Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Project Title & No. Weyrick N-SUB2024-00077 Tract 3193 / ED25-0111

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The proposed project could have a "Potentially Significant Impact" for environmental factors checked below. Please refer to the attached pages for discussion on mitigation measures or project revisions to either reduce these impacts to less than significant levels or require further study.

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

DETERMINATION:

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the Environmental Coordinator finds that:

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

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

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

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

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

David Moran		8/25/2025
Prepared by (Print)	Signature	Date
Eric Tolle		11/18/2025
Reviewed by (Print)	Signature	Date

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Project Environmental Analysis

The County's environmental review process incorporates all of the requirements for completing the Initial Study as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines. The Initial Study includes staff's on-site inspection of the project site and surroundings and a detailed review of the information in the file for the project. In addition, available background information is reviewed for each project. Relevant information regarding soil types and characteristics, geologic information, significant vegetation and/or wildlife resources, water availability, wastewater disposal services, existing land uses and surrounding land use categories and other information relevant to the environmental review process are evaluated for each project. Exhibit A includes the references used, as well as the agencies or groups that were contacted as a part of the Initial Study. The County Planning Department uses the checklist to summarize the results of the research accomplished during the initial environmental review of the project.

Persons, agencies or organizations interested in obtaining more information regarding the environmental review process for a project should contact the County of San Luis Obispo Planning Department, 976 Osos Street, Rm. 200, San Luis Obispo, CA, 93408-2040 or call (805) 781-5600.

A. Project

DESCRIPTION: A request by **Colin Weyrick** for a Vesting Tentative Tract Map to subdivide a 15.75-acre parcel into six (6) residential lots. The subdivision will be executed in one phase. Project improvements will include a new paved 40-foot-wide access and utility easement serving lots 3 through 6 as well as improvements to an existing 14-foot-wide private access and utility easement shared by lots 1 and 2 to meet CalFire standards. The subdivision also includes new drainage conveyance systems and utility connections. Lastly, the project includes a request to waive the requirement for curbs gutters and sidewalks along all street frontages. The project will result in an area of disturbance of 1.4 acres including 2,000 cubic yards (cy) of cut and 2,000 cy of fill. The project is located at 320 Championship Lane within the unincorporated community of Templeton, approximately 0.2 miles west of Theater Drive and 0.2 miles south of N. Main Street. The project is within the Residential Suburban land use category and is within the Salinas River Sub-area of the North County Planning Area. The project site is within the service area of the Templeton Community Services District.

The vesting tentative tract map (Figure 4) shows four of the six residential lots (Lots 3, 4, 5 and 6) fronting a private cul-de-sac (Driveway A) extending north and west from Championship Lane near the center of the project site. Building envelopes are shown for Lots 5 and 6 that have been located to ensure new development maintains a minimum 50 foot setback from the top of bank of the steep, oak covered slopes of an ephemeral drainage located in the southwest portion of the site. Lots 1 and 2 will take access from an existing 14 foot wide access and utility easement extending north from Championship Lane along the east property line.

The project location is shown in Figure 1; an aerial view of existing conditions is provided in Figure 2.

Standards for Determining Parcel Size. As described in LUO Section 22.22.070, the minimum parcel size in the Residential Suburban land use category is determined by the average slope of the areas under each parcel, and the type of water supply and wastewater disposal to be provided. Based on these standards, the minimum parcel size for newly created parcels on the project site is one acre as shown in Table 1, lot sizes will range from 1.3 net acres to about 4.62 acres consistent with these standards.

Table 1 – Lot Sizes

Lot	Parcel Sizes	
	Gross Area (acres)	**Net Area** (acres)
Lot 1	2.00	1.31
Lot 2	2.01	1.75
Lot 3	2.03	2.00
Lot 4	2.01	1.44
Lot 5	3.08	2.59
Lot 6	4.62	4.57
Total:	15.75	13.66

Utilities. The vesting tentative tract map shows two new water lines extending to serve each lot from the existing water main within the Championship Lane right-of-way. Wastewater disposal will be provided by the Templeton Community Services District (TCSD).

Waiver for the Installation of Curbs, Gutters and Sidewalk

The project includes a request for a waiver for the installation of curbs, gutters and sidewalks along the project's street frontages. Under section LUO 22.54.030 D.3., the required frontage improvements may be waived by joint decision of the Director and County Engineer where they determine, based upon the land use designations of the Land Use Element, existing land uses in the site vicinity, and existing and projected needs for drainage and traffic control, that such improvements would be incompatible with the ultimate development of the area.

Ordinance Modifications. None are requested.

Background and Baseline Conditions

The project site consists of a vacant, rectangular-shaped parcel of 15.75 acres located west of Theater Lane and south of Main Street within the unincorporated community of Templeton (Figure 2). Vehicular access is provided by Championship Lane which extends west of Theater Lane where it terminates in a cul-de-sac within a Rural Residential neighborhood. Championship Lane becomes a private roadway about 720 feet west of Theater Lane and is maintained by the property owners.

The parent parcel was created by Parcel Map CO 14-0057 (PM 79-65) recorded in April 2017 which resulted in three parcels: the 15.75 acre project site, a contiguous 6.97 acre parcel to the east that has been developed with a lumber yard, and a third noncontiguous parcel of 3.26 acres located to the east between the Highway 101 right-of-way and North Main Street. The recorded parcel map shows a number of easements affecting the project site and contiguous parcels that are also reflected in the notes on the vesting tentative map. These include the following:

- An offer of dedication for road purposes along Championship Lane (Document #2008-001622 & 2008-041089);
- A reciprocal access easement (Document #2008-041089);
- A grant of easement to Southern California Gas Company for pipeline purposes (Document #2009-014887);
- An easement for access and utilities (Document #2008-042834) along the eastern boundary of the

project site that has been developed with an all-weather surface and contains water and sewer mains and includes a 20-foot-wide TCSD facilities easement; and

- A 50-foot-wide offer of dedication for underground communication facilities (Document #2016-046045).

In 2024, the Board of Supervisors approved a General Plan Amendment (GPA) LRP2023-00003, changing the land use designation of the project site from Residential Rural to Residential Suburban. The GPA also included revisions to the Templeton Community Standards (Land Use Ordinance Section 22.104.090) to reflect the new land use category and to establish planning area standards that require discretionary review for future development. The project site is not subject to any Combining Designations.

The project site is within the service area of the Templeton Community Services District (TCSD) which is authorized to provide water, wastewater, fire protection, solid waste collection, and parks and recreation services. Existing service mains for water and sewer are located in Championship Lane and within the 14 foot wide access and utility easement located along the east property line. There are no structures or frontage improvements. The project site is currently used for livestock grazing; historic aerial photography indicates no crop production on the project site since at least 1994. The southeast corner of the project site has been improved with an all-weather area used for the storage of truck trailers.

Topography of the site consists of gently to moderately sloping terrain covered with annual non-native grasses and dense stands of oak trees associated with an ephemeral drainage that enters the site from the west and exits through a culvert under Championship Lane.

Surrounding land uses include single family residences to the west and southwest on lots ranging in size from 2 to 5 acres. The adjacent property to the east is within the Commercial Service land use category and has been developed with a lumber yard. Land to the north is used for the cultivation of wine grapes, and to the northeast is a Caltrans maintenance yard.

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER(S):
064-481-005

Latitude: 35º 33' 53.2" N **Longitude:** 120.º 42'' 28.72"W **SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #** 1

B. Existing Setting

Plan Area: North County **Sub:** Salinas River **Comm:** Templeton

Land Use Category: Residential Suburban

Combining Designation: Not applicable Camp Roberts Influence Area

Parcel Size: 15.75 acres

Topography: Gently rolling to steeply sloping

Vegetation: Grasses Oak woodland

Existing Uses: Undeveloped

Surrounding Land Use Categories and Uses:

North: Agriculture; agricultural uses

East: Commercial Service; heavy commercial/light industrial

South: Residential Rural; residential

West: Residential Rural; residential

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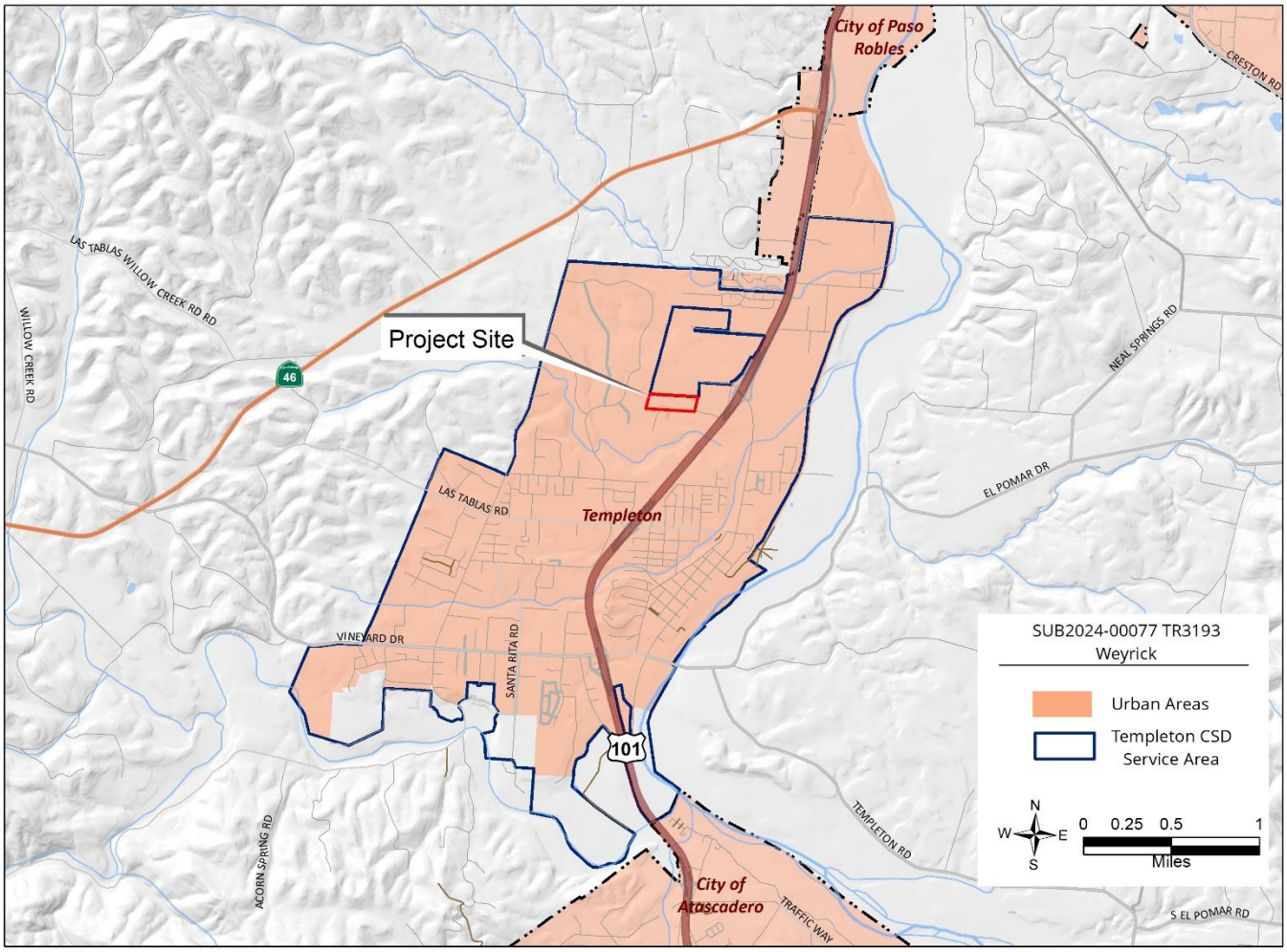

Figure 1 -- Project Location

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

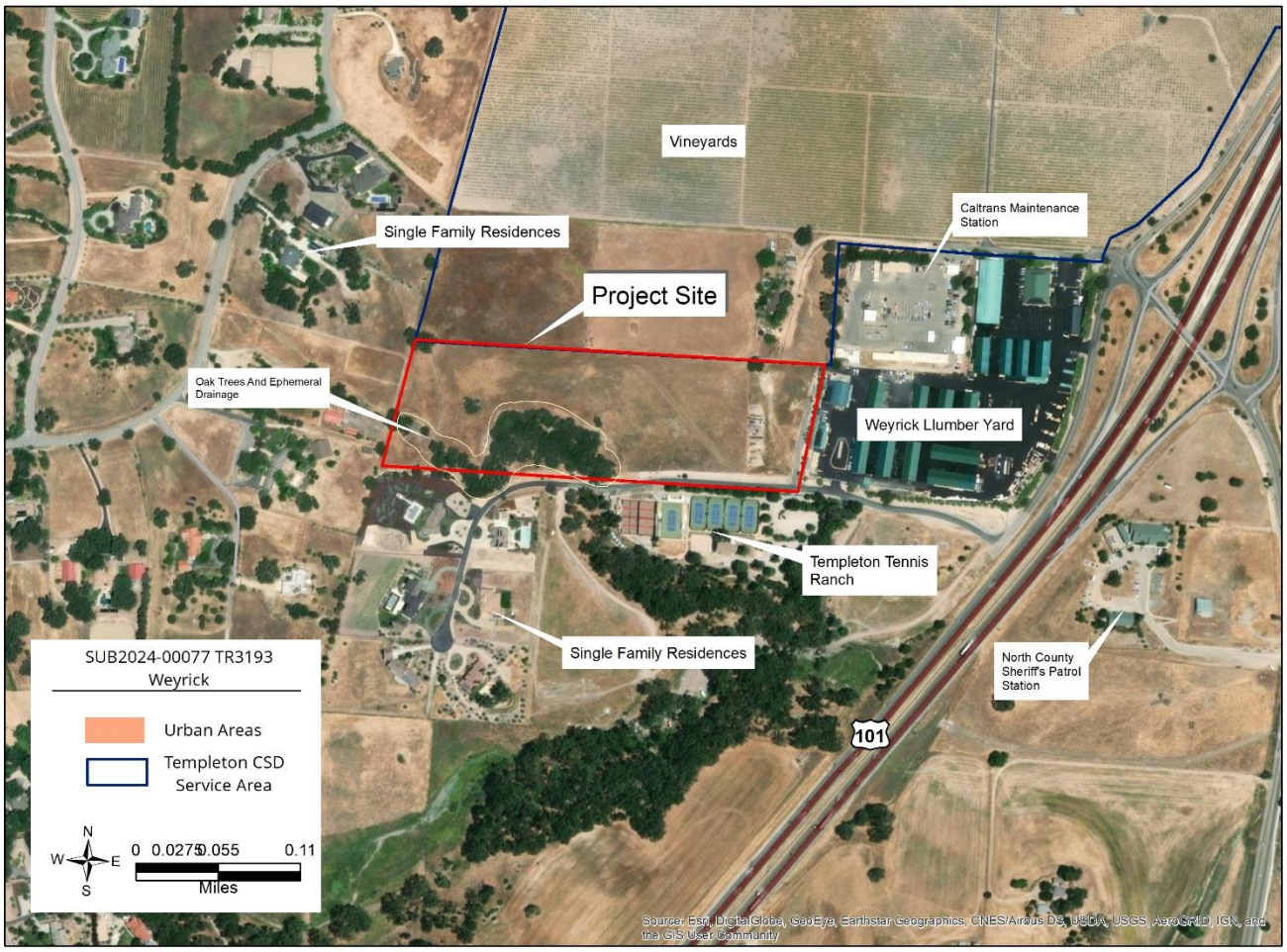

Figure 2 – Aerial View/Existing Conditions

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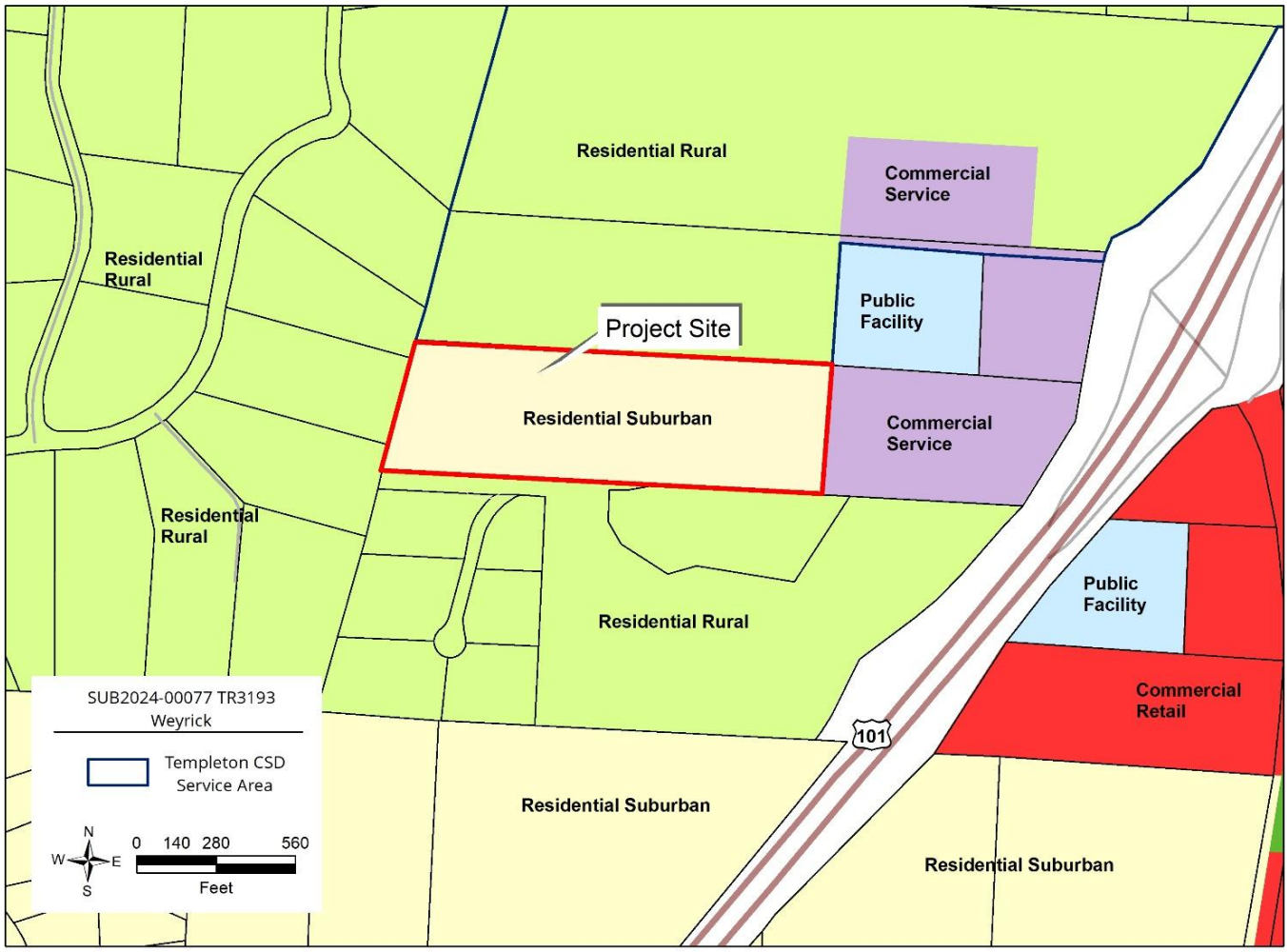

Figure 3 – Land Use Designations

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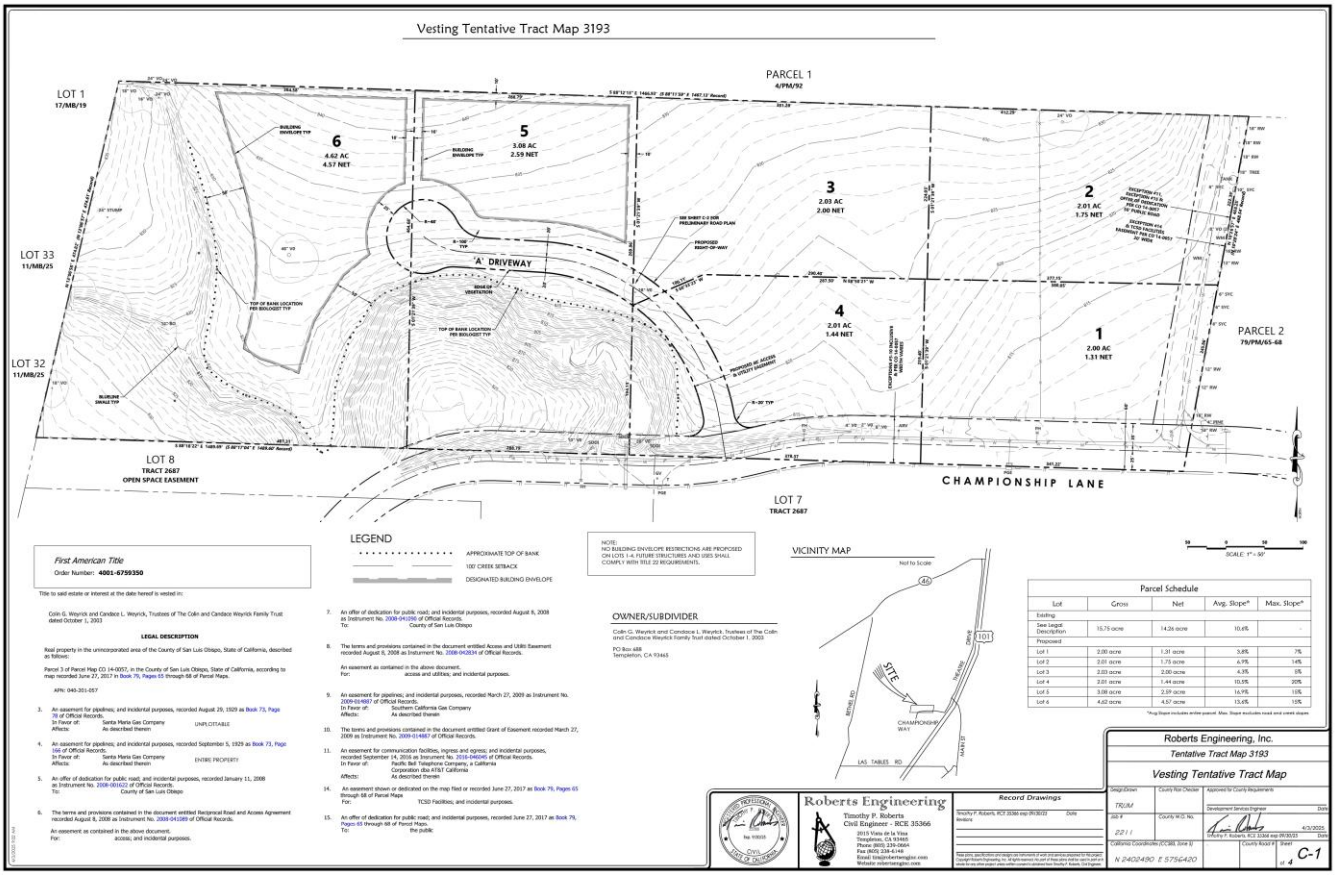

Figure 4 – Vesting Tentative Tract Map

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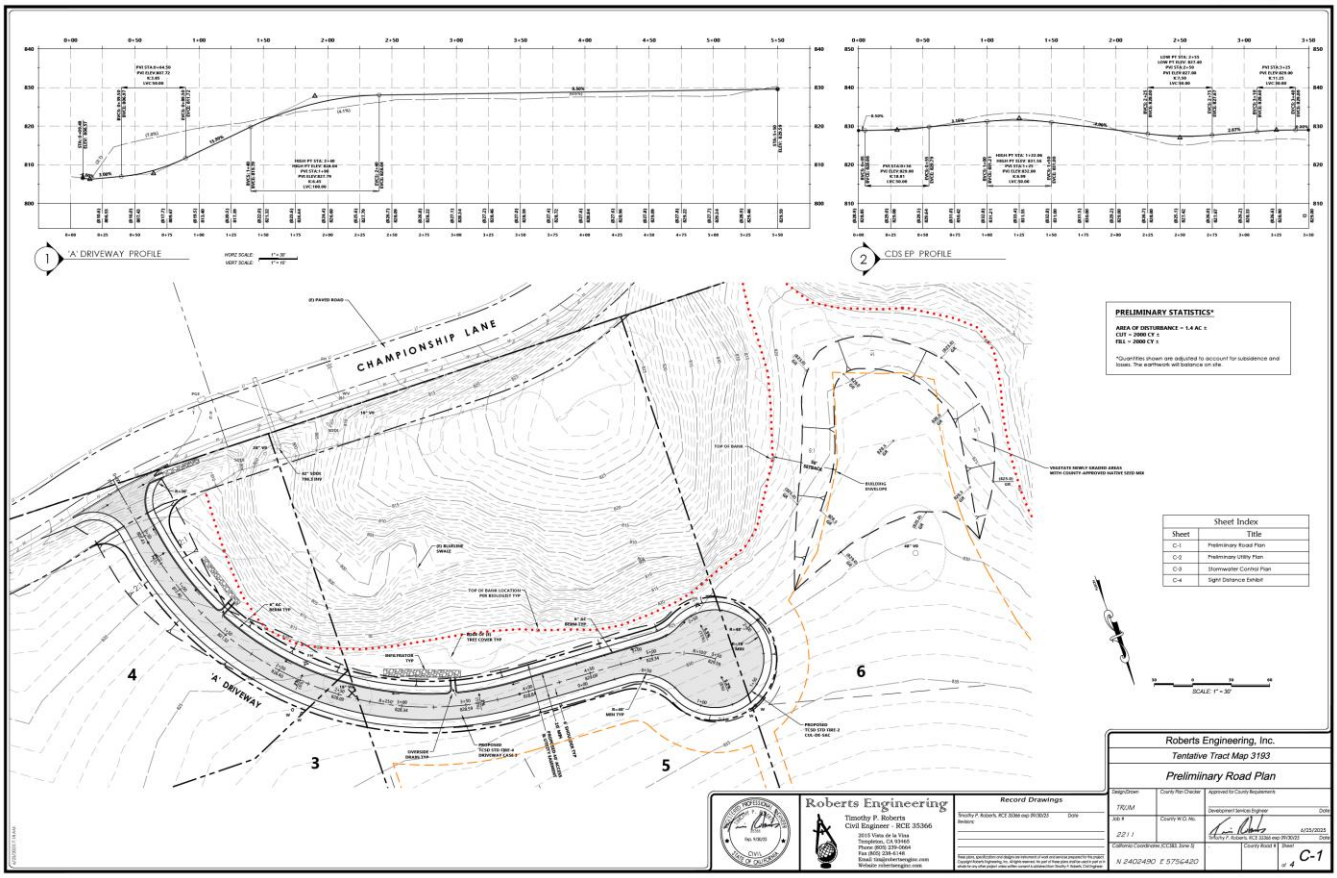

Figure 5 – Preliminary Road Plan/Grading Plan

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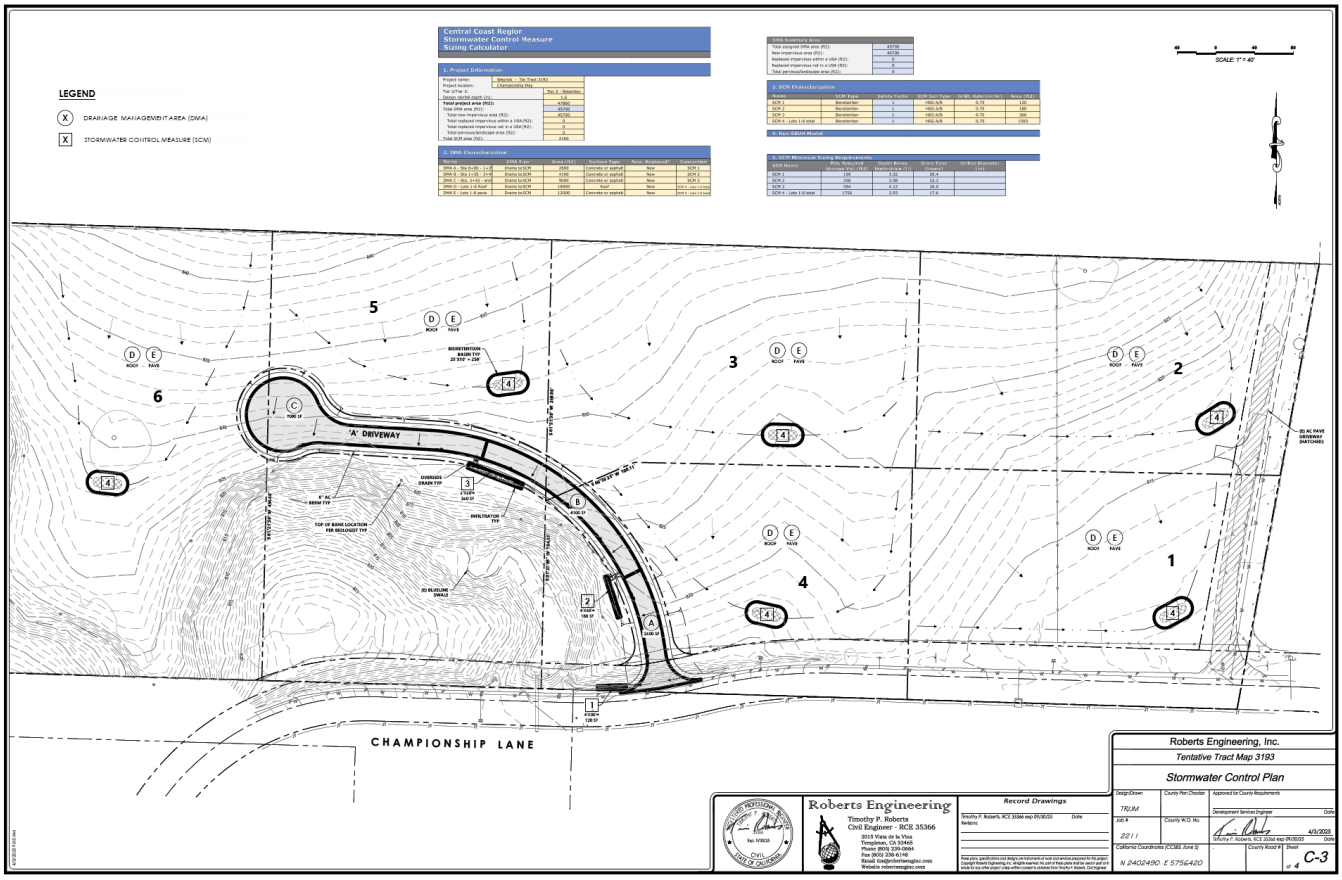

Figure 6 – Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan

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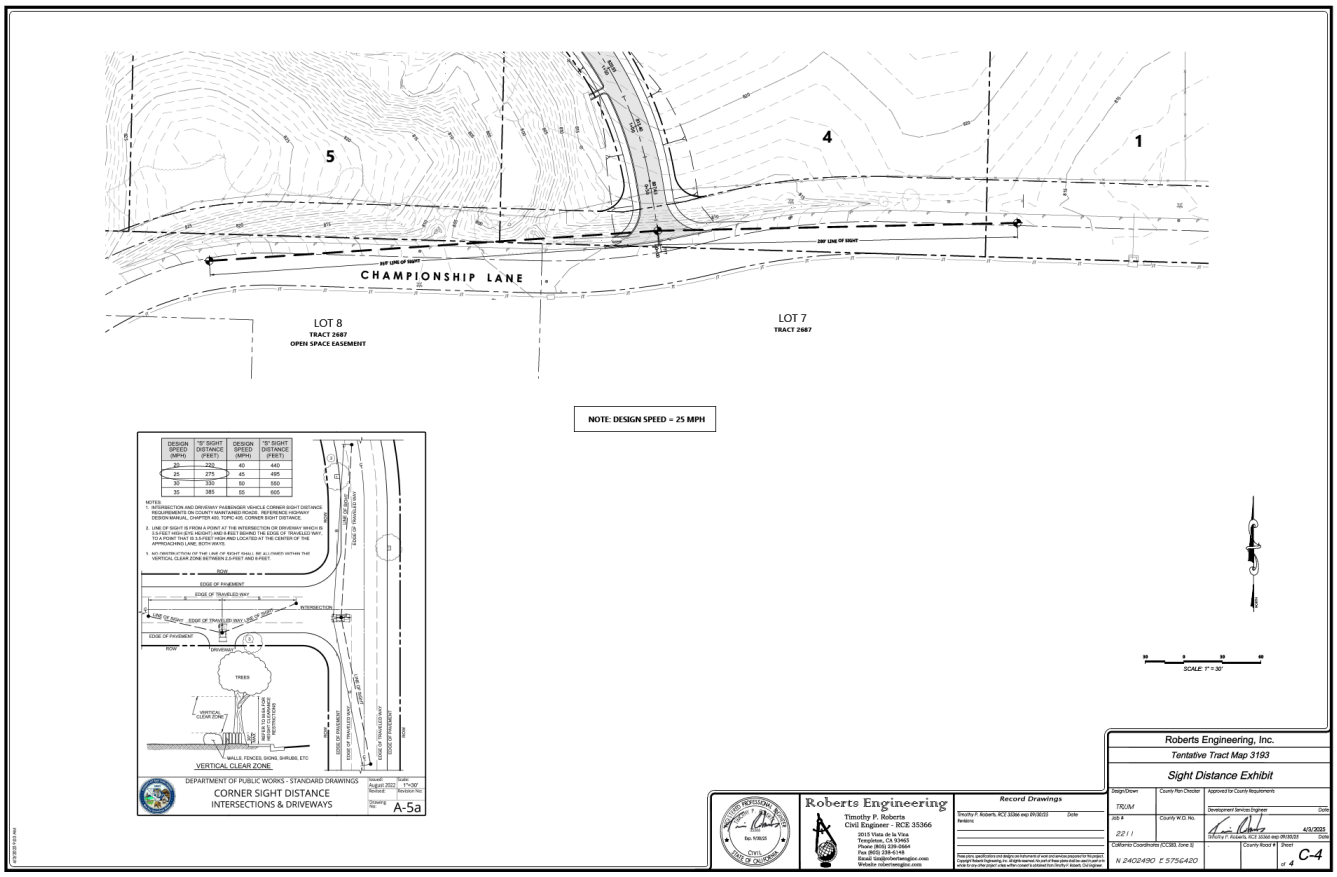

Figure 7 – Sight Distance Analysis for Private Access Road (Driveway A)

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

C. Environmental Analysis

The Initial Study Checklist provides detailed information about the environmental impacts of the proposed project and mitigation measures to lessen the impacts.

I. AESTHETICS

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

Setting

As discussed in the Baseline Conditions, the project site consists of a vacant, rectangular-shaped parcel of 15.75 acres located west of Theater Lane and south of N. Main Street within the unincorporated community of Templeton (Figure 2). Surrounding land uses include single family residences to the west and southwest on lots ranging in size from 2 to 5 acres. The adjacent property to the east is within the Commercial Service land use category and has been developed with a lumber yard. Land to the north is used for the cultivation of wine grapes, and to the northeast is a Caltrans maintenance yard.

Topography of the site consists of gently to moderately sloping terrain covered with annual non-native grasses and dense stands of oak trees associated with an ephemeral drainage that enters the site from the west and exits through a culvert under Championship Lane.

Vehicular access is provided by Championship Lane, a private roadway that extends west of Theater Lane where it terminates in a cul-de-sac within a Rural Residential neighborhood. Theater Lane is a County

maintained collector with low traffic volumes south of N. Main Street.

The visual qualities of the project site and surrounding area are considered urban and surrounded on three sides by development; however, the project site enjoys views to the north that support vineyards and scattered stands of oak trees on the hillsides to the west. The main vantages for public views of the project site are provided to motorists travelling on the surrounding public roadways.

Conservation and Open Space Element. The Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) identifies several goals for visual resources in rural parts of the county:

- Goal VR 1: The natural and agricultural landscape will continue to be the dominant view in rural parts of the county.
- Goal VR 2: The natural and historic character and identity of rural areas will be preserved.
- Goal VR 3: The visual identities of communities will be preserved by maintaining rural separation between them.
- Goal VR 7**:** Views of the night sky and its constellation of stars will be maintained.

Some of the strategies identified to accomplish the goals listed above include encouraging project designs that emphasize native vegetation and conforming grading to existing natural forms, as well as ensuring that new development follows the Countywide Design Guidelines to protect rural visual and historical character.

Countywide Design Guidelines. The Countywide Design Guidelines identify objectives for both urban and rural development. Rural area guidelines applicable to the project include the following:

- Objective RU-5: Fences and screening should reflect an area's rural quality.
- Objective RU-7: Landscaping should be consistent with the type of plants naturally occurring in the County and should limit the need for irrigation.

Templeton Community Design Plan

The Templeton Community Design Plan provides guidelines for development in the unincorporated community of Templeton, aiming to maintain its historic village character while accommodating growth. The guidelines are intended to inform and guide property development so that the form and character of the overall community is protected and enhanced. The guidelines are advisory and discretionary, to be used in the review of subdivision and development projects by County staff, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The Templeton Area Advisory Group (TAAG) also uses these guidelines when advising on land use plans and ordinances.

Guideline III.E.7: Site Grading

Site plan new development on the least sensitive portion of the site to preserve the natural landforms, geologic features, and vegetation. The plan must direct and provide adequate flow of surface run-off to catch basins while gracefully contouring the land to blend with existing conditions at the boundaries of the site.

Guideline V.A.1: Varied Front Yard Setbacks

Each group of three adjacent houses should contain at least one house whose front yard setback differs from those of its neighbors by a minimum of 7 feet. Minimum setbacks may not be reduced to accommodate this variation.

Guideline V.A.2: Lot Shape Variety

(West side only or severe topography on East site)

Each group of three adjacent lots should vary their lot sizes by containing one lot whose size or width should differ from those of the group by a minimum of 15%. Minimum lot sizes may not be reduced to accommodate this variation.

Inland Land Use Ordinance. The Land Use Ordinance sets forth standards for exterior lighting (LUO Section 22.10.060). In accordance with these standards, exterior lighting must be shielded and directed onto the source parcel and away from roadways and adjacent parcels.

Scenic Highways. The only Officially Designated State Scenic Highway in San Luis Obispo County is Highway 1 which is not visible from the project site.

Discussion

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

For the purpose of determining significance under CEQA, a scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. If the project would substantially degrade the scenic landscape as viewed from public roads, designated scenic routes, or from other public or recreation areas, this would be considered a potentially significant impact on the scenic vista.

Although the project site and vicinity have a low to moderate scenic value, the dwellings constructed on the project site will not be visible from any designated scenic vista or roadway available to the public. Therefore, the project will result in *no impact* to a scenic vista.

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

The project would result in a significant impact if it results in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic resource as seen from a state scenic highway. However, the project site is not visible from a state scenic highway and there would be *no impact*.

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

With regard to potential impacts to the existing visual character of public views of the site, the following should be noted:

- The project site is surrounded on three sides by urban and suburban development and would be considered an *urbanized area*.
- The primary public views of the project site are from the surrounding public roadways. However, the project site is screened from view from Theater Lane and Highway 101 by the intervening terrain, dense vegetation and existing development.
- The size, density and shape of the proposed parcels are consistent with the standards of the Residential Suburban land use designation.
- LUO Section 22.104.090 requires all new development to be consistent with the Templeton Community Design Plan (TCDP) which sets forth guidelines for the design of residential subdivisions and architectural guidelines for new residences. Compliance with these

guidelines would ensure future dwellings are comparable in size, scale and character to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

- The vesting tentative map is consistent with the site-specific standards set forth in LUO section 22.104.090(6). relating to the development of the project site. More specifically, the vesting tentative map incorporates building envelopes for lots 5 and 6 to ensure sensitive riparian and oak woodland resources on the site are protected.

Therefore, based on the preceding analysis, project impacts associated with the potential degradation of the existing visual character or quality of public views are expected to be *less than significant*.

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

The project would result in a significant impact if it subjects public viewing locations to a substantial amount of point-source lighting visible at night, or if project illumination results in a noticeable spillover effect into the nighttime sky, increasing the ambient light over the region. The placement of lighting, source of illumination, and fixture types combined with viewer locations, adjacent reflective elements, and atmospheric conditions can affect the degree of change to nighttime views. If the project results in direct visibility of a substantial number of lighting sources, or allows a substantial amount of light to project toward the sky, significant impacts on nighttime views and aesthetic character would result.

No specific information is available regarding outdoor lighting associated with future development of each lot, although it is assumed that exterior lighting would be included as part of the residential developments for functional and/or ornamental purposes. Because of the project's distance to public roadways and recreation areas, night lighting would not be seen from the surrounding area nor would it be distinguishable from the light associated with existing development.

The project will be conditioned to comply with county standards for exterior lighting. Therefore, potential impacts associated with the creation of a new source of substantial light would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project will have a less than significant impact on scenic vistas and would not result in a substantial change to scenic resources in the area. Review of future development plans would ensure the subsequent dwellings are consistent with the Templeton Community Design Plan as well as other policies and standards in the County LUO and COSE related to the protection of scenic resources. New sources of light will be subject to compliance with the County's exterior lighting standards as prescribed in LUO Section 22.10.060. Impacts to aesthetic resources would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
(a)	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(c)	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The California Department of Conservation (CDOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts to California's agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality as well as current and previous land use. For purposes of CEQA compliance, the FMMP categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique

Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land as "agricultural land." Non-agricultural designations include Urban and Built-up Land, Other Land, and Water.

Chapter 6 of the County Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) identifies resource management goals, policies, and strategies to protect agricultural soils from conversion to urban and residential uses. Important Agricultural Soils within the County are identified in Table SL-2 of the COSE and Policy SL 3.1 states that proposed conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses shall be evaluated using the applicable policies in the COSE and Agricultural Element.

Soils of the site are described in detail below. The acreage and corresponding farmland classifications are provided in Tables 2 and 3.

Map Unit: 103—Arbuckle-Positas complex, 15 to 30 percent slopes
Arbuckle: 40 percent

The Arbuckle component makes up 40 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 15 to 30 percent. This component is on terraces. The parent material consists of alluvium from mixed rock sources. Depth to a root restrictive layer is greater than 60 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is moderate. Shrink-swell potential is low. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 1 percent. This component is in the R014XE003CA Coarse Loamy ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 6e. Irrigated land capability classification is 6e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria.

Positas: 30 percent

The Positas component makes up 30 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 15 to 30 percent. This component is on terraces. The parent material consists of alluvium from mixed rock sources. Depth to a root restrictive layer, abrupt textural change, is 9 to 20 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is low. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is moderate. Shrink-swell potential is moderate. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 1 percent. This component is in the R014XE005CA Coarse Loamy Claypan ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 6e. Irrigated land capability classification is 6e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. The calcium carbonate equivalent within 40 inches, typically, does not exceed 1 percent. There are no saline horizons within 30 inches of the soil surface.

Greenfield, fine sandy loam: 10 percent

Generated brief soil descriptions are created for major components. The Greenfield soil is a minor component.

Unnamed, similar to positas: 10 percent

Generated brief soil descriptions are created for major components. The Unnamed soil is a minor component.

Map Unit: 158—Lockwood shaly loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes

Lockwood: 85 percent

The Lockwood component makes up 85 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 2 to 9 percent. This component is on terraces. The parent material consists of alluvium derived from sedimentary rock. Depth to a root restrictive layer is greater than 60 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is moderate. Shrink-swell potential is moderate. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 4 percent. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 4e. Irrigated land capability classification is 2e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. There are no saline horizons within 30 inches of the soil surface.

Unnamed, similar to lockwood soil: 10 percent

Generated brief soil descriptions are created for major components. The Unnamed soil is a minor component.

Map Unit: 179—Nacimiento-Los Osos complex, 9 to 30 percent slopes

Nacimiento: 30 percent

The Nacimiento component makes up 30 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 9 to 30 percent. This component is on hills. The parent material consists of residuum weathered from calcareous shale and/or sandstone. Depth to a root restrictive layer, bedrock, paralithic, is 20 to 40 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is low. Shrink-swell potential is moderate. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 4 percent. This component is in the R015XE020CA Fine Loamy 9-13 ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 4e. Irrigated land capability classification is 4e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. The calcium carbonate equivalent within 40 inches, typically, does not exceed 8 percent. There are no saline horizons within 30 inches of the soil surface.

Los Osos: 20 percent

The Los Osos component makes up 20 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 9 to 30 percent. This component is on hills. The parent material consists of residuum weathered from shale and/or sandstone. Depth to a root restrictive layer, bedrock, paralithic, is 20 to 40 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately low. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is low. Shrink-swell potential is high. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 3 percent. This component is in the R015XE020CA Fine Loamy 9-13 ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 4e. Irrigated land capability classification is 4e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. There are no saline horizons within 30 inches of the soil surface.

Unnamed, similar to los osos soil: 10 percent

Generated brief soil descriptions are created for major components. The Unnamed soil is a minor component.

Balcom, loam: 10 percent

Generated brief soil descriptions are created for major components. The Balcom soil is a minor component.

Positas, coarse sandly loam: 10 percent

Generated brief soil descriptions are created for major components. The Positas soil is a minor component.

As shown in Table 2, the Lockwood Shaly Loam 2 – 9% slopes percent slopes is considered Farmland of Statewide Importance by the FMMP and COSE. The other soils are considered not prime.

Table 2 – Farmland Classifications of the COSE and Corresponding Acreages

Soil	COSE Classification	Total Acres	Impacted Acres
Nacimiento Los 9 – 30% slopes	Not Prime	6.15	0.13
Arbuckle Positas 15 – 30% slopes	Not Prime	8.52	1.19
Lockwood Shaly Loam 2 – 9% slopes	Farmland of Statewide importance	1.06	0.08
	Total:	**15.75**	**1.40**

Source: Classifications based on Table SL-2 of the County General Plan's Conservation/Open Space Element

Table 3 provides a summary of farmland classifications for soils on the project site as determined by the FMMP. As shown in Table 3, about 10.2 acres of the project site are considered Farmland of Local Importance, including about 0.82 acres within the area of disturbance.

Table 3 – Farmland Classifications of the FMMP and Corresponding Acreages

FMMP Classification	Total Acres	Impacted Acres
Grazing	2.8	0.28
Farmland of Local Importance	10.2	0.82
Unclassified	2.75	0.28
Total:	**15.75**	**1.40**

Source: Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agriculture or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. The project site is within the Templeton Agricultural Preserve but is not subject to an active Williamson Act contract.

According to California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 12220(g), forest land is defined as land that can support 10% native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. Timberland is defined as land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce

lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. The project site does not contain any forest land as defined by the PRC.

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

The project site consists of 15.75 acres of vacant land covered with non-native grasses and mature oak trees. As shown in Table 2, the project will impact a total of 0.80 acres of land classified as Farmland of Statewide Importance by the COSE. As shown in Table 3, the project will impact a total of 0.82 acres of Farmland of Local Importance according to the FMMP. These impacts are considered *less than significant* because:

- The small size and irregular shape of the area where important farmland is located make crop production on the project site infeasible.
- The project site is designated for single family residential development and is surrounded on three sides by urban residential development.
- The conversion of up to 0.82 acres of important farmland is a small fraction of the total productive farmland within the County as mapped by the FMMP and COES.
- The water purveyor for Templeton (the TCSD) does not provide irrigation water for agricultural uses.

In addition, the project is consistent with the following policies of the Agriculture Element with regard to the protection and preservation of productive agricultural land:

AGP24: Conversion of Agricultural Land.

a. Discourage the conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses through the following actions:

1. Work in cooperation with the incorporated cities, service districts, school districts, the County Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Advisory Liaison Board, Farm Bureau, and affected community advisory groups to establish urban service and urban reserve lines and village reserve lines that will protect agricultural land and will stabilize agriculture at the urban fringe.

Discussion: The project site is located within the URL and USL for the community of Templeton.

2. Establish clear criteria in this plan and the Land Use Element for changing the designation of land from Agriculture to non-agricultural designations.

3. Avoid land redesignation (rezoning) that would create new rural residential development outside the urban and village reserve lines.

4. Avoid locating new public facilities outside urban and village reserve lines unless they serve a rural function or there is no feasible alternative location within the urban and village reserve lines.

Discussion: The project is consistent with the allowable land uses in the Residential Suburban land use category and does not propose a change in the land use designation.

For the above reasons, project impacts would be *less than significant* and *less than cumulatively considerable.*

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(b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

The subject property is located within the Residential Suburban land use category and is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract; single family dwellings are an allowable use. Therefore, as conditioned, the project would not result in a conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract and *no impacts would occur.*

(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))?

The project site does not include land use designations or zoning for forest land or timberland as defined by the Public Resources Code; *no impacts would occur.*

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

The project site does not support resources that meet the definition of "forest land" as prescribed in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g):

> *"Forest land" is land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.*

Therefore, there would be *no impact* relating to the conversion of forest land to a non-forest use.

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

The project site is generally surrounded by urban development. There are vineyards to the north but there are no other nearby agricultural operations that would be affected by the project. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would result in less than significant impacts relating to the conversion of farmland, forest land, or timber land to non-agricultural uses or non-forest uses and would not conflict with agricultural zoning or otherwise adversely affect agricultural resources or uses. Potential impacts to agricultural resources would be *less than significant* and *less than cumulatively considerable* and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

None necessary.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

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III. AIR QUALITY

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:					
(a)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(d)	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

San Luis Obispo County Clean Air Plan

The San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLOAPCD) San Luis Obispo County 2001 Clean Air Plan (CAP) is a comprehensive planning document intended to evaluate long-term air pollutant emissions and cumulative effects and provide guidance to the SLOAPCD and other local agencies on how to attain and maintain the state standards for ozone and particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter (PM_{10}). The CAP presents a detailed description of the sources and pollutants that impact the jurisdiction's attainment of state standards, future air quality impacts to be expected under current growth trends, and an appropriate control strategy for reducing ozone precursor emissions, thereby improving air quality. Project consistency with the CAP is determined by considering whether the project incorporates the relevant land use planning and transportation control measures and strategies outlined in the CAP.

The County is currently designated as a non-attainment area for ozone and PM_{10} under state ambient air quality standards. Construction and operation of the project would result in emissions of ozone precursors including reactive organic gasses (ROG) and nitrous oxides (NO_X) as well as fugitive dust emissions (PM_{10}) and exhaust particulates.

SLOAPCD Criteria Pollutant Thresholds

The SLOAPCD has developed a CEQA Air Quality Handbook (most recently updated in 2023) to help local agencies determine the significance of project-specific air quality impacts and to determine whether mitigation measures are needed. To assist in this task, the Handbook includes screening criteria to determine the significance of project impacts. For example, according to the Handbook, a project with grading in excess of 4.0 acres and moving 1,200 cubic yards of earth per day can exceed the construction threshold for respirable particulate matter (PM_{10}).

The use of heavy equipment and earth-moving operations during project construction can generate fugitive dust and engine combustion emissions that may have substantial temporary impacts on local air quality. Combustion emissions, such as nitrogen oxides (NOx), reactive organic gases (ROG), greenhouse gases (GHG), and diesel particulate matter (DPM), are most significant when using large, diesel-fueled scrapers, loaders, bulldozers, haul trucks, compressors, generators, and other heavy equipment. The SLOAPCD has established thresholds of significance for each of these contaminants.

Operational impacts are focused primarily on the indirect emissions (i.e., motor vehicles) associated with residential, commercial, and industrial development. Certain types of projects can also include components that generate direct emissions, such as power plants, gasoline stations, dry cleaners, and refineries (referred to as stationary source emissions). Table 1-1 of the APCD's CEQA Handbook provides screening criteria based on the size of different types of projects that would normally generate sufficient motor vehicle trips that would cause an exceedance of the operational thresholds for ozone precursors. A project consisting of 99 single family residences generating 970 average daily vehicle trips would be expected to exceed the 25 lbs/day operational threshold for ozone precursors.

The APCD has also estimated the number of vehicular round trips on an unpaved roadway necessary to exceed the 25 lbs/day threshold of significance for the emission of particulate matter (PM10). According to the APCD estimates, an unpaved roadway of one mile in length carrying 6.0 round trips would likely exceed the 25 lbs/day PM10 threshold.

The prevailing winds in the project vicinity are from the north and west.

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are people with an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants, such as the elderly, children, people with asthma or other respiratory illnesses, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, due to the population that occupies the uses and the activities involved. Sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residences. The nearest sensitive receptors to the site are single-family residences located to the west and south.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos

Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) is identified as a toxic air contaminant by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). Serpentine and other ultramafic rocks are fairly common throughout San Luis Obispo County and may contain NOA. If these areas are disturbed during construction, NOA-containing particles can be released into the air and have an adverse impact on local air quality and human health. Based on SLOAPCD's NOA Screening Map, the project site is not located in an area identified as having the potential for soils containing NOA.

Developmental Burning

As of February 25, 2000, the APCD prohibits developmental burning of vegetative material within San Luis Obispo County. However, under certain circumstances where no technically feasible alternatives are available, limited developmental burning under restrictions may be allowed. Any such exception must complete the following prior to any burning: APCD approval; payment of fee to APCD based on the size of the project; and issuance of a burn permit by the APCD and the local fire department authority. As a part of APCD approval, the applicant shall furnish them with the study of technical feasibility (which includes costs and other constraints) at the time of application.

Discussion

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

In order to be considered consistent with the 2001 San Luis Obispo County CAP, a project must be consistent with CAP's land use planning and transportation control measures and strategies (SLOAPCD 2002). These strategies include, but are not limited to, planning compact communities with higher densities, providing for mixed land use, and balancing jobs and housing. The project does not include development of retail or commercial uses that would be open to the public, therefore, land use planning strategies such as mixed-use development and planning compact communities are generally not applicable. The project would result in the construction of six single family residences that would typically be occupied by three full-time residents in each unit. The project would not generate a significant number of employees and therefore would not significantly affect the local area's jobs/housing balance.

Adopted transportation control measures include, but are not limited to, a voluntary commute options program, local and regional transit system improvements, bikeway enhancements, and telecommuting programs. The voluntary commute options program targets employers in the county with more than 20 full time employees; the project consists of six single family residences and would have no employees. The project would not conflict with regional plans for transit system or bikeway improvements.

Overall, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the CAP; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

(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?

The County is currently designated as non-attainment for ozone and PM_{10} under state ambient air quality standards. Construction and operation of the project would result in emissions of ozone precursors including reactive organic gasses (ROG) and nitrous oxides (NO_X) as well as fugitive dust emissions (PM_{10}).

Construction Emissions

Based on the project description, the project will have an area of disturbance of about 1.40 acres and will involve 2,000 cy of cut and 2,000 cy of fill. Construction activities will result in the generation of dust, as well as short-term construction vehicle emissions. Using the SLOAPCD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook (2023), construction-related emissions were calculated for the project and are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4 -- Estimated Construction-Related Emissions

Pollutant	Total Estimated Emissions	APCD Emissions Threshold	Mitigation Required?
Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) + Nitrogen Oxide (NO_x) (combined)	30.13 lbs./day[1]	137 lbs./day	No
	1.20 tons/quarter[1]	2.5 tons/quarter	No
Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM)	1.31 lbs. /day[2]	7 lbs./day	No
	0.039 tons/quarter[2]	0.13 tons/quarter	No
Fugitive Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	1.05 tons[3]/quarter	2.5 tons/quarter	No

Notes:

1. Based on 4,000 cubic yards of material moved and 0.113 pounds of combined ROG and NOx emissions per cubic yard of material moved and 10 construction days.
2. Based on 4,000 cubic yards of material moved and 0.0049 pounds of diesel particulate emissions per cubic yard of material moved and 10 construction days.
3. Based on 1.40 total acres of disturbance and 0.75 tons of PM10 generated per acre of disturbance per month and 15 days of construction.

As shown in Table 4, project construction related emissions are not expected to exceed the daily and quarterly emissions thresholds for ozone precursors or fugitive dust. Therefore, construction related emissions will be considered *less than significant*.

Operation-Related Emissions. As discussed in the setting above, a project consisting of 99 single family residences generating 970 average daily vehicle trips would be expected to exceed the 25 lbs/day operational threshold for ozone precursors. The project consists of six single family residences that will likely generate about 54.0 average daily trips. Accordingly, project-specific and cumulative operational impacts are considered a *less than significant* and *less than cumulatively considerable*.

The project site does not require travel on an unpaved roadway.

(c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Sensitive receptors are people or other organisms that may have a significantly increased sensitivity to exposure to air pollution by virtue of their age and health (e.g. schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes), regulatory status (e.g. federal or state listing as a sensitive or endangered species), or proximity to the source. The nearest sensitive receptors are residences located on the properties to the south and west that are all within 1,000 feet of potential construction activities. These residences may be occupied by sensitive receptors, and the close proximity, combined with the prevailing winds could result in exposure to diesel particulates and fugitive dust from construction activities. With implementation of mitigations measures AQ-1 and AQ-2, impacts to sensitive receptors will be considered *less than significant with mitigation*.

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

Construction activities have the potential to emit odors from diesel equipment, paints, solvents, fugitive dust, and adhesives. Any odors generated by construction activities would be intermittent and temporary, and generally would not extend beyond the construction area. Following construction of site improvements and future residences, the project site would be limited to residential uses and would not include any components or operational activities that would generate substantial long-term adverse odors. Therefore, odors generated by the project would be short-term, intermittent, and *less than significant*.

The project site is not located in an area identified as containing NOA.

The project does not propose to burn any onsite vegetative materials and would be subject to SLOAPCD restrictions on developmental burning of vegetative material; therefore, the project would have *no impact* relating to substantial air pollutant emissions from such activities.

Conclusion

The project would be consistent with the SLOAPCD's Clean Air Plan and will generate construction related and operational emissions that fall below SLOAPCD thresholds. However, diesel particulate emissions associated with construction activities could adversely impact surrounding sensitive receptors. Therefore, potential impacts to air quality would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

Mitigation

AQ-1 **Fugitive Dust Construction Control Measures.** Prior to issuance of construction permits, the following measures shall be incorporated into the construction phase of the project and shown on all applicable plans:

1. Reduce the amount of disturbed areas where possible;
2. Use water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency would be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 miles per hour. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible;
3. All dirt stock-pile areas shall be sprayed daily as needed;
4. All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible, and building pads shall be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used;
5. All of these fugitive dust mitigation measures shall be shown on grading and building plans; and
6. The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons to monitor the fugitive dust emissions and enhance the implementation of the measures as necessary to minimize dust complaints, reduce visible emissions below 20% opacity, and to prevent transport of dust offsite. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress.

AQ-2 **ROG, NO_x, DPM Emissions.** The following measures based on the SLOAPCD standard mitigation measures for construction equipment for reducing nitrogen oxides (NOx), reactive organic gases (ROG), and diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions from construction equipment shall be implemented to reduce exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. These measures shall be shown on grading and building plans:

a. Implement Mitigation Measure AQ-1, as identified above.

b. On-road diesel vehicles shall comply with Section 2485 of Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations. This regulation limits idling from diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles with gross vehicular weight ratings of more than 10,000 pounds and licensed for operation on highways. It applies to California and non-California based vehicles. In general, the regulation specifies that drivers of said vehicles:

   i. Shall not idle the vehicle's primary diesel engine for greater than 5 minutes at any location, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation; and,

   ii. Shall not operate a diesel-fueled auxiliary power system to power a heater, air conditioner, or any ancillary equipment on that vehicle during sleeping or resting in a sleeper berth for greater than 5.0 minutes at any location when within 1,000 feet of a restricted area, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation.

c. Maintain all construction equipment in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications.

d. Fuel all off-road and portable diesel-powered equipment with ARB certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road).

e. Use diesel construction equipment meeting ARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State Off-Road Regulation.

f. Idling of all on and off-road diesel-fueled vehicles shall not be permitted when not in use. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and or job site to remind drivers and operators of the no idling limitation.

g. Electrify equipment when possible.

h. Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, when available. and,

i. Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site when available, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

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IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

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

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Regulatory Setting

Federal Laws and Regulations

Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA)prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from taking (pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb) bald or golden eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs. This includes substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior. Activities that may result in the take of a bald or golden eagle require permits; the three activities eligible for permits include to remove or relocate an eagle nest; to transport, exhibit, collect, or control eagles or eagle parts, and for incidental take of eagles.

Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulating quality standards for surface waters. The purpose of the CWA is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of all waters of the U.S. Permitting is required for filling waters of the U.S. (including wetlands). Permits may be issued on an individual basis or may be covered under approved nationwide permits.

Endangered Species Act. The federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) provides the legal framework for the listing and protection of species (and their habitats) identified as being endangered or threatened with extinction. "Critical Habitat" is a term within the FESA designed to guide actions by federal agencies and is defined as "an area occupied by a species listed as threatened or endangered within which are found physical or geographical features essential to the conservation of the species, or an area not currently occupied by the species which is itself essential to the conservation of the species." Actions that jeopardize endangered or threatened species and/or critical habitat are considered a 'take' under the FESA. "Take" under federal definition means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.

Projects that would result in "take" of any federally listed threatened or endangered species, or critical habitats, are required to obtain permits from the USFWS through either Section 7 (interagency consultation with a federal nexus) or Section 10 (Habitat Conservation Plan) of FESA, depending on the involvement by the federal government in permitting and/or funding of the project. Through Section 10, it is required to prepare a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to be approved by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which results in the issuance of an Incidental Take Permit (ITP). Through Section 7, which can only occur when a separate federal nexus in a project exists (prompting interagency consultation), a consultation by the various federal agencies involved can take place to determine appropriate actions to mitigate negative effects on endangered and threatened species and their habitat.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act. All migratory, non-game bird species that are native to the U.S. or its territories are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (50 C.F.R. Section 10.13), as amended under the Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2004. MBTA makes it illegal to purposefully take (pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect) any migratory bird, or the parts, nests, or eggs of such a bird, except under the terms of a valid Federal permit. Migratory non-game native bird species are protected by international treaty under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA).

State Law and Regulations

California Endangered Species Act. The California Endangered Species Act (CESA), similar to FESA, contains a process for listing of species and regulating potential impacts to listed species. State threatened and endangered species include both plants and wildlife, but do not include invertebrates. The designation "rare species" applies only to California native plants. State threatened and endangered plant species are regulated largely under the Native Plant Preservation Act in conjunction with the CESA. State threatened and endangered animal species are legally protected against "take." The CESA authorizes the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to enter into a memorandum of agreement for take of listed species to issue an incidental take permit for a state-listed threatened and endangered species only if specific criteria are met.

Section 2080 of the CESA prohibits the take of species listed as threatened or endangered pursuant to the Act. Section 2081 allows CDFW to authorize take prohibited under Section 2080 provided that: 1) the taking is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity; 2) the taking will be minimized and fully mitigated; 3) the applicant ensures adequate funding for minimization and mitigation; and 4) the authorization will not jeopardize the continued existence of the listed species.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA defines a "project" as any action undertaken from public or private entity that requires discretionary governmental review (a non-ministerial permittable action). All "projects" are required to undergo some level of environmental review pursuant to CEQA, unless an exemption applies. CEQA's environmental review process includes an assessment of existing resources, broken up by categories (i.e., air quality, aesthetics, etc.), a catalog of potential impacts to those resources caused by the proposed project, and a quantifiable result determining the level of significance an impact would generate. The goal of environmental review under CEQA is to avoid or mitigate impacts that would lead to a "significant effect" on a given resource; section 15382 of the CEQA Guidelines defines a "significant effect" as *a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.*

California Fish and Game Code (CFGC). The California Fish and Game Code (CFGC) is one of the 29 legal codes that form the general statutory law of California. A myriad of statutes regarding fish and game are specified in the CFGC; the following codes are specifically relevant to the proposed Project:

California Native Plant Protection Act. Sections 1900-1913 of the California Fish and Game Code contain the regulations of the Native Plant Protection Act of 1977. The intent of this act is to help conserve and protect rare and endangered plants in the state. The act allowed the CFGC to designate plants as rare or endangered.

Lake and Streambed Alteration. Section 1602 of the CFGC requires any person, state, or local governmental agency to provide advance written notification to CDFW prior to initiating any activity that would: 1) divert or obstruct the natural flow of, or substantially change or remove material from the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake; or 2) result in the disposal or deposition of debris, waste, or other material into any river, stream, or lake. The state definition of "lakes, rivers, and streams" includes all rivers or streams that flow at least periodically or permanently through a well-defined bed or channel with banks that support fish or other aquatic life, and watercourses with surface or subsurface flows that support or have supported riparian vegetation.

Nesting Birds. Sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513 of CFGC states that it is "unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto," and "unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds of prey or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird" unless authorized.

Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) not only regulates impacts to water quality in federal waters of the U.S. under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, but also regulates any isolated waters that are impacted under the state Porter Cologne Act utilizing a Waste Discharge Requirement. Discharge of fill material into waters of the State not subject to the jurisdiction of the USACE pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act may require authorization pursuant to the Porter Cologne Act through application for waste discharge requirements or through waiver of waste discharge requirements.

Special Status Species and Sensitive Habitat Regulations

For the purposes of this biological resources assessment, special status species are those plants and animals listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as threatened or endangered by the USFWS under the FESA; those listed or proposed for listing as rare, threatened, or endangered by the CDFW under the CESA; animals designated as "Species of Special Concern," "Fully Protected," or "Watch List" by the CDFW; and plants with a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1, 2, 3, or 4.

California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB)

"Special Plants" and "Special Animals" are broad terms used to refer to all the plant and animal taxa inventoried by the CNDDB, regardless of their legal or protection status (CNDDB 2020a and 2020b). The Special Plants list includes vascular plants, high priority bryophytes (mosses, liverworts, and hornworts), and lichens. The Special Animals list is also referred to by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as the list of "species at risk" or "special status species."

According to the CNDDB (2020a, 2020b), Special Plants and Animals lists include: taxa that are officially listed or proposed for listing by California or the Federal Government as Endangered, Threatened, or Rare; taxa which meet the criteria for listing, as described in Section 15380 of CEQA Guidelines; taxa deemed biologically rare, restricted in range, declining in abundance, or otherwise vulnerable; population(s) in California that may be marginal to the taxon's entire range but are threatened with extirpation in California; and/or taxa closely associated with a habitat that is declining in California at a significant rate. Separately, the Special Plants List includes taxa listed in the California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California, as well as taxa determined to be Sensitive Species by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or U.S. Forest Service. The Special Animals List distinctively includes taxa considered by the CDFW to be a Species of Special Concern (SSC) and taxa designated as a special status, sensitive, or declining species by other state or federal agencies.

Federal and State Endangered Species Listings

The Federal and California Endangered Species Acts are the regulatory documents that govern the listing and protection of species, and their habitats, identified as being endangered or threatened with extinction (see Sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.2). Possible listing status under both Federal and California ESA includes Endangered and Threatened (FE, FT, CE, or CT). Species in the process of being listed are given the status of either Proposed Federally Endangered/Threatened, Candidate for California Endangered/Threatened (PE, PT, CCE, or CCT). The CESA has one additional status: Rare (CR).

Global and State Ranks

Global and State Ranks reflect an assessment of the condition of the species (or habitats, see 1.6.6 below) across its entire range. Basic ranks assign a numerical value from 1 to 5, respectively for species with highest risk to most secure. Other ranking variations include rank ranges, rank qualifiers, and infraspecific taxon ranks. All Heritage Programs, such as the CNDDB use the same ranking methodology, originally developed by The Nature Conservancy and now maintained and recently revised by NatureServe. Procedurally, state programs such as the CNDDB develop the State ranks. The Global ranks are determined collaboratively among the Heritage Programs for the states/provinces containing the species. Rank definitions, where G represents Global and S represents State, are as follows:

- **G1/S1:** Critically imperiled globally/in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer populations).
- **G2/S2:** Imperiled globally/in state because of rarity (6 to 20 populations).
- **G3/S3:** Vulnerable; rare and local throughout range or in a special habitat or narrowly endemic (on the order of 21 to 100 populations).
- **G4/S4:** Apparently secure globally/in state; uncommon but not rare (of no immediate conservation concern).
- **G5/S5:** Secure; common, widespread, and abundant.
- **G#G#/S#S#:** Rank range - numerical range indicating uncertainty in the status of a species, (e.g., G2G3 more certain than G3, but less certain that G2).
- **G/S#?:** Inexact numeric rank
- **Q:** Questionable taxonomy - Taxonomic distinctiveness of this entity is questionable.
- **T#:** Infraspecific taxa (subspecies or varieties) – indicating an infraspecific taxon that has a lower numerical ranking (rarer) than the given global rank of species.

California Rare Plant Ranks

Plant species are considered rare when their distribution is confined to localized areas, their habitat is threatened, they are declining in abundance, or they are threatened in a portion of their range.

The California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) categories range from species with a low threat (4) to species that are presumed extinct (1A). All but a few species are endemic to California. All of them are judged to be vulnerable under present circumstances, or to have a high potential for becoming vulnerable. Threat ranks are assigned as decimal values to a CRPR to further define the level of threat to a given species. The rare plant ranks and threat levels are defined below.

- **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 common elsewhere
- **2B:** Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
- **4:** Plants of limited distribution - a watch list
- **0.1:** Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat)

- **0.2:** Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened/moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
- **0.3:** Not very threatened in California (less than 20% of occurrences threatened/low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

California Department of Fish and Wildlife Animal Rank

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) assigns one of three ranks to Special Animals: Watch List (WL), Species of Special Concern (SSC), or Fully Protected (FP). Unranked species are referred to by the term Special Animal (SA).

Animals listed as Watch List (WL) are taxa that were previously designated as SSC, but no longer merit that status, or taxa that which do not yet meet SSC criteria, but for which there is concern and a need for additional information to clarify status.

Animals listed as California Species of Special Concern (SSC) may or may not be listed under California or federal Endangered Species Acts. They are considered rare or declining in abundance in California. The Special Concern designation is intended to provide the CDFW biologists, land planners, and managers with lists of species that require special consideration during the planning process to avert continued population declines and potential costly listing under federal and state endangered species laws. For many species of birds, the primary emphasis is on the breeding population in California. For some species that do not breed in California but winter here, emphasis is on wintering range. The SSC designation thus may include a comment regarding the specific protection provided such as nesting or wintering.

Animals listed as Fully Protected (FP) are those species considered by CDFW as rare or faced with possible extinction. Most, but not all, have subsequently been listed under the CESA or FESA. Fully Protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no provision of the California Fish and Game code authorizes the issuance of permits or licenses to take any Fully Protected species.

Sensitive Habitats

Sensitive Natural Community is a state-wide designation given by CDFW to specific vegetation associations of ecological importance. Sensitive Natural Communities rarity and ranking involves the knowledge of range and distribution of a given type of vegetation, and the proportion of occurrences that are of good ecological integrity (CDFW 2018a). Evaluation is conducted at both the Global (G) and State (S) levels, resulting in a rank ranging from 1 for very rare and threatened to 5 for demonstrably secure. Natural Communities with ranks of S1-S3 are considered Sensitive Natural Communities in California and may need to be addressed in the environmental review processes of CEQA and its equivalents.

Environmental Setting

The project site has been subject to several biological resources assessments by Althouse and Meade as summarized below.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Author	Date	Associated Discretionary Approval	Focus of Analysis
Althouse and Meade	July, 2015	Parcel Map CO-14-0057	Document biological resources (plants, animals, habitats) for a 19-acre portion of the 28 acre project site, identify potential impacts and mitigation measures.
	November, 2023	General Plan Amendment	First addendum to the 2015 study that provides updated information regarding biological resources on a 14.6 acre portion of the 28-acre project site to determine consistency with previous findings.
	July, 2024	Tract 3193	Second addendum to the 2015 study that provides supplemental information to the first addendum relating to botanical surveys aimed at determining the presence of, and potential impacts to, listed plants.
	July, 2025	Tract 3193	Third addendum to the 2015 study that provides an analysis of potential impacts to oak woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife

These studies are incorporated herein by reference and available for review in their entirety at the Department of Planning and Building. The following is a summary of the findings and recommendations of that study.

Methodology

2015 Study and Associated Surveys

The Study Area which included the project site and a noncontiguous portion located east of HWY 101 was surveyed for biological resources on March 11, April 21, and May 28, 2015. Biological surveys were conducted on foot in order to compile species lists, to search for special status plants and animals, to map habitats, and to photograph the Study Area. The entire Study Area was surveyed.

Each habitat type occurring in the Study Area was inspected, described, and catalogued (Section 5.0 of the BRA). All plant and animal species observed in the Study Area were identified and recorded (Sections 6.0 and 7.0 of the BRA). Pedestrian transects were meandering with an emphasis on locating habitat appropriate for special status plants. Transects were also utilized to map boundaries of different vegetation types, describe general conditions and dominant species, compile species lists, and evaluate potential habitat for special status species. Identification of botanical resources included field observations and laboratory analysis of collected material. Botanical surveys were conducted in spring 2015 according to agency guidelines (United States Fish and Game 2000, California Department of Fish and Game 2009, and California Native Plant Society 2001). Botanical surveys were appropriately timed to identify all special status plant species known from the region.

2023 First Addendum to the 2015 BRA

On November 2, 2023, Althouse and Meade, Inc. conducted a biological survey of the project site. One-hundred percent visual cover was achieved by meandering transects through the Property to reassess and map boundaries of different vegetation types, describe general conditions and dominant species, compile species lists, and evaluate potential habitat for special status species. Each vegetation type occurring on the Property was inspected, described, and catalogued. A list of plants and wildlife was also documented. Identification of botanical resources included field observations and laboratory analysis of collected

material. Botanical nomenclature used in this document follows the Jepson eFlora (Jepson Flora Project 2023).

Prior to the November 2023 botanical survey, Althouse and Meade, Inc. conducted a data search from the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) On-line Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California on October 23, 2023 (CDFW 2023, CNPS 2023a).

2024 Second Addendum to the 2015 BRA

On April 3, 2024, Althouse and Meade, Inc. (A&M) conducted a botanical survey of the project site. To achieve a full floristic survey, a late spring season survey was conducted on June 3, 2024 by Ms. Heaphy to detect species with later blooming periods. Surveys were conducted on foot to compile a species list and search for special status plant species. Special status species with potential to occur on the Property included dwarf calycadenia (*Calycadenia villosa*), Douglas's spineflower (*Chorizanthe douglasii*), hogwallow starfish (*Hesperevax caulescens*), Santa Lucia dwarf rush (*Juncus luciensis*), and shining navarretia (*Navarretia nigelliformis* subsp. *radians*). All areas of the site were surveyed and suitable habitat for each rare plant species was visually examined. Identification of botanical resources included field observations and laboratory analysis of collected material. Botanical nomenclature used in this document follows the Jepson eFlora (Jepson Flora Project 2024).

Prior to the 2024 botanical surveys, A&M reviewed data from the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) On-line Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California on April 1, 2024 (CDFW 2024, CNPS 2024a). Other database searches included online museum and herbarium specimen records for locality data within San Luis Obispo County, as maintained by the Consortium of California Herbaria (CCH 2024). The data search area included the Templeton USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle and the 8 surrounding quadrangles (Adelaida, Paso Robles, Estrella, York Mountain, Creston, Morro Bay North, Atascadero, Santa Margarita). Data were reviewed according to each species potential to occur on the Property.

To determine the appropriate bloom period for shining navarretia, a reference site was visited in San Miguel. Shining navarretia was observed flowering in San Miguel on May 20, 2024.

Potential wetland habitat was assessed in the field on March 26, 2024 by A&M following recent rains while accounting for proper identification of potential hydrophytic vegetation. The approximate 0.4-acre area previously mapped in 2015 as potential wetland habitat (A&M 2015) was assessed for hydrology and wetland vegetation. Soils were not analyzed as part of this assessment.

2025 Third Addendum to the 2015 BRA

As documented in the 2024 Addendum to the 2015 Biological Report, Althouse and Meade, Inc. conducted a review of special-status plant species records from the CNDDB and the CNPS Inventory on April 1, 2024, and identified 71 special-status plant species known from the region (CDFW 2024, CNPS 2024). These species were evaluated for their potential to occur on the Property based on habitat conditions observed during field surveys and each species' documented phenology. A complete list of the species evaluated, along with habitat associations and potential to occur on site, is provided in Attachment B of the 2024 Addendum (A&M 2024).

Based on this analysis, five special-status plant species were determined to have some potential to occur on the Property: dwarf calycadenia (*Calycadenia villosa*), douglas's spineflower (*Chorizanthe douglasii*), hogwallow starfish (*Hesperevax caulescens*), Santa Lucia dwarf rush (*Juncus luciensis*), and shining navarretia (*Navarretia nigelliformis* subsp. *radians*) (A&M 2024).

To assess presence or absence, spring botanical surveys were conducted on April 3 and June 3, 2024, with timing selected to correspond to the bloom periods of these five species. The April survey targeted Douglas's spineflower, hogwallow starfish, Santa Lucia dwarf rush, and shining navarretia, while the June survey focused on late-season dwarf calycadenia. Special status plants were not detected during appropriately timed botanical surveys conducted in April and June 2024 (consistent with spring 2015 botanical survey findings), and their presence on the Property is therefore considered unlikely.

Habitats/Vegetative Communities of the Project Site

Habitat acreages and distribution of the study area included in the most recent BRA addendum (2025) are presented in Table 5 and Figure 8 and described below. It should be noted that the study area for biological resources includes the project site and areas within 50 feet of the project site.

Table 5 -- Habitat Types and Vegetative Communities of the Project Site and the Study Area

Community	Acres in the Study Area[1]	Impacted Acres
Fallow Cropland	9.5	1.14
Mixed Oak Woodland	2.3	0.02
Disturbed	2.1	0.08
Potential Wetland	0.02	0.00
Riparian	2.1	0.00
California Annual Grassland	0.7	0.00
Total:	**16.72**	**1.24**

Source: Althouse and Meade, 2025

Notes:

1. Survey area includes the project site plus a 50 foot wide area surrounding the project site.

Cropland

Annual grasses such as wild oats (*Avena fatua*) and ruderal forbs such as filaree (*Erodium* spp.) and knotweed (*Polygonum aviculare* subsp. *depressum*) are found commonly throughout. Later in the season, Salinas tarplant (*Deinandra pentactis*) and holly-leaved navarretia (*Navarretia atractyloides*) are common in the cropland habitat. Several large valley oak (*Quercus lobata*) trees are present in the cropland and grassland habitats. Intermittent patches of bare soil occur throughout the cropland. California ground squirrel burrows are locally abundant. Cattle were observed grazing in the cropland during the biological surveys.

Mixed Oak Woodland

This woodland habitat forms a contiguous canopy with the riparian habitat, and consists primarily of blue oaks. The understory is mostly unvegetated with a layer of oak leaf litter. Vegetated areas consist of annual grasses and scattered ruderal forbs such as Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*). Some native forbs such as soap plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*) are also present in clusters within the understory. Special status bird species oak titmouse and yellow-billed magpie were observed foraging in the woodland habitat and could potentially nest in the woodland habitat. Cattle were grazing in the blue oak woodland habitat in the Study Area during the 2015 biological surveys.

Disturbed/Developed

Disturbed/Developed is a term that describes areas where the land surface has been modified for infrastructure, such as paved and unpaved roads, graded areas and water tank locations. Developed lands

typically do not support vegetative cover due to the presence of impervious surfaces, however, disturbed areas that are not paved can support vegetative cover. As observed during the field survey, Developed/Disturbed areas included the eastern portion of the project site which has been cleared and covered with an all-weather surface for use as a vehicle storage area and access road.

California Annual Grassland
Annual grassland habitat is present in both the western and eastern portions of the Study Area. It consists of annual grasses such as knit grass (*Gastridium phleoides)* and wild oats, and ruderal herbs such as black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) and Spanish clover (*Acmispon americanus* var. *americanus*). This portion of the Study Area was grazed by cattle at the time of the biological surveys in 2015, which likely contributed to the proportion of ruderal species observed.

Potential Wetland
Approximately 0.02 acres of potential wetland habitat is present in two patches in the southwestern corner of the Study Area, adjacent to but outside the ephemeral drainage. This habitat consists of rocky, cobbly soil with vegetation dominated by obligate wetland species slender woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus tenellus*) with facultative species pygmyweed (*Crassula connata*) as an associate. These patches are located in areas that slope slightly toward the ephemeral drainage. Based on review of historic aerial imagery, the wetland habitat areas do not appear to form pools or hold standing water for an extended period of time.

Riparian
An unnamed ephemeral drainage enters the project site from the north and exits about the midpoint of the parcel through a culvert under Championship Lane. Approximately 2.1 acres of riparian habitat is associated with this drainage. The canopy is locally dense and consists primarily of coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*) trees. The drainage channel was dry during the spring 2015 biological surveys. In early spring, vegetation within the channel consisted of forbs typical of mesic habitats such as bowlesia (*Bowlesia incana*) and minor's lettuce (*Claytonia parviflora*). Later in the season, a patch of perennial mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) was present in the drainage channel

Habitats mapped by the 2025 BRA are shown in Figure 8.

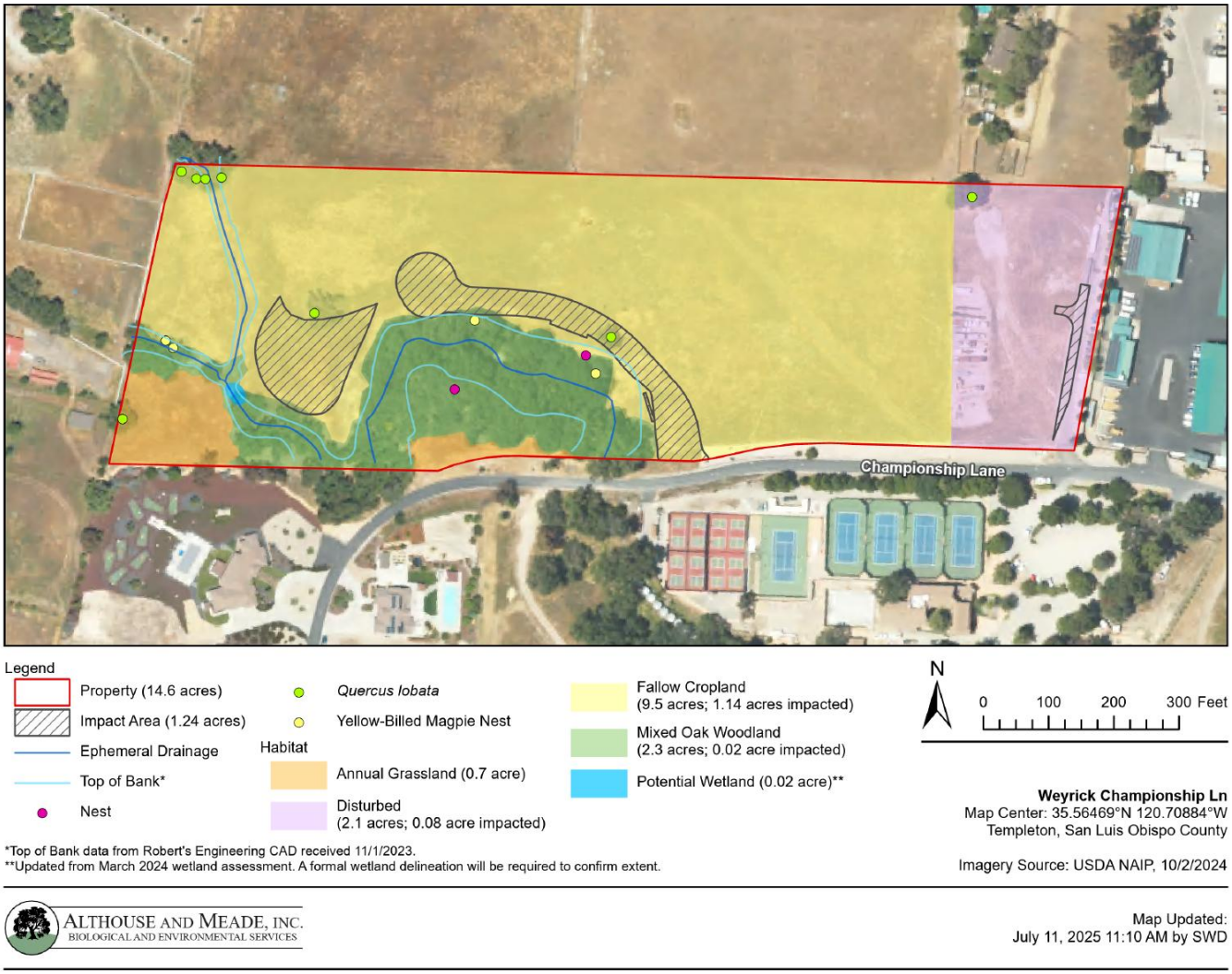

Figure 8 -- Habitats of the Project Site

Aquatic Resources

As discussed above, an unnamed ephemeral drainage enters the project site from the north and exits about the midpoint of the parcel through a culvert under Championship Lane. Approximately 2.1 acres of riparian habitat is associated with this drainage. The canopy is locally dense and consists primarily of coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*) trees. The drainage channel was dry during the spring 2015 biological surveys. In early spring, vegetation within the channel consisted of forbs typical of mesic habitats such as bowlesia (*Bowlesia incana*) and minor's lettuce (*Claytonia parviflora*). Later in the season, a patch of perennial mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) was present in the drainage channel.

A potential wetland of about 0.02 acres is located near the north end of the project site along the riparian corridor formed by the ephemeral drainage. Since this area is located outside the area of disturbance, a formal wetland delineation was not performed to determine its extent. This habitat is a dry, rocky upland site, upslope from the ephemeral drainage. Dominant plants observed during the fall 2023 survey include upland species turkey-mullein (*Croton setiger*) and soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*). The spring 2015 surveys

documented vegetation dominant with obligate wetland species slender woolly marbles (Psilocarphus tenellus), with facultative species pygmyweed (*Crassula connata*) as an associate (A&M 2015).

Special Status Resources

Special Status Wildlife Species.

Based on habitat conditions observed during field surveys conducted in 2025, and the known ecological requirements of species from the region, seven (7) special-status wildlife species have been identified as having some potential to occur on the Property. These species, along with their associated likelihood of occurrence, are summarized below.

Pallid Bat (*Antrozous pallidus)*

Pallid Bat (Antrozous pallidus) is a California Species of Special Concern. The pallid bat is a large, long-eared bat that occurs throughout the state and occupies a wide variety of habitats. Although most common in open, dry areas ideal for foraging with rocky outcrops for roosting, pallid bats are also found regularly in oak and pine woodlands where they roost in caves, mines, rock crevices, hollow trees, and in man-made structures such as bridges and attics. (Nowak et al. 1994). The closest reported occurrence of the pallid bat is approximately 4.5 miles southwest from the Property in 2000 (CNDDB #286). Due to the presence of contiguous mixed oak woodland on the Property, there is potential for pallid bats to roost on the site; however, the level of anthropogenic disturbance in the immediate area would detour pallid bats from utilizing the Property. No pallid bats were observed on the Property during the November 2023 survey and have low potential to occur.

Potential tree roosting habitat is present on the Property. However, the nearest reported occurrence of the pallid bat is approximately 4.5 miles southwest from the Property (CNDDB #286, 2000). Potential occur on the project site: Low.

Northern California Legless Lizard (*Anniella pulchra)*

Northern California Legless Lizard (Anniella pulchra) is a California Species of Special Concern that occurs from Contra Costa to Santa Barbara County. It has a Global Rank of G3 and a State Rank of S3, both of which indicate that this species is considered Vulnerable. Northern California legless lizard inhabits friable soils in a variety of habitats from coastal dunes to oak woodlands and chaparral. The closest reported occurrence of the northern California legless lizard is located approximately 1.4 miles southeast of the Property in 1989 (CNDDB #165). Abundant leaf litter in the understory of mixed oak woodland habitat is suitable for this species though soil moisture may be limited to the wet season. No northern California legless lizards were observed on the Property during the November 2023 survey however legless lizards are not typically visible until their refugia of leaf litter is disturbed, and there is moderate potential for this species to occur on the site.

Sandy or loose loamy soils under coastal scrub or oak trees. Soil moisture is essential. Suitable soil is present in blue oak woodland habitat on the Property. Nearest reported occurrence of the northern California legless lizard is approximately 1.4 miles southeast of the Property (CNDDB #165, 1989). Potential to occur on the project site: Moderate.

Lesser Slender Salamander (*Batrachoseps minor**)***

Lesser Slender Salamander (Batrachoseps minor) is designated as a Species of Special Concern by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and has a Global Rank of G1 (Critically Imperiled) and a State Rank of SI (Critically Imperiled). To be ranked as Critically Imperiled means that this species is at a very high risk of

extinction due to extreme rarity, very steep declines, and/or other factors. The range of this species is restricted to South Santa Lucia Mountains where it inhabits shaded slopes with abundant leaf litter in broadleaved upland forests consisting of tanbark oak, coast like oak, blue oak, sycamore and laurel (Jockusch et al. 2001). The closest reported occurrence of lesser slender salamander was located approximately 4.2 miles southwest of the Property in 1971 (CNDDB #4). Conditions onsite are mostly dry however there is low potential for this species to occur in the mixed oak woodland drainage during wetter years. Lesser slender salamander was not observed on the Property during 2015 or 2023 surveys but could be present.

Inhabits moist locations in forests of mixed oak, tanbark oak, sycamore & laurel above 1,300 ft (400 m). Appropriate oak woodland habitat is present on the Property, however conditions are typically dry. Potential to occur on the project site: Low.

Obscure Bumble Bee (*Bombus caliginosus*)

Obscure Bumble Bee (Bombus caliginosus) is designated by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as a Special Animal and has a Global Rank of G2G3 and a State Rank of S1S2 (NatureServe 2023a). The State Rank of S1S2 is indicative of uncertainty regarding whether this species is Critically Imperiled or Imperiled, meaning the taxon is between rare and extremely rare due to steep declines, restricted range, minimal populations (5-20 or fewer), and/or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state. The species' Global Rank indicates that it is Imperiled/Vulnerable (CDFW 2022), meaning it is at a moderate to high risk of extinction due to restricted or fairly range, with few or relatively few populations or occurrences. Obscure bumble bees inhabit open coastal grasslands and meadows with colonies occurring underground and/or in abandoned bird's nests. The closest reported occurrence is historic and was located approximately 3.2 miles southwest of the Property in 1956 (CNDDB #162). Due to the anthropogenic influence of the Property and surrounding areas, this species has low potential to occur on the site and was not detected during the November 2023 survey.

Crotch Bumble Bee (*Bombus crotchii)*

Crotch's Bumble Bee (Bombus crotchii) is designated by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as a Special Animal and is presently a Candidate for listing as Endangered under the California Endangered Species Act. Crotch's bumble bee is known from California, western Nevada, and northern Baja California, Mexico. The species inhabits open grassland and scrub habitats. Requirements for this, as well as all bumble bee species include suitable nesting sites, pollen and nectar sources, and suitable overwintering sites for the queen. Crotch's bumble bees are classified as a short-tongued species, whose food plants include Asclepias, Chaenactis, Lupinus, Medicago, Phacelia, and Salvia (Williams et al. 2014). Little is known about overwintering for this species, however in general for bumble bees, suitable overwintering sites for queens may include soft, undisturbed soils, leaf litter, or under other debris. The closest reported occurrence of Crotch's bumble bee is approximately 1.1 mile south of the Property in 1968 (CNDDB #80), however this species has been poorly documented and may be more prominent in the area than expected. Crotch's bumble bee was not observed in or around the Property during the November 2023 survey and has low potential to occur.

Food plant genera include *Antirrhinum, Phacelia, Clarkia, Dendromecon, Eschscholzia,* & *Eriogonum.* Marginally suitable grassland habitat is present on the Property. Eschscholzia documented on the Property. Nearest reported occurrence of Crotch bumble bee is approximately 1.1 miles south of the Property (CNDDB #80, 1968). Potential to occur on the project site: Low.

Monterey Dusky-Footed Woodrat (*Neotoma macrotis Luciana)*

Monterey Dusky-footed Woodrat (Neotoma macrotis luciana) is a California Species of Special Concern (CDFW 2018) and has a Global Rank of G5T3 (rounded status of T3 — Vulnerable) and a State Rank of S3 (Vulnerable) (NatureServe 2023b). According to NatureServe, this species is threatened by habitat loss due to coastal development. However, a significant portion of its range is protected by the Los Padres National Forest, and the species seems to respond favorably to restoration of riparian habitats (NatureServe 2023b). Its range extends from the Santa Lucia Mountains in Monterey Bay to Morro Bay and northwestern San Luis Obispo County (Wilson and Ruff 1999; CNDDB 2018). Monterey dusky-footed woodrat occurs in broadleaved upland forest and chaparral with moderate canopy and moderate to dense understory. It constructs nests using grass, leaves, sticks, feathers, etc. The closest reported occurrence of Monterey dusky-footed woodrat is approximately 0.7 miles northwest of the Property in 1997 (CNDDB #1). Trap and release efforts are the truest means for identifying wood rat species and it is assumed that woodrats in the area are likely this special status species. No woodrat middens or their signs were detected on the Property during the November 2023 survey, reducing their potential to occur on the site.

Appropriate woodland habitat is present on the Property, but no woodrat middens were detected during fall surveys. Nearest reported occurrence of Monterey dusky-footed woodrat is approximately 0.65 miles northwest of the Property (CNDDB #1, 1997). Potential to occur on the project site: Low.

Yellow-billed Magpie (*Pica nuttallii)*

Yellow-billed Magpie (Pica nuttallii) is a Special Animal that is endemic to the California's Central Valley, Coast Ranges, and Sierra Nevada foothills. It is a year-round resident of oak savannah and open oak woodlands, where it lives and breeds in communal groups. Nests are large, dome-like structures and typically placed high up in a large tree, often on top of a clump of mistletoe (Kaufmann 2005). Yellow-billed magpies and their nests were mapped on the Property during wildlife surveys conducted in 2015 and 2023 and are likely to continue use of the mixed oak woodland and valley oak trees on site.

Observed foraging in mixed oak woodland and single valley oak trees in fallow cropland habitat. Observed nesting on Property during spring 2015 surveys, with inactive nests detected in fall 2023, outside of nesting season. Nearest reported occurrence of the Yellow-billed magpie is located approximately .32 miles southwest of the Property (eBird 2025, Jacqueline Knowlton).

American Badger (*Taxidea taxus*)

American Badger (Taxidea taxus) is a California Species of Special Concern with a widespread range across the state (Brehme et. al. 2015, CDFW 2014). It is a permanent but uncommon resident in all parts of California, except for forested regions of the far northwestern corner, and is more abundant in dry, open areas of most shrub and forest habitats (CDFW 2014). American badger requires friable soil in order to dig burrows for cover and breeding. The main food source for the species is fossorial rodents, mainly ground squirrels and pocket gophers (CDFW 2014). The breeding season for badgers is in summer and early fall, and females give birth to litters usually in March and April (CDFW 2014). The closest reported occurrence of the American badger is located approximately 0.82 mile north of the Property in 2003 (CNDDB #23). Due to the anthropogenic influence of the Property and surrounding areas, and fragmentation of suitable denning habitat, American badger has a moderate potential to occur and could be present at varying times of year.

Critical Habitats and Special Status Natural Communities

No designated critical habitat for federally listed plant or animal species occurs on the site or in adjacent areas. There are no vernal pools present on the project site or vicinity.

Special-status Plant Species

As documented in the 2024 Addendum to the 2015 Biological Report, Althouse and Meade, Inc. conducted a review of special-status plant species records from the CNDDB and the CNPS Inventory on April 1, 2024, and identified 71 special-status plant species known from the region (CDFW 2024, CNPS 2024). These species were evaluated for their potential to occur on the Property based on habitat conditions observed during field surveys and each species' documented phenology. A complete list of the species evaluated, along with habitat associations and potential to occur on site, is provided in Attachment B of the 2024 Addendum (A&M 2024).

Based on this analysis, five special-status plant species were determined to have some potential to occur on the Property: dwarf calycadenia (*Calycadenia villosa*), douglas's spineflower (*Chorizanthe douglasii*), hogwallow starfish (*Hesperevax caulescens*), Santa Lucia dwarf rush (*Juncus luciensis*), and shining navarretia (*Navarretia nigelliformis* subsp. *radians*) (A&M 2024).

Dwarf Calycadenia (*Calycadenia villosa*)
Dwarf Calycadenia (Calycadenia villosa) is a CRPR 1B.1 species known to occur in chaparral, cismontane woodland, meadows and seep habitats in rocky areas with fine soils between 240- and 1,350-meters elevation. It is an annual herb that typically blooms between May and October. The rocky annual grassland, fallow cropland and woodland habitats on the Property are moderately suitable for this species, although it is unlikely to occur due to disturbed conditions and historic record occurrences in the area. The closest known record is historic and is located 1.1 mile east of the Property in 1956 (CNDDB #2). Dwarf calycadenia was not detected on the Property during the November 2023 survey, however an appropriately timed spring survey is recommended to confirm species presence or absence.

Douglas' Spinetflower (*Chorizanthe douglasii*)
Douglas' Spinetflower (Chorizanthe douglasii) is a CRPR 4.3 species endemic known to occur on sandy or gravelly soils in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and lower montane coniferous forests habitats between 55- and 1600-meters elevation. It is an annual herb that typically blooms between April and July. The gravelly substrate on the Property may be suitable for this species, although it is unlikely to occur due to disturbed conditions and the site is not the known type locality for this species. The closest known record is 10.6 miles south of the Property in 1998 (CCH2 UC1971787). Douglas' Spineflower was not detected on the Property during the November 2023 survey, however an appropriately timed spring survey is recommended to confirm species presence or absence.

Hogwallow Starfish (*Hesperevax caulescens*)
Hogwallow Starfish (Hesperevax caulescens) is a CRPR 4.2 species known to occur on clay soils and mesic sites in grassland and vernal pool habitats between 0- and 505-meters elevation. It is an annual herb that typically blooms between March and June. The potential wetland habitat on the Property may be suitable for this species, although it is unclear whether this habitat meets qualifying wetland characteristics due to its upland conditions. The closest known record 13.1 miles north of the Property in 2001 (CCH2 UC1927807). Hogwallow Starfish was not detected on the Property during the November 2023 survey, however an appropriately timed spring survey is recommended to confirm species presence or absence.

Santa Lucia Dwarf Rush (*Juncus luciensis*)
Santa Lucia Dwarf Rush (Juncus luciensis) is a CRPR 1B.2 species endemic to coastal California. It is known to occur in meadows, seeps, vernal pools, chaparral, Great Basin scrub and lower montane coniferous forest between 300- and 2,040-meters elevation. It is an annual herb that typically blooms between April and July. The ephemeral drainages, shallow ditches, and potential wetlands on the Property may be suitable to support this species, although it is unlikely to occur due to historic records and was not found during 2015 surveys. The closest known record is 5.8 miles east of the Property in 1958 (CCH2 SBBG18411). Santa Lucia Dwarf Rush was not detected on the Property during the November 2023 survey; however, an appropriately timed spring survey is recommended to confirm species presence or absence.

Shining Navarretia (*Navarretia nigelliformis* subsp. *radians*)
Shining Navarretia (Navarretia nigelliformis subsp. radians) is a CRPR 1B.2 subspecies known to occur in vernal pools, grassland, and cismontane woodland habitats, often on clay and alkaline sites between 65- and 1,000-meters elevation. It is an annual herb that typically blooms between (March) April and July. Marginally appropriate habitat and substrate is present in the California annual grassland, potential wetland, and fallow cropland habitats on the Property, and this species has moderate potential to occur on the site. The closest known record is 9.3 miles east of the Property in 2008 (CCH2 OBI127011). Shining navarretia was not detected on the Property during the November 2023 survey, however an appropriately timed spring survey is recommended to confirm species presence or absence.

Discussion

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

Special-Status Plants

To assess presence or absence, spring botanical surveys were conducted on April 3 and June 3, 2024, with timing selected to correspond to the bloom periods of these five species. The April survey targeted Douglas's spineflower, hogwallow starfish, Santa Lucia dwarf rush, and shining navarretia, while the June survey focused on late-season dwarf calycadenia. Special status plants were not detected during appropriately timed botanical surveys conducted in April and June 2024 (consistent with spring 2015 botanical survey findings), and their presence on the Property is therefore considered unlikely. Therefore, based on the results of a suitably timed plant survey, project impacts to special status plant species are considered *less than significant*.

Special Status Wildlife

As discussed in the setting, above, several special status wildlife species have potential to occur on the project site that may directly or indirectly impacted by construction activities and subsequent occupation of the site by residents.

Reptiles

Lesser Slender Salamander and California legless lizard
Lesser slender salamander could be present in the woodland habitat, or under logs and debris anywhere on the Property. California legless lizards could be present in the leaf litter of the oak woodland. Either species could be disturbed or crushed by construction activities. With

implementation of mitigation measure BIO-14, these impacts are considered *less than significant with mitigation.*

Mammals

Pallid Bat

Roosting bats and/or maternal bat colonies may be present in trees and snags with appropriate cavities or loose bark. The breeding season for bats is April to October. Project activities such as tree removal and trimming could result in direct impact to bats through injury or mortality. Impacts may also occur through the introduction of artificial light which can alter behavior of bats, their prey, and make them more susceptible to predators such as owls. With implementation of mitigation measure BIO-8, BIO-9, and BIO-10, these impacts are considered *less than significant with mitigation.*

American badger

American badger has potential to occur in the Study Area, and the proposed project could potentially impact American badger. No American badgers or sign of this species were observed within the Study Area during any of the field surveys, however because of their transient nature, American badger could forage or den within the Study Area at the time of construction even though they were not found on the site previously. With implementation of mitigation measure BIO-12, these impacts are considered *less than significant with mitigation.*

Invertebrates

Crotch Bumble Bee

California annual grassland, fallow cropland, and disturbed habitats on the Property are suitable habitats to support nesting and foraging Crotch's bumblebee. Miniature lupines, narrow-leaf milkweed and California burclover were observed during the 2024 survey however no individuals of Crotch's bumblebee have been observed. Additionally, queens may overwinter on site. Grading and vegetation removal could result in direct impact to animals through mortality of foraging or overwintering animals, or by crushing or destruction of nests. Indirect impacts may occur as a result of decreased food availability through removal of nectar and pollen sources. As a candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act, activities that have potential to impact Crotch's bumble bee. With implementation of mitigation measure BIO-11, these impacts are considered *less than significant with mitigation.*

Based on the preceding analysis, project impacts to listed wildlife species are considered *less than significant with mitigation*.

(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 Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

One potential jurisdictional aquatic feature, an ephemeral stream, is present within the Study Area and one potential wetland is located within the riparian corridor of this feature. No development is proposed within 50 feet of the ephemeral drainage. However, these resources could be indirectly impacted by grading and construction activities. Therefore , with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2, BIO-6 and BIO-7, these impacts are considered *less than significant with mitigation.*

(c) *Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

There are no vernal pool resources within the area of disturbance or on nearby properties that would be impacted by the project. However, as discussed above under item (b), one potential wetland is located within the riparian corridor of the ephemeral drainage and these resources could be indirectly impacted by grading and construction activities. Therefore , with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2, BIO-6 and BIO-7, these impacts are considered *less than significant with mitigation.*

(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?*

Wildlife Corridors

Wildlife corridors and habitat connectivity are important for the movement of wildlife between different populations and habitats. Wildlife movement corridors are defined as areas that connect suitable wildlife habitat areas in a region otherwise fragmented by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. Natural features such as canyon drainages, ridgelines, or areas with vegetation cover provide corridors for wildlife travel. Wildlife movement corridors are important because they provide access to mates, food, and water; allow the dispersal of individuals away from high population density areas; and facilitate the exchange of genetic traits between populations (Beier and Loe 1992).

The Study Area is partially contiguous to open space to the north; however, the site does not function as a wildlife corridor because it is surrounded by urban development to the west, south and east. Oak woodland habitat and the ephemeral drainage offer cover and provide some opportunity for wildlife movement. However, the Project does not introduce significant features that would be expected to affect wildlife movement through surrounding natural habitats and impacts to wildlife movement are considered *less than significant*.

Migratory Nesting Birds and Sensitive Avian Species
Migratory non-game native bird species are protected by international treaty under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (50 C.F.R. Section 10.13). Sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibit take (as defined therein) of all native birds and their active nests, including raptors and other migratory non-game birds (as listed under the Federal MBTA). Native bird species, protected under the MBTA are likely to nest within the Study Area during the nesting season (generally March 1 through August 15).

Yellow-billed magpies may nest in oak trees on or adjacent to the property and could be directly impacted if trees are removed during the nesting season or indirectly impacted by construction noise leading to nest abandonment. Potential impacts to these special status animals can be avoided.

Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-13, these impacts are considered *less than significant with mitigation.*

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

Impacts to, or removal of, mature oak trees (i.e., greater than six inches in diameter at breast height [DBH]) or oak woodland habitat is evaluated under CEQA. As a CEQA Lead Agency, the County of San Luis Obispo currently applies a 4:1 mitigation ratio for removed trees and a 2:1 mitigation ratio for impacted trees.

Impacts to oak trees may include trimming, compaction, or excavation within the critical root zone and placement of year-round or summer watering within the critical root zone. trimming and/or disturbance within the critical root zone of several trees may be required. Impacts to and removal of individual oak trees and oak woodland habitat are protected under CEQA via Senate Bill 1334 (Kuehl Bill) and California Public Resources Code 21083.4.

Based on the current plans, no construction will occur within the oak woodland; however, indirect impacts may occur and mitigation for impacts will be implemented through best management practices (BMPs) to protect the retained oaks surrounding the Project footprint as well as individual tree protection measures. Mitigation for individual trees that are proposed for removal and/or Critical Root Zone (CRZ) impacts will be implemented through tree protection measures.

Desktop review of access road improvements show potential for one valley oak (*Quercus lobata*) tree to be removed, and CRZs of other adjacent oak trees may be impacted during grading.

Therefore , with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-3, BIO-4, and BIO-5, these impacts are considered *less than significant with mitigation.*

(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?

The project is not located within an area subject to an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted plan and there would be *no impact.*

Conclusion

Upon implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-14 potential impacts to biological resources would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation

BIO-1 Environmental Awareness Training. An environmental awareness training shall be presented to all construction personnel by a qualified biologist prior to the start of any project activities. The training shall include color photographs and a description of the ecology of all special-status species known or with potential to occur on site, as well as other sensitive resources requiring avoidance near the project site. The training shall include a description of protection measures required by discretionary permits, an overview of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts, and implications of noncompliance with these regulations. The biologist will provide an overview of the required avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. A sign-in sheet with the name and signature of the qualified biologist who presented the training, and the names and signatures of the environmental awareness trainees will be kept. A fact sheet conveying the information provided in the environmental awareness training will be provided to all project personnel and anyone else who

may enter the project site. Prior to issuance of grading or construction permits, the applicant shall provide a copy of a contract with an approved/qualified biologist and a scope of work which includes, at a minimum, the conduct of environmental awareness training and ongoing monitoring as outlined in the adopted list of mitigation measures. Prior to ground disturbance and following conclusion of the awareness training, the project biologist shall provide a copy of the completed attendance sign-in sheet, and the required fact sheet, to the County.

BIO-2 Site Maintenance and General Operations - The following measures are required to minimize impacts during active construction and ongoing operations. All measures applicable during construction shall be included on project plans. All measures applicable to operation shall be clearly posted on-site in a location(s) visible to workers and anyone visiting the site:

- All work activities shall be completed during daylight hours (between sunrise and sunset) and outside of rain events.
- The Project impact area shall be clearly marked or delineated with stakes, flagging, tape, or signage prior to work. Areas outside of work limits shall be considered environmentally sensitive and shall not be disturbed.
- All equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained daily to prevent spills of fuel, oil, and other hazardous materials. A designated staging area shall be established for vehicle/equipment parking and storage of fuel, lubricants, and solvents. All fueling and maintenance activities shall take place in the staging area.
- The use of heavy equipment and vehicles shall be limited to the proposed project limits and defined staging areas/access points. The boundaries of each work area shall be clearly defined and marked with high visibility fencing (e.g., t-posts and yellow rope) and/or flagging. No work or travel shall occur outside these limits.
- Project plans, drawings, and specifications shall show the boundaries of all work areas on site and the location of erosion and sediment controls, limit delineation, and other pertinent measures to ensure the protection of sensitive habitat areas and associated resources.
- Staging of equipment and materials shall occur in designated areas at least 100 feet from aquatic habitat (e.g., swales, drainages, ponds, vernal pools, if identified on site).
- Secondary containment such as drip pans shall be used to prevent leaks and spills of potential contaminants.
- Washing of concrete, paint, or equipment, and refueling and maintenance of equipment shall occur only in designated staging areas. These activities will occur at a minimum of 100 feet from sensitive habitat. Sandbags and/or absorbent pads and spill control kits shall always be available on site to clean up and contain fuel spills and other contaminants.
- Construction equipment shall be inspected by the operator daily to ensure that equipment is in good working order and no fuel or lubricant leaks are present.

- Plastic monofilament netting (erosion control matting) or similar material will not be used on site due to the potential to entangle special-status wildlife. Acceptable substitutes are coconut coir matting, biodegradable fiber rolls, or tackified hydroseeding compounds.
- The use of pesticides (including rodenticides) and herbicides on the property shall be in compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations to avoid primary and secondary poisoning of sensitive species that may be using the site.
- After completion of the project's construction, all protective fencing/flagging used to delineate sensitive biological resources shall be removed from the project area and disposed of in appropriate waste receptacles or reused.

BIO-3 Oak Tree Protection. To the maximum extent feasible, impacts to oak trees and oak woodland habitat shall be avoided and minimized. The following measures shall be implemented and included on the project plans:

- Grading and/or construction plans shall provide a 'Native Tree (Oak) Inventory' that accurately identifies the canopy edge and trunk locations of all native trees within 25 feet of the proposed project limits (including ancillary elements, such as trenching); For each of the trees shown, they shall be marked with one of the following 1) to be removed, 2) to be impacted, or 3) to remain intact/protected. This should be noted as the "Native Tree Impact Plan". Trees identified as 'impacted' or 'to remain protected' shall be marked in the field as such and protected to the extent possible.
- Impacts to the oak canopy or sensitive root zone shall be avoided to the extent feasible. Impacts may include pruning, ground disturbance, or placement of impervious surfaces (e.g., asphalt, permanent structures) within the sensitive root zone; installation of year-round irrigation or other supplemental water within the sensitive root zone; and trunk damage.
- Prior to ground-breaking, tree protection fencing shall be installed as close to the outer limit of the sensitive root zone as practicable for construction operations to protect trees located within 50 feet of construction that will be preserved. The fencing shall be in place throughout the duration of construction. Plastic orange safety fencing shall not be used as it may entangle wildlife. Other demarcation such as t-posts and yellow rope are adequate. Protective measures shall be visible to work crews and be able to remain in good working order for the duration of the construction work. Waterproof signage at protective edge is recommended (e.g., "TREE PROTECTION AREA – STAY OUT"). Grading, trenching, compaction of soil, construction material/equipment storage, or placement of fill shall not occur within these protected areas.
- All construction activity shall occur outside delineation fencing installed for protection of oak trees.
- A licensed arborist or qualified botanist shall be hired to oversee all removal or trimming of existing roots and necessary branch trimming. To minimize impacts from tree trimming, the following approach shall be used:
    - Removal of larger lower branches shall be minimized to 1) avoid making tree top heavy and more susceptible to "blow-overs" (due to wind), 2) to reduce the number of large limb cuts that take longer to heal and are much more susceptible to disease and infestation, 3) to

retain the wildlife that is found only in the lower branches, 4) retain shade to keep summer temperatures cooler (retains higher soil moisture, creates greater passive solar potential, provides better conditions for oak seedling volunteers) and 5) retain the natural shape of the tree.

- If trimming is unavoidable, no more than 10% of the oak canopy shall be removed.
- If trimming is done, either a certified arborist will be used, or trimming techniques accepted by the International Society of Arboriculture will be used. Unless a hazardous or unsafe situation exists, trimming will be done only during the winter for deciduous species.

- Care shall be taken to avoid surface roots within the top 18 inches of soil. If any roots are exposed during construction, they shall be covered with a layer of soil to match existing topography.
- Impacts to oak trees shall be assessed by a licensed arborist or qualified botanist prior to final inspection and reported to the County.

BIO-4 Oak Tree Mitigation. For oak tree removals or impacts during project implementation, the applicant shall provide mitigation (on site if feasible) per the County's guidelines, typically 4:1 for removals and 2:1 for impacted trees. This shall include development of an oak tree mitigation plan and establishment of an oak tree planting site or conservation easement that shall be protected in perpetuity. A mitigation plan shall be prepared by a licensed arborist or qualified biologist that details the methods and requirements for oak tree mitigation. At a minimum, the plan shall:

- Include a detailed inventory of the species and quantity of all oak trees to be removed or impacted.
- Discuss the proposed construction methods, construction schedule, and the implementation schedule of activities proposed as part of the plan.
- Quantify and describe the anticipated impacts to individual oak trees and/or oak woodland habitat, as applicable.
- Identify all appropriate methods for fulfillment of required mitigation (e.g., on-site plantings, conservation easement, or in-lieu fee).
- Describe detailed planting methods, as appropriate. Replacement trees shall be of one-gallon size of local origin, and of the same species as was impacted. Replacement trees shall be seasonally maintained (browse protection, weed reduction and irrigation, as needed) and monitored annually for at least seven years.
- Identify suitable areas for establishment of new oak trees and/or protection of existing oak woodland habitat, as appropriate.
- Describe short-term and long-term monitoring protocols and/or vegetative growth performance criteria for mitigation success.
- The plan shall be prepared by a licensed arborist or qualified botanist and be submitted to the County for approval prior to the start of construction.

BIO-5 **Impacts to the oak canopies or critical root zones (CRZ)** shall be avoided where practicable. Impacts include pruning, any ground disturbance within the dripline or CRZ of the tree (whichever distance is greater), and trunk damage. The CRZ radius is determined using ratio of 1.5 feet for every inch of DBH. For example, a tree with a 10- inch DBH has a 15-foot radius CRZ.

BIO-6 **Prior to issuance of grading permits**, the applicant shall provide evidence to the County that either no jurisdictional areas will be impacted or that any necessary authorizations from the United States Army Corps of Engineers, State Water Resource Control Board, and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife have been issued.

BIO-7 **Protection of Jurisdictional Waters.** In addition to BIO-2 and HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, the following recommendations are provided to protect drainages and aquatic resources from indirect impacts.

- Project construction shall comply with County Code Title 19.11 Stormwater Management.
- A minimum 50-foot setback from the top of bank or upland edge of any potentially jurisdictional wetland or water shall be maintained throughout all phases of construction and operation. This buffer shall be clearly demarcated in project plans and protected with temporary fencing during construction. No grading, trenching, or equipment staging shall occur within this buffer without agency review and approval.
- Construction activity within 100 feet of drainages shall occur only when conditions are dry.
- To prevent erosion and sedimentation into jurisdictional waters during construction, an erosion and sedimentation control plan shall be developed and implemented. It shall outline Best Management Practices for temporary stabilization. Acceptable stabilization methods include the use of weed-free, natural fiber (i.e., non-monofilament) rolls, jute or coir netting, and/or other industry standard materials. Erosion control devices shall be installed and maintained for the duration of the project.

BIO-8 **Pre-construction survey for bats**. A pre-construction survey shall be completed within 7 days prior to removal or trimming of any tree over 10-inches DBH (including dead trees and snags) to determine if they harbor sensitive bat species or maternal bat colonies. If a non-maternal roost is found, the qualified biologist may install one-way valves or other appropriate passive relocation method.

BIO-9. **Bat eviction plan**. If a bat roost is detected during the maternal season, a minimum 50- foot no-disturbance buffer will be maintained. For roosts that require removal during the non-maternal season, a one-way valve will be placed over the occupied access point to allow bats to safely leave and prohibit reentry.

BIO-10 Reduce Light Impact to Nocturnal species. The following measures shall be implemented for temporary and permanent light sources to minimize potential light impacts to bats and other nocturnal wildlife:

1. Use the lowest intensity lighting appropriate for the task
2. Light only the area intended – keep lights directed and shielded to avoid light spill.

BIO-11 A focused survey for Crotch's bumble bee shall be performed by a qualified biologist following the guidance set forth in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Candidate Bumble Bee Species (June 6, 2023). This includes at least 3 surveys during the Colony Active Period of April – August. If Crotch's bumble bee is detected during the survey the applicant shall consult with CDFW on recommendations for impact avoidance and/or take authorization through acquisition of an Incidental Take Permit, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 subdivision (b).

BIO-12 Badger pre-construction survey. A pre-construction survey shall be conducted within thirty days of beginning work on the site to identify if badgers are using the site. The results of the survey shall be sent to the project manager and the County of San Luis Obispo. If the pre-construction survey finds potential badger dens, they shall be inspected to determine whether they are occupied. The survey shall cover the entire Study Area and shall examine both old and new dens. If potential badger dens are too long to completely inspect from the entrance, a fiber optic scope shall be used to examine the den to the end. Inactive dens may be excavated by hand with a shovel to prevent reuse of dens during construction. If badgers are found in dens on the Property between February and July, nursing young may be present. To avoid disturbance and the possibility of direct take of adults and nursing young, and to prevent badgers from becoming trapped in burrows during construction activity, no grading shall occur within 100 feet of active badger dens between February and July. Between July 1st and February 1st all potential badger dens shall be inspected to determine if badgers are present. During the winter badgers do not truly hibernate but are inactive and asleep in their dens for several days at a time. Because they can be torpid during the winter, they are vulnerable to disturbances that may collapse their dens before they rouse and emerge. Therefore, surveys shall be conducted for badger dens throughout the year. If badger dens are found within the Study Area during the pre-construction survey, the CDFW wildlife biologist for the area shall be contacted to review current allowable management practices.

Construction activities shall not commence within the exclusion area until the badger has moved of its own accord. A preconstruction survey letter report shall be submitted to the lead agency for review within one week after completion of the survey.

BIO-13 Nesting bird surveys. Within one week of ground disturbance activities, if work occurs between March 1 and August 30, nesting bird surveys shall be conducted to determine whether yellow-billed magpie or other bird species protected under the MBTA are nesting within or adjacent to the construction zone. If surveys do not locate nesting birds, construction activities may be conducted. If nesting birds are located, no construction activities shall occur within 100 feet of nests until chicks are fledged. A pre-construction survey report shall be submitted to the lead agency immediately upon completion of the survey. The report shall detail appropriate fencing or flagging of the buffer zone and make recommendations on additional monitoring requirements. A map of the Project site and nest locations shall be included with the report. The Project biologist conducting the nesting

survey shall have the authority to reduce or increase the recommended buffer depending upon site conditions.

BIO-14 Preconstruction Survey and Monitoring for Special-status Reptiles. A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey immediately prior to the start of work within 50 feet of suitable habitat for Northern California legless lizard and lesser salamander. The scope of the survey shall be determined by a qualified biologist and shall be sufficient to determine presence or absence in the project areas. Construction monitoring shall also be conducted by a qualified biologist during all initial ground disturbing and vegetation removal activities (e.g., grading, grubbing, vegetation trimming, or vegetation removal including tree removal) within suitable habitat. With approval from CDFW, if Northern California legless lizards are discovered during surveys and monitoring, they will be hand captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside the area of impact. If the focused survey results are negative, a letter report shall be submitted to the County, and no further action shall be required. If legless lizards are found to be present in the proposed work areas the following steps shall be taken:

- Legless lizards shall be captured by hand by the project biologist and relocated to an appropriate location well outside the project areas.
- Construction monitoring shall be required for all new ground-breaking activities located within legless lizard habitat.
- Construction monitors shall capture and relocate horned lizards as specified above. A letter report shall be submitted to the County and CDFW within 30 days of legless lizard relocation, or as directed by CDFW.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

Setting

San Luis Obispo County possesses a rich and diverse cultural heritage and has an abundance of historic and prehistoric cultural resources dating as far back as 9,000 B.C. The County protects and manages cultural resources in accordance with the provisions detailed by CEQA and local ordinances.

As defined by CEQA, a historical resource includes:

1. A resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).
2. Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant. The architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural records of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence.

The COSE identifies and maps anticipated culturally sensitive areas and historic resources within the county and establishes goals, policies, and implementation strategies to identify and protect areas, sites, and buildings having architectural, historical, Native American, or cultural significance.

Discussion

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

The project site has no structures or other improvements and is not associated with an important historical location or event as defined by section 15064.5. Therefore, the project would result in *no impacts* associated with an adverse change in the significance of a historical resources.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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

The project site does not possess any natural or human-produced features that are normally associated with the native peoples of the central coast of California. The site is not subject to the Archaeology combining designation and there are no known resources on surrounding properties.

There is always the possibility, however remote, that significant cultural resources could lie buried below the surface. Therefore, if artifacts, burials, or other indicators of significant cultural resources are encountered during grading or other earth-moving construction activities, work should stop immediately and a qualified archaeologist should be called to the site to evaluate the find and suggest mitigation measures, if necessary.

Based on the preceding analysis, impacts related to a substantial adverse change in the significance of archaeological resources would be *less than significant*.

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

Based on existing conditions, buried human remains are not expected to be present in the area proposed for development. In the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, California State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and LUO 22.10.040 (Archaeological Resources) require that no further disturbances shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. With adherence to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and County LUO, impacts related to the unanticipated disturbance of archaeological resources and human remains would be reduced to less than significant; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

No historic or cultural resources are present on the project site. Adherence with County LUO standards and State Health and Safety Code procedures would reduce potential impacts. Accordingly, impacts related to a substantial adverse change in the significance of archaeological resources would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation

None required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

VI. ENERGY

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

Setting

The Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) is the primary electricity provider for urban and rural communities within San Luis Obispo County. Approximately 38% of electricity provided by PG&E is sourced from renewable sources and an additional 43% is sourced from non-renewable GHG-free resources (PG&E 2024).

PG&E offers two programs through which consumers may purchase electricity from renewable sources: the Solar Choice program and the Regional Renewable Choice program. Under the Solar Choice program, a customer remains on their existing electric rate plan and pays a modest additional fee on a per kilowatt-hour (kWh) basis for clean solar power. The fee depends on the type of service, rate plan, and enrollment level. Customers may choose to have 50% or 100% of their monthly electricity usage to be generated via solar projects. The Regional Renewable Choice program enables customers to subscribe to renewable energy from a specific community-based project within PG&E's service territory. The Regional Renewable Choice program allows a customer to purchase between 25% and 100% of their annual usage from renewable sources.

The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) is the primary provider of natural gas for urban and rural communities within San Luis Obispo County. SoCalGas has committed to replacing 20% of its traditional natural gas supply with renewable natural gas by 2030 (Sempra 2019).

Local Energy Plans and Policies

The COSE establishes goals and policies that aim to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), conserve water, increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, and reduce GHG emissions. This element provides the basis and direction for the development of the County's EnergyWise Plan (EWP), which outlines in greater detail the County's strategy to reduce government and community-wide GHG emissions through a number of goals, measures, and actions, including energy efficiency and development and use of renewable energy resources.

State Building Code Requirements

The California Building Code (CBC) contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvement to real property. The CBC includes mandatory green building standards for residential and nonresidential structures, the most recent version of which are referred to as the *2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards*. These standards focus on four key areas: smart residential photovoltaic systems, updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to the exterior and vice versa), residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements, and non-residential lighting requirements. While the CBC has strict energy and green-building standards, U-occupancy structures (such as greenhouses used for cultivation activities) are typically not regulated by these standards.

Vehicle Fuel Economy Standards

In October 2012, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHSTA), on behalf of the Department of Transportation, issued final rules to further reduce GHG emissions and improve corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards for light duty vehicles for model years 2017 and beyond. NHTSA's CAFE standards have been enacted under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act since 1978. This national program requires automobile manufacturers to build a single light-duty national fleet that meets all requirements under both federal programs and the standards of California and other states. This program would increase fuel economy to the equivalent of 54.5 miles per gallon (mpg) limiting vehicle emissions to 163 grams of carbon dioxide (CO_2) per mile for the fleet of cars and light-duty trucks by the model year 2025.

As part California's overall approach to reducing pollution from all vehicles, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has established standards for clean gasoline and diesel fuels and fuel economies of new vehicles. CARB has also put in place innovative programs to drive the development of low-carbon, renewable, and alternative fuels such as their Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) Program pursuant to California Assembly Bill (AB) 32 and the Governor's Executive Order S-01-07.

In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars Program which combines the control of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) missions and criteria air pollutants, as well as requirements for greater numbers of zero-emission vehicles, into a single package of standards for vehicle model years 2017 through 2025. The new rules strengthen the GHG standard for 2017 models and beyond. This will be achieved through existing technologies, the use of stronger and lighter materials, and more efficient drivetrains and engines. The program's zero-emission vehicle regulation, the Advanced Clean Cars II rule, establishes a year-by-year roadmap so that by 2035 100% of new cars and light trucks sold in California will be zero-emission vehicles, including plug-in hybrid electric vehicles. The regulation realizes and codifies the light-duty vehicle goals set forth in Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-79-20.

The program also includes a clean fuels outlet regulation designed to support the commercialization of zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell vehicles planned by vehicle manufacturers by 2015 by requiring increased numbers of hydrogen fueling stations throughout the state. The number of stations will grow as vehicle manufacturers sell more fuel cell vehicles. By 2025, when the rules will be fully implemented, the statewide fleet of new cars and light trucks will emit 34 percent fewer global warming gases and 75 percent fewer smog-forming emissions than the statewide fleet in 2016 (CARB 2016).

All self-propelled off-road diesel vehicles 25 horsepower (hp) or greater used in California and most two-engine vehicles (except on-road two-engine sweepers) are subject to the CARB's Regulation for In-Use Off-

Road Diesel Fueled Fleets (Off-Road regulation). This includes vehicles that are rented or leased (rental or leased fleets). The overall purpose of the Off-Road regulation is to reduce emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) and particulate matter (PM) from off-road diesel vehicles operating within California through the implementation of standards including, but not limited to, limits on idling, reporting and labeling of off-road vehicles, limitations on use of old engines, and performance requirements.

Discussion

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

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

Construction Activities

During construction activities, fossil fuels, electricity, and natural gas would be used by construction vehicles and equipment. The energy consumed during construction would be temporary in nature and would be typical of other similar construction activities in the county. Based on the size and scope of proposed earthwork and building construction, the project would not have the potential to result in adverse environmental impacts through its use of diesel fuel for construction equipment, except as it relates to diesel exhaust (See Section III Air Quality). In addition, project contractors save costs by avoiding the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, such as idling. Therefore, potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the consumption of energy resources during construction would be avoided and project construction activities would not result in a conflict with a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, project construction impacts associated with energy use would be *less than significant.*

Project Operations

Electricity and Natural Gas Use. There are no occupied buildings or accessory structures on the project site. The project's operational electricity needs would be met by a connection to PG&E infrastructure. Natural gas is provided by PG&E.

The CBC 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards include mandatory energy efficiency standards. A new single family residence is subject to compliance with these standards. Lastly, the new residences will be required to comply with the relevant provisions of the 2022 California Green Building Code and the County of San Luis Obispo's Green Building Ordinance.

Therefore, project impacts associated with electricity and natural gas use are considered *less than significant* and *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Fuel Use. Ongoing occupation of the project would result in fuel use associated with motor vehicle trips generated by residential occupancy. All vehicles used by residents would be subject to applicable state and federal fuel economy standards and State-mandated smog inspections.

Based on adherence to applicable state and federal vehicle fuel regulations and the size and scope of proposed activities, project fuel use would not result in a potentially significant environmental impact and would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary.

Therefore, potential impacts associated with potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources and potential conflict with state or local plans regarding renewable energy or energy efficiency would be *less than significant.* and *less than cumulatively considerable.*

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Conclusion

The project would not result in a potentially significant energy demand and inefficient energy use during long-term operations that would be considered wasteful, inefficient and unnecessary. Potential impacts related to energy would be *less than significant* and *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

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

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(f)	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The project site consists of a vacant, rectangular-shaped parcel of 15.75 acres located west of Theater Lane and south of Main Street within the unincorporated community of Templeton (Figure 2). Topography of the site consists of gently to moderately sloping terrain covered with annual non-native grasses and dense stands of oak trees associated with an ephemeral drainage that enters the site from the west and exits through a culvert under Championship Lane. Soils of the project site are described in Section II. Agricultural Resources, and consist of Nacimiento Los 9 – 30% slopes, Arbuckle Positas 15 – 30% slopes, and Lockwood Shaly Loam 2 – 9% slopes. There are no rock outcroppings or other geologic features.

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Alquist-Priolo Act) is a California state law that was developed to regulate development near active faults and mitigate the surface fault rupture potential and other hazards. The Alquist-Priolo Act identifies active earthquake fault zones and restricts the construction of habitable structures over known active or potentially active faults. San Luis Obispo County is located in a geologically complex and seismically active region. The Safety Element of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan identifies three active faults that traverse through the county and are currently zoned under the Alquist-Priolo Act: the San Andreas, the Hosgri-San Simeon, and the Los Osos.

The County Safety Element also identifies 17 other faults that are considered potentially active or have uncertain fault activity. The Safety Element establishes policies that require new development to be located away from active and potentially active faults. The element also requires that the County enforce applicable building codes relating to seismic design of structures and require design professionals to evaluate the potential for liquefaction or seismic settlement to impact structures in accordance with the Uniform Building Code. The nearest potentially capable fault line is the Rinconada fault located approximately 2 miles to the east.

The County LUO identifies a Geologic Study Area (GSA) combining designation for areas where geologic and soil conditions could present new developments and/or their occupants with potential hazards to life and property. The project site is located within a Geologic Study Area (GSA) combining designation due to the potential for landslides in the area. However, according to maps included in the Safety Element, the project site is located in an area with a low risk of landslides and a low liquefaction potential.

The project site is located on early to late Pleistocene alluvial deposits.

Geotechnical investigations of the project site were prepared for lots 1-4, and lots 5 and 6 by Beacon Geotechnical, Inc. (July, 2024). These studies are incorporated by reference and available for review in their entirety at the Department of Planning and Building located at 976 Osos Street, San Luis Obispo. The findings and recommendations of those studies are summarized below.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

(a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

(a-i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zone. The potential for ground rupture at the site during ground shaking is considered low. The closest known Quaternary age fault is the Rinconada fault located approximately 2.3 miles to the east which is considered potentially active but does not underly the project site. Therefore, there will be *no impact* related to the rupture of a known earthquake fault.

(a-ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Groundshaking refers to the motion that occurs in response to local and regional earthquakes. Seismic groundshaking is influenced by the proximity of the site to an earthquake fault, the intensity of the seismic event, and the underlying soil composition.

The most detailed mapping and characterization of regional faults capable of generating sufficient ground motion within the region has been conducted for Pacific Gas and Electric as a part of the Long Term Seismic Studies for Diablo Nuclear Power Plant. These studies identify the Hosgri-San Simeon fault zone (5 mile distance) and the San Andreas fault zone (50 mile distance), both strike-slip type faults, as the primary sources of ground shaking for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. The Hosgri-San Simeon fault is projected to have a maximum credible earthquake of M 8.3 but the more characteristic earthquakes would range from 6 to 7.3 (PGE, 2015).

All new structures constructed on the project site will be subject to the seismic risk standards of the CBC and other applicable standards to ensure the effects of a potential seismic event would be minimized through compliance with current engineering practices and techniques. Implementation of the project in compliance with relevant construction codes would not expose people or structures to significant increased risks associated with seismic ground shaking; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

(a-iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Based on the Safety Element Liquefaction Hazards Map, the project site is located in an area with a low potential for liquefaction. According to the geotechnical studies prepared for lots 1-4 and lots 5 and 6, based on the quality and conditions of the in-place soils and the absence of groundwater in the boring explorations conducted, the potential for liquefaction and/or lateral spreading on the project site is low.

In addition, the project would be required to comply with CBC seismic requirements to address the site's potential for seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction; therefore, the potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(a-iv) Landslides?

Based on the Safety Element Landslide Hazards Map the project site is located in an area with a low potential for landslides. According to the geotechnical studies prepared for lots 1-4 and lots 5 and 6, the site topography and exposed soil types indicate that the potential for landslides is minimal at the

project site. Furthermore, no evidence of previous landslides was observed at the site. Therefore, the potential impacts would be *less than significant.* In addition, the project will be conditioned to comply with CBC building requirements.

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

The project would result in approximately 1.40 acres of site disturbance and would require 2,000 cy of cut, and 2,000 cy of fill. During site preparation and grading/leveling activities, there would be potential for erosion to occur. The project application materials include a preliminary stormwater control plan (Figure 6) and a preliminary road plan/grading plan (Figure 7) that includes drainage collection, storage and conveyance infrastructure to ensure runoff does not cause erosion or adversely impact the quality of downstream surface or groundwater bodies.

Section 22.51.120 of the LUO requires any project that would change the runoff volume or velocity leaving any point of the site, resulting in an impervious surface of more than 20,000 square feet, or involve hillside development on slopes steeper than 10 percent to prepare and implement a sedimentation and erosion control plan. LUO Section 22.51.120 includes requirements for specific erosion control materials and states that Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be employed to control sedimentation and erosion. These mandatory BMPs are set forth in LUO Section 22.52.150 B. and C. and may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Minimizing the use of impervious surfaces (e.g., installing pervious driveways and walkways);
- Directing runoff from roofs and drives to vegetative strips before it leaves the site;
- Managing runoff on the site (e.g., percolation basins); and other Low Impact Design (LID) techniques.
- The installation of vegetated roadside drainage swales shall be encouraged and, if used, calculated into BMP requirements.
- The combined set of BMPs shall be designed to treat and infiltrate stormwater runoff up to and including the 85th percentile storm event.
- The BMPs shall include measures to minimize post-development loadings of total suspended solids.

Compliance with these mandatory BMPs will ensure water quality is protected from potential impacts associated with the construction and occupancy of the project. The plans will be reviewed by the County Building and Public Works Departments to ensure compliance.

In addition, the project may be subject to Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements for preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (LUO Section 22.52.130), which may include the preparation of a Storm Water Control Plan to further minimize on-site erosion. Upon implementation of the recommended BMPs, impacts related to soil erosion would be *less than significant*.

(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?

As discussed above under item a-iv, based on the Safety Element Landslide Hazards Map, the project site is located in an area with a low landslide risk.

Based on the Safety Element and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) data, the project is not located in an area of historical or current land subsidence (USGS 2019) and is located in an area with low potential for liquefaction risk. Due to the distance to the nearest active fault zone and topography of the project site, lateral spreading is not likely to occur on-site. Lastly, according to the geotechnical studies prepared for lots 1-4 and lots 5 and 6, based on the quality and conditions of the in-place soils and the absence of groundwater in the boring explorations conducted, the potential for liquefaction and/or lateral spreading on the project site is low. According to the geotechnical studies prepared for lots 1-4 and lots 5 and 6, the site topography and exposed soil types indicate that the potential for landslides is minimal at the project site. Furthermore, no evidence of previous landslides was observed at the site.

The project will be conditioned to comply with the CBC standards designed to significantly reduce potential risks associated with unstable earth conditions. Therefore, impacts related to on- or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or 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?

According to the NRCS, soils underlying the area of have a moderate shrink-swell potential. The project will be required to comply with applicable CBC standards designed to reduce potential risks associated with expansive soils. Therefore, potential impacts associated with expansive soil would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

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

The project is within the service area of the wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system operated by the Templeton Community Services District. Therefore, the project will have *no impact* associated soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks.

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

The underlying geologic material is considered to have low to moderate paleontological sensitivity (County of Monterey 2014, SWCA Environmental Consultants 2019). Potential impacts to paleontological resources would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project site is not subject to significant geologic hazards such as landslides and shallow groundwater. Based on the preceding analysis, compliance with the relevant provisions of the CBC will reduce impacts associated with geology and geologic hazards to *less than significant*.

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Greenhouse gasses (GHGs) are any gases that absorb infrared radiation in the atmosphere. The primary GHGs that are emitted into the atmosphere as a result of human activities are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), and fluorinated gases. These are most commonly emitted through the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal), agricultural practices, decay of organic waste in landfills, and a variety of other chemical reactions and industrial processes (e.g., the manufacturing of cement). Carbon dioxide (CO_2) is the most abundant GHG and is estimated to represent approximately 80–90% of the principal GHGs that are currently affecting the earth's climate. According to the California Air Resources Board (CARB), transportation (vehicle exhaust) and electricity generation are the main sources of GHGs in the state.

In October 2008, the CARB published the *Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan*, which is the state's plan to achieve GHG reductions in California required by Assembly Bill (AB) 32. The Scoping Plan included CARB-recommended GHG reductions for each emissions sector of the state's GHG inventory. The largest proposed GHG reduction recommendations were associated with improving emissions standards for light-duty vehicles, implementing the Low Carbon Fuel Standard program, implementation of energy efficiency measures in buildings and appliances, the widespread development of combined heat and power systems, and developing a renewable portfolio standard for electricity production.

Senate Bill (SB) 32 and Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 extended the state's GHG reduction goals and require CARB to regulate sources of GHGs to meet the following goals:

- Reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020;
- Reduce GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030;
- Reduce GHG emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

The initial Scoping Plan was approved by CARB on December 11, 2008, and is updated every 5 years. The first update of the Scoping Plan was approved by the CARB on May 22, 2014, which looked past 2020 to set mid-term goals (2030–2035) toward reaching the 2050 goals. The most recent update released by CARB is the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, which was released in November 2017. The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan incorporates strategies for achieving the 2030 GHG-reduction target established in SB 32 and EO S-3-05.

When assessing the significance of potential impacts for CEQA compliance, an individual project's GHG emissions will generally not result in direct significant impacts because the climate change issue is global in nature. However, an individual project could be found to contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact. Projects that have GHG emissions above the noted thresholds may be considered cumulatively considerable and require mitigation. Accordingly, in March 2012, the SLOAPCD approved thresholds for GHG impacts which were incorporated into their 2012 CEQA Air Quality Handbook. The Handbook recommended applying a 1,150 $MTCO_2e$ per year Bright Line Threshold for commercial and residential projects and included a list of general land uses and estimated sizes or capacities of uses expected to exceed this threshold. According to the SLOAPCD, this threshold was based on a 'gap analysis' and was used for CEQA compliance evaluations to demonstrate consistency with the state's GHG emission reduction goals associated with AB32 and the 2008 Climate Change Scoping Plan which have a target year of 2020. However, in 2015, the California Supreme Court issued an opinion in the case of *Center for Biological Diversity vs California Department of Fish and Wildlife* ("Newhall Ranch") that determined that AB 32 based thresholds derived from a gap analysis are invalid for projects with a planning horizon beyond 2020. Since the bright-line and service population GHG thresholds in the Handbook are AB 32 based, and project horizons are now beyond 2020, the SLOAPCD no longer recommends the use of these thresholds in CEQA evaluations.

In 2023, the SLOAPCD released an update to these thresholds with their *2023 Administrative Update Version to APCD Board Adopted April 2012 Version*. These updated thresholds were developed by creating updated GHG emissions inventories for 2005 and 2018 for the incorporated cities and unincorporated areas in SLO county to consider whether jurisdictions were on track with the AB 32 GHG reduction target. Then, target GHG emissions for SLO county in 2020, 2030, and 2045 were calculated to be consistent with reduction targets specified in AB 32, SB 32, and AB 1279. Thresholds for the years in between those evaluated were linearly interpolated, and annual GHG efficiency thresholds were adjusted to factor in GHG reductions needed for new development using information from the City of SLO's 2020 qualified Climate Action Plan's Appendix C – CEQA GHG Emissions Thresholds and Guidance. A project's initial operating year should be used to determine which of the updated GHG Bright Line Thresholds for new residential, commercial, and mixed-use development is applicable to the project. For projects with an initial operating year of 2030 or earlier, GHG emissions at or below the applicable threshold for that year are contributing to the state's SB 32 GHG reduction target. For projects with an initial operational year after 2030, GHG emissions at or below the applicable threshold for that year are contributing to the state's AB 1279 target of reaching carbon neutrality by 2045. Table 6 shows the GHG Bright-Line Thresholds for projects with an initial operating year between 2023 and 2030.

Table 6 -- San Luis Obispo County Bright-Line CEQA GHG Thresholds Between 2023 and 2030 for Residential, Commercial, and Mix-use Development Projects

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
GHG Bright-Line Thresholds (MT/Yr)	980	930	880	830	780	740	690	650

If the lead agency determines that a proposed project's operational phase GHG emissions are below the applicable threshold, then the project's GHG impacts would be deemed less than significant and consistent with state and local GHG reduction goals.

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EnergyWise Plan

The County Energy Wise Plan (EWP) identifies changes that could occur in the County as a result of climate change, provides an inventory of GHG emissions in the County, and establishes a GHG emissions forecast and reduction targets for the County. This plan identifies strategies to reduce the county's GHG emissions by 15% below the baseline year of 2006 by the year 2020. This goal is consistent with Assembly Bill 32. The inventory denotes municipal and community-wide emissions caused by a range of activities in 2006, including transportation, waste, agriculture, energy, and aircraft-related activities. The EWP includes an Implementation Program that provides a strategy for action with specific measures and steps to achieve the identified GHG reduction targets including, but not limited to, the following:

- Encourage new development to exceed minimum Cal Green requirements;
- Require a minimum of 75% of nonhazardous construction and demolition debris generated on site to be recycled or salvaged;
- Continue to implement strategic growth strategies that direct the county's future growth into existing communities and to provide complete services to meet local needs;
- Continue to increase the amount of affordable housing in the County, allowing lower-income families to live closer to jobs and activity centers, and providing residents with greater access to transit and alternative modes;
- Reduce potable water use by 20% in all newly constructed buildings by using the performance method provided in the California Green Building Code;
- Require use of energy-efficient equipment in all new development;
- Minimize the use of dark materials on roofs by requiring roofs to achieve a minimum solar reflectivity index of 10 for high-slope roofs and 68 for low-slope roofs; and
- Use light-colored aggregate in new road construction and repaving projects adjacent to existing cities.

In 2016 the County published the EnergyWise Plan 2016 Update, which describes changes and modifications to the EnergyWise plan. These modifications include a summary of the progress made toward implementing measures in the 2011 EWP, overall trends in energy use and emissions since the baseline year of the inventory (2006), and the addition of implementation measures intended to provide a greater understanding of the County's emissions status.

Discussion

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

The California Energy Emissions Model (CalEEMod, 2022) was utilized to estimate the project's annual construction related and operational carbon dioxide equivalent emissions in metric tons (MTCO2e; Table 7). The estimated emissions were then compared with the interim threshold of 690 MMTCO2e per year to determine significance.

Table 7 – Operational GHG Emissions

Project Component	Quantity	Emissions Rate (Annual $MTCO_2e$/)		Estimated Projected Annual CO_2 Emissions (MT/year) Without Mitigation[1]
		Construction	Operation	
Single Family Residences	6	1.87	11.8	82.2

Sources: County of San Luis Obispo Department of Planning and Building, 2023, CalEEMOD version 2022

Notes:

1. CalEEMOD CalEEMOD version 2022

As shown in Table 7, project-related GHG emissions will be well below the 780 MTCO2e interim threshold for a completion year of 2027. As stated above, a project estimated to generate less than 780 MMTCO2e GHG is assumed to have a less than significant adverse impact that is not cumulatively considerable and consistent with the GHG reduction objectives of AB32 and SB32.

Therefore, potential impacts associated with GHG emissions would be *less than significant and less than cumulatively considerable*.

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

Energy inefficiency contributes to higher GHG emissions which in turn may conflict with the following state and local plans for energy efficiency.

2011 EnergyWise Plan (EWP). As discussed above, the County of San Luis Obispo EnergyWise plan (EWP), adopted in 2011, serves as the County's GHG reduction strategy. The GHG-reducing policy provisions contained in the EWP were prepared for the purpose of complying with the requirements of AB 32 and achieving the goals of the AB 32 Scoping Plan, which have a horizon year of 2020. The policy provisions are divided into community-wide measures and measures aimed at reducing GHG emissions associated with County operations. The GHG reduction measures contained in the EWP are generally programmatic and intended to be implemented at the community level. Measure No. 7. encourages energy efficient new development and provides incentives for new development to exceed Cal Green energy efficiency standards. The following is a summary of project consistency with the relevant supporting actions identified in the EWP for promoting energy efficiency in new development.

Supporting Action	Project Consistency
Require the use of energy-efficient equipment in all new development, including but not limited to Energy Star appliances, high-energy efficiency equipment, heat recovery equipment, and building energy management systems.	All new energy using fixtures will satisfy current energy efficiency requirements.
Encourage new projects to provide ample daylight within the structure through the use of lighting shelves, exterior fins, skylights, atriums, courtyards, or other features to enhance natural light penetration.	The proposed dwellings will be subject to current building codes relating to energy efficiency.
Minimize the use of dark materials on roofs by requiring roofs to achieve a minimum solar reflectivity index (SRI) of 10 for high-slope roofs and 64 for low-slope roofs (CALGreen 5.1 Planning and Design).	

San Luis Obispo County 2023 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). The 2023 RTP, which was adopted by the SLOCOG Board in June 2023, provides a collective vision for the region's future balancing transportation and housing needs with social, economic, and environmental goals. The Plan identified and tested growth scenarios to accommodate the coming 42,000 new people, 18,000 new homes, and 18,000 new jobs. The plan helps guide future planning efforts and policy decisions that affect transportation, including its relationship with housing and land use that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our region. The 2023 RTP provides recommendations to help cities and the County of San Luis Obispo make important decisions about transportation, housing, and land-use. The 2023 RTP provides forward looking recommendations out to 2045 because many local government decisions will influence the region's long-term growth and development over the coming decades.

The RTP includes the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy and outlines how the region will meet or exceed its GHG reduction targets by creating more compact, walkable, bike-friendly, transit-oriented communities, preserving important habitat and agricultural areas, and promoting a variety of transportation demand management and system management tools and techniques to maximize the efficiency of the transportation network. The RTP and SCS provide guidance for the development and management of transportation systems county-wide to help achieve, among other objectives, GHG reduction goals. The RTP/SCS recommend strategies for community planning such as encouraging mixed-use, infill development that facilitate the use of modes of travel other than motor vehicles. The project consists of an infill residential subdivision with urban utilities within the community of Templeton and in this sense can be considered consistent with aspects of the SCS that encourage infill development.

As discussed in Section III. Air Quality, the project does not include development of retail or commercial uses that would be open to the public, therefore, land use planning strategies such as mixed-use development are generally not applicable. The project would result in the construction and occupancy of six single family residences that would typically be occupied by three residents each. Therefore, the project would not significantly affect the local area's jobs/housing balance.

California Air Resources Board (CARB) 2022 Scoping Plan. Pursuant to AB 32, the California Air Resources Board (CARB or Board) prepared and adopted the initial Scoping Plan to "*identify and make recommendations on direct emissions reductions measures, alternative compliance mechanisms, market-based compliance mechanisms, and potential monetary and non-monetary incentives*" in order to achieve the 2020 goal, and to achieve "*the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions*" by 2020 and maintain and continue reductions beyond 2020. AB 32 requires CARB to update the Scoping Plan at least every five years.

The 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan recommends strategies to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier, outlining a technologically feasible, cost-effective, and equity-focused path to achieve the state's climate target. The 2022 plan, addressing recent legislation and direction from Governor Newsom, extends and expands upon earlier scoping plans with a target of reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. The 2022 plan also takes the unprecedented step of adding carbon neutrality as a science-based guide and touchstone for California's climate work. The plan outlines how carbon neutrality can be achieved by taking steps to reduce GHGs to meet the anthropogenic emissions target and by expanding actions to capture and store carbon through the state's natural and working lands and using a variety of mechanical approaches.

The strategies described in the 2022 Scoping Plan are programmatic and intended to be implemented state-wide and industry wide. They are therefore not applicable at the level of an individual project. However, as discussed in Section XVII. Transportation, the project is not expected to generate a significant increase in construction-related or operational traffic trips or Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) which is consistent with Scoping Plan strategies for reducing vehicle miles traveled. Overall, the project would have a *less than significant impact* relating to consistency with adopted plans and policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions.

Conclusion

GHG emissions would be *less than significant and less than cumulatively considerable* and consistent with plans adopted to reduce GHG emissions.

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Be located on a site 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Setting

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese List), which is a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to California Government Code (CGC) Section 65962.5, is a planning document used by the state, local agencies, and developers to comply with CEQA requirements related to the disclosure of information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. The project is not located in an area of known hazardous material contamination and is not on a site listed on the Cortese List (State Water Resources Control Board [SWRCB] 2021; California Department of Toxic Substance Control [DTSC] 2021).

The County has adopted general emergency plans for multiple potential natural disasters, including the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, County Emergency Operations Plan, Earthquake Plan, Dam and Levee Failure Plan, Hazardous Materials Response Plan, County Recovery Plan, and the Tsunami Response Plan.

The California Health and Safety Code provides regulations pertaining to the abatement of fire-related hazards and requires that local jurisdictions enforce the CBC, which provides standards for fire resistive building and roofing materials, and other fire-related construction methods. The Safety Element of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan provides a Fire Hazard Zones Map that indicates unincorporated areas in the county within moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones. The project is located within the State Responsibility Area. Based on the Safety Element map of response times, it would take approximately less than 5 minutes to respond to a call regarding fire or life safety. For more information about fire-related hazards and risk assessment, see Section XX, Wildfire.

The project site is not located within an Airport Review Area.

Discussion

(a) *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

Construction activities may involve the use of oils, fuels, and solvents. In the event of a leak or spill, persons, soil, and vegetation down-slope from the site may be affected. The use, storage, and transport of hazardous materials is regulated by DTSC (22 Cal. Code of Regulations Section 66001, et seq.). The use of hazardous materials on the project site for construction and maintenance is required to be in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations. In addition, compliance with best management practices (BMPs) for the use and storage of hazardous materials would also address impacts. These BMPs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Determining whether a product constitutes a hazardous material in accordance with federal and state regulations;
- Properly characterizing the physical properties, reactivity, fire and explosion hazards of the various materials;
- Using storage containers that are appropriate for the quantity and characteristics of the materials;
- Properly labeling of containers and maintaining a complete and up to date inventory;
- Ongoing inspection and maintenance of containers in good condition;
- Proper storage of incompatible, ignitable and/or reactive wastes;

Project operations would involve the intermittent use of small amounts of household hazardous materials such as fertilizer and pesticides that are not expected to be acutely hazardous.

The project will be conditioned to comply with all applicable fire protection standards as determined by CAL FIRE, including, but not limited to, preparation of a fire safety plan. Compliance with the Uniform Fire Code and the recommendations of CalFIRE will ensure that potential impacts associated with hazards to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be *less than significant.*

(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?

Oils, gasoline, lubricants, fuels, and other potentially hazardous substances would be used and temporarily stored onsite during construction activities. A spill or leak of these materials under accident conditions during construction activities could create a potentially significant hazard to the surrounding environment. Mitigation measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2 have been recommended to reduce potential impacts associated with upset or accident conditions during project construction.

Through required compliance with these standards and mitigation measures, potential operational hazards associated with the use of ethanol onsite would be effectively minimized. Therefore, potential impacts associated with hazards to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions would be *less than significant 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?

The closest school facility is located approximately 1.2 miles to the south of the project site. Therefore, the project site is not located within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

(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?

Based on the California DTSC's Envirostor and SWRCB's GeoTracker, the project site is not listed on, nor is it located in close proximity to, a site listed on the Cortese List, which is a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to CGC Section 65962.5; therefore, *no impacts* would occur.

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

The nearest airstrip in proximity to the project site is the Paso Robles Airport located approximately 8 miles to the northeast. The project site is not located within an Airport Review designation or adjacent to a private airstrip. The project site is not located within or adjacent to an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or private airstrip; therefore, *no impacts would occur.*

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

The project may require temporary road closures to construct the water line and storm drain connections within Championship Lane. However, any road closures would be required to be designed to accommodate emergency vehicle access. The project would not impair implementation or physically interfere with County hazard mitigation or emergency plans; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

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

The project is within the community of Templeton and about one mile from the Templeton Fire Station. The project will be conditioned to implement building and site improvements in accordance with the Fire Code, as detailed in the referral response letter (Templeton Fire Department, May 28, 2025), including, but not limited to implementation of a fire safety plan. Therefore, potential impacts associated with exposure of people or structures to significant risk involving wildland fires would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project may include the use of potentially hazardous materials during construction. Mitigation measures have been identified below to reduce potential impacts associated with routine transport, use, and disposal of these materials, as well as potential hazards associated with upset and accident conditions and wildland fire risk. Upon implementation of measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, potential impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Mitigation

HAZ-1 **Equipment Maintenance and Refueling.** During all construction activities, the cleaning, refueling, and maintenance of equipment and vehicles shall occur only within designated staging areas. The staging areas shall conform to all Best Management Practices applicable to attaining zero discharge of stormwater runoff. At a minimum, all equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and to avoid potential leaks or spills.

HAZ-2 **Spill Response Protocol.** During all construction activities, all project-related spills of hazardous materials shall be cleaned up immediately. Appropriate spill prevention and cleanup materials shall be onsite at all times during construction.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
	(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(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; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Setting

Topography of the site consists of gently to moderately sloping terrain covered with annual non-native grasses and dense stands of oak trees associated with an ephemeral drainage that enters the site from the west and exits through a culvert under Championship Lane.

The RWQCB's Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Basin (Basin Plan; RWQCB 2017) describes how the quality of surface water and groundwater in the Central Coast Region should be managed to provide the highest water quality reasonably possible. The Basin Plan outlines the beneficial uses of streams, lakes, and other water bodies for humans and other life. There are 24 categories of beneficial uses, including, but not limited to, municipal water supply, water contact recreation, non-water contact recreation, and cold freshwater habitat. Water quality objectives are then established to protect the beneficial uses of those water resources. The RWQCB implements the Basin Plan by issuing and enforcing waste discharge requirements to individuals, communities, or businesses whose discharges can affect water quality.

In accordance with the LUO, a project that would change the runoff volume or velocity leaving any point of the site, result in an impervious surface of more than 20,000 square feet, or involve hillside development on slopes steeper than 10 percent is required to prepare a drainage plan for review and approval by the County. A drainage plan is not required where grading is exclusively for an exempt agricultural structure, crop production, or grazing. The LUO also requires the preparation of an erosion and sedimentation control plan for all construction and grading permit projects and site disturbance activities of one-half acre or more in geologically unstable areas, on slopes steeper than 30 percent, on highly erodible soils, or within 100 feet of any watercourse.

The County Department of Public Works is responsible for ensuring that new construction sites implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction, and that site plans incorporate appropriate post-construction stormwater runoff controls. Construction sites that disturb 1 acre or more must obtain coverage under the SWRCB's Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit requires the preparation of a SWPPP to minimize on-site sedimentation and erosion. There are several types of projects that are exempt from preparing a SWPPP, including routine maintenance to existing developments, emergency construction activities, and projects exempted by the SWRCB or RWQCB. Projects that disturb less than 1 acre must implement all required elements within the site's erosion and sediment control plan as required by the LUO.

The project site is located within the Atascadero groundwater basin as identified by Bulletin 118 of the Department of Water Resources. According to the TCSD's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, water is provided from several sources: deep aquifer groundwater, shallow underflow water, and water supply augmentation through treated wastewater retrieval, and importation of Nacimiento raw water. These sources are expected to provide adequate water through the year 2045.

The TCSD operates a wastewater collection system that serves the community of Templeton. There are two wastewater tributary areas. The area on the west side of Highway 101 flows to the CSD-owned Meadowbrook Wastewater Treatment Plant. The majority of flows generated by the east side of Highway 101 are sent to the Paso Robles treatment plant. By agreement, the Templeton CSD is allotted 0.443 MGD of the treatment plant's capacity.

The Meadowbrook system has a design flow capacity of 0.60 MGD. According to the 2016-2018 Resource Summary Report, based on the projected growth in population within the CSD service area, the capacity of the treatment plant is not expected to be reached for the next twenty-five years or more. For the portion of the community served by the City of Paso Robles wastewater treatment plant (about 60%), based on the

projected growth in population within the service area, the community's allotted capacity of the treatment plant is not expected to be reached for the next twenty-five years or more.

In 2018, the TCSD began construction of the Upper Salinas River Basin Conjunctive Use Project (US CUP). The US CUP will redirect all of the wastewater generated in the east side of the community to the Meadowbrook WWTP, thereby increasing the community's potential water supply by an additional 242 acre-feet per year (AFY).

For planning purposes, the flood event most often used to delineate areas subject to flooding is the 100-year flood. The Safety Element of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan establishes policies to reduce flood hazards and reduce flood damage, including, but not limited to, prohibition of development in areas of high flood hazard potential, discouragement of single-road access into remote areas that could be closed during floods, and review of plans for construction in low-lying areas.

Discussion

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

The project will involve 2,000 cy of cut and 2,000 cy of fill and an area of disturbance of about 1.40 acres. During site preparation and grading/leveling activities, there would be potential for erosion to occur. Accordingly, a sedimentation and erosion control plan will be required to minimize the potential for soil erosion, which will be subject to the review and approval of the County Building Division in accordance with LUO Section 22.52.120. The erosion and sedimentation control plan must set forth measures to minimize potential impacts related to erosion and will include requirements for specific erosion control materials, setbacks from creeks, and siltation. In addition, the project is located outside of a stormwater management area (MS4) and proposes a disturbance area greater than 1.0 acre, therefore, the project will be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) by a qualified SWPPP developer in order to demonstrate compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act which prohibits certain discharges of stormwater containing pollutants.

The project application materials include a preliminary stormwater control plan (Figure 6) that includes drainage collection, storage and conveyance infrastructure to ensure runoff does not cause erosion or adversely impact the quality of downstream surface or groundwater bodies. Stormwater drainage will be collected to bioretention basins to accommodate future runoff from residential development.

The project will be conditioned to require all potentially hazardous materials to be stored, refilled, and dispensed on-site in full compliance with applicable County Department of Environmental Health standards and Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and compliance with existing County and state water quality, sedimentation, and erosion control standards. Therefore, the project would not result in a violation of any water quality standards, discharge into surface waters, or otherwise alter surface water quality; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

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

The project site is located within the Atascadero groundwater basin as identified by Bulletin 118 of the Department of Water Resources. The Atascadero Basin is not in overdraft and is considered a Very Low Priority Basin according to the State of California. The Groundwater Basin does experience

groundwater level declines in dry years, but they also recover in normal and wet years and overall are considered to have stable groundwater levels.

A Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) was prepared for the Atascadero Basin in January 2022, even though it was not required due to the basin's 'Very Low Priority' status. The GSP was prepared to help with current and on-going groundwater management, as well as prevent future conditions that would require state mandated groundwater management requirements.

According to the TCSD's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, water is provided from several sources: deep aquifer groundwater, shallow underflow water, and water supply augmentation through treated wastewater retrieval, and importation of Nacimiento raw water. These sources are expected to provide adequate water through the year 2045. Accordingly, the District has issued a conditional intent-to-serve letter indicating that the District possesses adequate water and infrastructure of serve the project. Therefore, the project would have a *less than significant impact* on groundwater resources.

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

(c-i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

The project application materials include a preliminary stormwater control plan (Figure 6) that includes drainage collection, storage and conveyance infrastructure to ensure runoff does not cause erosion or adversely impact the quality of downstream surface or groundwater bodies. The erosion and sedimentation control plan must set forth measures to minimize potential impacts related to erosion and will include requirements for specific erosion control materials, setbacks from creeks, and siltation.

The project is not located within the County of San Luis Obispo Municipal Stormwater Management Area (MS4 Coverage Area); however, compliance with the Central Coast Post-Construction Requirements (Resolution R3-2013-00032) may be required. At the time of application for construction permits, the applicant will be required to complete a Stormwater Control Plan (SWCP) Application and supporting documents or Stormwater Post Construction Requirements Wavier Request Form.

Upon implementation of the stormwater control plan, as well as compliance with the standards required by the LUO and RWQCB, project impacts would be *less than significant.*

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

According to the Safety Element Flood Hazard Map, the project site is not within an area affected by the 100-year or 500-years storms.

As discussed above, the project application materials include a preliminary grading and erosion control plan that includes drainage collection, storage, and conveyance infrastructure to ensure runoff does not adversely impact the quality of downstream surface or groundwater bodies.

The project will be subject to post-construction stormwater requirements through preparation and implementation of a SWPPP, which would identify appropriate Best Management Practices to capture and treat runoff before it leaves the site.

Based on required compliance with applicable state and County drainage and stormwater control regulations, as well as implementation of the Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan, project impacts

associated with increased surface runoff resulting in flooding on- or off-site would be *less than significant.*

(c-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?

The project may be subject to post-construction stormwater requirements through preparation and implementation of a SWPPP, which would identify appropriate Best Management Practices to capture and treat runoff before it leaves the site. As discussed in item c-ii, above, the application materials include a Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan (PSCP) prepared by a registered civil engineer (Figure 6). Based on required compliance with applicable state and County drainage and stormwater control regulations, as well as implementation of the Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan, project impacts associated with increased surface runoff resulting in flooding on- or off-site would be *less than significant.*

(c-iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

Based on the Safety Element Flood Hazard Map, the project site is not located within a 100-year flood zone. Therefore, *no impacts would occur.*

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

Based on the Safety Element Flood Hazard Map, the project site is not located within a 100-year flood zone (County of San Luis Obispo 2013). Based on the San Luis Obispo County Tsunami Inundation Maps, the project site is not located in an evacuation area with the potential for inundation by a tsunami (CDOC 2023). The project site is located about 2 miles east of Lake Nacimiento, a large surface water body that may produce a seiche in the event of a strong earthquake in the area. However, given the distance to the lake, the project site is not expected to be affected by a seicher. Therefore, the project site has no potential to release pollutants due to project inundation, and *no impacts would occur.* See also the discussion provided in Section IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials, as well as mitigation measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2.

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

As discussed in the setting, the project is required to comply with relevant permitting of the RWQCB. The project will be served by a community water system that derives a portion of its supply from the Atascadero Basin which is subject to a Groundwater Management Plan. According to the TCSD, the District has sufficient water to supply the project without adversely impacting the groundwater basin. Therefore, potential impacts associated with conflict or obstruction of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project will result in *less than significant impacts* associated with water supply, water quality and hydrology.

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

See Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Setting

The LUO was established to guide and manage the future growth in the county in accordance with the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan; regulate land use in a manner that will encourage and support orderly development and beneficial use of lands; minimize adverse effects on the public resulting from inappropriate creation, location, use, or design of buildings or land uses; and protect and enhance significant natural, historic, archeological, and scenic resources within the county. The LUO is the primary tool used by the County to carry out the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan.

The Land Use Element (LUE) of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan provides policies and standards for the management of growth and development in each unincorporated community and rural areas of the county and serves as a reference point and guide for future land use planning studies throughout the county. LUE identifies strategic growth principles to define and focus the County's proactive planning approach and balance environmental, economic, and social equity concerns. Each strategic growth principle correlates with a set of policies and implementation strategies that define how land will be used and resources protected. The LUE also defines each of the 14 land use designations and identifies standards for land use based on the designation they are located within. The project site is within the Residential Suburban land use category.

The inland LUE also contains the area plans of each of the four inland planning areas: Carrizo, North County, San Luis Obispo, and South County. The area plans establish policies and programs for land use, circulation, public facilities, services, and resources that apply "areawide," in rural areas, and in unincorporated urban areas within each planning area. Part three of the LUE contains each of the 13 inland community and village plans, which contain goals, policies, programs, and related background information for the County's unincorporated inland urban and village areas.

The project site is located within the area governed by the Templeton Community Plan which is within the Salinas River Sub Area of the North County Planning Area. In addition, the project site is not subject to any Combining Designations.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Discussion

(a) *Physically divide an established community?*

The project does not propose project elements or components that would physically divide the site from surrounding areas and uses. The project would be consistent with the general level of development within the project vicinity and would not create, close, or impede any existing public or private roads, or create any other barriers to movement or accessibility within the community. Therefore, the proposed project would not physically divide an established community and *impacts would be less than significant.*

(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?*

Consistency With the Land Use Ordinance

The minimum parcel size in the Residential Suburban land use category is determined by the average slope of the areas under each parcel, and the type of water supply and wastewater disposal to be provided, as described in the standards set forth in LUO Section 22.22.070. Based on these standards, the minimum parcel size for newly created parcels on the project site is one acre as shown in Table, 1 lot sizes will range from 2.0 acres. to about 4.62 acres consistent with these standards.

Lastly, the vesting tentative map is consistent with the site-specific standards set forth in LUO section 22.104.090(6). relating to the development of the project site. More specifically, the vesting tentative map incorporates building envelopes for lots 5 and 6 to ensure sensitive riparian and oak woodland resources on the site are protected.

Consistency With the North County Area Plan – Planning Area Standards

There are no planning area standards that apply to the project site.

Policies and Programs of the General Plan Housing Element

The Housing Element (adopted in 2020) sets forth goals, policies and implementation programs to ensure that the unincorporated areas of the County provide safe, sound, affordable housing for County residents. Within the context of the Housing Element, 'affordable' refers to a cost for housing that is available to a full range of household incomes, while allowing for expenditures on other living expenses. Generally, housing is considered "affordable" if total housing costs do not exceed 30 percent of total household income. The Housing Element defines these household income categories as follows:

Extremely low-income: No more than 30 percent of county median income.

Very low-income: Greater than 30 percent but no more than 50 percent of county median income.

Low-income: Greater than 50 percent but no more than 80 percent of county median income.

Moderate-income: Greater than 80 percent but no more than 120 percent of county median income.

Workforce-income category: No more than 160 percent of county median income.

Above moderate-income: Above 120 percent of county median income.

In accordance with State law, the Housing Element must be updated every eight years. For each Housing Element cycle, the State Department of Housing and Community Development produces a Regional Housing Needs Allocation for the county which is then distributed among the County and the seven incorporated cities by the Council of Governments (SLOCOG). According to the 2019 Regional Housing Needs Assessment, the methodology for making these allocations is based on a jurisdiction's proportional share of population and jobs and is aimed at improving the intraregional jobs/housing imbalance. The share of dwelling units allocated to the unincorporated county is provided below by income category:

Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
400	401	505	585	1,365	3,256

Source: 2020-2028 Housing Element, Table 4.1.

The Housing Element provides an assessment of vacant land within the urban areas of the unincorporated county to demonstrate that there is sufficient land designated for housing development to construct the County's projected Regional Housing Need of 3,256 units. The analysis includes an inventory of vacant sites and assumes an average residential density of 18 units per acre, based on actual densities achieved by approved residential development within the unincorporated areas of the County. The analysis (summarized in Table 7.5 of the Housing Element) demonstrates that there are sufficient vacant parcels designated for housing development to accommodate the construction of about 1,459 dwellings affordable to Extremely Low, Very Low, and Low income households. This number exceeds the 1,306 units allocated to the unincorporated areas for these income categories. However, two important qualifications to this analysis should be noted:

- The analysis is intended to demonstrate the feasibility of meeting the County's Regional Housing Need, only, and does not include all of the vacant land designated for residential development within the unincorporated county. And,
- Although the analysis identifies a number of sites where the construction of affordable housing is feasible, it does not identify specific communities or sites where affordable housing *must* be constructed to meet the Regional Housing Need. Rather, the provision of affordable housing is considered a regional problem to be solved throughout the unincorporated county. As a result, Housing Element strategies aimed at achieving the County's Regional Housing Need may not address the 'affordability gap' within a given unincorporated community.

The project is consistent with the residential density allowable within the Residential Suburban land use category and will help the County achieve its regional fair share of market-rate housing consistent with the goals, policies and programs of the Housing Element.

In sum, the project would be required to implement measures to mitigate potential impacts associated with air quality, biological resources, and hazardous materials; therefore, with mitigation, the project would not conflict with policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects and impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Conclusion

The project is consistent with the land use designation of the property and the guidelines and policies for development within the applicable area plan and LUO. The project, as it may be conditioned, was found to be consistent with standards and policies set forth in the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan, the San Luis Obispo Area Plan, the SLOAPCD Clean Air Plan, and other land use policies for this area. The project will be conditioned to comply with standards set forth by County Fire/CAL FIRE and the County Public Works Department.

Potential impacts related to land use and planning would be *less than significant with mitigation* measures associated with air quality, biological resources, hazards and hazardous materials.

Mitigation

Implement mitigation measures AQ-1 and AQ-2, BIO-1 through BIO-14, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Result in the loss of availability of a locally- important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) requires that the State Geologist classify land into mineral resource zones (MRZ) according to the known or inferred mineral potential of the land (California PRC Sections 2710–2796).

The three MRZs used in the SMARA classification-designation process in the San Luis Obispo-Santa Barbara Production-Consumption Region are defined below (California Geological Survey [CGS] 2015):

- **MRZ-1:** Areas where available geologic information indicates that little likelihood exists for the presence of significant mineral resources.
- **MRZ-2:** Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists. This zone shall be applied to known mineral deposits or where well-developed lines of reasoning, based upon economic-geologic principles and adequate data, demonstrate that the likelihood for occurrence of significant mineral deposits is high.
- **MRZ-3:** Areas containing known or inferred aggregate resources of undetermined significance.

The LUO provides regulations for development in delineated Energy and Extractive Resource Areas (EX) and Extractive Resource Areas (EX1). The EX combining designation is used to identify areas of the county where:

1. Mineral or petroleum extraction occurs or is proposed to occur;
2. The state geologist has designated a mineral resource area of statewide or regional significance pursuant to California PRC Sections 2710 et seq. (SMARA); and
3. Major public utility electric generation facilities exist or are proposed.

The purpose of this combining designation is to protect significant resource extraction and energy production areas identified by the County LUE from encroachment by incompatible land uses that could hinder resource extraction or energy production operations, or land uses that would be adversely affected by extraction or energy production.

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Discussion

(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?*

Based on the California Geological Survey (CGS) Information Warehouse for Mineral Land Classification, the project site is not located within an area that has been evaluated for mineral resources and is not in close proximity to an active mine (CGS 2021).

In addition, based on Chapter 6 of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element – Mineral Resources, the project site is not located within an extractive resource area or an energy and extractive resource area. The project is not located within a designated mineral resource zone area or within an Extractive Resource Area combining designation. There are no known mineral resources in the project area; therefore, there would be *no impact* to mineral resources.

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

The project is not located within a designated mineral resource zone or within an Extractive Resource Area combining designation. There are no known mineral resources in the project area; therefore, there would be *no impact* to mineral resources.

Conclusion

No impacts to mineral resources would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

None necessary.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

XIII. NOISE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:					
(a)	Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting

The Noise Element of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan provides a policy framework for addressing potential noise impacts in the planning process. The purpose of the Noise Element is to minimize future noise conflicts. The Noise Element identifies the major noise sources in the county (highways and freeways, primary arterial roadways and major local streets, railroad operations, aircraft and airport operations, local industrial facilities, and other stationary sources) and includes goals, policies, and implementation programs to reduce future noise impacts. Among the most significant policies of the Noise Element are numerical noise standards that limit noise exposure within noise-sensitive land uses and performance standards for new commercial and industrial uses that might adversely impact noise-sensitive land uses.

Noise sensitive uses that have been identified by the County include the following:

- Residential development, except temporary dwellings
- Schools (preschool to secondary, college and university, and specialized education and training)
- Health care services (e.g., hospitals, clinics, etc.)
- Nursing and personal care
- Churches
- Public assembly and entertainment
- Libraries and museums
- Hotels and motels

- Bed and breakfast facilities
- Outdoor sports and recreation
- Offices

All sound levels referred to in the Noise Element are expressed in A-weighted decibels (dBA). A-weighting deemphasizes the very low and very high frequencies of sound in a manner similar to the human ear.

The LUO establishes standards for acceptable exterior and interior noise levels and describes how noise shall be measured. Exterior noise level standards are applicable when a land use affected by noise is one of the sensitive uses listed in the Noise Element. Exterior noise levels are measured from the property line of the affected noise-sensitive land use.

Table 8 -- Maximum allowable exterior noise level standards[1]

Sound Levels	Daytime 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	Nighttime [2]
Hourly Equivalent Sound Level (L_{eq}, dB)	50	45
Maximum level, dB	70	65

[1] When the receiving noise-sensitive land use is outdoor sports and recreation, the noise level standards are increased by 10 db.

[2] Applies only to uses that operate or are occupied during nighttime hours.

The existing ambient noise environment is characterized by traffic on Gateway Drive. The nearest sensitive receptors are offsite residences located less than 1,000 feet to the west and south of potential construction areas.

The noise standards are subject to a range of exceptions, including noise sources associated with construction, provided such activities do not take place before 7 a.m. or after 9 p.m. on weekdays, or before 8 a.m. or after 5 p.m. on Saturday or Sunday. Noise associated with agricultural land uses, traffic on public roadways, railroad line operations, and aircraft in flight are also exempt.

Discussion

(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 Impacts. According to the 2005 Federal Highway Administration's Roadway Construction Noise Mode Database, noise associated with heavy construction equipment can range from about 73 to 101 dBA for non-impact equipment. Noise levels 50 feet from stationary equipment can range from 68 to 88 dBA, with. Table 9 provides an estimate of noise generated by temporary construction activities that may be used for construction of the project.

Table 9 -- Estimate of Noise From Construction Equipment

Equipment	Quantity	dBA at 50 Feet[1]
Backhoe	1	78
Dozer	1	82
Excavator	1	81
Dump Truck	1	76
Generator	1	81
Pickup Truck	2	75
Total:	**7**	**872**

Notes:

1. Source: Federal Highway Administration's Roadway Construction Noise Mode Database.
2. Assumes all equipment are operating concurrently.

As shown in Table 9, construction related noise would likely temporarily exceed the maximum hourly daytime levels allowed by the County's noise standards at the nearest property line. Project construction would result in a temporary increase in noise levels associated with construction activities, equipment, and vehicle trips. Construction noise would be variable, temporary, and limited in nature and duration. The County LUO requires that construction activities be conducted during daytime hours and that construction equipment be equipped with appropriate mufflers recommended by the manufacturer. Compliance with these standards would ensure short-term construction noise would be *less than significant*.

Operational Impacts. Operational noise will be limited to motor vehicle traffic and maintenance activities associated with home ownership. A second source is related to noise generated by the growth in traffic on Highway 101 which is about 150 feet east of the project site. These impacts were assessed by a noise study (45dB, Inc., 2006) prepared for the General Plan amendment that changed the land use designation to Residential Suburban. Future noise levels were modeled based on the predicted growth in traffic on Highway 101 and noise exposure contours were derived for the project site to determine whether the noise standard for exterior residential areas would be exceeded. The study concluded that the future noise levels reaching the outdoor areas of future residences would be well below the allowable 60dBA LDN level identified in the Noise Element.

Therefore, operational noise will be below County standards and impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impacts associated with the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels would be *less than significant.*

(b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

The project is not expected to require the use of pile driving, or other high impact activities that would generate substantial groundborne noise or groundborne vibration during construction. In addition, construction equipment has the potential to generate minor groundborne noise and/or vibration, but these activities would be limited in duration. The project does not propose a use that would generate long-term operational groundborne noise or vibration. Therefore, impacts related to

exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels 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?

The nearest airstrip in proximity to the project site is the Paso Robles Airport located approximately 8 miles to the northeast. The project site is not located within an Airport Review designation or adjacent to a private airstrip. The project site is not located within or adjacent to an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or private airstrip; therefore, *no impact would occur*.

Conclusion

Short-term construction activities would be limited in nature and duration and conducted during daytime periods per LUO standards. Operational noise levels will be less than the standards set forth in the LUO and are considered less than significant. No other potentially significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

Setting

The Housing Element of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan recognizes the difficulty for residents to find suitable and affordable housing within San Luis Obispo County. The Housing Element includes an analysis of vacant and underutilized land located in urban areas that is suitable for residential development and considers zoning provisions and development standards to encourage development of these areas. Consistent with state housing element laws, these areas are categorized into potential sites for very low- and low-income households, moderate-income households, and above moderate-income households.

In its efforts to provide for affordable housing, the County currently administers the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which provide limited financing to projects relating to affordable housing throughout the county.

The project site is currently vacant.

Discussion

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

The project proposes construction of six residences that would be occupied by about three persons each. Employed residents would not require new or additional housing as a result of the proposed project. The project would not generate new employment opportunities that would encourage population growth in the area. The project does not include the extension or establishment of new roads, utilities, or other infrastructure to the site that would induce development and population growth in new areas. In addition, the project would be subject to inclusionary housing fees to offset any potential increased need for housing in the area. Therefore, the project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial growth and impacts would be *less than significant.*

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

The project would not displace existing housing or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

No impacts to population and housing would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

None necessary.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

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

Setting

Fire protection services for Templeton are provided by the Templeton Fire Department which is part of the Templeton Community Services District located at 206 5th St. Emergency personnel would be able to reach the site within less than 5 minutes of receiving a call.

Police protection and emergency services in the unincorporated portions of the county are provided by the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office Patrol Division responds to calls for service, conducts proactive law enforcement activities, and performs initial investigations of crimes. Patrol personnel are deployed from three stations throughout the county, the Coast Station in Los Osos, the North County Station in Templeton, and the South Station in Oceano. The project would be served by the County Sheriff's Office, and the nearest sheriff station is located approximately 1 mile to the east.

San Luis Obispo County has a total of 12 school districts that currently enroll approximately 34,000 students in over 75 schools. The project site is located within the San Miguel Unified Elementary School District, and the Templeton Unified School District.

Within the County's unincorporated areas, there are currently 23 parks, three golf courses, four trails/staging areas, and eight Special Areas that include natural areas, coastal access, and historic facilities currently operated and maintained by the County.

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Public facilities fees, Quimby fees, and developer conditions are several ways the County currently funds public services. A public facility fee program (i.e., development impact fee program) has been adopted to address impacts related to public facilities (county) and schools (CGC Section 65995 et seq.). The fee amounts are assessed annually by the County based on the type of proposed development and the development's proportional impact and are collected at the time of building permit issuance. Public facility fees are used as needed to finance the construction of and/or improvements to public facilities required to the serve new development, including fire protection, law enforcement, schools, parks, and roads.

Discussion

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

Fire protection?

The project will be designed to comply with all applicable fire safety rules and regulations, including the California Fire Code and California PRC, which require access roads to accommodate emergency vehicle access, vegetation clearing or trimming around all existing and proposed structures, and potential installation of a water storage tank for fire protection (if fire sprinklers are required). The project will be conditioned to implement all requirements identified by the Templeton Fire Department as detailed in the referral response letter (letter of May 28, 2025), including items to be completed prior to final inspection/operation, but not limited to implementation of a fire safety plan. Based on the limited amount of development proposed, the project would not create a significant new demand for fire services. In addition, the project will be subject to public facility fees to offset the increased cumulative demand on fire protection services. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*. Additional information regarding wildfire hazard impacts is discussed in Section XX, Wildfire. Additional information regarding fire related hazard impacts is discussed in Section IX, Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

Police protection?

The project would be subject to public facility fees to offset the project's cumulative contribution to demand on law enforcement services. Therefore, impacts related to police services would be *less than significant.*

Schools?

As discussed in Section XIV, Population/Housing, the project would not induce significant population growth and would not result in the need for additional school services or facilities. However, the project would be subject to school impact fees, pursuant to California Education Code Section 17620, to help fund construction or reconstruction of school facilities. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Parks?

As discussed in Section XIV, Population and Housing, the project would not induce a substantial increase in population growth and would not result in the need for additional parks or recreational services or facilities to serve new populations; therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Other public facilities?

As discussed above, the proposed project would be subject to applicable fees to offset negligible increased demands on public facilities; therefore, there would be *no impacts* related to other public facilities.

Conclusion

The project does not propose development that would substantially increase demands on public services and would not induce population growth that would substantially increase demands on public services. The project would be subject to payment of development impact fees to reduce the project's negligible contribution to increased demands on public services and facilities. Therefore, potential impacts related to public services would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

None are necessary.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

XVI. RECREATION

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The Parks and Recreation Element (Recreation Element) of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan establishes goals, policies, and implementation measures for the management, renovation, and expansion of existing parks and recreation facilities and the development of new parks and recreation facilities in order to meet existing and projected needs and to assure an equitable distribution of parks throughout the county. The nearest public park to the project site is Templeton Park located about 3 miles to the south, which is owned and operated by the County Parks Department.

Public facilities fees, Quimby fees, and developer conditions are several ways the County currently funds public parks and recreational facilities. Public facility fees are collected upon construction of new residential units and currently provide funding for new community-serving recreation facilities. Quimby Fees are collected when new residential lots are created and can be used to expand, acquire, rehabilitate, or develop community-serving parks. Finally, a discretionary permit issued by the County may condition a project to provide land, amenities, or facilities consistent with the Recreation Element.

The County Bikeways Plan identifies and prioritizes bikeway facilities throughout the unincorporated area of the county, including bikeways, parking, connections with public transportation, educational programs, and funding. The Bikeways Plan is updated every 5 years and was last updated in 2016. The plan identifies goals, policies, and procedures geared towards realizing significant bicycle use as a key component of the transportation options for San Luis Obispo County residents. The plan also includes descriptions of bikeway design and improvement standards, an inventory of the current bicycle circulation network, and a list of current and future bikeway projects within the county.

Discussion

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

The project will result in the construction of six single family residences that could be occupied by as many as three persons each for a total of 18 total new residents. The project is not proposed in a location that would affect any existing public trail, park, recreational facility, and/or natural area. The

project would not result in substantial growth within the area and would not substantially increase demand on any proximate existing public neighborhood or regional park or other recreational facilities. Payment of standard development impact fees would ensure any incremental increase in use of existing parks and recreational facilities would be reduced to *less than significant.*

(b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The project does not include the construction of new recreational facilities and would not result in a substantial increase in demand or use of parks and recreational facilities. Implementation of the project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not result in the significant increase in use, construction, or expansion of parks or recreational facilities. Therefore, potential impacts related to recreation would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

None are necessary.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The County Department of Public Works maintains updated traffic count data for all County-maintained roadways. In addition, Traffic Circulation Studies have been conducted within several community areas using traffic models to reasonably simulate current traffic flow patterns and forecast future travel demands and traffic flow patterns. These community Traffic Circulation Studies include the South County Circulation Study, Los Osos Circulation Study, Templeton Circulation Study, San Miguel Circulation Study, Avila Circulation Study, and North Coast Circulation Study. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) maintains annual traffic data on state highways and interchanges within the county.

The County has established Level of Service (LOS) "C" or better for rural roadways. The project site is currently undeveloped and generates no traffic. The project site is served by Championship Lane, a privately maintained collector. The project site is located in an adopted Road Impact Fee area (Templeton Area B).

In 2013 SB 743 was signed into law with the intent to "more appropriately 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" and required the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to identify new metrics for identifying and mitigating transportation impacts as determined by the CEQA process. As a result, in December 2018, the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted updates to the State CEQA Guidelines. The revisions included new requirements related to the implementation of SB 743 and identified VMT per capita, VMT per employee, and net VMT as new metrics for transportation analysis under CEQA (as detailed in Section 15064.3[b]). The County of San Luis Obispo has developed a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Program (Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines; Rincon, October 2020 & VMT Thresholds Study; GHD, March 2021). The program provides operating thresholds and includes a screening tool for evaluating VMT impacts.

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The County's Framework for Planning (Inland), includes the Land Use and Circulation Elements of the County of San Luis Obispo General Plan. The Framework establishes goals and strategies to meet pedestrian circulation needs by providing usable and attractive sidewalks, pathways, and trails to establish maximum access and connectivity between land use designations.

The 2023 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the region's long-range (2023-2045) plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). The RTP provides a collective vision for the region's future balancing transportation and housing needs with social, economic, and environmental goals. The Plan identified and tested growth scenarios to accommodate the coming 42,000 new people, 18,000 new homes, and 18,000 new jobs. The plan helps guide future planning efforts and policy decisions that affect transportation, including its relationship with housing and land use that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our region.

Discussion

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

The project does not propose substantial temporary or long-term alteration of any proximate transportation facilities. Motor vehicle trips associated with the project are expected to be about: 9.6 x 6 = 58 trips per day. Construction activities will require temporary construction trips to and from the site.

The project would not noticeably impact traffic operations on Championship Lane or Theater Lane, a County-maintained road, and is not expected to reduce levels of service on nearby roads, conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs for transportation, and would not cause congestion on the local circulatory network. The project is not expected to generate significant foot or bicycle traffic, or generate significant public transit demand and would have a *less than significant* impact on levels of service/conditions for these facilities.

Marginal increases in traffic can be accommodated by existing local streets and the project would not result in any long-term changes in traffic or circulation or reduce the Level of Service below LOS "C". The project does not propose uses that would interfere or conflict with applicable policies related to circulation, transit, roadway, bicycle, or pedestrian systems or facilities. The project would be consistent with the County Framework for Planning (Inland) and consistent with the projected level of growth and development identified in the 2023 RTP. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

The project includes a request for a waiver for the installation of curbs, gutters and sidewalks along the project's Championship Lane street frontage and along the proposed cul-de-sac as allowed by LUO section 22.54.030.D. Under section 22.54.030 D.3., the required frontage improvements may be waived by joint decision of the Director and County Engineer where they determine, based upon the land use designations of the Land Use Element, existing land uses in the site vicinity, and existing and projected needs for drainage and traffic control, that such improvements would be incompatible with the ultimate development of the area.

The project was referred to the Public Works Department and no significant traffic impacts were identified and no mitigation measures above what are already required by existing regulations are necessary. Therefore, project impacts associated with a conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities are considered *less than significant*.

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

Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that a CEQA compliance document includes an assessment of whether a project would generate potentially significant levels of VMT. To assist in these efforts, the County of San Luis Obispo has developed new Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines (TIAG) (March 2021) that include thresholds of significance for VMT as well as screening criteria and methodologies for performing VMT analysis.

The TIAG is accompanied by a VMT screening model that compares the current (baseline) per capita VMT in a particular VMT impact zone with future per capita VMT inclusive of the project. As a result, the VMT analysis of a given project is also considered to be a cumulative impact analysis. Therefore, even though the subject project is being considered concurrently with Tract 3110 for the consideration of cumulative impacts, we have not assessed the VMT associated with both projects taken together.

Map Based Screening. The TIAG includes two maps that depict areas of the unincorporated county where residential and work-based projects would generate an average VMT that is 15% below (or lower than) the baseline VMT metric (or 85% of the baseline or lower) and would therefore not require a VMT analysis. According to Figure 1 of the TIAG screening maps, the Templeton area is located within one of these areas. Therefore, Tract 3193 meets this screening criteria and is considered to have VMT impacts that are *less than significant* and less *than cumulatively considerable*.

Project Size. Small projects that are found to be consistent with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments Sustainable Communities Strategies (SLOCOG SCS) or San Luis Obispo County General Plan and generate fewer than 110 daily trips are considered to have a less than significant VMT impact. According to the TIAG, a single family residential project with 11 or fewer units would generate less than 110 daily trips and would be considered to have a less than significant impact on VMT. Since the project is consistent with the Templeton Community Plan and proposes six single family residential lots, it is considered to have VMT impacts that are *less than significant* and less *than cumulatively considerable*.

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

A project referral package was sent to the Public Works Department; in their response letter of May 29, 2025, the Public Works Department did not raise any concerns regarding the sight distance associated with the proposed private cul-de-sac at its intersection with Championship Lane. Nonetheless, a sight distance and speed evaluation was prepared for the intersection (Rick Engineering, August 7, 2020) which is incorporated by reference and available for review at the County Planning Department located at 976 Osos Street, San Luis Obispo. The study concludes that sight distance provided for the intersection meets or exceeds the minimum stopping sight distance requirement set forth by County Standard A-5a. Therefore, project impacts related to traffic hazards are considered *less than significant*.

The project will be conditioned to construct all access improvements from N. Ocean Avenue consistent with County standards.

(d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

The project will be conditioned to construct all roadways and access improvements consistent with County standards, as they may be amended by the requested waiver and adjustment. The project

would not result in road closures during short-term construction activities or long-term operations. Individual access to adjacent properties would be maintained during construction activities and throughout the project area. Project implementation would not affect long-term access through the project area and sufficient alternative access exists to accommodate regional trips. Therefore, the project would not adversely affect existing emergency access and impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

The project would not alter existing transportation facilities or result in the generation of substantial additional trips or vehicle miles traveled. Payment of standard development fees and compliance with existing regulations would ensure potential impacts were reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
	(i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 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 Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

Approved in 2014, AB 52 added tribal cultural resources to the categories of resources that must be evaluated under CEQA. Tribal cultural resources are defined as either of the following:

1. Sites, features, 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 CRHR; or
    b. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of California PRC 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 California PRC Section 5024.1(c).

In applying these criteria for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.

Recognizing that tribes have specific expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, AB 52 requires lead agencies to provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if they have requested notice of projects proposed within that area. If the tribe requests consultation within 30 days upon receipt of the notice, the lead agency must consult with the tribe regarding the potential for adverse impacts on tribal cultural resources as a result of a project. Consultation may include discussing the type of environmental review necessary, the presence and/or significance of tribal cultural resources, the level of significance of a project's impacts on the tribal cultural resources, and available project alternatives and mitigation measures recommended by the tribe to avoid or lessen potential impacts on tribal cultural resources.

In accordance with AB 52 Cultural Resources requirements, outreach was provided to the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties, tiṭyu tiṭyu yak tiłhini Northern Chumash, and Northern Chumash Tribal Council.

Discussion

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

(a-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)?*

The project site does not contain any known tribal cultural resources that have been listed or have been found eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1.

Potential impacts associated with the inadvertent discovery of tribal cultural resources would be subject to LUO requirements for Archaeologically Sensitive Areas, which requires that in the event resources are encountered during project construction, construction activities shall cease, and the County Planning and Building Department shall be notified of the discovery so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded by a qualified archaeologist, and the disposition of artifacts may be accomplished in accordance with state and federal law. Therefore, there would be *no impact* related to a substantial adverse change in the significance of tribal cultural resources.

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

As discussed in Section V. Cultural Resources, the project site does not contain features typically associated with cultural resources in the areas of disturbance.

In accordance with AB 52 Cultural Resources requirements, outreach to the Salinan Tribe of Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties, tiṭyu tiṭyu yak tiłhini Northern Chumash, and Northern Chumash Tribal Council. The County did not receive any responses.

If human remains are discovered during future construction, work must stop at the discovery location and any nearby area suspected to contain human remains (California Public Resources Code [PRC] 7050.5). The San Luis Obispo County Coroner must be contacted to determine whether the cause of death should be investigated. If the coroner determines that the remains are of Native American origin, it is necessary to comply with state laws relating to the disposition of Native American burials, which fall within the jurisdiction of the NAHC (PRC 5097). The coroner will contact the NAHC. The NAHC will contact the most likely descendant (MLD) who will be afforded the opportunity to recommend means for treatment of the human remains following protocols in PRC 5097.98.

Compliance with existing regulations (LUO 22.10.040) would reduce potential impacts to *less than significant*.

Conclusion

Cultural resources are not expected to occur within or adjacent to the project site. In the event unanticipated sensitive resources are discovered during project activities, adherence with applicable LUO standards and State Health and Safety Code procedures would reduce potential impacts to less than significant; therefore, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:					
(a)	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting

The County Department of Public Works provides water and wastewater services for specific County Service Areas (CSAs) that are managed through issuance of water/wastewater "will serve" letters. The Department of Public Works currently maintains CSAs for the communities of Nipomo, Oak Shores, Cayucos, Avila Beach, Shandon, the San Luis Obispo County Club, and Santa Margarita. Other unincorporated areas in the county rely on on-site wells and individual wastewater systems. Regulatory standards and design criteria for on-site wastewater treatment systems are provided by the Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (California OWTS Policy).

The project site is within the service area of the TCSD (Figure 1).

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

The Department of Public Works is responsible for ensuring that new construction sites implement BMPs during construction, and that site plans incorporate appropriate post-construction stormwater runoff controls. Construction sites that disturb 1 acre or more must obtain coverage under the SWRCB's Construction General Permit. PG&E is the primary electricity provider and both PG&E and SoCalGas provide natural gas services for urban and rural communities within the county. The project would be served by the TCSD which derived all of its water from the Atascadero Groundwater Basin. The project's energy needs would be provided by PG&E.

There are three landfills in San Luis Obispo County: Cold Canyon Landfill, located near the city of San Luis Obispo; Chicago Grade Landfill, located near the community of Templeton; and Paso Robles Landfill, located east of the city of Paso Robles. The project's solid waste needs would be served by the Chicago Grade landfill.

Discussion

(a) *Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

Water Supply

The project site is located within the Atascadero groundwater basin as identified by Bulletin 118 of the Department of Water Resources. According to the TCSD's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, water is provided from several sources: deep aquifer groundwater, shallow underflow water, and water supply augmentation through treated wastewater retrieval, and importation of Nacimiento raw water. These sources are expected to provide adequate water through the year 2045. The TCSD has issued a conditional will-serve letter for the project (April 8, 2025).

Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Wastewater

The TCSD operates a wastewater collection system that serves the community of Templeton. There are two wastewater tributary areas. The area on the west side of Highway 101 flows to the CSD-owned Meadowbrook Wastewater Treatment Plant. The majority of flows generated by the east side of Highway 101 are sent to the Paso Robles treatment plant. By agreement, the Templeton CSD is allotted 0.443 MGD of the treatment plant's capacity.

The Meadowbrook system has a design flow capacity of 0.60 MGD. According to the 2016-2018 Resource Summary Report, based on the projected growth in population within the CSD service area, the capacity of the treatment plant is not expected to be reached for the next twenty-five years or more. For the portion of the community served by the City of Paso Robles wastewater treatment plant (about 60%), based on the projected growth in population within the service area, the community's allotted capacity of the treatment plant is not expected to be reached for the next twenty-five years or more.

In 2018, the TCSD began construction of the Upper Salinas River Basin Conjunctive Use Project (US CUP). The US CUP will redirect all of the wastewater generated in the east side of the community to the Meadowbrook WWTP, thereby increasing the community's potential water supply by an additional 242 acre-feet per year (AFY).

Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

As discussed above under item a), the District issued a Conditional Will Serve Letter to the property. Therefore, as conditioned, impacts related to water supplies would be *less than significant.*

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

As discussed under item a), the TCSD is undertaking efforts to maintain wastewater capacity to serve buildout of the community and has determined that adequate wastewater collection and treatment capacity exists to serve the project. Therefore, *impacts will be less than significant.*

(d) *Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?*

The nearest landfill to the site is the Chicago Grade Landfill located approximately 5 miles to the southeast. The landfill has a remaining capacity of approximately 8.8 million cubic yards. The incremental amount of waste generated by the project that is not recycled/reused would be within the service capacity of the landfill. Construction activities would result in the generation of minimal solid waste materials; no significant long-term increase in solid waste would occur. Local landfills have adequate permit capacity to serve the project and the project does not propose to generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The project would not result in a substantial increase in waste generation during project construction or operation. Construction waste disposal would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

Conclusion

The project would not result in significantly increased demand on wastewater or stormwater infrastructure and facilities. No substantial increase in solid waste generation would occur. Therefore, potential impacts to utilities and service systems would be *less than significant.*

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

XX. WILDFIRE

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

Setting

In central California, the fire season usually extends from roughly May through October; however, recent events indicate that wildfire behavior, frequency, and duration of the fire season are changing in California. Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) are defined by CALFIRE based on the presence of fire-prone vegetation, climate, topography, assets at risk (e.g., high population centers), and a fire protection agency's ability to provide service to the area (CAL FIRE 2007). FHSZs throughout the county have been designated as "Very High," "High," or "Moderate." In San Luis Obispo County, most of the area that has been designated as a "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" is located in the Santa Lucia Mountains, which extend parallel to the coast along the entire length of San Luis Obispo County. The project would be located within the service area of the Templeton Fire Department and it would take less than 5 minutes to respond to a call regarding fire or life safety.

The County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) addresses several overall policy and coordination functions related to emergency management. The EOP includes the following components:

- Identifies the departments and agencies designated to perform response and recovery activities and specifies tasks they must accomplish;

- Outlines the integration of assistance that is available to local jurisdictions during disaster situations that generate emergency response and recovery needs beyond what the local jurisdiction can satisfy;
- Specifies the direction, control, and communications procedures and systems that will be relied upon to alert, notify, recall, and dispatch emergency response personnel; alert the public; protect residents and property; and request aid/support from other jurisdictions and/or the federal government;
- Identifies key continuity of government operations; and
- Describes the overall logistical support process for planned operations.

Topography influences wildland fire to such an extent that slope conditions can often become a critical wildland fire factor. Conditions such as speed and direction of dominant wind patterns, the length and steepness of slopes, direction of exposure, and/or overall ruggedness of terrain influence the potential intensity and behavior of wildland fires and/or the rates at which they may spread (Barros et al. 2013).

The Safety Element establishes goals, policies, and programs to reduce the threat to life, structures, and the environment caused by fire. Policy S-13 states that new development should be carefully located, with special attention given to fuel management in higher fire risk areas, and that new development in fire hazard areas should be configured to minimize the potential for added danger. Implementation strategies for this policy include identifying high risk areas, developing and implementing mitigation efforts to reduce the threat of fire, requiring fire resistant material be used for building construction in fire hazard areas, and encouraging applicants applying for subdivisions in fire hazard areas to cluster development to allow for a wildfire protection zone.

The California Fire Code provides minimum standards for many aspects of fire prevention and suppression activities. These standards include provisions for emergency vehicle access, water supply, fire protection systems, and the use of fire resistant building materials.

The County EOP outlines the emergency measures that are essential for protecting public health and safety. These measures include, but are not limited to, public alert and notifications, emergency public information, and protective actions. The EOP also addresses policy and coordination related to emergency management.

Discussion

(a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The project may require temporary road closures to construct the storm drain and water line connections within Championship Lane. However, any road closures would be required to be designed to accommodate emergency vehicle access. The project would not impair implementation or physically interfere with County hazard mitigation or emergency plans. Implementation of the proposed project would not have a permanent impact on any adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. Temporary construction activities and staging would not substantially alter existing circulation patterns or trips. Access to adjacent areas would be maintained throughout the duration of the project.

Based on the County's Land Use View tool and Dam and Levee Failure Plan, the project is not located within an area that would be inundated in the event of a dam failure or tsunami. The project would not impair implementation or physically interfere with County hazard mitigation or emergency plans; therefore, no impacts related to emergency plans would occur.

Therefore, the project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(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?

The six residences will be located on moderately sloping land. Winds in the area vary from 6-8 miles per hour and primarily come from the north and west. As described in Section 6, Geology and Soils, potential for landslides affecting the site is low, and the project is not proposing disturbance in areas of steep slopes that would be conducive to the formation of debris flows off site.

The site is located within the service area of the Templeton Fire Department and based on the County's fire response time map; it would take less than 5 minutes to respond to a call regarding fire or life safety. The project would be designed to comply with all fire safety rules and regulations, including the California Fire Code and Public Resources Code, which includes improvements to the site to accommodate emergency vehicle access, vegetation clearing or trimming, and installation of a water storage tank for fire protection. The project will be conditioned to comply with all applicable fire protection standards as determined by the TCSD, as detailed in the referral response letter (May 28, 2025), including, but not limited to implementation of a fire safety plan, and the applicant will be required to comply with the requirements of the plan for the life of the project. Compliance with the Uniform Fire Code and the recommendations of TCSD Fire Department will ensure that potential impacts associated with slope, prevailing winds, and other factors will be *less than significant*.

Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(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?

The project design and construction are required to comply with all fire safety rules and regulations, including the California Fire Code and Public Resources Code, which includes construction of an access road/driveway to accommodate emergency vehicle access, vegetation clearing or trimming around all proposed structures, and installation of fire sprinklers. These infrastructure improvements would reduce fire risk. Therefore, potential impacts would be *less than significant.*

(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?

The six residences will be located on moderately sloping land. Winds in the area vary from 6-8 miles per hour and primarily come from the north and west. As described in Section 6, Geology and Soils, potential for landslides affecting the site is low, and the project is not proposing disturbance in areas of steep slopes that would be conducive to the formation of debris flows off site. Based on the design of the project and the characteristics of the surrounding terrain, the project will not include design elements that would expose people or structures to significant risks such as downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant*.

Conclusion

As conditioned, the project would not expose people or structures to new or exacerbated wildfire risks and would not require the development of new or expanded infrastructure or maintenance to reduce wildfire

risks. Therefore, potential impacts associated with wildfire would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation

None are required.

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

(a) *Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

As discussed in each of the preceding topical sections, upon implementation of identified mitigation measures, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to biological resources and would not substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate

important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated.*

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

The State CEQA Guidelines define cumulative impacts as "two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." Section 15355 of the State CEQA Guidelines further states that individual effects can be various changes related to a single project or the change involved in a number of other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. The State CEQA Guidelines state that the discussion of cumulative impacts should reflect the severity of the impacts as well as the likelihood of their occurrence. However, the discussion need not be as detailed as the discussion of environmental impacts attributable to the project alone. Furthermore, the discussion should remain practical and reasonable in considering other projects and related cumulatively considerable impacts.

Aesthetics

The analysis provided in Section I., Aesthetics, concludes that the project will result in development that is consistent with the type, scale, character and location of surrounding properties and areas visible from public vantages. Project impacts, when combined with additional development and activities likely to occur on surrounding properties within the viewshed are considered *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The analysis provided in Section II, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, indicates that the project would result in the permanent conversion of about 0.82 acres of important farmland. This impact is considered less than significant and less than cumulatively considerable because:

- The small size and irregular shape of the area where important soils are located make crop production on each project site infeasible.
- The project site is designated for residential development and is surrounded on three side by urban development.
- The conversion of up to 0.82 acres of important farmland is a small fraction of the total productive farmland within the County as mapped by the FMMP and COES.
- The TCSD does not provide water for agricultural uses.

In addition, no potential impacts to forest land or timberland would occur. The project would not result in a conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or with the existing Williamson Act contract. Therefore, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development, the contribution of the project's potential impacts to agriculture and forestry resources is considered *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Air Quality

The analysis provided in Section III, Air Quality, concludes that the project's potential construction-related emissions would not exceed SLOAPCD thresholds of significance for construction emissions. In addition, construction related emissions could adversely impact sensitive receptors on the

surrounding parcels. With implementation of recommended mitigation measures AQ-1 and AQ-2, project construction, operational, and cumulative impacts would be *less than cumulatively considerable with mitigation*.

Biological Resources

The analysis provided in Section IV, Biological Resources, concludes that the project would have a less-than-significant impact upon implementation of the identified avoidance and mitigation measures for special-status wildlife species and their habitats, potential jurisdictional waters, and oak trees. With implementation of measures BIO-1 through BIO-14 potential impacts to biological resources would be less than significant.

Based on the mitigation measures identified to reduce potential project impacts, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development in the area, project impacts associated with biological resources would be *less than cumulatively considerable with mitigation*.

Cultural Resources

The analysis provided in Section V. Cultural Resources concludes that project development would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources and project related impacts are considered less than significant.

Therefore, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development in the area, project impacts associated with cultural resources would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Energy

The analysis provided in Section VI. Energy concludes that the project's contribution to the overall increased demand for electricity and natural gas would not have the potential to result in potentially cumulatively considerable environmental impacts the wasteful, inefficient and unnecessary use of energy because the residences will be required to comply with relevant building codes relating to energy conservation. Therefore, the project's environmental impacts associated with energy use would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Geology and Soils

As discussed in Section VII. Geology and Soils, the project is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zone and would be required to comply with the CBC and other applicable standards to ensure the effects of ground instability or a potential seismic event would be minimized through compliance with current engineering practices and techniques. Therefore, project related impacts to soils and geologic resources is considered *less than cumulatively considerable*. Based on the underlying geologic formation, the project's potential impacts to previously unknown paleontological resources would be *less than significant* and *less than cumulatively considerable.*

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

As discussed in Section VI, Energy, the project is estimated to generate approximately 82 metric tons of CO_2 per year. As stated in Section VIII., a project estimated to generate less than 760 MMTCO2e GHG in 2027 is assumed to have a less than significant adverse impact that is not cumulatively considerable and consistent with the GHG reduction objectives of AB32 and SB32.

Therefore, cumulative impacts associated with GHG emissions would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

As discussed in Section IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials, construction activities may include the use of hazardous materials that could result in potential hazards through routine transport, use, and disposal as well as under upset or accident conditions. Mitigation measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2 have been identified to reduce potential impacts by restricting the location of equipment maintenance, refueling and other potentially hazardous activities, and identifying the appropriate response protocol for immediate cleanup of any spills.

Project impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be *less than cumulatively considerable with mitigation.*

Hydrology and Water Quality

As discussed in Section X. Hydrology and Water Quality, the project is not expected to require the construction of additional water supply infrastructure that would result in a significant impact on the environment.

With regard to stormwater runoff, as discussed in Section X. Hydrology and Water Quality, the application materials include a preliminary stormwater management plan and will be conditioned to ensure post-construction runoff will satisfy NPDES standards and will not adversely impact downstream properties or improvements.

Therefore, project impacts are considered *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Noise

As discussed in Section XIII, Noise, project related noise associated with construction activities and outdoor cultivation would be less than significant.

Therefore, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development, the contribution of the subject project to potential noise impacts is considered *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Population and Housing

The most recent projection of regional growth for San Luis Obispo County is the 2050 Regional Growth Forecast (RGF) for San Luis Obispo County, prepared and adopted by SLOCOG in 2017. Using the Medium Scenario, the total county population, housing, and employment for both incorporated and unincorporated areas is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 0.50% per year. Between 2015 and 2050, the County's population is projected to increase by 44,000, or about 1,260 residents per year. Within the unincorporated area, the population is expected to increase by about 19,500 residents, or about 557 per year. Employment is expected to increase by about 6,441, or about 184 per year.

The project could be expected to be occupied by about 18 residents. When considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development in the unincorporated county, the contribution of the subject project to impacts related to housing and population is considered *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Public Services

The project would be subject to adopted public facility (County) and school (CGC Section 65995 et seq.) fee programs to offset impacts to public services. Therefore, when considered with the

potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable projects, the contribution of the subject project to potential public services impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Transportation

Local Traffic Impacts. Total ADT is estimated to be about 54. As discussed in Section XVII, Transportation, the project would not result in a conflict with a plan or policy addressing the circulation system or increasing hazards due to a geometric design feature. Therefore, the project's potential traffic impacts would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Moreover, each project will be required to mitigate the project-specific impacts to the transportation network. Such mitigation may include, but is not limited to, the installation of roadway and intersection improvements necessary to serve the project and the payment of applicable road improvement fees. Therefore, when considered with the potential impacts of other reasonably foreseeable development, the contribution of the subject project to local roadway impacts would be *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Fire protection access requirements will be enforced as conditions of approval.

Vehicle Miles Traveled. Based on the screening criteria provided in the County's Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines, the infill location small size of the project is expected to have a less than significant impact on VMT that is considered de minimis and will therefore be *less than significant* and *less than cumulatively considerable*.

Other Impact Issue Areas

Based on the project's less-than-significant impacts and the discretionary review of all surrounding reasonably foreseeable future development, the project's potential impacts associated with the following issue areas would be *less than cumulatively considerable*:

- Land Use Planning;
- Mineral Resources;
- Recreation;
- Tribal Cultural Resources;
- Utilities and Service Systems; and
- Wildfire.

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

Environmental impacts that may have an adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly, are analyzed in each environmental resource section above. In addition, implementation of mitigation measures AQ-1 and AQ-2, HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, and identified in in the resource sections above would reduce potential adverse effects on human beings to less than significant; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation.*

Conclusion

Potential impacts would be less than significant upon implementation of mitigation measures identified in the resource sections above.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Sources

Provided in Exhibit A.

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

Exhibit A - Initial Study References and Agency Contacts

The County Planning Department has contacted various agencies for their comments on the proposed project. With respect to the subject application, the following have been contacted (marked with an ☒) and when a response was made, it is either attached or in the application file:

Contacted	Agency	Response
☒	County Public Works Department	**In File****
☒	County Environmental Health Services	**In File****
☐	County Agricultural Commissioner's Office	**Not Applicable**
☐	County Airport Manager	**Not Applicable**
☐	Airport Land Use Commission	**Not Applicable**
☒	Air Pollution Control District	**None**
☒	County Sheriff's Department	**None**
☒	Regional Water Quality Control Board	**None**
☐	CA Coastal Commission	**Not Applicable**
☐	CA Department of Fish and Wildlife	**Not Applicable**
☐	CA Department of Forestry (Cal Fire)	**Not Applicable**
☒	CA Department of Transportation	**None**
☐	Templeton Community Services District	**Not Applicable**
☒	Other TAG	**In File****
☒	Other AB 52 Tribes	**In File****

** "No comment" or "No concerns"-type responses are usually not attached

The following checked ("☒") reference materials have been used in the environmental review for the proposed project and are hereby incorporated by reference into the Initial Study. The following information is available at the County Department of Planning and Building.

☒ Project File for the Subject Application

County Documents

☐ Coastal Plan Policies
☒ Framework for Planning (Coastal/Inland)
☒ General Plan (Inland/Coastal), includes all maps/elements; more pertinent elements:
- ☒ Agriculture Element
- ☒ Conservation & Open Space Element
- ☐ Economic Element
- ☒ Housing Element
- ☒ Noise Element
- ☒ Parks & Recreation Element/Project List
- ☒ Safety Element

☒ Land Use Ordinance (Inland/Coastal)
☒ Building and Construction Ordinance
☒ Public Facilities Fee Ordinance
☒ Real Property Division Ordinance
☐ Affordable Housing Fund
☐ Airport Land Use Plan
☒ Energy Wise Plan
☒ North County Area Plan/Salinas River SA
☒ Templeton Design Plan
☐ Specific Plan
☐ Annual Resource Summary Report
☐ Circulation Study

Other Documents

☒ Clean Air Plan/APCD Handbook
☒ Regional Transportation Plan
☒ Uniform Fire Code
☒ Water Quality Control Plan (Central Coast Basin – Region 3)
☐ Archaeological Resources Map
☐ Area of Critical Concerns Map
☐ Special Biological Importance Map
☒ CA Natural Species Diversity Database
☒ Fire Hazard Severity Map
☒ Flood Hazard Maps
☒ Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey for SLO County
☒ GIS mapping layers (e.g., habitat, streams, contours, etc.)
☒ Other

Initial Study – Environmental Checklist

The project application materials are incorporated by reference in their entirety and available for review at the Department of Planning and Building, 976 Osos Street, Suite 200, San Luis Obispo. In addition, the following project specific information and/or reference materials have been considered as a part of the Initial Study:

Project-Specific Studies and Supporting Materials

Project application materials

45dB Acoustics Consultant, Noise Impact Analysis for General Plan Amendment, January 23, 2007

Beacon Geotechnical, Inc., July 18, 2024, Geotechnical Engineering Report For Four (4) Proposed Single Family Residences and Driveways Tract 3193 Lots 1-4

Beacon Geotechnical, Inc., July 18, 2024, Geotechnical Engineering Report For Four (4) Proposed Single Family Residences and Driveways Tract 3193 Lots 5-6

Althouse and Meade, Inc., July, 2015, Biological Report for Vesting Tentative Parcel Map CO 14-0057

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Exhibit B - Mitigation Summary Table

Per Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, the following measures also constitute the mitigation monitoring and/or reporting program that would reduce potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels. These measures would become conditions of approval (COAs) should the project be approved. The Lead Agency (County) or other Responsible Agencies, as specified in the following measures, are responsible for verifying compliance with these COAs.

Air Quality

AQ-1 **Fugitive Dust Construction Control Measures.** ***Prior to issuance of construction permits***, the following measures shall be incorporated into the construction phase of the project and shown on all applicable plans:

1. Reduce the amount of the disturbed area where possible;
2. Use water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency would be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 miles per hour. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible. When water use is a concern due to drought conditions, the contractor or builder shall consider use of a dust suppressant that is effective for the specific site conditions to reduce the amount of water used for dust control.;
3. All dirt stock-pile areas shall be sprayed daily as needed;
4. All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible, and building pads shall be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used;
5. All trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials are to be covered or should maintain at least two feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between top of load and top of trailer) or otherwise comply with California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 23114.
6. "Track-Out" is defined as sand or soil that adheres to and/or agglomerates on the exterior surfaces of motor vehicles and/or equipment (including tires) that may then fall onto any highway or street as described in CVC Section 23113 and California Water Code 13304. To prevent 'track out', designate access points and require all employees, subcontractors, and others to use them. Install and operate a 'track-out prevention device' where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto paved streets. The 'track-out prevention device' can be any device or combination of devices that are effective at preventing track out, located at the point of intersection of an unpaved area and a paved road. Rumble strips or steel plate devices need periodic cleaning to be effective. If paved roadways accumulate tracked out soils, the track-out prevention device may need to be modified.
7. All of these fugitive dust mitigation measures shall be shown on grading and building plans; and
8. The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons whose responsibility is to ensure any fugitive dust emissions do not result in a nuisance and to enhance the implementation of the mitigation measures as necessary to minimize dust complaints and reduce visible emissions below the APCD's limit of 20% opacity for greater than 3 minutes in any 60-minute period. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress (for example, wind-blown dust could be generated on an open dirt lot). The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the APCD Compliance Division

prior to the start of any grading, earthwork, or demolition (Contact the Compliance Division at 805-781-5912).

9. Permanent dust control measures identified in the approved project revegetation and landscape plans should be implemented as soon as possible, following completion of any soil disturbing activities.
10. Exposed ground areas that are planned to be reworked at dates greater than one month after initial grading should be sown with a fast germinating, non-invasive grass seed and watered until vegetation is established.
11. All disturbed soil areas not subject to revegetation should be stabilized using approved chemical soil binders, jute netting, or other methods approved in advance by the APCD.
12. Vehicle speed for all construction vehicles shall not exceed 15 mph on any unpaved surface at the construction site.
13. Sweep streets at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads. Water sweepers shall be used with reclaimed water where feasible. Roads shall be pre-wetted prior to sweeping when feasible.
14. Take additional measures as needed to ensure dust from the project site is not impacting areas outside the project boundary.

AQ-2 **ROG, NOx, DPM Emissions.** The following measures based on the SLOAPCD standard mitigation measures for construction equipment for reducing nitrogen oxides (NOx), reactive organic gases (ROG), and diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions from construction equipment shall be implemented to reduce expose of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. These measures ***shall be shown on grading and building plans***:

1. Implement Mitigation Measure AQ-1, as identified above.
2. On-road diesel vehicles shall comply with Section 2485 of Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations. This regulation limits idling from diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles with gross vehicular weight ratings of more than 10,000 pounds and licensed for operation on highways. It applies to California and non-California based vehicles. In general, the regulation specifies drivers of said vehicles:
    a. Shall not idle the vehicle's primary diesel engine for greater than 5 minutes at any location, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation; and,
    b. Shall not operate a diesel-fueled auxiliary power system to power a heater, air conditioner, or any ancillary equipment on that vehicle during sleeping or resting in a sleeper berth for greater than 5.0 minutes at any location when within 1,000 feet of a restricted area, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation.
3. Maintain all construction equipment in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications.
4. Fuel all off-road and portable diesel-powered equipment with ARB certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road).
5. Use diesel construction equipment meeting ARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines and comply with the State Off-Road Regulation.
6. Use on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the CARB's 2010 or cleaner certification standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines and comply with the State On-Road Regulation.

7. Idling of all on and off-road diesel-fueled vehicles shall not be permitted when not in use. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and or job site to remind drivers and operators of the no idling limitation.
8. Electrify equipment when possible.
9. Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, when available. and,
10. Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site when available, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.

Biological Resources

BIO-1 Environmental Awareness Training. An environmental awareness training shall be presented to all construction personnel by a qualified biologist prior to the start of any project activities. The training shall include color photographs and a description of the ecology of all special-status species known or with potential to occur on site, as well as other sensitive resources requiring avoidance near the project site. The training shall include a description of protection measures required by discretionary permits, an overview of the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts, and implications of noncompliance with these regulations. The biologist will provide an overview of the required avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. A sign-in sheet with the name and signature of the qualified biologist who presented the training, and the names and signatures of the environmental awareness trainees will be kept. A fact sheet conveying the information provided in the environmental awareness training will be provided to all project personnel and anyone else who may enter the project site. Prior to issuance of grading or construction permits, the applicant shall provide a copy of a contract with an approved/qualified biologist and a scope of work which includes, at a minimum, the conduct of environmental awareness training and ongoing monitoring as outlined in the adopted list of mitigation measures. Prior to ground disturbance and following conclusion of the awareness training, the project biologist shall provide a copy of the completed attendance sign-in sheet, and the required fact sheet, to the County.

BIO-2 Site Maintenance and General Operations - The following measures are required to minimize impacts during active construction and ongoing operations. All measures applicable during construction shall be included on project plans. All measures applicable to operation shall be clearly posted on-site in a location(s) visible to workers and anyone visiting the site:

- All work activities shall be completed during daylight hours (between sunrise and sunset) and outside of rain events.
- The Project impact area shall be clearly marked or delineated with stakes, flagging, tape, or signage prior to work. Areas outside of work limits shall be considered environmentally sensitive and shall not be disturbed.
- All equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained daily to prevent spills of fuel, oil, and other hazardous materials. A designated staging area shall be established for vehicle/equipment parking and storage of fuel, lubricants, and solvents. All fueling and maintenance activities shall take place in the staging area.
- The use of heavy equipment and vehicles shall be limited to the proposed project limits and defined staging areas/access points. The boundaries of each work area shall be clearly defined

and marked with high visibility fencing (e.g., t-posts and yellow rope) and/or flagging. No work or travel shall occur outside these limits.

- Project plans, drawings, and specifications shall show the boundaries of all work areas on site and the location of erosion and sediment controls, limit delineation, and other pertinent measures to ensure the protection of sensitive habitat areas and associated resources.
- Staging of equipment and materials shall occur in designated areas at least 100 feet from aquatic habitat (e.g., swales, drainages, ponds, vernal pools, if identified on site).
- Secondary containment such as drip pans shall be used to prevent leaks and spills of potential contaminants.
- Washing of concrete, paint, or equipment, and refueling and maintenance of equipment shall occur only in designated staging areas. These activities will occur at a minimum of 100 feet from sensitive habitat. Sandbags and/or absorbent pads and spill control kits shall always be available on site to clean up and contain fuel spills and other contaminants.
- Construction equipment shall be inspected by the operator daily to ensure that equipment is in good working order and no fuel or lubricant leaks are present.
- Plastic monofilament netting (erosion control matting) or similar material will not be used on site due to the potential to entangle special-status wildlife. Acceptable substitutes are coconut coir matting, biodegradable fiber rolls, or tackified hydroseeding compounds.
- The use of pesticides (including rodenticides) and herbicides on the property shall be in compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations to avoid primary and secondary poisoning of sensitive species that may be using the site.
- After completion of the project's construction, all protective fencing/flagging used to delineate sensitive biological resources shall be removed from the project area and disposed of in appropriate waste receptacles or reused.

BIO-3 Oak Tree Protection. To the maximum extent feasible, impacts to oak trees and oak woodland habitat shall be avoided and minimized. The following measures shall be implemented and included on the project plans:

- Grading and/or construction plans shall provide a 'Native Tree (Oak) Inventory' that accurately identifies the canopy edge and trunk locations of all native trees within 25 feet of the proposed project limits (including ancillary elements, such as trenching); For each of the trees shown, they shall be marked with one of the following 1) to be removed, 2) to be impacted, or 3) to remain intact/protected. This should be noted as the "Native Tree Impact Plan". Trees identified as 'impacted' or 'to remain protected' shall be marked in the field as such and protected to the extent possible.
- Impacts to the oak canopy or sensitive root zone shall be avoided to the extent feasible. Impacts may include pruning, ground disturbance, or placement of impervious surfaces (e.g., asphalt, permanent structures) within the sensitive root zone; installation of year-round irrigation or other supplemental water within the sensitive root zone; and trunk damage.

- Prior to ground-breaking, tree protection fencing shall be installed as close to the outer limit of the sensitive root zone as practicable for construction operations to protect trees located within 50 feet of construction that will be preserved. The fencing shall be in place throughout the duration of construction. Plastic orange safety fencing shall not be used as it may entangle wildlife. Other demarcation such as t-posts and yellow rope is adequate. Protective measures shall be visible to work crews and be able to remain in good working order for the duration of the construction work. Waterproof signage at protective edge is recommended (e.g., "TREE PROTECTION AREA – STAY OUT"). Grading, trenching, compaction of soil, construction material/equipment storage, or placement of fill shall not occur within these protected areas.

- All construction activity shall occur outside delineation fencing installed for protection of oak trees.

- A licensed arborist or qualified botanist shall be hired to oversee all removal or trimming of existing roots and necessary branch trimming. To minimize impacts from tree trimming, the following approach shall be used:

    - Removal of larger lower branches shall be minimized to 1) avoid making tree top heavy and more susceptible to "blow-overs" (due to wind), 2) to reduce the number of large limb cuts that take longer to heal and are much more susceptible to disease and infestation, 3) to retain the wildlife that is found only in the lower branches, 4) retain shade to keep summer temperatures cooler (retains higher soil moisture, creates greater passive solar potential, provides better conditions for oak seedling volunteers) and 5) retain the natural shape of the tree.

    - If trimming is unavoidable, no more than 10% of the oak canopy shall be removed.

    - If trimming is done, either a certified arborist will be used, or trimming techniques accepted by the International Society of Arboriculture will be used. Unless a hazardous or unsafe situation exists, trimming will be done only during the winter for deciduous species.

- Care shall be taken to avoid surface roots within the top 18 inches of soil. If any roots are exposed during construction, they shall be covered with a layer of soil to match existing topography.

- Impacts to oak trees shall be assessed by a licensed arborist or qualified botanist prior to final inspection and reported to the County.

BIO-4 Oak Tree Mitigation. For oak tree removals or impacts during project implementation, the applicant shall provide mitigation (on site if feasible) per the County's guidelines, typically 4:1 for removals and 2:1 for impacted trees. This shall include development of an oak tree mitigation plan and establishment of an oak tree planting site or conservation easement that shall be protected in perpetuity. A mitigation plan shall be prepared by a licensed arborist or qualified biologist that details the methods and requirements for oak tree mitigation. At a minimum, the plan shall:

- Include a detailed inventory of the species and quantity of all oak trees to be removed or impacted.

- Discuss the proposed construction methods, construction schedule, and the implementation schedule of activities proposed as part of the plan.

- Quantify and describe the anticipated impacts to individual oak trees and/or oak woodland habitat, as applicable.
- Identify all appropriate methods for fulfillment of required mitigation (e.g., on-site plantings, conservation easement, or in-lieu fee).
- Describe detailed planting methods, as appropriate. Replacement trees shall be of one-gallon size of local origin, and of the same species as was impacted. Replacement trees shall be seasonally maintained (browse protection, weed reduction and irrigation, as needed) and monitored annually for at least seven years.
- Identify suitable areas for establishment of new oak trees and/or protection of existing oak woodland habitat, as appropriate.
- Describe short-term and long-term monitoring protocols and/or vegetative growth performance criteria for mitigation success.
- The plan shall be prepared by a licensed arborist or qualified botanist and be submitted to the County for approval prior to the start of construction.

BIO-5 **Impacts to the oak canopies or critical root zones (CRZ)** shall be avoided where practicable. Impacts include pruning, any ground disturbance within the dripline or CRZ of the tree (whichever distance is greater), and trunk damage. The CRZ radius is determined using ratio of 1.5 feet for every inch of DBH. For example, a tree with a 10- inch DBH has a 15-foot radius CRZ.

BIO-6 **Prior to issuance of grading permits**, the applicant shall provide evidence to the County that either no jurisdictional areas will be impacted or that any necessary authorizations from the United States Army Corps of Engineers, State Water Resource Control Board, and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife have been issued.

BIO-7 **Protection of Jurisdictional Waters.** In addition to BIO-2 and HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, the following recommendations are provided to protect drainages and aquatic resources from indirect impacts.

- Project construction shall comply with County Code Title 19.11 Stormwater Management.
- A minimum 50-foot setback from the top of bank or upland edge of any potentially jurisdictional wetland or water shall be maintained throughout all phases of construction and operation. This buffer shall be clearly demarcated in project plans and protected with temporary fencing during construction. No grading, trenching, or equipment staging shall occur within this buffer without agency review and approval.
- Construction activity within 100 feet of drainages shall occur only when conditions are dry.
- To prevent erosion and sedimentation into jurisdictional waters during construction, an erosion and sedimentation control plan shall be developed and implemented. It shall outline Best Management Practices for temporary stabilization. Acceptable stabilization methods include the use of weed-free, natural fiber (i.e., non-monofilament) rolls, jute or coir netting, and/or other industry standard materials. Erosion control devices shall be installed and maintained for the duration of the project.

BIO-8 Pre-construction survey for bats. A pre-construction survey shall be completed within 7 days prior to removal or trimming of any tree over 10-inches DBH (including dead trees and snags) to determine if they harbor sensitive bat species or maternal bat colonies. If a non-maternal roost is found, the qualified biologist may install one-way valves or other appropriate passive relocation method.

BIO-9. Bat eviction plan. If a bat roost is detected during the maternal season, a minimum 50- foot no-disturbance buffer will be maintained. For roosts that require removal during the non-maternal season, a one-way valve will be placed over the occupied access point to allow bats to safely leave and prohibit reentry.

BIO-10 Reduce Light Impact to Nocturnal species. The following measures shall be implemented for temporary and permanent light sources to minimize potential light impacts to bats and other nocturnal wildlife:

3. Use the lowest intensity lighting appropriate for the task
4. Light only the area intended – keep lights directed and shielded to avoid light spill.

BIO-11 A focused survey for Crotch's bumble bee shall be performed by a qualified biologist following the guidance set forth in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Candidate Bumble Bee Species (June 6, 2023). This includes at least 3 surveys during the Colony Active Period of April – August. If Crotch's bumble bee is detected during the survey the applicant shall consult with CDFW on recommendations for impact avoidance and/or take authorization through acquisition of an Incidental Take Permit, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 subdivision (b).

BIO-12 Badger pre-construction survey. A pre-construction survey shall be conducted within thirty days of beginning work on the site to identify if badgers are using the site. The results of the survey shall be sent to the project manager and the County of San Luis Obispo. If the pre-construction survey finds potential badger dens, they shall be inspected to determine whether they are occupied. The survey shall cover the entire Study Area and shall examine both old and new dens. If potential badger dens are too long to completely inspect from the entrance, a fiber optic scope shall be used to examine the den to the end. Inactive dens may be excavated by hand with a shovel to prevent reuse of dens during construction. If badgers are found in dens on the Property between February and July, nursing young may be present. To avoid disturbance and the possibility of direct take of adults and nursing young, and to prevent badgers from becoming trapped in burrows during construction activity, no grading shall occur within 100 feet of active badger dens between February and July. Between July 1st and February 1st all potential badger dens shall be inspected to determine if badgers are present. During the winter badgers do not truly hibernate but are inactive and asleep in their dens for several days at a time. Because they can be torpid during the winter, they are vulnerable to disturbances that may collapse their dens before they rouse and emerge. Therefore, surveys shall be conducted for badger dens throughout the year. If badger dens are found within the Study Area during the pre-construction survey, the CDFW wildlife biologist for the area shall be contacted to review current allowable management practices.

Construction activities shall not commence within the exclusion area until the badger has moved of its own accord. A preconstruction survey letter report shall be submitted to the lead agency for review within one week after completion of the survey.

BIO-13 Nesting bird surveys. Within one week of ground disturbance activities, if work occurs between March 1 and August 30, nesting bird surveys shall be conducted to determine whether yellow-billed magpie or other bird species protected under the MBTA are nesting within or adjacent to the construction zone. If surveys do not locate nesting birds, construction activities may be conducted. If nesting birds are located, no construction activities shall occur within 100 feet of nests until chicks are fledged. A pre-construction survey report shall be submitted to the lead agency immediately upon completion of the survey. The report shall detail appropriate fencing or flagging of the buffer zone and make recommendations on additional monitoring requirements. A map of the Project site and nest locations shall be included with the report. The Project biologist conducting the nesting survey shall have the authority to reduce or increase the recommended buffer depending upon site conditions.

BIO-14 Preconstruction Survey and Monitoring for Special-status Reptiles. A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey immediately prior to the start of work within 50 feet of suitable habitat for Northern California legless lizard and lesser salamander. The scope of the survey shall be determined by a qualified biologist and shall be sufficient to determine presence or absence in the project areas. Construction monitoring shall also be conducted by a qualified biologist during all initial ground disturbing and vegetation removal activities (e.g., grading, grubbing, vegetation trimming, or vegetation removal including tree removal) within suitable habitat. With approval from CDFW, if Northern California legless lizards are discovered during surveys and monitoring, they will be hand captured and relocated to suitable habitat outside the area of impact. If the focused survey results are negative, a letter report shall be submitted to the County, and no further action shall be required. If legless lizards are found to be present in the proposed work areas the following steps shall be taken:

- Legless lizards shall be captured by hand by the project biologist and relocated to an appropriate location well outside the project area.
- Construction monitoring shall be required for all new ground-breaking activities located within legless lizard habitat.
- Construction monitors shall capture and relocate horned lizards as specified above. A letter report shall be submitted to the County and CDFW within 30 days of legless lizard relocation, or as directed by CDFW.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

HAZ-1 Equipment Maintenance and Refueling. During all construction activities, the cleaning, refueling, and maintenance of equipment and vehicles shall occur only within designated staging areas. The staging areas shall conform to all Best Management Practices applicable to attaining zero discharge of stormwater runoff. At a minimum, all equipment and vehicles shall be checked and maintained on a daily basis to ensure proper operation and to avoid potential leaks or spills.

HAZ-2 Spill Response Protocol. During all construction activities, all project-related spills of hazardous materials shall be cleaned up immediately. Appropriate spill prevention and cleanup materials shall be onsite at all times during construction.