4.5 Energy

This section evaluates the potential for impacts on energy resulting from implementation of the proposed French Hotel Project (Project). This section is partially based on the following technical reports:

- Air Quality Analysis for French Hotel Project. MIG, November 24, 2025. (Appendix B)
- Fuel Use Calculations for French Hotel Project. Harris & Associates, May 27, 2026. (Appendix E)

A Notice of Preparation for the Project was released for public review on March 19, 2026, and an EIR Scoping meeting was held on April 6, 2026. No comments were made during the public scoping period that pertain to energy. Additionally, no comments related to energy were received during the public scoping meeting.

4.5.1 Environmental Setting

The following sections describe the environmental setting for the project as it relates to energy.

4.5.2 Regulatory Setting

This section describes the federal, state, and local regulatory framework adopted to address energy.

4.5.2.1 Federal

Federal Clean Air Act (U.S. Code, Title 42, Section 7401 et seq.)

The Clean Air Act (CAA) of 1970 is the comprehensive federal law that regulates air emissions from stationary and mobile sources. The CAA authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards to protect public health and public welfare and to regulate emissions of hazardous air pollutants. The USEPA has classified air basins (or portions thereof) as being in "attainment," "non-attainment," or "unclassified" for each criteria air pollutant based on whether the National Ambient Air Quality Standards have been achieved. Non-attainment areas are air basins that do not meet one or more of the California Ambient Air Quality Standards and are subject to additional restrictions as required by the USEPA. If an area is designated unclassified, it is because inadequate air quality data was available as a basis for a non-attainment or attainment designation. The USEPA classifies the South Coast Air Basin as in attainment for the federal carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), lead, respirable particulate matter (PM_{10}), and sulfur dioxide (SO_2) standards. The South Coast Air Basin is classified as extreme non-attainment for the federal ozone (O_3) standard and serious non-attainment for the fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) standard (SCAQMD 2016).

Energy Independence and Security Act (Public Law 110-140)

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 seeks to provide the nation with greater energy independence and security by increasing the production of clean renewable fuels, improving vehicle fuel economy, and increasing the efficiency of products, buildings, and vehicles. It also seeks to improve the energy performance of the federal government. The Energy Independence and Security Act sets increased Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards, the Renewable Fuel Standard, appliance energy efficiency standards, building energy efficiency standards, and accelerated research and development tasks on renewable energy sources (e.g., solar energy, geothermal energy, and marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy technologies), carbon capture, and sequestration (USEPA 2025a).

Energy Policy and Conservation Act (Public Law 94-163)

In 1975, Congress enacted the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, which established the first fuel economy standards for on-road motor vehicles in the United States. Pursuant to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is responsible for establishing additional vehicle standards. In 2010, fuel economy standards were set at 27.5 miles per gallon (mpg) for new passenger cars and 23.5 mpg for new light-duty trucks. Heavy-duty vehicles (i.e., vehicles and trucks over 8,500 pounds gross vehicle weight) were not subject to fuel economy standards in 2010. Passenger cars and light trucks used directly or indirectly associated with a project would be required to comply with the applicable fuel economy standards. Fuel economy is determined based on each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the fleet of vehicles available for sale in the United States.

The standards have been modified several times to cover additional model years, incorporating increasingly stringent standards over time. Standards for model years 2027–2031 were finalized in 2024. In this final rule, fuel economy is estimated to increase 2 percent per year for model years 2027–2031 for passenger cars, while light trucks will increase 2 percent per year for model years 2029–2031. These increases will bring the average light-duty vehicle fuel economy up to approximately 50.4 mpg by model year 2031 (NHTSA 2025a). Most recently, in 2025, the NHTSA issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that includes eliminating the inter-manufacturer credit trading system and amending standards to an industry fleetwide average for all light-duty vehicles of roughly 34.5 mpg in model year 2031 (NHTSA 2025b).

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) promoted the development of inter-modal transportation systems to maximize mobility as well as address national and local interests in air quality and energy. The ISTEA contained factors that Metropolitan Planning Organizations were to address in developing transportation plans and

programs, including some energy-related factors. To meet the new ISTEA requirements, Metropolitan Planning Organizations adopted explicit policies defining the social, economic, energy, and environmental values guiding transportation decisions.

Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21)

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) was signed into law in 1998 and builds upon the initiatives established in the ISTEA legislation, discussed above. TEA-21 authorizes highway, highway safety, transit, and other efficient surface transportation programs. TEA-21 continues the program structure established for highways and transit under the ISTEA, such as flexibility in the use of funds, emphasis on measures to improve the environment, and focus on a strong planning process as the foundation of good transportation decisions. TEA-21 also provides for investment in research and its application to maximize the performance of the transportation system through, for example, deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems, to help improve operations and management of transportation systems and vehicle safety.

4.5.2.2 State

Assembly Bill 1007: State Alternative Fuels Plan

Assembly Bill (AB) 1007 requires the California Energy Commission to prepare a plan to increase the use of alternative fuels in California. The State Alternative Fuels Plan was prepared by the California Energy Commission with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and in consultation with other federal, state, and local agencies to reduce petroleum consumption, increase use of alternative fuels (e.g., ethanol, natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, electricity, and hydrogen), reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and increase in-state production of biofuels. The State Alternative Fuels Plan recommends a strategy that combines private capital investment, financial incentives, and advanced technology that will increase the use of alternative fuels, result in significant improvements in the energy efficiency of vehicles, and reduce trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through changes in travel habits and land management policies. The Alternative Fuels and Vehicle Technologies Funding Program legislation (AB 118, Statutes of 2007) proactively implements the State Alternative Fuels Plan.

Integrated Energy Policy Report

Senate Bill 1389 (Bowen, Chapter 568, Statutes of 2002) requires the California Energy Commission (CEC) to prepare a biennial integrated energy policy report that assesses major energy trends and issues facing California's electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel sectors and provides policy recommendations to conserve resources; protect the environment; ensure reliable, secure, and diverse energy supplies; enhance the state's economy; and protect public health and safety (Public Resources Code, Section 25301a). The CEC prepares these assessments and

associated policy recommendations every two years, with updates on alternate years, as part of the Integrated Energy Policy Report.

The 2025 Integrated Energy Policy Report discusses the California Energy Demand Forecast, accelerating interconnection and energization, California's progress toward the load-shift goal, and advancing clean and renewable hydrogen for electricity and transportation. It also includes appendices on Clean Transportation Program benefits, firm zero-carbon resources, and fossil gas price forecasts. The report provides an analysis of electricity sector trends, building decarbonization and energy efficiency, zero-emission vehicles, energy equity, climate change adaptation, electricity reliability in Southern California, natural gas technologies, and electricity, natural gas, and transportation energy demand forecasts. In response to SB 100, which calls for California's electricity system to become 100 percent zero-carbon by 2045, the CEC, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the CARB are leading the way to identify pathways to remove carbon from the state's electricity system. The goal is to use the clean electricity system to eliminate the carbon from other portions of California's energy system. (CEC, 2025).

State of California Energy Plan

The CEC is responsible for preparing the State Energy Plan, which identifies emerging trends related to energy supply, demand, conservation, public health and safety, and the maintenance of a healthy economy. The State Energy Plan calls for California to assist in the transformation of the transportation system to improve air quality, reduce congestion, and increase the efficient use of fuel supplies with the least environmental and energy costs. To further this policy, the State Energy Plan identifies several strategies, including assistance to public agencies and fleet operators and encouragement of urban designs that reduce VMT and accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access.

Tractor-Trailer Greenhouse Gas Regulation and Greenhouse Gas Standards for Medium- and Heavy-Duty Engines and Vehicles

CARB approved the Tractor-Trailer Greenhouse Gas (TTGHG) regulation in December 2008 for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions from long-haul tractors and trailers. GHG emissions would be reduced by improving the aerodynamic performance and reducing the rolling resistance of tractor-trailers. The requirements specified in the regulation are based on elements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's SmartWay program, which supports the availability of more efficient equipment. The TTGHG has been updated over time, and California also implemented GHG-reducing standards for medium- and heavy-duty engines. In 2014, concurrent with the adoption of California Phase 1 GHG regulations, CARB modified the TTGHG regulation by sunsetting the requirements for model year 2014 and later tractors. Affected tractors under this regulation were no longer required to be SmartWay-verified models or use SmartWay-verified low rolling resistance tires because such requirements were duplicative of the then newly adopted Phase 1 certification requirements for tractors. Most recently, in 2018, concurrent with the adoption of

California Phase 2 GHG regulations that introduced trailer standards, CARB modified the TTGHG regulation by providing trailer fleet owners the option of complying with the TTGHG regulation by using a California Phase 2-certified trailer or by using a trailer retrofitted with Phase 2-compliant aerodynamic technologies and low rolling resistance tires. The modification also includes the term "long box-type trailer," defined as a trailer that is greater than 50 feet in length (CARB 2025).

Renewables Portfolio Standard

Senate Bill 100

On September 10, 2018, Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill (SB) 100, which replaces the SB 350 requirement of 45 percent renewable energy by 2027 with the requirement of 50 percent by 2026 and raises California's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirements for 2050 from 50 to 60 percent. SB 100 also establishes RPS requirements for publicly owned utilities that consist of 44 percent renewable energy by 2024, 52 percent by 2027, and 60 percent by 2030. Furthermore, the bill also establishes an overall state policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of retail sales of electricity to California end users and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve state agencies by December 31, 2045. Under the bill, the State of California cannot increase carbon emissions elsewhere in the western grid or allow resource shuffling to achieve the 100 percent carbon-free electricity target.

Senate Bill 350

SB 350 was signed into law in September 2015. SB 350 establishes tiered increases to the RPS of 40 percent by 2024, 45 percent by 2027, and 50 percent by 2030. SB 350 also set a new goal of doubling energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas through energy efficiency and conservation measures.

Senate Bills 1078, 107, and X1-2 and Executive Order S-14-08

The California RPS program was established in 2002 under SB 1078 (Sher) and SB 107 (Simitian). The California RPS program requires investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase the use of eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total procurement by 2020. Initially under the California RPS, certain retail sellers of electricity were required to increase the amount of renewable energy each year by at least 1 percent to reach at least 20 percent by December 30, 2010. Executive Order S-14-08 was signed in November 2008, which expanded the state's Renewable Energy Standard to 33 percent renewable power by 2020. This standard was adopted by the legislature in 2011 (SB X1-2). The CPUC is required to provide quarterly progress reports on progress toward RPS goals. This has accelerated the development of renewable energy projects throughout the State of California. All electricity retail sellers had an interim target between compliance periods to serve at least 38.5 percent of their load with RPS-eligible resources by December 31, 2022. In general, retail sellers either met

or exceeded the interim 38.5 percent target and are on track to achieve their compliance requirements (CPUC 2025).

Appliance Efficiency Regulations

California's Appliance Efficiency Regulations contain energy performance, energy design, water performance, and water design standards for appliances (including refrigerators, ice makers, vending machines, freezers, water heaters, fans, boilers, washing machines, dryers, air conditioners, pool equipment, and plumbing fittings) that are sold or offered for sale in California. These standards are updated regularly to allow consideration of new energy efficiency technologies and methods (CEC 2025a).

California Building Standards Code (Title 24, Part 6 and Part 11)

California Code Title 24, Part 6 (also referred to as the California Energy Code), was promulgated by the CEC in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to create uniform building codes to reduce California's energy consumption. The California Energy Code provides energy efficiency standards for residential and non-residential buildings. California's building efficiency standards are updated on an approximately three-year cycle. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy-efficient technologies and methods.

The latest update to the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6, was approved in 2021 and took effect on January 1, 2023 (the 2022 Standards). The 2022 Standards encourage efficient electric heat pumps, establish electric-ready requirements for new homes, expand solar photovoltaic and battery storage standards, and strengthen ventilation standards. The 2025 Standards will go into effect on January 1, 2026. The 2025 Standards emphasize the use of heat pumps for space heating and water heating, as well as photovoltaic and battery storage systems and strengthen ventilation standards to improve indoor air quality.

The Project would comply with all applicable requirements of the California Energy Code (Title 24). As required by the Energy Code for hotel uses, the Project would include solar photovoltaic (PV) systems designed and installed in accordance with applicable code requirements. In addition, the Project would incorporate energy efficiency measures, where feasible, such as high-efficiency heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, LED lighting, energy recovery ventilation, and other strategies consistent with applicable code requirements and sustainability objectives.

California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11, California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), is a comprehensive and uniform regulatory code for all residential, commercial, and school buildings that went into effect on August 1, 2009, and is administered by the California Building Standards Commission. CALGreen is updated regularly, with the most recent approved

update incorporating the 2025 California Green Building Code Standards, which became effective on January 1, 2026**.**

Executive Order N-79-20

Executive Order N-79-20 requires that by 2035, all new cars and passenger trucks sold in California will be zero-emission vehicles (ZEV). Under the order, CARB is mandated to develop and propose strategies to achieve 100 percent zero emissions from medium- and heavy-duty on-road vehicles in California by 2045, where feasible, and by 2035 from drayage trucks. Final details for achieving the goal are not available, but CARB has several existing programs to encourage ZEV adoption. These include the Carl Moyer Program, which provides incentives to replace existing vehicles and equipment with the cleanest available technology, and the Low Carbon Transportation Program, which focuses on advancing technologies through zero-emissions demonstration projects and supports the deployment of on-road zero-emissions technologies. The Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) Program, discussed below, provides the regulatory framework for meeting the sales requirement set forth in EO N-79-20. The USEPA granted CARB its California CAA waiver request on December 18, 2024; however, as noted below, Public Law 119-16 rescinded California's waiver under the CAA.

Advanced Clean Cars Program

The Advanced Clean Cars Program refers to several regulations that reduce pollutant emissions from vehicles, including the low-emissions vehicle criteria and GHG regulations, and ZEV regulation. Advanced Clean Cars I was adopted in 2012, and Advanced Clean Cars II was adopted in 2022. These regulations rapidly scale down emissions of light-duty passenger cars, pickup trucks, and SUVs and require an increased number of ZEVs to meet air quality and climate change emissions goals. On June 12, 2025, Public Law No. 119-16 rescinded the USEPA's December 2024 CAA waiver, which allowed California to implement and enforce Advanced Clean Cars II by including EO N-79-20's ZEV mandate, targeting 100 percent new light-duty ZEV sales by 2035. As discussed above, the impacts of Public Law No. 119-16 are uncertain pending the outcome of litigation challenging the rescission.

Pavley Fuel Efficiency Standards (AB 1493)

California AB 1493, enacted on July 22, 2002, required CARB to develop and adopt regulations that reduce GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks. Under this legislation, CARB adopted regulations to reduce GHG emissions from non-commercial passenger vehicles (cars and light-duty trucks). Although aimed at reducing GHG emissions, specifically, a co-benefit of the Pavley standards is an improvement in fuel efficiency and, consequently, a reduction in fuel consumption.

Assembly Bill 130/Senate Bill 131

AB 130 and SB 131, signed into effect in June 2025, are intended to streamline California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of new housing development. AB 130 and SB 131 expanded CEQA exemptions for qualifying housing projects, specifically new infill development. AB 130 also included limitations on local jurisdictions' ability to update building codes to apply more restrictive standards to housing development, including green building standards, effective October 1, 2025, through June 1, 2031.

4.5.2.3 Local

City of San Juan Capistrano General Plan

A complete rewrite of the City's General Plan was last adopted in December 1999. In May 2002, the City Council approved a variety of changes to several of elements of the General Plan. In February 2022, a new Environmental Justice Element was added to the General Plan. The General Plan's Housing Element is updated every eight years with the latest update adopted in August 2022. The City's General Plan is the principal land use document guiding development in the City. The City's General Plan is a comprehensive plan that establishes goals, objectives, and policies intended to guide growth and development in the City. The General Plan also serves as a blueprint for development throughout the community and is the vehicle through which the community needs, desires, and aspirations are balanced. The San Juan Capistrano General Plan is the fundamental tool for influencing the quality of life in the City.

Conservation and Open Space Element

The Conservation and Open Space Element addresses the conservation and enhancement of the visual quality of the City. The goals and policies in the Community Design Element aim to protect natural hillsides and features in the City (e.g., creeks and floodplains), preserve and enhance the historic character of the community, incorporate new development into existing developed neighborhoods, and maintain the community's "small-village" and "rural atmosphere."

The following policies applicable to the Project and related to energy are presented in the Conservation and Open Space Element:

- **Policy COS-6.6:** Promote energy conservation and recycling by public and private sectors.

Public Services and Utilities Element

The Public Services and Utilities Element of the City of San Juan Capistrano General Plan establishes goals and policies intended to ensure the adequate provision and maintenance of public infrastructure and municipal services necessary to support existing and future development. The element addresses water, wastewater, storm drainage, solid waste, transportation infrastructure,

police and fire protection, parks, schools, and other public facilities. The element promotes coordinated infrastructure planning, efficient use of existing public services, sustainable development practices, and infrastructure improvements that maintain community health, safety, and quality of life while supporting compatible growth and development in the City.

The following policies applicable to the Project and related to energy are presented in the Conservation and Open Space Element:

- **Goal PSU-7:** Work effectively with providers of natural gas, electricity, telephone, cable television and solid waste disposal to provide sufficient levels of these services.
  - **Policy PSU-7.1:** Work closely with providers of energy, communications and solid waste disposal in determining and meeting the needs of the community for energy, communications and solid waste disposal.
  - **Policy PSU-7.2:** Encourage energy efficient development.

4.5.3 Existing Conditions

4.5.3.1 Existing California Energy Usage

The most recent data for California's estimated total electricity and natural gas consumption is from 2024. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration and the CEC, California's estimated annual energy use as of 2024 included:

- Approximately 278,338 gigawatt hours of electricity; and

These energy sources, and statewide fuel use, are addressed in greater detail below.

Electricity

Natural gas is the main source for in-state electricity generation at approximately 40 percent of the total in-state electric generation system power as shown in Table 4.5-1, Total Electricity System Power (California 2024).

Table 4.5-1. Total Electricity System Power (California 2024)

Fuel Type	Percent of California In-State Generation (%)	California In-State Generation	Northwest Imports	Southwest Imports	Total Imports	Total California Energy Mix	Total California Power Mix (%)
		GWh					
Coal	0.12	263	124	5,775	5,899	6,162	2.21
Natural Gas	40.00	86,479	84	8,091	8,176	94,655	34.01
Oil	0.02	36	-	0	0	36	0.01
Other (Waste Heat/Petroleum Coke)	0.09	198	13	9	22	220	0.08

Table 4.5-1. Total Electricity System Power (California 2024)

Fuel Type	Percent of California In-State Generation (%)	California In-State Generation	Northwest Imports	Southwest Imports	Total Imports	Total California Energy Mix	Total California Power Mix (%)
		GWh					
Unspecified Sources of Power	0.00	-	80	3,971	4,051	4,051	1.46
Total Thermal and Unspecified	40.23	86,976	301	17,846	18,147	105,123	37.77
Nuclear	8.5	18,379	208	9,026	9,234	27,613	9.92
Large Hydro	11.67	25,222	4,479	1,079	5,558	30,780	11.06
Biomass	2.20	4,754	614	26	640	5,394	1.94
Geothermal	4.84	10,453	212	2,139	2,351	12,803	4.60
Small Hydro	1.84	3,969	269	2	270	4,240	1.52
Solar	23.44	50,666	536	8,081	8,616	59,283	21.30
Wind	7.29	15,761	9,195	8,145	17,341	33,102	11.89
Total Non-GHG and Renewables	59.77	129,205	15,512	28,498	44,010	173,215	62.23
Total Energy	**100**	**216,181**	**15,813**	**46,344**	**62,157**	**278,338**	**100**

Source: CEC 2024.

The Project Site is located in the service area of San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), which provides electric and natural gas service throughout San Diego County and portions of southern Orange County, including the City of San Juan Capistrano. SDG&E currently serves approximately 3.7 million people through approximately 1.5 million electric customer accounts and approximately 900,000 natural gas customer accounts.

According to SDG&E's 2024 Power Content Label, the utility's electricity portfolio is derived from a combination of renewable energy resources, large hydroelectric generation, natural gas, nuclear generation, and unspecified market purchases. Renewable energy sources in SDG&E's portfolio include solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, and small hydroelectric generation. SDG&E also purchases electricity from independent power producers and regional energy markets, including out-of-state suppliers, consistent with California's statewide renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

California utilities, including SDG&E, are subject to the state's RPS requirements and related clean energy mandates, including Senate Bill 100, which requires retail electricity supplied to California customers to achieve 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2045.

The Project Site is currently developed with the vacant Domingo Yorba and Manuel Garcia Adobes and does not consume electricity. As previously discussed, the Project Site is serviced by SDG&E.

Table 4.5-2, SDG&E Company 2024 Power Content Label, identifies SDG&E's specific proportional shares of electricity sources in 2024. As shown in Table 4.5-2, the 2024 SDG&E Power Mix has renewable energy at 41 percent of the overall energy resources. The largest share of renewable energy comes from solar energy, at 24 percent.

Table 4.5-2. SDG&E Company 2024 Power Content Label

Energy Resources	2024 SDG&E Power Mix (%)
RPS-Eligible Renewables	**41%**
Biomass and Biogas	1%
Geothermal	0%
Eligible Hydroelectric	0%
Solar	24%
Wind	16%
Large Hydroelectric	0%
Nuclear	0%
Emerging Technologies	0%
Other	0%
Natural Gas	**59%**
Coal & Petroleum	0%
Unspecified Power (primarily fossil fuels)	0%
Total	**100%**

Source: SDG&E 2024.

Natural Gas

The Project Site is located in the service area of the Southern California Gas Co (SoCal Gas), which is regulated by the CPUC. Natural gas is available from a variety of in-state and out-of-state sources and is provided throughout the State of California in response to market supply and demand. Complementing available natural gas resources, biogas may soon be available via existing delivery systems, thereby increasing the availability and reliability of resources in total. The CPUC oversees utility purchases and transmission of natural gas to ensure reliable and affordable natural gas deliveries to existing and new consumers throughout the State of California.

Transportation Energy/Fuel Consumption

Gasoline (and other vehicle fuels) are commercially provided commodities and are available to the Project patrons and employees via commercial outlets. The Department of Motor Vehicles identified 36.2 million registered vehicles in California, and those vehicles consume an estimated 17.2 billion gallons of fuel each year.

4.5.4 Method of Analysis

The Project's potential construction emissions were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version (V.) 2022.1.1.33. Information from the CalEEMod output is contained in Attachment 2 of Appendix B of this EIR. The CalEEMod outputs detail project-related construction equipment, transportation energy demands, and facility energy demands. Fuel consumption from construction of the Project was calculated using the CalEEMod annual carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) emissions output prepared for the Project and the kilograms per carbon dioxide (kg/CO_2) conversion factors from the USEPA (2025) for diesel fuel and motor gasoline. Calculation worksheets used in the following analysis can be found in Appendix E of this EIR.

4.5.5 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the Project would have a significant impact on energy if it would:

- **Threshold EN-a:** Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.
- **Threshold EN-b:** Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

4.5.6 Plans, Programs, and Policies

The following sections address various potential impacts relating to energy that could result from implementation of the Project:

PPP EN-1 The Project will comply with the California Building Standards Code (Title 24), which requires that building construction, system design and installation, and appliances achieve energy efficiency and preserve outdoor and indoor environmental quality.

PPP EN-2 The Project is required to meet or exceed the energy standards established in the California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 11 (CALGreen). This will require the project to reduce water consumption, employ building commissioning to increase building system efficiencies, divert construction waste from landfills, and install low pollutant-emitting finish materials.

4.5.7 Environmental Impacts

The following sections address various potential impacts relating to energy that could result from implementation of the Project.

4.5.7.1 Threshold EN-a: Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation.

Impact Analysis

Construction

The Project is anticipated to include demolition, renovation of the historical adobes, and new construction activities. The Project would demolish the structural addition portions of the two adobes and the entirety of the existing barn, the materials from which would be salvaged and reused in the new hotel development. Project construction is anticipated to last approximately 12 months. The construction of the Project would include demolition, site preparation, grading, trenching, building construction, paving, and architectural coating work. Refer to Table 4.5-3, French Hotel Project Construction Activities, for a summary of construction activities and anticipated equipment used.

Table 4.5-3. French Hotel Project Construction Activities

Construction Phase	Anticipated Equipment Used
Construction Phase	Anticipated Equipment Used
Demolition	Excavators
Site Preparation	Dozer, Water Truck, Loader
Grading	Dozer, Water Truck, Loader
Trenching	Backhoe, Dump Truck
Building Construction (Foundation)	Backhoe, Concrete Pump
Building Construction (Vertical)	Telehandler, Lift
Building Construction (MEP/Other)	Telehandler, Lift
Paving	Cement and Mortar Mixer, Paver, Roller, Paving Equipment, Backhoe

Source: Appendix B.

Annual construction energy consumption is estimated based on the assumptions outlined in Section 4.2, Air Quality, of this EIR. Total diesel fuel use and motor gasoline consumption from the operation of construction equipment, haul truck trips, vendor truck trips, and worker vehicle trips are summarized in Table 4.5-4, Annual Construction Diesel Fuel and Gasoline Use. Fuel use is estimated based on the results of CalEEMod modeling (Appendix B) and per-gallon conversion factors from the USEPA (2025) for motor gasoline and diesel fuel. Although alternatively fueled construction equipment may be used for future construction projects, CalEEMod default construction assumptions are assumed, including use of a diesel construction equipment fleet. Consistent with model default assumptions, electricity and natural gas use during construction was not assumed.

Table 4.5-4. Annual Construction Diesel Fuel and Gasoline Use

Fuel Type	Amount
Diesel Fuel	21,668 gallons
Motor Gasoline	3,404 gallons

Sources: Refer to CalEEMod output (Appendix B) and fuel use calculations (Appendix E); USEPA 2025 (conversion factors).

Notes: Includes fuel use from construction equipment, haul truck trips, vendor truck trips, and worker vehicle trips. Assumes a conversion factor of 10.21 kg/CO_2 for diesel fuel and 8.78 kg/CO_2 for motor gasoline. Detailed calculations are provided in Appendix E.

To limit wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption, future construction contractors would be required to minimize nonessential idling of construction equipment in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9, Section 2449. In addition, electricity may be available on individual construction sites through existing power lines and connections, which could minimize or avoid the use of less-efficient diesel generators. Furthermore, construction-related trips would avoid unnecessary energy use because the Project Site area is already developed and served by an established roadway network, including several regional freeway systems, such as I-5 and SR-74, which provide direct access throughout the region. Overall, construction activities associated with land use developments accommodated under the Project would not result in energy use that is inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary compared to similar development projects. Therefore, construction-related energy impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Operation of the Project would result in annual energy consumption associated with hotel operations, restaurant and event uses, lighting, heating and cooling systems, water heating, vehicle trips, and operational equipment.

Table 4.5-5, Operation Energy Use, includes annual energy use estimates for electricity, natural gas, forklift fuel, and vehicle fuel (fossil fuels) from implementation of proposed development during the opening year (2027). Energy use for future development was estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) (Version 2022.1.1.33), the assumptions described in Section 4.2 of this EIR, and per-gallon conversion factors from the USEPA (2025) for diesel and motor gasoline.

Table 4.5-5. Operation Energy Use

Energy Type	Annual Usage
Electricity	
Hotel	498,599
Quality Restaurant	388,324
Enclosed Parking with Elevator	9,081
Recreational Swimming Pool	0
Parking Lot	40,792
Total	**936,796 kWh/yr**

Table 4.5-5. Operation Energy Use

Energy Type	Annual Usage
Natural Gas	
Hotel	1,879,011
Quality Restaurant	1,225,336
Total	**3,104,347 kBTU/yr**
Forklift Fuel Use	3,526 gallons/yr
Vehicle Fuel Use	59,453 gallons/yr

Source: Refer to CalEEMod output (Appendix B) and fuel use calculations (Appendix E).

Notes: kWh/yr = kilowatt-hour per year; KBTU/yr = kilo British thermal unit per year; Assumes a conversion factor of 8.78 kg/CO_2 for motor gasoline. Detailed calculations are provided in Attachment 2 of Appendix B.

Electrical service to the Project Site would continue to be provided by SDG&E through connections to existing off-site electrical lines and new on-site infrastructure. Natural gas would continue to be provided through SoCal Gas. As shown in Table 4.5-5, the Project would result in an increase in electricity and natural gas use. However, future development would be required to comply with the applicable Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. As these standards are updated triennially, it is anticipated that development to occur in later years would result in less energy consumption than similarly sized development in the near-term. Because these later year developments would be required to comply with the more efficient applicable energy efficiency regulations, development would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary electricity and natural gas demands.

In addition to complying with applicable Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen requirements, the Project would include solar photovoltaic (PV) systems as required by the California Energy Code for hotel uses. These systems would generate renewable electricity onsite and would partially offset electricity demand associated with hotel, restaurant, and other operational uses. The Project would also incorporate additional energy efficiency features, where feasible, such as high-efficiency HVAC systems, LED lighting, and energy recovery ventilation. Accordingly, the Project would reduce reliance on grid-supplied electricity and support efficient energy use.

As shown in Table 4.5-5, the Project would result in an increase in fuel use. As discussed in Section 4.10.7.2 (Threshold TRA-b), the Proposed Project would result in a net increase in Citywide Total VMT and would therefore result in a significant VMT impact prior to mitigation. Implementation of MM TR-1 would require development and implementation of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips and encourage alternative modes of transportation, which would reduce Project-related VMT and associated transportation fuel consumption. However, because the precise level of VMT reduction achieved through the TDM Plan cannot be guaranteed, the transportation impact would remain significant and unavoidable after mitigation. Notwithstanding this VMT significance determination, the Project's

increase in transportation fuel consumption would not, by itself, constitute wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Project-related vehicle trips and associated fuel use would occur in connection with the operation of a 70-room hotel and associated visitor-serving uses, and MM TR-1 would further reduce single-occupancy vehicle travel and associated fuel demand to the extent feasible. Accordingly, although the Project would increase VMT and transportation fuel consumption, operation-related fuel use would not be considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary. Therefore, impacts related to operational transportation fuel consumption would be less than significant.

Summary

As demonstrated above, the Project would result in an increase in electricity, natural gas, and fossil fuel use during construction and operation. However, energy use from implementation of the Project would not result in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy. Development under the Project would comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations during construction and operation. The Project does not include any components that would encourage or enable wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary resource consumption. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.5.7.2 Threshold EN-b: Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Impact Analysis

Construction

As discussed under Threshold EN-a, implementation of the Project would result in temporary energy consumption associated with demolition, rehabilitation of the historic adobes, grading, excavation, paving, and construction activities. Construction-related energy use would primarily occur through the combustion of diesel and gasoline fuels associated with construction equipment, haul trucks, vendor deliveries, and worker commute trips. The Project includes demolition of select non-historic improvements, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the Domingo Yorba Adobe and Casa Manuel Garcia Adobe, and construction of new hotel and site improvements over an anticipated 12-month construction period. Materials from the existing barn and non-historic structural additions would be salvaged and reused in the proposed development to the extent feasible, reducing material waste and demand for new construction materials.

Construction contractors would be required to comply with California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections 2449 and 2485, which limit idling of on-road and off-road diesel-powered equipment

and are enforced by CARB. In addition, construction emissions modeling prepared for the Project demonstrates that maximum daily regional construction emissions would remain below applicable South Coast Air Quality Management District significance thresholds. The Project Site is also located in an already urbanized area served by an established roadway and utility network, including I-5 and SR-74, which would allow construction-related trips and utility connections to occur efficiently without requiring substantial new infrastructure.

Accordingly, construction activities associated with the Project would not result in energy use that is inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary compared to similar infill hospitality and redevelopment projects in the region. Therefore, construction-related impacts associated with conflict with or obstruction of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency would be less than significant.

Operation

California's RPS requires utilities to procure 60 percent of retail electricity sales from eligible renewable resources by 2030. Senate Bill 100 builds upon the RPS by establishing a statewide policy that 100 percent of retail electricity sales be supplied by renewable and zero-carbon resources by 2045. Similarly, the State of California is promoting renewable energy targets to meet the 2022 Scoping Plan greenhouse gas emissions reductions. As discussed under Threshold EN-a, operation of the Project would result in annual energy consumption associated with hotel operations, restaurant and event uses, lighting, heating and cooling systems, water heating, vehicle trips, and operational equipment. Operational energy demand is estimated at approximately 936,796 kilowatt-hours of electricity annually and approximately 3,104,347 kBTU of natural gas annually. In addition, annual fuel consumption associated with operational vehicle trips and equipment is estimated at approximately 59,453 gallons of vehicle fuel and 3,526 gallons of forklift fuel per year.

However, the Project would be required to comply with applicable California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6), CALGreen requirements, and applicable state and local energy efficiency regulations in effect at the time of building permit issuance. The Project Site is also located in an existing urbanized and pedestrian-oriented downtown environment near commercial uses, restaurants, rail service, bicycle facilities, and the San Juan Capistrano Metrolink/Amtrak station, which supports multimodal transportation opportunities and reduced vehicle dependence consistent with state energy and climate planning objectives.

Accordingly, operation of the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable renewable energy or energy efficiency plans, policies, or regulations, and impacts would be less than significant.

General Plan

Table 4.5-6, General Plan Consistency Analysis, provides an analysis of the Project's potential to conflict with all applicable General Plan goals and policies related to energy. As shown, the Project would not conflict with any of the applicable General Plan goals and policies.

Table 4.5-6. General Plan Consistency Analysis

Goals and Policies	Project Consistency
Conservation and Open Space Element	
Goal COS-6.6: Promote energy conservation and recycling by public and private sectors.	**Consistent.** The Project would promote energy conservation through compliance with the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6) and CALGreen requirements, which require implementation of energy-efficient building systems, lighting, ventilation, water heating, and construction practices. As required by the California Energy Code for hotel uses, the Project would also incorporate solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, which would generate renewable electricity onsite and reduce reliance on electricity supplied from the grid. Additional energy efficiency features would be incorporated where feasible, including high-efficiency HVAC systems, LED lighting, and energy recovery ventilation. The Proposed Project would promote energy conservation through compliance with the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6) and CALGreen requirements, which require implementation of energy-efficient building systems, lighting, ventilation, water heating, and construction practices. The Project would also incorporate adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of the existing Domingo Yorba Adobe and Casa Manuel Garcia Adobe, which conserves building materials and reduces the energy demand associated with demolition and full reconstruction. In addition, materials from the existing barn and non-historic structural additions would be salvaged and reused in the development to the extent feasible, reducing construction waste and supporting recycling and material conservation objectives. The Project Site's infill location in the Historic Town Center area near restaurants, commercial uses, bicycle facilities, and the San Juan Capistrano Metrolink/Amtrak station further supports energy conservation by encouraging multimodal transportation opportunities and reducing reliance on vehicle travel. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with Goal COS-6.6.
Public Services and Utilities	
Goal PSU-7: Work effectively with providers of natural gas, electricity, telephone, cable television and solid waste disposal to provide sufficient levels of these services.	**Consistent.** The Project would continue to receive electricity service from SDG&E and natural gas service from SoCal Gas through connections to existing utility infrastructure serving the downtown San Juan Capistrano area. The Project Site is located in an already urbanized portion of the City that is currently served by established utility, telecommunications, and solid waste infrastructure. Implementation of the Project would include coordination with applicable utility providers during project design and construction to ensure adequate service capacity and infrastructure connections are available to support hotel and visitor-serving operations. In addition, the Project would comply with applicable Title 24 and CALGreen requirements intended to promote energy efficiency and reduce operational demand on utility systems. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with Goal PSU-7.
Policy PSU-7.1. Work closely with providers of energy, communications and solid waste disposal in determining and meeting the needs of the community for energy, communications and solid waste disposal.	**Consistent.** The Project would coordinate with SDG&E, SoCal Gas, telecommunications providers, and solid waste service providers during project planning, design, and construction to ensure adequate utility infrastructure and service capacity are available to support the proposed hotel and visitor-serving uses. The Project Site is located in an existing developed area currently served by established utility and service infrastructure, and the Project would connect to and use existing systems consistent with City requirements. In addition, the Project would incorporate energy-efficient building systems and comply with applicable Title 24 and CALGreen standards intended to reduce operational demand on utility infrastructure and support efficient use of community resources. The Project would also comply with applicable solid waste, recycling, and organics collection requirements. The Project would also comply with applicable solid waste,

	recycling, and organics collection requirements. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with Policy PSU-7.1.
Policy PSU-7.2. Encourage energy efficient development.	**Consistent.** The project would incorporate energy-efficient design and operational features consistent with applicable California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6) and CALGreen requirements in effect at the time of construction. The Project would include energy-efficient lighting, mechanical systems, ventilation systems, and water heating infrastructure intended to reduce operational electricity and natural gas consumption. In addition, the Project Site's infill location in the Historic Town Center area near commercial uses, restaurants, bicycle facilities, and the San Juan Capistrano Metrolink/Amtrak station supports multimodal transportation opportunities and reduced vehicle dependence consistent with state and local energy conservation objectives. Adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of the historic adobes and reuse of salvaged construction materials would further support efficient use of resources and reduction of construction waste. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with Policy PSU-7.2.

As shown in Table 4.5-6, the Project would be consistent with the General Plan goals and policies related to energy.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.5.8 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts result if the project, along with cumulative projects, taken together could result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy. The areas considered for cumulative impacts to electricity and natural gas supplies are the service areas for SDG&E and SoCal Gas, respectively.

4.5.8.1 Cumulative Threshold EN-a: Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation.

The Project, related projects, and additional forecasted growth in SDG&E's service area would cumulatively increase the demand for electricity supplies and infrastructure capacity. As with the project, during construction and operation, other future development projects would be expected to incorporate energy conservation features and comply with applicable regulations including CALGreen and state energy standards under Title 24, which would contribute to minimizing wasteful energy consumption. As such, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts related to wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary use of electricity would not be cumulatively considerable and, thus, would be less than significant. Buildout of the Project, related projects, and additional forecasted growth would cumulatively increase the demand for transportation-related fuel in the state and region. As with the project, other future development projects would be expected to reduce VMT by encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation and other design features that promote VMT reductions. Moreover, the Project is located in a Transit Priority Area as it is within a 0.5-mile radius from the San Juan Capistrano train station and is designed as a pedestrian-oriented

development to encourage and increase the use of public transportation options. The Project Site is also surrounded by commercial uses to the north and south. Therefore, the project's contribution to cumulative impacts related to wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary use of transportation fuel would not be cumulatively considerable and, thus, would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.5.8.2 Cumulative Threshold EN-b: Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

The Project would not conflict with any adopted California or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Cumulative developments would also be required to be consistent with applicable regulations adopted to support California-wide energy goals, such as Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards. Because it can be assumed that other cumulative projects would implement features to reduce inefficient or unnecessary energy use, the Project and cumulative projects would not conflict with California's Energy Conservation Plans. As such, potential impacts due to a conflict with or obstruction of a California or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.5.9 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Environmental impacts related to Thresholds EN-a and EN-b would be less than significant.

4.5.10 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

4.5.11 Level of Significance After Mitigation

Not applicable.