

EIR Scoping Document

Solomon Hills Project

Case Nos.: 22GPA-00000-00007, 22RZN-00000-00003, 24TRM-00005, 24TRM-00006, 23DVP-00015, 25CUP-00005, 25CUP-00006, 25GOV-00003, 25SPP-00001, 25RDN-00001, 25ORD-00002, 25BAR-00011, 25EIR-00001

Assessor's Parcel Numbers* (APNs): 101-020-041, 101-020-043, 101-020-085, 101-020-086, and 101-020-087

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APNs: 101-020-041, 101-020-043, 101-020-085, 101-020-086, 101-020-087.

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1 Introduction

This scoping document explains the public scoping effort to be conducted by the County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development (County) for the Solomon Hills Specific Plan Project (project). In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a 30-day public scoping period provides members of the public, regulatory agencies, and interested parties the opportunity to comment on the scope of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project.

The project site is currently zoned Agricultural II, 100-acre minimum parcel size (AG-II-100) with a Land Use Designation of Agricultural Commercial (AC). The project includes a request initiated by Solstra Communities California, LLC (the applicant) for a General Plan Amendment to create a new urban boundary around portions of the proposed development, and to change the land use designation within the Specific Plan Area from AC to various residential, commercial, institutional, and open space land use designations under a Specific Plan. The project includes a request for accompanying rezones from AG-II-100 to allow for future residential, commercial, institutional, and mixed-use development in different areas of the project site. Portions of the project site outside of the Specific Plan Area will remain designated AC and Zoned AG-II-100, and will accommodate various infrastructure improvements and limited development. At the County Planning Commission hearing of March 8, 2023, the Commission voted to accept the General Plan Amendment and Rezone applications for processing.

The applicant-initiated request included the following materials:

- General Plan Amendment and Rezone Application Forms
- Description of proposed amendments to the General Plan
- Complete Project Plan Set
- Supplemental Technical Reports

The County is in the process of peer reviewing applicant-provided technical materials to evaluate the adequacy of the reports for informing the environmental review process for the project, based on the CEQA Guidelines Environmental Checklist Form (Appendix G) and the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual. The peer review is currently being conducted by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. Based on the most recent peer review, the County has determined the applicant-provided technical materials are adequate to initiate the environmental review process through the development of a CEQA project description and public scoping effort.

2 Project Location

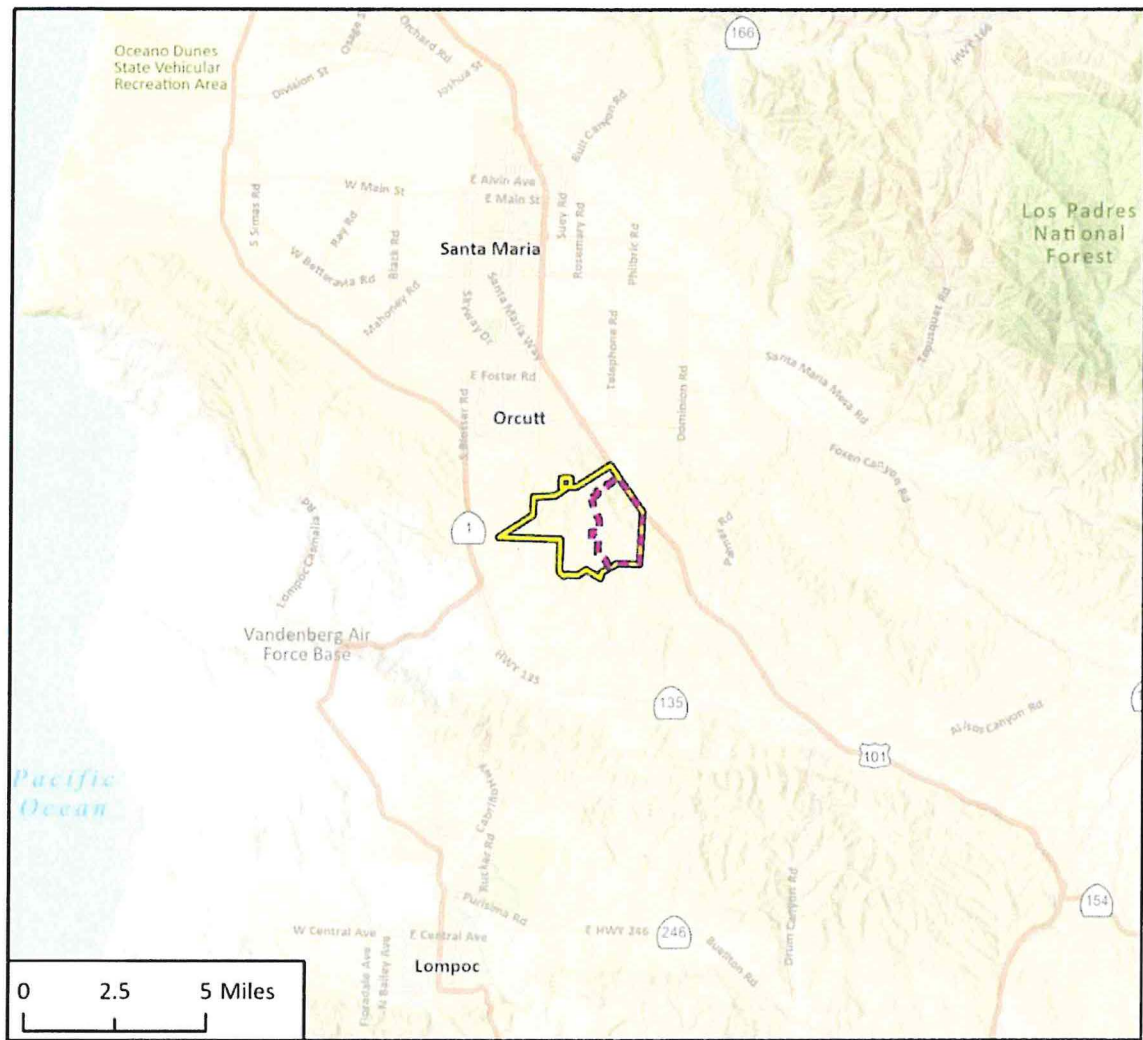
The 4,195-acre project site is located in unincorporated Santa Barbara County, directly west of U.S. Highway 101 (U.S. 101) and two miles east of California State Route (SR) 135. The project site lies between the communities of Orcutt to the north and Los Alamos in the south. The project site includes five Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 101-020-041, 101-020-043, 101-020-085, 101-020-086, and 101-020-087, though overall development for infrastructure improvements and access will also occur offsite as shown in Figure 1-3. The project site is regionally accessible from U.S. 101, and locally accessible from Orcutt Hill Road to the north, Solomon Summit Road to the south, and Graciosa Road to the west where it joins with SR 135. Table 1-1 summarizes the characteristics of the project. Figure 1-1 shows the regional location of the project site, and Figure 1-2 shows the location of the project site in its local context.

Table 1-1 Project Site Characteristics

Project Element	Characteristic
Project Site	4,195 acres
Specific Plan Area	1,616 acres
General Plan Land Use Designation	Agricultural Commercial
Zoning Designations	Agricultural II (AG-II-100)
Current Uses	Oil and gas production, cattle grazing, Newlove Picnic Grounds
Regional Access	U.S. 101 and SR 135
Public Services	Water Supply: Cadiz and State Water Project supplies Sewage: On-site Water Reclamation Facility Fire: Santa Barbara County Fire Department (County Station No. 21 and County Station No. 26) Law Enforcement: Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department (Santa Maria Station)

Additional details on the project location can be found in the Environmental Project Description (Attachment A).

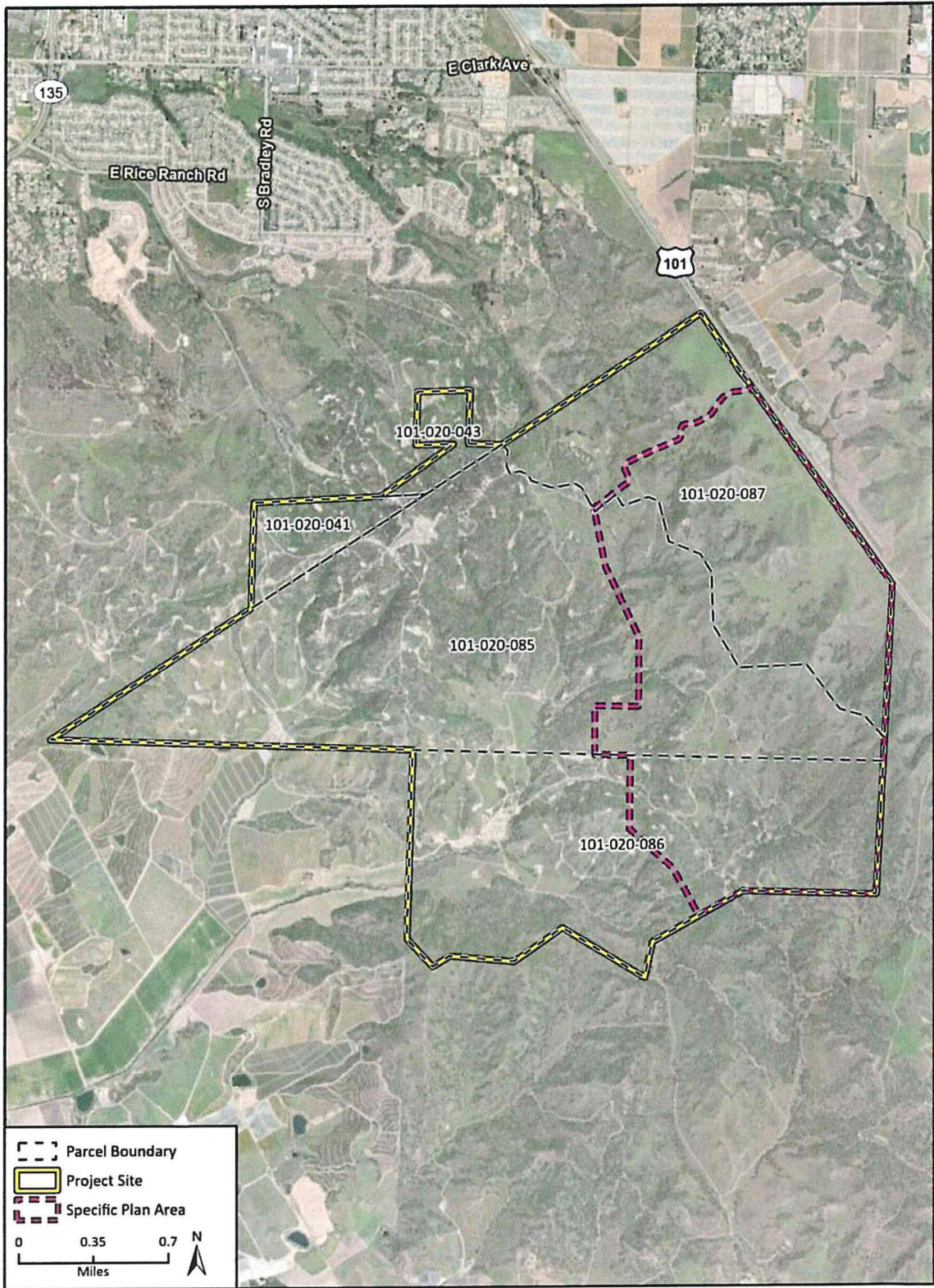
Figure 1-1 Regional Project Location



- Project Site
- Specific Plan Area



Figure 1-2 Project Site Location



3 Request/Project Description

The Specific Plan Area encompasses 1,616 acres proposed for residential development, supporting non-residential community services, commercial retail and office space development, open space, and infrastructural development under the Solomon Hills Specific Plan.¹ Outside of the Specific Plan Area, the project would include development and improvements within the project site, as well as offsite improvements. These include a 506-acre conservation easement, a 31-acre park, a 9.5-acre recycled water storage basin, utility improvements such as water infrastructure, electrical lines, natural gas lines, telecommunications upgrades, regional and local access improvements including new private roadways, multi-use pathways, improvement of the existing connection to SR 135, improvement of the existing U.S. 101/Solomon Summit Road interchange to the south, and a new interchange on U.S. 101.

Figure 1-3 and Figure 1-4 show the location of the project site, Specific Plan Area, Newlove Park, Wet Weather Storage Basin, Anticipated Utility Areas, Anticipated Roadways, Anticipated Highway Improvements, and Proposed Conservation Areas. Additional project description details can be found in the Environmental Project Description, Attachment A.

The project includes the Specific Plan and related entitlements and approvals, which would serve to prepare for and guide future development within the Specific Plan Area. The County's Comprehensive Plan would direct future landowners and developers to the Specific Plan for zone districts, development standards, allowed uses, and permitting requirements within the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan Area would be developed into a new community with up to 4,000 single and multi-family residential units; community services including a school, fire and sheriff; commercial retail and office uses; and open space for parks, recreation, and conservation. Based on the proposed unit count of 4,000 units, 400 units would be designated as inclusionary housing, consistent with the County Code of Ordinances Chapter 46A, which provides the County criteria and definitions for inclusionary housing.

The project would include a DVP entitlement that would identify the four phases of the project buildout to allow future development within the Specific Plan Area. Construction is planned to occur over a 14-year period in four phases, with grading, access, and utilities scheduled in advance to correspond with each phase, further described in the Environmental Project Description (Attachment A). The project includes two Conditional Use Permit applications within the project area and north of the Specific Plan Area, within the Orcutt Community Plan area. The Newlove Recreation Conditional Use Permit (Newlove Park) would expand the existing 31-acre park to include additional sports and recreational facilities. The Newlove Wet Weather Storage Basin Conditional Use Permit would involve the construction of a 9.5-acre recycled water storage facility to serve the Specific Plan Area.

The project includes abandoning or re-abandoning 66 known oil and gas wells near the proposed development and remediating oilfield infrastructure within the project site, including historic sumps, pipelines, and storage tanks. All active oil well operations within the Specific Plan Area would cease and

¹ Following are definitions for several key terms used in this document:

Project Site refers to the 4,195-acre area owned by the applicant, comprised of five APNs: 101-020-041, 101-020-043, 101-020-085, 101-020-086, and 101-020-087 (refer to Figure 1-2):

Specific Plan Area refers to the 1,616-acre area proposed for development. Refer to Figure 1-3.

Newlove Park refers to the 31-acre proposed park. Refer to Figure 1-3.

Offsite Improvements refer to the portions of the Anticipated Utility Areas, Anticipated Roadways, and Anticipated Highway Improvements that are outside of the project site boundary. Refer to Figure 1-3.

be permanently closed during the first buildout phase. Remediation activities associated with historic oilfield uses would be implemented on a phased basis consistent with the project's four buildout phases. A project specific Construction Health Risk Assessment and Air Quality Impact Assessment would inform the total number of oil and gas wells on the project site that would be required to be abandoned prior to development of the Specific Plan Area, further described in the Environmental Project Description (Attachment A).

Figure 1-3 Project Site Components

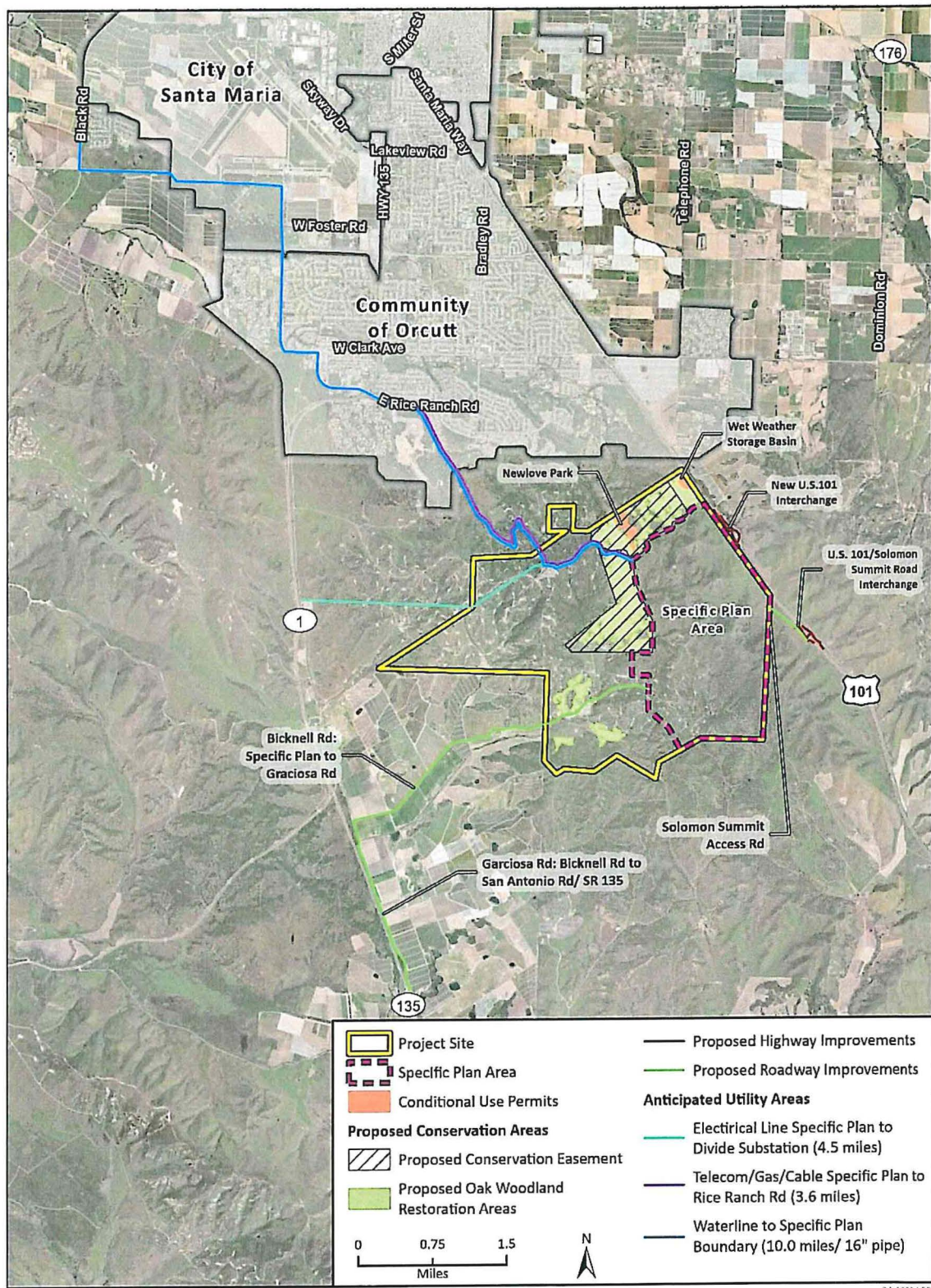
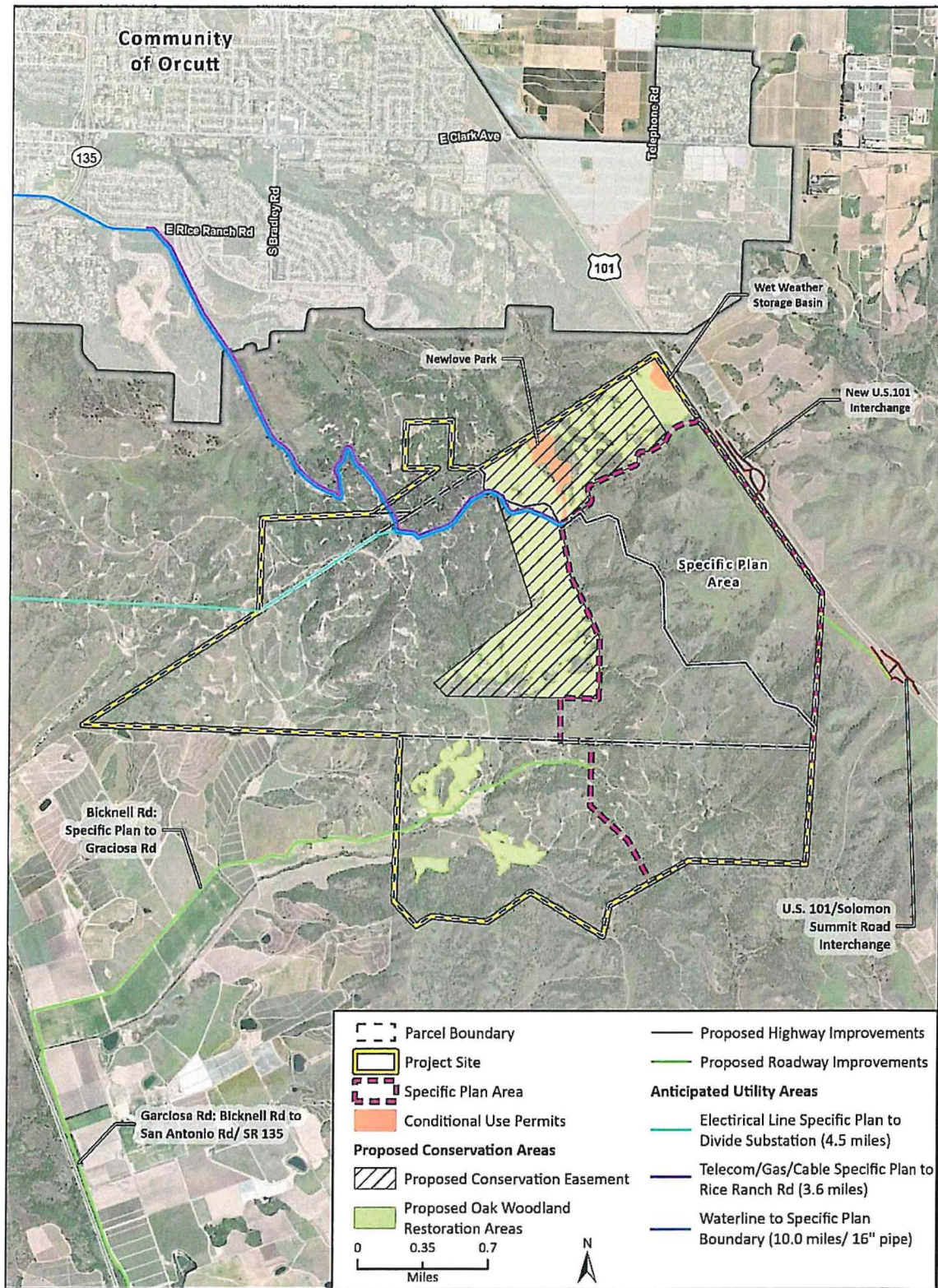


Figure 1-4 Project Site Components Detail



4 Environmental Setting

The project site has historically been used for cattle grazing as well as oil and gas production. The southwestern and western portions of the project site are currently leased to Pacific Coast Energy Company and contain both active and abandoned oil and gas wells, along with associated pipelines and infrastructure. The eastern and northeastern portions of the project site remain largely undeveloped, aside from a few scattered wells and related facilities. The northern portion of the project site includes Newlove Picnic Grounds, a private park located within the Orcutt Community Plan Area. The project site is surrounded by largely undeveloped agricultural land (zoned AG-II-100) on all sides: to the north and west, nearby agricultural land is used for oil and gas operations; to the south, nearby agricultural land is used for ranching; and to the east, the site is bordered by U.S. 101 and agricultural land.

The project site features diverse landforms, including hillsides, steep bluffs, alluvial valleys, and narrow canyons with slopes reaching up to 100 percent. Vegetation on the site consists primarily of oak woodlands, chaparral coastal sage, and non-native grasses, which occur over various sand and loamy sand soil types.

The region experiences a climate characterized by hot, dry summers and mild winters. Average annual temperatures range from approximately 50 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and average yearly precipitation ranges from 10 to 15 inches.

Additional details on the project's Environmental Setting can be found in the Environmental Project Description (Attachment A).

5 Environmental Review

This section includes a preliminary evaluation of the project's potential environmental impacts identified during the preparation of applicant-provided technical materials. This EIR scoping document outlines information that is available for public and agency review. The EIR will provide a thorough and complete environmental review of the proposed project, based on the CEQA Guidelines Environmental Checklist Form (Appendix G) and the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, updating the preliminary evaluation provided in this scoping document in response to comments received as part of the EIR scoping process, and any relevant new environmental information.

5.1 Aesthetics/Visual Resources

5.1.1 Impact Discussion

The project's Objective Design Standards and Design Guidelines, detailed in Appendix A of the Specific Plan, would establish the design standards for zone district development. The project Objective Design Standards and Design Guidelines include requirements to guide development in the Specific Plan Area, such as vegetation screening for infrastructure, landscape design, plant palettes, and specifications for lighting. The Objective Design Standards and Design Guidelines will be reviewed by County resource staff and used during preparation of the EIR to evaluate the project's potential impacts to aesthetic and visual resources.

Construction and development of the project could result in changes to the visual character of the Specific Plan Area, project site, and surrounding area. The existing visual character includes views of the Solomon Hills to the east, undeveloped hillsides, grazing land, and areas disturbed by historic and active oil operations. During project construction, equipment, fencing, lighting, staging areas, and stockpiled materials could be visible from surrounding areas, temporarily degrading the visual character of the area from public viewpoints. This is particularly true because of the amount of time necessary to complete buildout, phased grading design, and development of portions of the Specific Plan Area by multiple third-party developers.

Construction and development of the project has the potential to alter existing landforms in portions of the project site, impacting topography of the area. As shown in the Concept Grading Plan (Attachment B), the proposed grading activities within the Specific Plan Area include approximately 23.9 million cubic yards of cut, with cut heights up to approximately 150 feet, and 19.9 million cubic yards of fill, with fill heights up to approximately 112 feet. These large-scale grading operations would not follow existing topographical features and would substantially modify the natural terrain. Phased tract grading would also require the removal of mature trees and on-site vegetation that contribute to the project site's rural and undeveloped visual character. The combined effects of topographical changes and the loss of vegetation would increase the visibility of disturbed areas during construction and could result in a substantial change in the visual landscape.

Construction of the project would require staging areas, equipment laydown zones, and multiple soil stockpiles, which would temporarily degrade the visual character of the project site by introducing visually prominent construction elements into a largely undeveloped landscape. Short-term stockpiles generated

during active earthwork would be located near ongoing grading activities, and an additional engineered fill stockpile is planned along the eastern boundary of the Specific Plan Area following completion of Phase I grading. This engineered stockpile would be expanded during Phase 3 and would remain in place until Phase 4 grading activities are completed. Based on the anticipated scale, duration, and visible location on the eastern edge of the Specific Plan Area, the stockpile would likely be visible from portions of U.S. 101 and other nearby public viewpoints. Construction staging areas, material storage, and stockpiling activities would remain visible during multiple grading phases and would contribute to short-term changes in the area's visual quality until construction activities in each phase are completed.

Development of the project has the potential to impact nearby viewsheds, including those from existing public trails and roadways. While U.S. 101 is not formally designated as a scenic corridor, portions of U.S. 101 are eligible for scenic designation, including the segment located along the northwest boundary of the project site. During construction and operation, new development and grading activities would be visible to motorists traveling along this section of U.S. 101 (Caltrans 2018). Over the long term, project development would permanently alter the visual setting and contribute to cumulative visual changes in the Orcutt area by introducing residential neighborhoods, commercial buildings, roadways, lighting, and associated infrastructure to an area that is largely undeveloped and surrounded by agriculturally zoned land.

The project has the potential to increase glare off-site, light spillage, and night sky light pollution in an area that includes limited existing sources of light and glare. During project construction, temporary lighting may be required for worker safety or during night work. Project construction would introduce new sources of glare from equipment, trucks, or construction materials. Habitation of the largely undeveloped Specific Plan Area would introduce permanent new sources of lighting and glare associated with residential and commercial development, roadways, utilities, and safety infrastructure.

5.1.2 Scope of EIR

The EIR will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impacts on aesthetics and visual resources, including construction and operation related changes to the visual character of the project site and surrounding area, increased light and glare, and effects on nearby viewsheds and officially designated scenic resources. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's aesthetics/visual resources impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.2 Agricultural Resources

5.2.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment C):

- Agriculture Suitability and Production Report (Althouse and Meade, Inc. 2025)

This report has been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the report is adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information retained in this report, the project is not

anticipated to result in a significant impact to agricultural resources, as summarized below.

The project site is designated and zoned Agricultural II (AG-II-100) and is currently used for seasonal grazing. The project would rezone the project site to allow the proposed residential, commercial, and public uses, removing the existing grazing operations.

The County evaluates Prime Agricultural Land using a weighted system that considers water availability, soil suitability, grazing and crop production potential, existing and historic land uses, land designation, agricultural preserve potential, and combined farming operations. According to the Agriculture Suitability and Production Report, the project site lacks feasible water sources to supply irrigation needed to support agricultural production. However, potential for groundwater use beyond recent historic use for future land uses will be evaluated in a Water Supply Assessment, which is being prepared by the applicant.² While the project site currently supports viable cattle grazing at a stocking rate of 1 Animal Unit per 10.2 to 10.9 acres, this existing use does not meet the County's criteria for Prime Agricultural Land, which require the capacity to support 1 Animal Unit per acre. In addition, most of the site contains coastal scrub with slopes greater than 15 percent, which reduces the total grazeable area and further limits the site's suitability under the County's Prime Agricultural Land criteria.

5.2.2 Scope of EIR

The EIR will incorporate the applicant-prepared and peer reviewed Agriculture Suitability and Production Report and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impacts to agricultural resources, including any changes in land designation, land use, or viability for potential agricultural use. Based on current information, these effects are anticipated to be less than significant; therefore, mitigation measures are not anticipated to be required. Should the analysis identify potential impacts that warrant further consideration, the EIR will discuss them accordingly.

5.3a Air Quality

5.3.1a Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment D):

- Air Quality Study (SCS Engineers, 2025)

This study has been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the study is adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information retained in this study, the project has the potential to impact air quality. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

The County is nonattainment-transitional for the State ozone standard and nonattainment for the State

² Under California State Legislature of Senate Bill SB 610, a Water Supply Assessment is required to determine water supply sufficiency for a 20-year projection in addition to the demand of existing and other planned future uses for projects that are subject to CEQA and propose (1) residential development of more than 500 dwelling units; (2) commercial development of more than 250,000 square feet of floor space; (3) a retail center with more than 500,000 square feet of floor space; (4) a hotel or motel having more than 500 rooms; (5) an industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area; (6) a mixed-use project that includes one or more of the projects specified above; or (7) a project that will demand an amount of water equal to, or greater than, the amount of water required by 500 dwelling units.

particulate matter 10 micrometers or small (PM₁₀) standard. Project construction and operational activities could emit ozone precursors including nitrogen oxides and reactive organic compounds, as well as PM₁₀ generated from fugitive dust and mobile sources that may meet or exceed the applicable Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District thresholds of significance, which has the potential to result in local and regional impacts to air quality. As such, the County anticipates the project would require mitigation to reduce air quality impacts.

The project has the potential to generate odors and toxic air contaminants from sources such as diesel-fueled equipment, commercial operations, architectural coatings, and the on-site water reclamation facility. Nearby residential areas could be affected by odor producing land uses from the water reclamation facility, restaurants, and commercial land uses. Exposure to toxic air contaminant emissions, which include diesel particulate matter, can result in adverse health effects. Project construction and operational activities would emit toxic air contaminants associated with the use of diesel fuel equipment, remediation activities, and project-generated truck traffic.

The project would be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and regional/local odor control and air toxic regulations. However, in response to recommendations from Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District, the applicant is preparing a project-specific Construction Health Risk Assessment consistent with Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District Rule 805 and modeling requirements for evaluating construction-related health risks, as well as an Air Quality Impact Assessment to address the proximity of sensitive land uses (e.g., residences and a school) to existing oil and gas operations.

5.3.2a Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed Air Quality Study includes mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction, operational, and cumulative impacts, including contributions to ozone and PM₁₀ nonattainment. The EIR will incorporate information from the applicant-prepared Air Quality Study, and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's air quality impacts, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The project-specific Construction Health Risk Assessment and Air Quality Impact Assessment being prepared by the applicant will be peer reviewed by Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District staff prior to being used to support the EIR evaluation of the project's construction-related health risks and proximity of sensitive land uses to existing oil and gas operations. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's air quality impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.3b Air Quality – Greenhouse Gas Emissions

5.3.1b Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment E):

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory (SCS Engineers, 2025)

This inventory report has been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the inventory report is adequate to

initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information retained in this inventory report, the project has the potential to impact greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Project construction and operation could generate GHG emissions from sources such as heavy equipment used during project construction and development, commercial operations, electricity and natural gas use, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, and vehicle fuel combustion. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, the County evaluates the significance of a project's GHG emissions by considering whether the project is consistent with the County's 2030 Climate Action Plan. A project that demonstrates consistency with the 2030 Climate Action Plan through the 2030 CAP Consistency Checklist (also known as the CEQA GHG Checklist) can rely on this consistency to support a determination that the project's GHG contribution is not cumulatively considerable. The County is in the process of adopting lower GHG emission thresholds that would be used for years beyond 2030 to be consistent with the State's 2045 carbon neutrality goal. Because the project's anticipated buildout in 2046 is closer to the State's 2045 carbon neutrality goal, the project construction and operation GHG emissions analysis in the EIR will reflect thresholds applicable to the project's proposed buildout timeline.

Based on the size and scale of proposed residential and commercial development, the increase in residential density compared to the site's existing AG-II-100 zoning and current land use, the additional vehicle trips generated by the proposed development, and the inclusion of natural gas service for commercial operations, the project has the potential to generate a substantial volume of new GHG emissions. As described above, the County is currently in the process of developing lower GHG significance thresholds. In the absence of adopted thresholds, the project has the potential to conflict with the County's 2030 Climate Action Plan and the State's 2045 carbon neutrality goal.

5.3.2b Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory includes mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational GHG emissions. The EIR will incorporate information from the applicant-prepared Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's GHG emissions, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local GHG reduction policies. This analysis will assess the project's anticipated emissions relative to both the County's 2030 Climate Action Plan and the State's 2045 carbon neutrality goal, taking into account the project's proposed buildout year and the County's emerging post-2030 thresholds. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's GHG impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.4 Biological Resources

5.4.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment F):

- Biological Resources Assessment (David Wolff Environmental, 2025)
- Oak Tree Management and Replacement Plan (Dudek, 2025)

- Golden Eagle Nest Report (Althouse & Meade, 2025)
- Biological Technical Report (Environmental Science Associates, 2025)
- Wet Weather Storage Basin Conditional Use Permit Biological Resources Assessment (David Wolff Environmental, 2025)
- Newlove Park CUP Biological Resources Assessment (David Wolff Environmental, 2025)
- Oak Tree Impact Evaluation for the Solomon Hills Off-Site Water Line (Dudek, 2026)
- Solomon Hills Project September 2025 Floristic Survey Results (ESA, 2025)

The initial technical documents have been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants, and the County has determined these documents are adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Two supplemental technical documents; the Oak Tree Impact Evaluation for the Solomon Hills Off-Site Water Line and the Solomon Hills Project September 2025 Floristic Survey Results, are currently under review by County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. Based on the information retained in the peer reviewed technical documents, the project has the potential to impact biological resources. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Construction and development activities associated with the project could result in direct loss of native and naturalized habitat, including oak woodland, wetlands, native grasslands, scrub habitats, sedge marshes, and arroyo willow thickets. According to the Biological Technical Report prepared by Environmental Science Associates in July 2025, the project would impact 370 acres of sensitive natural communities, including Coast Live Oak Woodland, Needlegrass-Melic Grass Grasslands, Burton Mesa Chaparral, Silver Dune Lupine-Mock Heather Scrub, California Brittle Brush Scrub, Saltgrass-Alkali Heath Coastal, Soft and Western Rush-Sedge Marshes, and Arroyo Willow Thickets. Development of the project would require removal of approximately 14,206 protected trees and approximately 3,002 non-protected trees. As such, the County would require mitigation for the removal of the 14,206 protected trees.

The project has the potential to impact special-status wildlife species as a result of the loss or degradation of habitat and foraging areas, increased human presence, increased barriers that interfere with wildlife movement corridors, noise, and lighting. Wildlife species that could be impacted by the construction and operation of the project include Golden Eagle, Cooper's hawk, California tiger salamander, California legless lizard, San Diego desert woodrat, coast-horned lizard, Crotch's bumble bee, monarch butterfly, white-tailed kite, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot, and American badger.

Development of the project has the potential to result in water quality impacts to the area drainages due to storm water runoff and increased pollutants from typical residential development and activities (e.g. oil, grease, herbicides and pesticides), soil erosion and sedimentation, and construction activities and waste. Increased human presence, herbicide and pesticide use for landscaping and gardens, and the use of non-native plant material in landscaping could result in increased levels of invasive species occurring in native habitats and affect the long-term integrity and persistence of native plant and insect communities within the project site. Increased human presence in areas that have historically been open space by new residents within the project site, as well as due to the creation of the new public trails, has the potential to impact sensitive species and habitats.

5.4.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed technical materials listed under Section 5.4.1 Impact Discussion include mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational impacts, including the loss of protected and non-protected trees and other vegetation, habitat, sensitive natural communities, and impacts to special-status wildlife species. The EIR will incorporate information from these technical materials and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impacts to biological resources, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.5 Cultural Resources

5.5.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant:

- Phase I Archaeological Assessment: Solomon Hills Project, Orcutt, Santa Barbara County, California (Leftwich Archaeology, 2025)
- Phase I Archaeological Assessment: Effluent Storage Basin Number 3 Supplement (Leftwich Archaeology, 2025)
- Phase I Archaeological Assessment: Tree Planting Area Supplemental (Leftwich Archaeology, 2025)
- Phase I Archaeological Assessment: Off-Site Water, Gas, and Telecommunications Supplement (Leftwich Archaeology, 2025)
- Phase I Archaeological Assessment: Grading Area Adjustments Supplement (Leftwich Archaeology, 2025)
- Phase I Archaeological Assessment: Highway 101 Ingress/Egress Supplement (Leftwich Archaeology, 2025)
- Phase II Archaeological Testing and Evaluation, Historic Sites, Solomon Hills General Plan, Rezone, and Development Application Project, Santa Barbara County, CA (Padre Associates, 2025)
- Phase II Archaeological Testing and Evaluation, CA-SBA-3962, Solomon Hills, General Plan, Rezone, and Development Application Project, Santa Barbara County, California (Padre Associates, 2025)

These technical materials are not included in the attachments to this document pursuant to California Government Code §6254.10 and Public Resources Code §21082.3(c), which protect sensitive cultural resource information. These technical documents have been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the reports are adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information retained in these technical documents, the project has the potential to impact cultural resources. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Construction and development activities associated with the project would result in ground disturbance during grading, excavating, and vegetation removal, which has the potential impact known as well as previously unidentified archaeological and historic-era cultural resources on the project site. According to the Phase I Archaeological Assessment prepared by Leftwich Archaeology, 22 recorded historic-period sites were identified within the project site, primarily associated with early 20th-century oil production, as well as one recorded prehistoric site. Most cultural resources within the project site occur inside the proposed grading limits and could be damaged or destroyed during project construction. A small portion of one historic site located near Bicknell Road and Graciosa Road could also be affected by planned roadway improvements. The project site could contain buried or obscured archaeological materials not identified during prior surveys due to dense vegetation and limited surface visibility. Initial grading, excavation, and vegetation removal activities could expose previously undiscovered archaeological deposits or human remains. As such, the County would require mitigation during initial ground disturbing construction activities.

During project operation, increased human presence, maintenance activities, and long-term residential and commercial use of the site could potentially result in impacts to previously undiscovered historic-period and prehistoric cultural resources on the project site. Indirect impacts could include potential disturbance or inadvertent damage to preserved in-place materials.

5.5.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed technical materials listed under Section 5.5.1 Impact Discussion include mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational impacts, including damage or loss of cultural resources during ground disturbing activities. The EIR will incorporate information from these technical materials and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impact to cultural resources, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.6 Energy

5.6.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment G):

- Preliminary Engineering Study Plan (Pacific Gas and Electric Company, 2025)
- Load Calculations Report (Salas O'Brien, 2025)

These technical documents have been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the reports are adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information presented in these technical documents, the project has the potential to result in an increased demand for energy. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Construction and development of the project could result in an increase in regional energy demand.

Project construction would require electricity to power lighting, tools, and equipment, which could result in a temporary increase to regional energy demand typical of development projects. Operation of the proposed residential, commercial, and public land uses would increase demand for electricity in the Orcutt area to support the additional 4,000 residential units and associated non-residential uses. Natural gas would be provided for certain commercial land uses, resulting in an increase in natural gas demand in the Orcutt area associated with non-residential uses.

Based on the scale of full project buildout, operation of the project has the potential to exceed the available capacity of existing distribution feeders and substation facilities in the Orcutt area, which may require upgrades or extensions to the existing energy distribution infrastructure.

5.6.2 Scope of EIR

The EIR will incorporate information from the applicant-prepared and peer reviewed technical materials listed under Section 5.6.1 Impact Discussion and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impact on energy demand, including increases to regional energy demand and the capacity of existing infrastructure, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. Based on current information, these effects are anticipated to be less than significant; therefore, mitigation measures are not anticipated to be required. Should the analysis identify potential impacts that warrant further consideration, the EIR will discuss them accordingly.

5.7 Fire Protection

5.7.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment H):

- Fire Protection Plan (Dudek, 2025)
- Wildfire Evacuation Study (Dudek, 2025)

These technical documents have been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the reports are adequate to initiate the environmental review process. The technical documents identify potential fire protection issues related to wildfire hazards. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Development of the Specific Plan Area could impact emergency response capability and evacuation conditions due to the urbanization of land adjacent to wildlands and population growth within High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. As identified in the Fire Protection Plan, the project's calculated response time from the closest existing County Fire station would not meet the applicable response time standard prior to construction of the proposed onsite fire station. Because the Fire Protection Plan determined that the project's response time from the nearest existing County Fire station would fall short of the required standard, the project proposes interim measures for emergency coverage. During the first phase of project development, the applicant proposes to construct a temporary fire facility which would provide emergency services and fire protection until the proposed final onsite fire station is completed in the third phase of project development. Based on projected increases in emergency service demand associated with project development, estimated County Fire response times following buildout of the

proposed onsite fire station would be consistent with County Fire's response time goals for suburban uses. However, project development activities including site preparation, remediation, and non-vertical construction, could begin before the onsite fire station becomes operational, during which time reduced emergency response capability could affect fire protection and emergency access.

Operation of the proposed residential, commercial, and public land uses has the potential to introduce wildfire-related risks through increased human activity, vehicle use, and development adjacent to wildlands. Proposed residential uses could also impact emergency access and response times due to increased vehicle traffic, potentially increasing congestion in an area served by limited regional evacuation routes such as U.S. 101 and State Route 135.

5.7.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed technical materials listed under Section 5.7.1 Impact Discussion include mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational impacts, including reduced emergency response times and evacuation conditions. The EIR will incorporate information from these technical materials and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impacts to fire protection and wildfire hazards, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.8 Geologic Processes

5.8.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment I):

- Geotechnical Report Newlove Park C.U.P. (Allan E. Seward Engineering Geology, 2025)
- Geotechnical Report Proposed Offsite Wet Weather Storage Basin C.U.P. (Allan E. Seward Engineering Geology, 2025)
- Geotechnical Report Solomon Hills Water Supply Pipeline (Allan E. Seward Engineering Geology, 2025)
- Geotechnical Report Solomon Hills General Plan Amendments and Specific Plan (Allan E. Seward Engineering Geology, 2023)
- Geotechnical Report – Addendum No. 1 (Allan E. Seward Engineering Geology, 2025)

These technical documents have been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the reports are adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information retained in these technical documents, the project has the potential to impact geologic processes. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Project construction would involve ground disturbing activities such as grading and excavation that could temporarily cause soil disruption, displacement, compaction, or overcovering of soil. The proposed grading activities within the Specific Plan Area include approximately 23.9 million cubic yards of cut, with

cut heights up to approximately 150 feet, and 19.9 million cubic yards of fill with fill heights up to approximately 112 feet. Soils exposed, disrupted, and displaced during project construction could result in wind or water erosion of soils. Heavy equipment used during project construction could potentially result in compaction and displacement of soil.

The project site is located in an area with existing geologic hazards, including earthquakes and landslides, that could affect project development and long-term operations. According to the Geotechnical Report, the project site lies within a seismically active region and in proximity to significant landslides, such as the Mount Solomon landslide. The Casmalia (Orcutt Frontal) fault borders the project site along the northeast flank of the Solomon Hills, and the active San Andreas fault is located about 44 miles to the northeast. In seismically active areas such as the project site, earthquakes can trigger ground rupture, strong ground shaking, liquefaction, and other forms of ground failure. Based on the project site's location within a seismically active region and proximity to significant landslides, construction and operation of the project could be affected by these geologic hazards.

The project site has the potential to contain buried or obscured paleontological resources. Initial grading, excavation, and vegetation removal activities could exposure previously undiscovered paleontological resources. During project operation, maintenance activities could potentially result in impacts to previously undiscovered paleontological resources on the project site. Indirect impacts could include potential disturbance or inadvertent damage to preserved in-place materials. Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, the County is preparing a project-specific Paleontological Resources Assessment to address the project's potential to impact sensitive paleontological resources.

5.8.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed technical materials listed under Section 5.8.1 Impact Discussion include mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational impacts, including soil disruption and displacement and exposure to unstable earth conditions such as earthquakes and landslides. The project-specific Paleontological Resources Assessment being prepared by the County will be used to support the EIR evaluation of the project's construction-related impacts to paleontological resources. The EIR will incorporate information from these technical materials and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impacts to geologic processes, exposure to geologic hazards, and paleontological resources, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's geologic impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.9 Hazardous Materials/Risk of Upset

5.9.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment J):

- Phase I Environmental Assessment Report (Waterstone Environmental, 2025)
- Phase II Investigation and Remedial Action Plan (Waterstone Environmental 2024)

- Workplan for Supplemental Site Investigation (Waterstone Environmental, 2025)
- Feasibility Study for Soil Remediation (Waterstone Environmental, 2025)

These technical documents have been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the reports are adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information retained in these technical documents, the project has the potential to result in or be impacted by hazardous materials, including an increased risk of upset. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Based on the site's long-term use for oil and gas production, construction and development activities associated with the project, including planned well abandonment and remediation activities, have the potential to expose construction workers or the public to hazardous materials. The peer reviewed technical documents listed above indicate that oil and gas operations on the site have resulted in localized subsurface soil contamination, including petroleum hydrocarbons, and volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds. During remediation and construction, ground-disturbing activities such as grading, trenching, and utility installation could disturb impacted soil, generate dust, and expose construction workers to hazardous substances if not properly managed. Transportation and off-site disposal of impacted soils have the potential to present hazards related to handling and hauling of waste materials. In response to recommendations from the County of Santa Barbara Environmental Health Services, the applicant is preparing additional site-specific analysis for evaluating the potential volume of impacted soil to address the feasibility of transporting impacted soil to the Waste Pile Management Facility for beneficial reuse.

Operation of the proposed residential, commercial, and public land uses has the potential to result in hazards related to residual soil contamination and vapor intrusion if impacted areas are not adequately remediated prior to development. According to the Feasibility Study for Soil Remediation, contamination is localized and remediation would occur under the oversight of County Environmental Health Services. As such, regulatory oversight of required remediation activities would include phased investigation and regulatory closure to ensure that all affected areas are remediated to residential or commercial standards consistent with the future land uses proposed in the Specific Plan Area before grading and development of the phase area could proceed. As described in Section 5.3a Air Quality, Air Quality, the applicant is preparing a project-specific Construction Health Risk Assessment consistent with Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District Rule 805 and modeling requirements for evaluating construction-related health risks, as well as an Air Quality Impact Assessment to address the proximity of sensitive land uses (e.g., residences and a school) to existing oil and gas operations and surrounding oil and gas operations.

5.9.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed technical materials listed under Section 5.9.1 Impact Discussion include mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational impacts, including human health hazards, hazardous material exposure, and risk of upset. The EIR will incorporate information from these technical materials and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impacts with regards to hazardous materials and risk of upset, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's hazardous materials impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.10 Land Use

5.10.1 Impact Discussion

The project site is designated Agricultural Commercial (AC) and zoned Agricultural II, 100-acre minimum parcel size (AG-II-100). The project would amend the existing land use designations within the Specific Plan Area to allow residential, commercial, public facility, and open space uses not permitted under the current AG-II-100 designation. The proposed Specific Plan and associated entitlements would guide future development within the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan would establish new zone districts, development standards, allowed uses, and permitting requirements in the Specific Plan Area required to support development of the project's residential, commercial and public land uses, as well as supporting infrastructure (e.g., roads and public utilities). Existing land use designations and zoning would remain for the remainder of the project site, with the exception of the proposed Wet Weather Storage Basin, which may be assigned a Public Utility land use designation.

Development of the project has the potential to result in conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted by the County for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects. As described in Section 5.4 Biological Resources, the project would involve removal of approximately 14,206 protected trees and could affect special-status wildlife species, which could conflict with native oak and oak woodland protection policies in the County's Conservation Element, as well as policies in the County Land Use and Development Code that regulates the protection of special-status wildlife species and sensitive habitats. As described in Section 5.8, Geological Resources, the project would involve 23.9 million cubic yards of cut and 19.9 million cubic yards of fill for phased rough grading, including in areas of steep slopes, with cut and fill heights up to 150 and 112 feet, respectively, which could conflict with policies in the County's Land Use Element requiring minimization of grading and preservation of natural landforms. County staff and supporting consultants are currently reviewing the project application for other potential conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted by the County for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects.

5.10.2 Scope of EIR

The EIR will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impacts on land uses, which include construction and operational land use and population impacts associated with the proposed General Plan Amendment, rezoning, and adoption of the Specific Plan. Based on current information, the project site contains development constraints, including mineral resource sites, steep slopes, prime soils, areas of high scenic value, significant wildlife habitat, and other sensitive biological resources that will be evaluated in the EIR and are protected by policy and regulatory requirements. Should the analysis identify potential impacts or areas requiring additional consideration, the EIR will discuss them and identify mitigation measures accordingly.

5.11 Noise

5.11.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment K):

- Noise Technical Report (Dudek, 2025)
- Noise Technical Report – Addendum (Dudek, 2026)

The initial technical report has been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants, and the County determined that the technical report is adequate to initiate the environmental review process; however, County peer reviewers have noted that the technical report does not fully utilize the County's adopted noise thresholds. The applicant has submitted an addendum to the Noise Technical Report that is currently under review by County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. Therefore, based on the information retained in the peer-reviewed Noise Technical Report, the project has the potential to result in noise impacts, as summarized below.

Construction and development activities associated with the project would temporarily increase noise levels and elevate ambient noise, potentially affecting nearby sensitive receptors. Currently, the nearest noise-sensitive receptors are residences located 2,350 feet north of the northern project site boundary, with additional scattered residences located to the west, south, and southeast at distances greater than 5,000 feet. Over the planned 14-year buildout period, the project would introduce new noise-sensitive receptors as residential units are constructed and occupied and proposed public institutions (e.g., schools) are developed. In addition to noise, heavy equipment and large trucks used during grading and construction could generate temporary ground-borne vibration.

Project operation would introduce new sources of noise associated with the proposed residential, commercial, and public facility uses in an area that currently has low ambient noise levels. As described in Section 5.14 Transportation/Circulation, the project would contribute a substantial number of vehicle trips and could result in traffic noise impacts where noise-sensitive receptors are located adjacent to a roadway that would be subject to project-generated traffic.

5.11.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed Noise Technical Report includes mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational impacts, including exposing new noise-sensitive receptors to elevated noise and ground-borne vibration. The EIR will incorporate information from applicant-prepared Noise Technical Report and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential noise impacts, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's noise impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.12 Public Facilities

5.12.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment L):

- Wastewater Analysis Memorandum (Wallace Group, 2025)

- Treated Effluent Reuse and Storage Areas V3 (Wallace Group, 2025)
- Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan for Newlove Park (RRM, 2025)
- Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan for Solomon Hills (RRM, 2025)
- Fire Protection Plan (Dudek, 2025)
- Wildfire Evacuation Study (Dudek, 2025)
- Solomon Hills Water Supply Fact Sheet – CADIZ Water Company, September 2025
- Solomon Hills Water Supply and Conveyance Fact Sheet – Central Coast Water Authority, September 2025
- Solomon Hills Development, Off-Site Water, Gas, and Telecommunications Plan Set (Solstra Communities California, 2025)
- Golden State Water Company Solomon Hills Water Supply and Infrastructure Overview (Water Systems Consulting, Inc., 2025)

These technical documents have been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the reports are adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information retained in these technical documents, the project has the potential to result in impacts to public facilities. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

The project would introduce up to 4,000 new residential units, resulting in population growth and a corresponding increase in demand for public services, utilities and facilities. New residential and non-residential development in the Specific Plan Area would increase daily service needs for police, fire protection and emergency medical services, schools, libraries, and hospitals. Proposed development would also increase demand for solid waste collection and disposal services, stormwater runoff collection and conveyance systems, wastewater conveyance and treatment, potable water supply and distribution systems. As further detailed in the Environmental Project Description (Attachment A), the applicant is considering multiple potential water supply sources, including imported supplies from the Cadiz Water Project and the State Water Project. Additional options under consideration include purchase agreements with agencies such as the Montecito Water District for State Water Project allocations and associated conveyance rights, as well as groundwater banking opportunities for imported supplies. Because these sources may not be reliably available at the time of project development, the adequacy of the water supply will require further evaluation in a Water Supply Assessment, which is being prepared by the applicant.

During construction, workers and equipment would generate additional solid waste, use potable water, and produce wastewater, temporarily increasing utility demand and affecting stormwater drainage infrastructure. Construction activities may also require lane closures, detours, and increased construction traffic, which could temporarily disrupt emergency access and result in delays.

5.12.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed technical materials listed under Section 5.12.1 Impact Discussion include mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction

and operational impacts, including increased daily service needs for public services and facilities. The EIR will incorporate information from these technical materials and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's impact to public facilities, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's impact to public facilities and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.13 Recreation

5.13.1 Impact Discussion

Project construction could result in temporary impacts on recreational facilities, including potential disruptions to access or use of Newlove Picnic Grounds. Temporary impacts could include closures, construction noise, or circulation changes that affect park users. Newlove Picnic Grounds, located in the northern portion of the project site, provides amenities such as sports fields and picnic facilities, but no other existing recreational facilities are located within the project site.

During project operation, the introduction of up to 4,000 new residential units would generate population growth and increase demand on recreational facilities in the surrounding area. As further detailed in the Environmental Project Description (Attachment A), the Specific Plan Area includes approximately 20,000 square feet of on-site recreational facilities, including parkways, parks, and trails. While these amenities would provide recreational opportunities for new residents in the Specific Plan Area, the additional population generated by the project could also result in increased use of existing recreational facilities, parks, and regional trail systems located outside of the project site. As a result, the potential for the project to impact on off-site recreational resources will be evaluated in the EIR.

5.13.2 Scope of EIR

The EIR will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's potential impacts on recreation, including any changes in access to or use of existing recreational facilities. Based on current information, these effects are anticipated to be less than significant; therefore, mitigation measures are not anticipated to be required. Should the analysis identify potential impacts that warrant further consideration, the EIR will discuss them accordingly.

5.14 Transportation/Circulation

5.14.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment M):

- Vehicle Miles Traveled and Local Transportation Analysis (Kimley Horn, 2025)

This technical analysis has been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the report is adequate to initiate the environmental review process; however, the County's peer review team have recommended revisions to the report assumptions that have the potential to result in changes to the findings. Therefore, based on

the information retained in this technical document, supported by comments and recommendations provided by the County's peer review team, the project has the potential to result in impacts on transportation and circulation. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Construction and development activities could generate vehicle trips on area roadways as workers travel to and from the project, and large trucks transport equipment and material to and from the project site. Construction-related vehicle trips would be temporary, but could result in increased delays, and changes to circulation patterns on nearby local and regional roadways during active construction phases.

Operation of the project would require construction of new transportation and circulation infrastructure, including new private roadways, multi-use pathways, improvement of the existing connection to SR 135, improvement of the existing U.S. 101/Solomon Summit Road interchange to the south, and a new interchange on U.S. 101. As further detailed in the Environmental Project Description (Attachment A), the new U.S. 101 interchange, improvements to the existing U.S.101/Solomon Summit Road interchange, and improvements to the existing connection to SR 135 would require approval from the California Department of Transportation.

Operation of the project could conflict with County transportation and sustainability policies; increase vehicle miles traveled on area roadways from the proposed 4,000 residential units and associated commercial, public, and recreational uses; and increase roadways maintenance needs. The Vehicle Miles Traveled and Local Transportation Analysis provided by the project applicant concludes that project operation would result in Vehicle Miles Traveled per service population that does not exceed the County threshold when trip reductions for affordable and age-restricted units are applied. However, County staff and peer reviewers have noted that the phasing plan used in the technical report to support this finding is inconsistent with the project's planned phasing as described in the Project Description (Attachment A) and other technical reports prepared for the project by the applicant team. Under a scenario in which the residential components are built prior to the non-residential office and retail uses, the analysis identifies a higher Vehicle Miles Traveled per service population that would exceed the County threshold without trip reduction measures. County staff have directed the applicant to update the Vehicle Miles Traveled and Local Transportation Analysis to incorporate a phasing plan that is consistent with the Project Description (Attachment A). At this time, based on the information retained in the technical report, supported by comments and recommendations provided by the County's peer review team, the project has the potential to result in transportation and circulation impacts.

5.14.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed Vehicle Miles Traveled and Local Transportation Analysis includes mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational impacts, including temporary construction traffic impacts and the long-term addition of new vehicle trips to area roadways. The EIR will incorporate information from the applicant-prepared Vehicle Miles Traveled and Local Transportation Analysis and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's transportation and circulation impacts, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's transportation and circulation impacts and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

5.15 Water Resources/Flooding

5.15.1 Impact Discussion

The following technical materials have been provided by the project applicant (Attachment N):

- Hydrology Report for Solomon Hills (RRM, 2025)
- Preliminary Hydrology Report for Newlove Park (RRM, 2025)
- Solomon Hills Water Demand Memorandum (Wallace Group, 2025)
- Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan for Newlove Park (RRM, 2025)
- Preliminary Stormwater Control Plan for Solomon Hills (RRM, 2025)
- Solomon Hills Water Supply Fact Sheet – CADIZ Water Company, September 2025
- Solomon Hills Water Supply and Conveyance Fact Sheet – Central Coast Water Authority, September 2025
- Solomon Hills Development, Off-Site Water, Gas, and Telecommunications Plan Set (Solstra Communities California, 2025)

These technical documents have been peer reviewed by a team of County resource staff and qualified County-selected technical expert consultants. The County has determined the reports are adequate to initiate the environmental review process. Based on the information retained in these technical documents, the project has the potential to result in impacts to water resources/flooding. The anticipated impacts are summarized below.

Construction and development of the project would result in new impervious surfaces and modified drainage patterns on the project site, which could increase the volume, rate, and timing of stormwater runoff compared to existing conditions. Grading and vegetation removal during construction would alter topography and temporarily expose soils, increasing the potential for erosion and allowing sediment to be transported in stormwater runoff. Increased stormwater runoff could transport additional pollutants from exposed soils, construction activities and waste, and typical residential land uses during project operation (e.g., oil, grease, herbicides, and pesticides). As stormwater runoff conveys these pollutants, changes to drainage patterns could influence how and when they are transported onsite and downstream, potentially affecting stormwater conveyance systems and contributing to localized ponding or flooding. The project has the potential to impact groundwater resources due to increased demand associated with development and the introduction of new groundwater extraction facilities. As further detailed in the Environmental Project Description (Attachment A), the project would rely primarily on imported water for its domestic supply from multiple potential water supply sources; including imported supplies from the Cadiz Water Project and the State Water Project. The adequacy of potential water supply sources will require further evaluation in a Water Supply Assessment, which is being prepared by the applicant. However, development of the project would include new groundwater wells in the Santa Maria groundwater basin to serve as an emergency backup during Coastal Branch Aqueduct Pipeline outages. These new wells could increase localized groundwater extraction during outage periods.

5.15.2 Scope of EIR

The applicant-prepared and peer reviewed technical materials listed under Section 5.15.1 Impact Discussion include mitigation recommendations intended to reduce the project's potential construction and operational impacts, including modified drainage patterns, increased runoff and transport of pollutants, and localized groundwater extraction. The EIR will incorporate information from these technical materials and will include the County's independent evaluation of the project's impact to water resources and flooding, consistent with CEQA Guidelines and current state and local policies. The EIR will determine the significance of the project's impact to water resources and flooding and will identify feasible mitigation measures, as warranted, to reduce any potential environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

6 Project Alternatives

Pursuant to Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will consider and analyze a reasonable range of alternatives to the project. Alternatives will be developed to avoid, mitigate, or lessen the significant environmental impacts identified in the EIR while feasibly satisfying most of the basic objectives of the project. This will include discussion of the required No Project Alternative. The EIR will identify the “environmentally superior alternative.” If the No Project Alternative is determined to be environmentally superior, the EIR will identify the environmentally superior alternative among the remaining alternatives, in accordance with CEQA requirements.

7 Summary

The scoping described above is intended to provide the public and responsible agencies with a summary of the preliminarily identified environmental issue areas concerning the project. As the lead CEQA agency for the project, the County will be responsible for identifying all potential environmental impacts of the project and developing feasible mitigation measures or conditions of approval to meet current standards and address project-specific impacts and the project's contribution to cumulative impacts as appropriate for each of the impact areas outlined above.

This EIR Scoping Document and all attachments can be accessed via the following link: <https://cosantabarbara.box.com/v/SolomonHills>

The project application, specific plan, project plans, and technical documents in reference to the applicant's request are available and may be reviewed at the County of Santa Barbara Planning & Development Department located at 624 W. Foster Road Suite C, Santa Maria, California 93455.

Additional information regarding the project will be posted to the project's webpage as it becomes available at: <https://www.countyofsb.org/3729/Solomon-Hills-Project>

If you have questions about this project, please contact EIR project manager, Alia Vosburg (Senior Planner) at (805) 934-6259 or Tina Mitchell (Senior Planner) at (805) 934-6289.

8 References

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2018. California State Scenic Highway System Map. https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/47e2009986264718a5a13a2c81382774#data_s=id%3AdataSource_2-199ba603ee3-layer-4%3A193 (accessed January 2026).

9 Attachments

See the [Scoping Paper Attachments folder](#) for Attachments A-N.