches throughout Riverside County. The closest library branch to the Ranch at Madison Project Site is the Indio Public Library, located in the City of Indio, providing books, digital resources, programs, and community services for residents.

The Project would develop up to 85 dwelling units, resulting in an estimated increase of approximately 261 residents, in addition to on-site employees associated with Project operations. Because the Project would introduce new households and residents into the community, it could incrementally increase demand for library services at the Indio Public Library and nearby RCLS branches. However, the scale of projected population growth is modest relative to the overall service population of the County's library system. Use of Project amenities by members of the adjacent Madison Club would be limited and would not substantially increase demand for public library services.

As shown in **Table 7.4-1** above, the Fiscal Impact Analysis prepared for the Project evaluated the effect of the Project on County library services and determined that the Project would generate

substantially more revenue for the County's Library Fund than the cost of providing library services. At buildout, Project-generated library revenues are projected to exceed library service costs by approximately $99,681 per year, demonstrating that existing library facilities and services would be adequately funded to serve Project residents without the need for new or expanded facilities.

In addition, the Project would be required to pay applicable Development Impact Fees pursuant to County Ordinance No. 659, which funds public facilities, including libraries, necessary to serve new development. These fees ensure that the Project contributes its fair and proportionate share toward the provision and maintenance of library facilities.

With the Project's net positive fiscal contribution to library services and compliance with applicable County fee requirements, the Project would not require the construction or expansion of library facilities or degrade existing service levels. Therefore, impacts related to libraries would be less than significant.

7.4.4.6 Recreation

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

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project would develop up to 85 dwelling units, which is anticipated to add approximately 261 residents, in addition to on-site employees associated with Project operations and limited use of on-site amenities by members of the adjacent Madison Club. While the addition of new residents would incrementally increase demand for parks and recreational facilities, the Project is designed as a self-contained master-planned community with extensive on-site parkland and recreational amenities.

On-site employees and Madison Club members would utilize private on-site recreational amenities and would not substantially increase demand for off-site public parks or recreational facilities.

The Specific Plan provides approximately 115.6 acres of designated Open Space–Recreation within the Project Site, including landscaped green spaces, walking and multi-use trails, and other park-like areas integrated throughout the residential neighborhoods. These on-site recreational areas would serve the majority of the recreational needs of Project residents, thereby reducing reliance on off-site neighborhood and regional parks.

Because the Project includes substantial on-site parkland and recreational facilities, Project residents would not be expected to rely heavily on existing public parks in the surrounding area. In addition, the Project would be subject to Riverside County's Quimby Act requirements under Ordinance No. 460, which require parkland dedication and/or payment of in-lieu fees to fund public park facilities as needed to serve new development.

With the provision of on-site parkland and compliance with applicable parkland dedication and fee requirements, the Project would not increase use of existing neighborhood or regional parks in a manner that would cause or accelerate substantial physical deterioration of those facilities. Therefore, impacts related to recreational facilities would be less than significant.

a. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Less than Significant Impact.

The Project includes the development of on-site recreational facilities as part of a master-planned residential community. These facilities include park-like open space areas, trails, and other recreational amenities integrated into the Project Site. Construction of these facilities would occur within the boundaries of the Project Site and would be part of the overall Project development that is evaluated in this Draft EIR.

The physical effects associated with construction and operation of the Project's recreational facilities—such as grading, vegetation removal, noise, traffic, and utility demand—are not unique to the recreational components but are part of the overall Project development. These effects are addressed and evaluated under the applicable environmental issue areas in this Draft EIR, including biological resources, air quality, noise, hydrology and water quality, cultural resources, and other relevant sections.

The recreational facilities are designed to serve Project residents, on-site employees, and members of the adjacent Madison Club, and are consistent with the Project's land use designations and Specific Plan. These facilities are private and would not be available to the general public. They do not require expansion of off-site recreational facilities or development in areas outside the Project Site.

Because the recreational facilities are included as part of the Project and their environmental effects are fully evaluated in this Draft EIR, they would not result in additional adverse physical environmental effects beyond those already analyzed. Therefore, impacts related to recreational facilities would be less than significant.

7.4.5 WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact.

The Project Site is not within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ).[7] No impacts would occur.

b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No Impact.

The Project Site is not within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). No impacts would occur.

c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No Impact.

The Project Site is not within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). No impacts would occur.

d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No Impact.

The Project Site is not within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). No impacts would occur.

7 CalFire. "Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer." 2026. Accessed January 2026. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/5065c998b4b0462f9ec3c6c226c610a9.

8.0 ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) was prepared by the County of Riverside (County) with the assistance of Meridian Consultants. Report preparers and consultants are identified as follows, along with agencies and individuals that provided information used to prepare this Draft EIR.

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