

Beaumont Unified School District

TK-8 SCHOOL: BROOKSIDE AVENUE AND NORTH HIGHLAND SPRINGS AVENUE

April 2026 | Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration



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TK-8 SCHOOL: BROOKSIDE AVENUE AND NORTH HIGHLAND SPRINGS AVENUE

For Beaumont Unified School District

Beaumont Unified School District

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ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: TK-8 School: Brookside Avenue and North Highland Springs Avenue

Lead Agency Name and Address:

Beaumont Unified School District
350 West Brookside Avenue
Beaumont, California 92223

Contact Person and Phone Number:

Nora Lopez, Facilities Coordinator
951.389.0518

Project Location: Southwest corner of the intersection of Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue, unincorporated community of Cherry Valley, Riverside County, CA

Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

Beaumont Unified School District
350 West Brookside Avenue
Beaumont, California 92223

General Plan Designation: The Pass Area Plan

Zoning: Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)

Description of Project: The Beaumont Unified School District is proposing construction and operation of a new public school on the project site, which would serve students from transitional kindergarten (TK) to eighth grade. Once completed, the new school campus would have an enrollment capacity of up to 1,200 students, 124 school staff, and multiple school buildings and facilities. Other project components include campus amenities and facilities; vehicular access, circulation, and parking improvements; pedestrian access and circulation improvements; landscape, hardscape, and lighting improvements; and infrastructure and utility improvements.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: The project site is bounded by residential uses to the north and south, vacant land to the east, and vacant land and residential uses to the west.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., Permits, Financing Approval, or Participating Agreement):

California Department of General Services, Division of State Architect
California Department of Education, School Facilities Planning Division
Riverside County Public Works and Community Services
Riverside County Fire Department

Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

Beaumont Unified School District prepared letters addressed to each Native American Tribe provided on the Native American Heritage Commission's list of tribes to be contacted for tribal consultation. Outreach letters were sent to tribal representatives initiating consultation with tribes pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

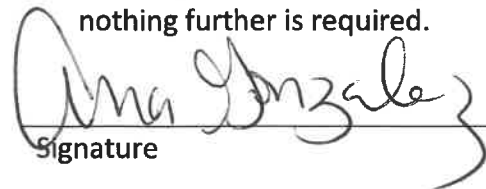
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project; that is, at least one impact is a "Potentially Significant Impact," as indicated by the checklist for that factor in Chapter 3, *Environmental Evaluation*.

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

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.


Signature

4/20/26
Date

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

The Beaumont Unified School District (District) is proposing construction and operation of a new public school on the project site that would serve students from transitional kindergarten (TK) to eighth grade. Once completed, the new school campus would have an enrollment capacity of up to 1,200 students, 124 school staff, and multiple school buildings and facilities. Other project components, which are described in Chapter 2, include campus amenities and facilities; vehicular access, circulation, and parking improvements; pedestrian access and circulation improvements; landscape, hardscape, and lighting improvements; and infrastructure and utility improvements.

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the District, as lead agency, is preparing the environmental documentation for the proposed project to determine whether approval of the requested discretionary actions and subsequent development would have a significant impact on the environment. As defined by Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study is prepared primarily to provide the lead agency with the information to use as the basis for determining whether an environmental impact report (EIR), negative declaration, or mitigated negative declaration (MND) would provide the necessary environmental documentation and clearance for the proposed project.

1.2 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

The environmental compliance process is governed by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines (Public Resources Code [PRC], Section 21000 et seq.; California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.). CEQA was enacted in 1970 by the California Legislature to disclose to decision makers and the public the significant environmental effects of projects and to identify ways to avoid or reduce the environmental effects through feasible alternatives or mitigation measures. Compliance with CEQA applies to California government agencies at all levels: local, regional, and state agencies, boards, commissions, and special districts (e.g., school districts and water districts). The Beaumont Unified School District is the lead agency for the proposed project and is therefore required to conduct an environmental review to analyze the potential environmental effects associated with the proposed project.

PRC Section 21080(a) states that analysis of a project's environmental impact is required for any "discretionary projects proposed to be carried out or approved by public agencies..." In this case, the lead agency has determined that an Initial Study is required to determine whether there is

1. INTRODUCTION

substantial evidence that construction and operation of the proposed project would result in environmental impacts.

A “project” means the whole of an action that has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and that is any of the following:

- An activity directly undertaken by any public agency including but not limited to public works construction and related activities clearing or grading of land, improvements to existing public structures, enactment and amendment of zoning ordinances, and the adoption and amendment of local General Plans or elements thereof pursuant to Government Code Sections 65100 to 65700.
- An activity undertaken by a person which is supported in whole or in part through public agency contacts, grants, subsidies, loans, or other forms of assistance from one or more public agencies.
- An activity involving the issuance to a person of a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement for use by one or more public agencies. (14 CCR section 15378[a]).

The proposed discretionary actions by the project applicant constitute a “project” because the activity would result in a direct physical change in the environment and would be undertaken by a public agency. All “projects” in the State of California are required to undergo an environmental review to determine the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the project.

One of the primary objectives of CEQA is to enhance public participation in the planning process, so public involvement is an essential feature of CEQA. Community members are encouraged to participate in the environmental review process, request to be notified, monitor newspapers for formal announcements, and submit substantive comments at every possible opportunity afforded by the lead agency. The environmental review process provides several opportunities for the public to participate through public notice and public review of CEQA documents and at public meetings.

1.3 INITIAL STUDY

The purpose of the initial study is to 1) provide the lead agency with information to use as the basis for deciding the proper type of CEQA document to prepare; 2) enable the lead agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts before an environmental impact report (EIR) is prepared, thereby enabling the project to qualify for a negative declaration; 3) assist in the preparation of an EIR, if one is required; 4) facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of a project; 5) provide documentation of the factual basis for the findings in a mitigated negative declaration (MND) or negative declaration (ND); 6) eliminate unnecessary EIRs; and 7) determine

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if a project is covered under a previously prepared EIR. When an initial study identifies the potential for immitigable significant environmental impacts, the lead agency must prepare an EIR (14 CCR section 15064); however, if all impacts are found to be less than significant or can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level, the lead agency can prepare an ND or an MND, which incorporates mitigation measures into the project (14 CCR section 15070).

1.4 MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

The MND includes information necessary for agencies to meet statutory responsibilities related to the proposed project. State and local agencies will use the MND when considering any permit or other approvals necessary to implement the project. A list of the environmental topics that have been identified for study in the MND is provided in the *Environmental Checklist* that precedes Chapter 1 of this initial study.

1.5 LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following terminology is used to describe the level of significance of impacts. Although the criteria for determining significance are different for each topic area, the environmental analysis applies a uniform classification of the impacts based on definitions consistent with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines:

No impact. The project would result in no adverse effect on the environment.

Less-than-significant impact. The project would not exceed the established significance criteria.

Less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated. The project would exceed the established significance criteria without mitigation measures, but one or more mitigation measures would successfully reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

Potentially significant impact. The project would exceed the established significance criteria, and either no feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level, or more analysis is needed to determine if feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. If any impact is identified as potentially significant, an EIR is required.

Mitigation Measures. If, after incorporation and implementation of federal, state, and local regulations, there are still significant environmental impacts, then feasible and project-specific mitigation measures are required to reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels. Mitigation measures must further reduce significant environmental impacts above and beyond compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Mitigation under CEQA Guidelines Section 15370 includes the following:

1. INTRODUCTION

- Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
- Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment.
- Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.
- Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

2.1.1 Regional Setting

The Project Site is in the unincorporated community of Cherry Valley, which is in the western end of Riverside County. Cherry Valley is bounded by the City of Beaumont to the south; unincorporated San Bernardino County to the north; the City of Banning and unincorporated Riverside County to the east; and the City of Calimesa to the west (see Figure 1, *Regional Location*). Cherry Valley is a rural community characterized by large-lot residential, agricultural, and animal keeping uses, with a commercial core along Beaumont Avenue, northerly of Cherry Valley Boulevard. The Project Site lies within the boundary of the City of Beaumont's sphere of influence. Regional access to the Project Site is from Interstate 10 (I-10), approximately 2.3 miles south via N. Highland Springs Avenue.

2.1.2 Local Setting

The Project Site is in the southeastern end of Cherry Valley (see Figure 2, *Local Vicinity*). It lies at the southwest corner of the intersection of Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue. The Project Site is bordered by Brookside Avenue to the north, N. Highland Springs Avenue to the east, vacant parcels and residential uses to the west, and residential uses to the south. Cougar Way is just south of the Project Site (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*). The Project Site consists of 37.46 acres and consists of four legal parcels, Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 408-080-009 through -012.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

2.2.1 Existing Land Use

As shown in Figure 3, the Project Site is in a developing area of the county. The Project Site is vacant and consists mainly of ruderal vegetation, nonnative grasses, and a few trees along the northwestern/western site boundary. There are no buildings, structures, or improvements on-site. The northern Project Site boundary is lined with electric power lines on wooden poles; the southern boundary is lined with an existing block wall. There is also a natural drainage feature that lines the western Project Site boundary as well as a water detention basin in the

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

southwestern end that ties into the drainage feature. The Project Site has been subject to historical disturbances related to agricultural use and the construction and subsequent demolition of a water tank and associated buildings in the mid-20th century.

2.2.2 Surrounding Land Use

As shown in Figure 3, the Project Site is bounded by residential development to the north and south, vacant land to the east, and vacant land and residential development to the west.

2.2.3 Existing Zoning and General Plan

According to the Riverside County General Plan, the Project Site is in the Pass Area Plan, which guides development, land use, and transportation for the San Geronio Pass area. Per the Pass Area Plan, the land use designation of the Project Site is Very Low Density Residential (VLDR) and lies within the Cherry Valley Gateway Policy Area.

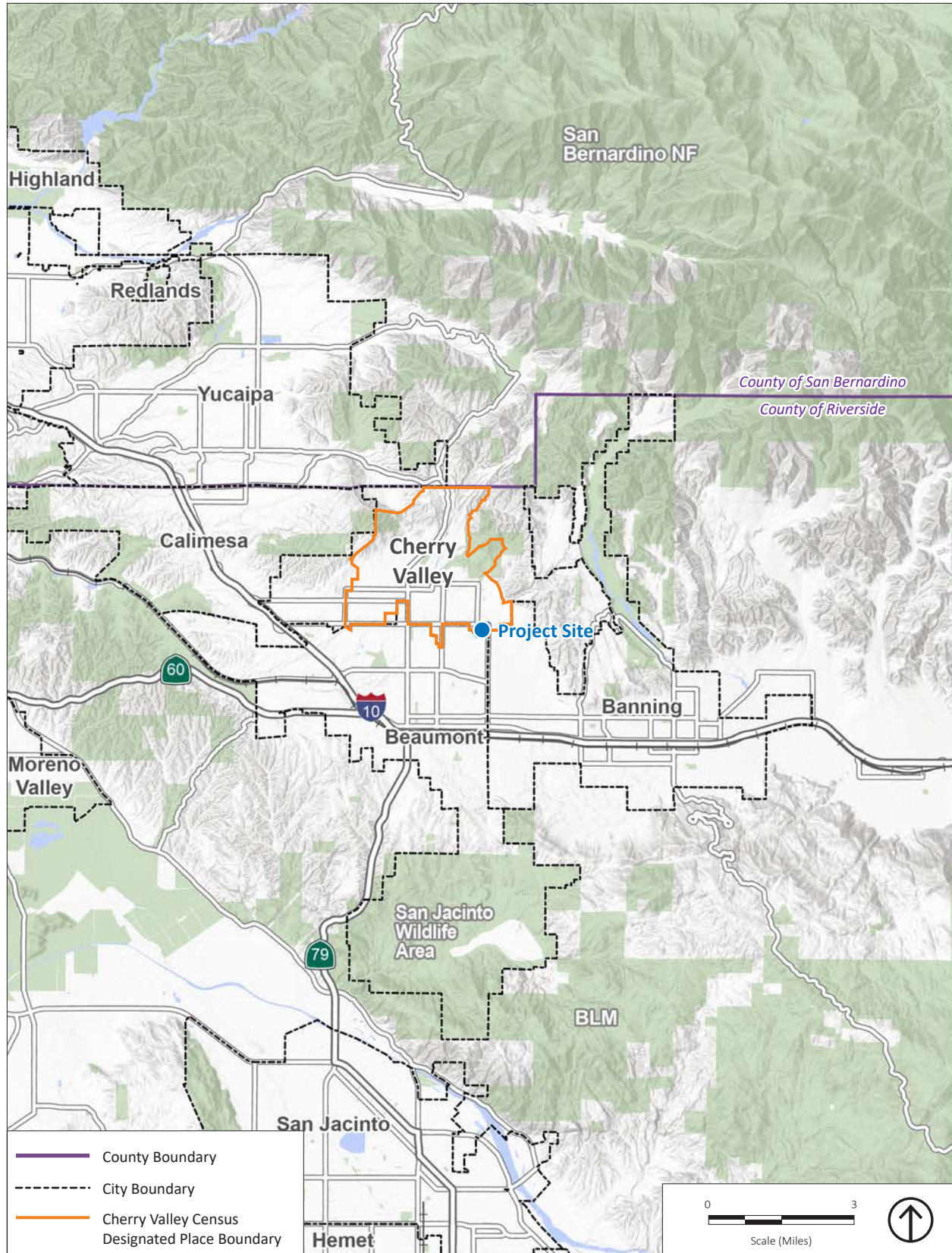
2.3 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

2.3.1 Proposed Land Use

The District is proposing construction and operation of a new public school on the Project Site that would serve students from transitional kindergarten (TK) to eighth grade (Proposed Project). Once completed, the new school campus would have an enrollment capacity of up to 1,200 students, 124 school staff (teachers: 58; all other staff: 66), multiple school buildings, and playfields.

As shown in Figure 4, *Conceptual Campus Site Plan*, the new school campus would occupy the entire Project Site. The Proposed Project would be designed as a contemporary TK to eighth grade public school. The proposed site design would follow the natural contours of the vacant Project Site and its surroundings. The site layout and design elements (i.e., provision of substantial building setbacks and landscaped edges) will help create a buffer between the proposed campus facilities, surrounding streets, residences, and off-site elements. The design identifies a dedicated, protected recreation zone, physically separated from adjacent streets and parking areas. This creates a safer, more focused environment for children's sports courts, fields, and communal gathering spaces. The Proposed Project's design places emphasis on maintaining a relationship with surrounding residences while generating a distinct school identity.

TK-8 SCHOOL: BROOKSIDE AVENUE AND NORTH HIGHLAND SPRINGS AVENUE
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
BEAUMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



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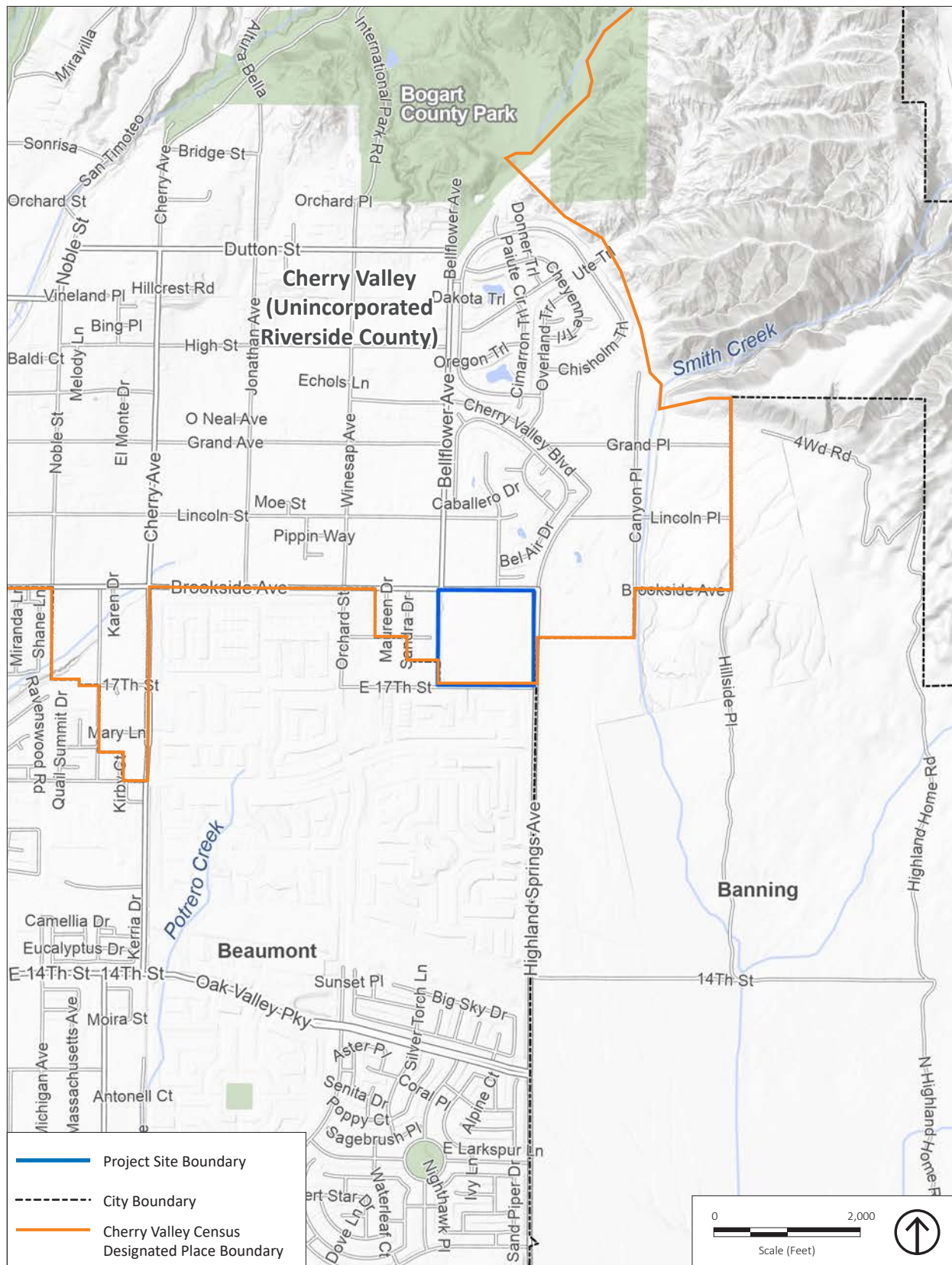
Figure 1
Regional Location

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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TK-8 SCHOOL: BROOKSIDE AVENUE AND NORTH HIGHLAND SPRINGS AVENUE
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
BEAUMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



Source: Generated using GIS Pro 2025.

Figure 2
Local Vicinity

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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TK-8 SCHOOL: BROOKSIDE AVENUE AND NORTH HIGHLAND SPRINGS AVENUE
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
BEAUMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

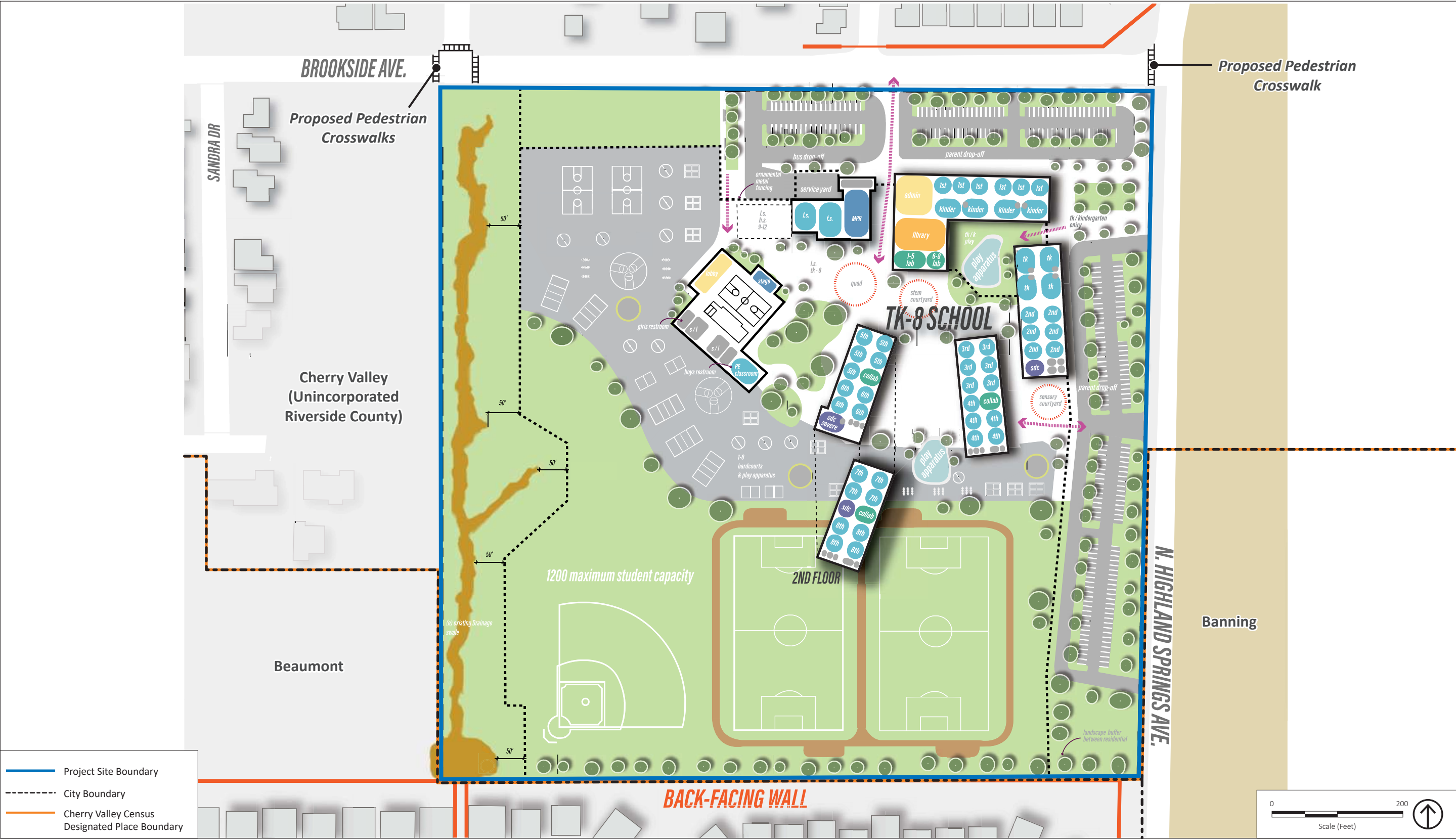


Source: Nearmap 2025.

Figure 3
Aerial Photograph

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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Source: Ruhnau Clarke 2025.

Figure 4
Conceptual Campus Site Plan

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the Proposed Project's campus buildings and associated square footages as well as the number of anticipated classrooms. As shown in the table and illustrated in Figure 4, the proposed project would consist of six buildings (Buildings A through F), which would house the administrative, instructional, extracurricular, physical education, and support services. As described in the table, buildings would be one story with the exception of Building D, which would be two stories.

Table 1 Proposed Project Site Development

Building	Gross Square Footage	Number of Classrooms
Building A – Single Story: Admin, Library, Classrooms for Kinder and 1st Grade, Labs	23,040	12
Building B – Single Story: Classrooms for TK, Second, and Special Daily Class	14,941	11
Building C – Single Story: Classrooms for 3rd and 4th Grade	12,297	11
Building D – Two Stories: Classrooms for 5th to 8th Grade and Special Daily Class	22,850	19
Building E – Single Story: Gymnasium with locker rooms and physical education classroom	20,060	1
Building F – Multipurpose Room/Food Service	9,423	0
Total	102,611	54

It should be noted that the natural drainage feature (approximately 1.5 acres of the 37.46-acre Project Site) that lines the entire stretch of the western Project Site boundary, including the culverted water detention basin¹ in the southwestern end (see Figures 3 and 4), will remain in their existing condition and not be disturbed or impacted in any way as a result of the Proposed Project. As shown in Figure 4, a 50-foot buffer from the edge of the drainage feature and basin would be provided along the entire stretch of the features. Additionally, construction fencing would be erected along the edge of the 50-foot buffer area to help protect the drainage feature and basin from any construction-related impacts. Upon completion of construction activities, the fencing would be removed.

Other project components, which are described below, include campus amenities and facilities; vehicular access, circulation, and parking improvements; pedestrian access and safe path of

¹ A culverted detention basin, often known as a dry detention pond, is a landscaped or structural depression designed to temporarily store stormwater runoff and release it slowly via a culvert, riser, or orifice to manage peak flow rates and prevent flooding.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

travel; landscape, hardscape, and lighting improvements; and infrastructure and utility improvements.

2.3.2 Campus Amenities and Facilities

As shown in Figure 4, the school campus amenities would include a baseball field and two soccer fields with natural turf; a dirt track around the soccer fields; two hard courts for basketball and other recreational activities; two playgrounds with play structures (playgrounds would be provided for kindergarten and elementary and middle school students); various courtyards and a quad; lunch areas; janitorial and storage rooms; and a service yard. Also, the Proposed Project amenities and facilities would include a gymnasium, multipurpose room, kitchen, and library. Dedicated trash bins for solid waste, recyclable materials, and food waste would be provided on the campus.

2.3.3 Landscaping, Fences, and Lighting

Landscaping

The Proposed Project's landscape plan would feature landscaping along the campus perimeter and internal to the proposed campus, including along the building edges, within the parking areas and courtyards, and as a part of the natural turf areas and playfields (see Figure 4). The site landscaping would include a variety of trees for shade, shrubs, and groundcover that would help soften the massing of the buildings and various hardscape improvements (e.g., parking areas, drive aisles, walkways).

Fences and Gates

Various fences and gates would be provided along the campus perimeter and internal to the Project Site to provide a secure and safe environment for students, staff, parents, and visitors. Also, the existing block wall along the southern site boundary (which separates the Project Site from residential homes to the south) would remain and not undergo any modifications. Fencing and gates would also be provided for the TK and kindergarten courtyard and play area to ensure an exclusive and safe area for these students. Pedestrian access to the campus would be controlled through a single primary entry point at the main entrance, consistent with the District's closed-campus safety protocols. Additional gated access points around the building perimeter and parking areas would be restricted for controlled or staff use only. Knox Boxes² (or other

² A Knox Box is a small, wall-mounted safe that holds building keys for fire departments, emergency medical services, and sometimes for sheriffs to retrieve in emergency situations.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

approved emergency access systems) would be installed at secured gates to provide immediate access for emergency personnel.

The proposed solid waste enclosure(s) would include solid walls on three sides and swinging metal doors on the side facing the internal drive aisles to ensure adequate access to the bins for the solid waste hauler.

Lighting

Project lighting would consist of exterior building-mounted light fixtures; interior lighting for the new buildings; lighting for pedestrian walkways and common gathering areas; ground-mounted decorative lighting for landscape and architectural features; lighting for the parking areas and drive aisles; and security lighting. No nighttime or field lighting are proposed for the play fields or hard courts.

2.3.4 Access, Circulation, and Parking

Vehicular Access, Circulation, and Parking

Vehicular access to the Project Site would be provided via driveways along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue. The driveways would connect to the internal drive aisle system, which would connect to the internal parking areas, serving as the student drop-off/pick-up circulation feature (for both parents and school buses), and serving as a part of the internal fire access and circulation system. All driveways would be designed to provide adequate sight distance, which is the continuous length of roadway visible to a driver.

On-site parking would be provided in dedicated surface parking lots in the northern and eastern portions of the Project Site (see Figure 4). Combined, the three parking lots would accommodate approximately 254 parking spaces, which would include parking spaces for electric vehicles and handicap access.

Pedestrian Access and Circulation

Pedestrian and bicycle access to the Project Site would be provided via Brookside Avenue on the north and N. Highland Springs Avenue on the east. Pedestrian access and circulation along the site frontages would be via new public sidewalks along the northern and eastern site boundaries. Access to the school campus would be via internal walkways that would connect to the public sidewalks along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue. A pedestrian crosswalk, which involves roadway striping and is considered a minor off-site improvement, would be

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provided at the intersection of Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue on the west side of the intersection. Additionally, pedestrian crosswalks would be provided on all three sides of the Brookside Avenue and Bellflower Avenue intersection, which is currently a one-way, stop-controlled intersection. School crossing guards would be recommended to be stationed at the new crosswalks to ensure the safety of the students.

There are no existing striped, on-street bike lanes in the vicinity of the Project Site. However, existing low-speed streets where cyclists are permitted to ride in the street or on the sidewalks are already provided abutting and surrounding the Project Site and surrounding properties. In addition, the Proposed Project would construct sidewalks along the south side of Brookside Avenue and west side of N. Highland Springs Avenue, which abut the Project Site. School crossing guards would be recommended to be stationed at the designated crossing locations along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue.

2.3.5 Utility and Service Systems

Water System

No water delivery service is currently provided to the Project Site under existing conditions, as it is vacant and undeveloped. The Project Site is outside of the water delivery service area of the Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District (BCVWD). Therefore, the District would coordinate with BCVWD to provide water delivery service to the Project Site, which would require Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) annexation of the Project Site into BCVWD's service area and issuance of a water "will serve" letter from BCVWD. The LAFCO process would be a District-driven action that would allow BCVWD to annex the Project Site into its service area and allow BCVWD to provide water delivery service to the Project Site. Upon annexation, BCVWD would provide water service to the Project Site.

As part of the Proposed Project, new on-site water lines would connect to the water main in Brookside Avenue or N. Highland Springs Avenue. No new off-site water line construction or upsizing would be required to accommodate the Proposed Project. However, some construction in the public right-of-way of these roads would make the necessary infrastructure connections to the existing water main. The proposed water system improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with Riverside County requirements and would require county approval. Additionally, fire hydrants would be installed on-site pursuant to the requirements of the Riverside County Fire Department to ensure adequate fire protection infrastructure. The fire hydrants would connect to the new on-site water lines.

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Wastewater System

Wastewater collection and conveyance service is not currently provided to the Project Site under existing conditions as it is vacant and undeveloped. The District is seeking two options for wastewater service. Option One and the preferred option is for the City of Beaumont to provide wastewater service to the Project Site. This is also the preferred option for the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health, which oversees wastewater service in the unincorporated areas of the county and requires that project proponents connect to an existing wastewater provider's infrastructure if it is within 200 feet of the infrastructure. Since there is a sewer main in Brookside Avenue (which is approximately 10 feet from the northern Project Site boundary) that is owned, operated, and maintained by the City of Beaumont, the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health has requested that the District connect to the City's sewer main and in doing so, the City would provide wastewater service to the Project Site.

The Project Site is outside of the wastewater service area of the City of Beaumont. Therefore, and in response to the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health's request, under Option One the District would coordinate with the City of Beaumont to provide wastewater conveyance service to the Project Site, which would require LAFCO annexation of the Project Site into the City of Beaumont's service area and issuance of a wastewater will-serve letter from the City. The LAFCO process would be a District-driven action that would allow the City to annex the Project Site into its service area and provide wastewater service to the Project Site.

If annexed, the City of Beaumont would provide wastewater collection and conveyance service to the Project Site. As part of the Proposed Project and under Option One, new on-site sewer lines would connect to the existing sewer main in Brookside Avenue. No off-site sewer line construction or upsizing would be required to accommodate the Proposed Project. However, some construction in the public right-of-way of Brookside Avenue would be necessary to make the infrastructure connections to the existing sewer main. The proposed wastewater system improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with the City of Beaumont standards and would require City approval.

Alternatively, and if the City of Beaumont determines that it cannot provide wastewater service to the Project Site, the District would proceed with Option Two, which would require the District to provide an advanced treatment system on-site in the form of an Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) for the Proposed Project. The OWTS would be required to be designed, constructed, installed, and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the County of Riverside's Local Agency Management Program (LAMP), which outlines the specific requirements and regulations for installation and operation of an OWTS. The LAMP allows for the use of OWTS within the jurisdiction of Riverside County while protecting water quality and public health. The LAMP helps protect groundwater sources and surface water bodies from contamination by

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

providing standards for the proper design, placement, installation, maintenance, and assessment of an OWTS (RCDEH 2024).

Drainage System

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the Project Site is vacant and consists mainly of ruderal vegetation. Under existing conditions, the Project Site has zero percent impervious surface area. The site is generally flat with gentle slopes draining via sheet flow toward the southern/southwesterly end of the Project Site. There are no drainage improvements on-site under existing conditions; there are also no water quality devices/features on-site to provide any treatment for “first flush”³ generated on-site. Further, there are no curb-and-gutter improvements along any of the streets that front the Project Site.

Under proposed conditions and upon completion of the Proposed Project, the Project Site would be developed with impervious (e.g., buildings, asphalt parking, hardcourts) and pervious (e.g., playfields, open lawn areas) surfaces. Also, part of the roadway improvements proposed along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue would include curb and gutter improvements. Site runoff from the Project Site would be conveyed via a comprehensive on-site drainage collection, conveyance, and treatment system.

Solid Waste and Recycling

Solid waste and recycling generated by the Proposed Project would be collected and hauled away by Waste Management (the solid waste hauler serving Cherry Valley) and transported to and disposed of at the appropriate waste and recycling facilities in the county. As noted earlier, the solid waste enclosure(s) would include solid walls on three sides and swinging metal doors on the side facing the internal drive aisles to ensure that the solid waste hauler has adequate access to the bins.

Utilities and Service Systems

Plans for utilities and service systems that would serve the Proposed Project include provision of electricity (Southern California Edison), natural gas (Southern California Gas Company), and telecommunications (Frontier, Spectrum, T-Mobile). All modification of and connection to existing utility and service systems would be accommodated consistent with the District and service

³ First flush" refers to the initial runoff of a rainstorm, which contains the highest concentration of pollutants washed from surfaces like streets and roofs.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

providers' requirements. Also, all new utility infrastructure would be installed underground or in enclosed spaces (e.g., utility closets).

2.3.6 School Operation

Traditional School

The Proposed Project is proposed to operate on a traditional two-semester academic calendar, with students in session from August through June. School hours would be from approximately 7:30 am to 3:45 pm, and some teachers and students may be on campus after school hours to attend various after-school programs and activities.

School-Related Events

The Proposed Project would provide after-school programs for students, such as special-interest clubs, and extracurricular activities that may end later than 3:45 pm up to 10:00 pm. There may also be occasional nighttime and weekend events during the school year. Some of these events would be campus-wide, such as school plays and open houses, and others would be grade specific, such as graduation. In addition, pursuant to the Civic Center Act, school facilities would be available for authorized community use.

2.3.7 Project Phasing and Construction

Construction of the Proposed Project is anticipated to take approximately 18 months, commencing in January 2028 and ending in June 2029. Construction activities would disturb the majority of the Project Site, excluding approximately 1.5 acres that encompass the natural drainage feature along the entire western Project Site boundary (see Figure 3), which would remain in its existing condition and not be disturbed. Based on the proposed construction timeline and for purposes of the analysis in this Initial Study, it is "tentatively anticipated" that the Proposed Project would be operational by fall of the 2029–2030 school year. However, the final opening year for the new school would be determined by the District based on available funding and design timeline.

Site preparation would be limited to soil disturbance; clearing and grubbing of existing vegetation, which consists of mostly shrubs; and removal of rocks and debris. No soil export or import is anticipated since soil on the Project Site is anticipated to be balanced. Construction staging areas, including earth stockpiling, storage of equipment and supplies, and related activities would be within the boundaries of the Project Site. The anticipated types and quantities of construction equipment are further summarized in Section 3.3, *Air Quality*.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.4 AGENCY REVIEWS AND APPROVALS

The following District approvals are required to implement the Proposed Project:

- Approval of Proposed Project
- Adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

It is anticipated that the reviewing agencies for the Proposed Project would include, but may not be limited to:

- **California Department of General Services, Division of State Architect (DSA).** Plan review and construction oversight, including structural safety, fire and life safety, and access compliance.
- **California Department of Education, School Facilities Planning Division.** Because the District is requesting new construction funds from the State Allocation Board, the plans must be reviewed and approved by the California Department of Education (Education Code Section 17070.50) before the District can submit a funding request.
- **Riverside County Public Works and Community Services.** Permit for curb, gutter, and other off-site improvements.
- **Riverside County Fire Department.** Approval of plans for emergency access and emergency evacuation. Division of State Architect's approval of the fire/life safety portion of a project requires local fire authority review of elevator/stair access for emergency rescue and patient transport; access roads, fire lane markings, pavers, and gate entrances; fire hydrant location and distribution; and fire flow (location of post indicator valve, fire department connection, and detector check valve assembly).
- **State Water Resources Control Board.** Review of notice of intent to obtain permit coverage; issuance of general permit for discharges of stormwater associated with construction activity; review of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

This section includes a checklist for each environmental topic, evaluates the significance criteria in the checklists, and, if necessary, provides mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts.

I. Aesthetics

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

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

DISCUSSION

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

For purposes of determining significance under CEQA, a scenic vista is generally considered a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. Some scenic vistas are officially designated by public agencies. Vistas provide

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

visual access or panoramic views to a large geographic area and are generally located at a point where surrounding views are greater than one mile away. Panoramic views are usually associated with vantage points over a section of urban or natural areas that provide a geographic orientation not commonly available. Examples of panoramic views might include an urban skyline, valley, mountain range, a large open space area, the ocean, or other water bodies. A substantial adverse effect to a scenic vista is one that degrades the view from such a designated view spot.

The Project Site is located in the unincorporated Cherry Valley area, situated in the Riverside Lowlands. The broader region offers scenic views of the San Gorgonio Mountains to the north/northwest and the San Jacinto Mountains to the east/southeast from various vantage points. Views of these mountains are available from the Project Site and its surroundings. It should be noted that views of San Gorgonio Mountains are partially obstructed from different vantage points in and around the Project Site by existing mature trees and residential development.

Brookside Avenue, which runs east-west and forms the northern Project Site boundary, offers partially obstructed distant views of the San Gorgonio Mountains to motorists and passersby traveling east on Brookside Avenue. Development of the Proposed Project would not obstruct views of the mountains from motorists or passersby because the Project Site would be developed on the south side of Brookside Avenue and the viewshed is to the north.

N. Highland Springs Avenue, which runs north-south and forms the eastern Project Site boundary, offers unobstructed distant views of the San Jacinto Mountains to motorists and passersby traveling north on N. Highland Springs Avenue. Development of the Proposed Project would not obstruct views of the mountains from motorists or passersby because the Project Site would be developed on the west side of Brookside Avenue and the viewshed is to the east and southeast.

Additionally, a review of the Riverside County General Plan and the Pass Area Plan confirms that there are no designated scenic vistas or protected viewsheds on or in the vicinity of the Project Site. While distant views of the San Gorgonio and San Jacinto Mountain ranges may be glimpsed from some local roadways such as North Highland Springs Avenue, these are broad, regional vistas. The Proposed Project's location, existing surrounding development patterns, and topography do not establish the Project Site as a primary or unique viewing location for these features.

Furthermore, the Riverside County General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element identifies no designated open space resources (a designation typically used to determine the value of certain public vistas in order to gauge adverse effects) or scenic designations on-site or immediately adjacent to the Project Site that would be affected.

Finally, overall site topography can be characterized as generally flat, with no notable change in elevation. There are no visible landforms (e.g., mountains, hills, creeks) from the Project Site or surrounding area, and no landforms are on or within proximity of the Project Site.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

Based on the preceding, the Proposed Project would not substantially degrade any valued scenic resource. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Scenic highways are a unique component of the region's circulation system as they traverse areas of scenic or aesthetic value. According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), a highway may be designated as scenic depending on how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view (Caltrans 2026a).

The Project Site is in an urbanized area of Riverside County and is not within or near an official state-designated scenic highway or an eligible state scenic highway. The nearest designated scenic highway is State Route 243 is located 5.34 miles southeast of the Project Site (Caltrans 2026b). Due to the distance, topography, and intervening development, the Proposed Project would not impact scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

The Project Site is currently vacant and characterized by ruderal vegetation. There are no rock outcroppings, historic buildings, or other significant scenic resources identified on the site. The project plans include the removal of existing ruderal vegetation as part of site preparation, but this common, non-native vegetation does not constitute a scenic resource as defined.

Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The assessment of aesthetic impacts is subjective by nature. Aesthetics generally refers to the identification of visual resources and their quality, as well as an overall visual perception of the environment. The Project Site is in an area of Riverside County that qualifies as an "urbanized area," as defined in State Resources Code Section 21071, Urbanized Area (definition). Based on the Project Site's urban setting, the Proposed Project's consistency with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality is evaluated.

The Project Site is in an urbanized area of the unincorporated community of Cherry Valley, which is characterized by flat topography and a rural setting of large-lot residential uses, agricultural activities, and vacant land. Existing land use and conditions of the Project Site and surrounding area are depicted in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*. As shown in the figure, the Project Site is vacant land consisting mainly of ruderal vegetation. The Project Site is generally flat, with gentle slopes

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

draining to the south/southwest. Surrounding land uses consist of vacant land to the east and residential development to the north, south, and west.

Following is a discussion of the potential impact on the visual character or quality of the Project Site and its surroundings resulting from the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Project.

Project Construction Phase

Project implementation would result in construction activities that would temporarily change the visual character of the Project Site and its surroundings. Construction activities would involve soil disturbance; clearing and grubbing of existing ruderal vegetation; and the construction of buildings, parking areas, athletic fields, and all associated site improvements. Construction staging areas, including earth stockpiling, storage of equipment and supplies, and related activities would occur within the Project Site boundaries and would contribute to a temporarily disturbed appearance, which may be perceived as a visual impact.

However, these effects are typical of any development in Riverside County. Construction is anticipated to occur over a single phase spanning approximately 18 months. While construction activities may be unsightly during the site preparation and building phases, these effects would be temporary and would cease upon project completion. Furthermore, standard construction fencing and screening practices would be employed to help shield active work areas from public view, minimizing the visual presence of stockpiles, equipment, and materials from the surrounding roadways and residences.

Therefore, Project-related construction activities, while temporarily altering the Project Site's appearance, would not result in a permanent substantial degradation of the visual character of the Project Site or its surroundings. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Project Operational Phase

As agencies for the State for the local operation of a Statewide school system, school districts are generally exempt and not subject to local regulations. The District is proposing to develop the Project Site with a new TK-8 public school campus. As shown in Figure 4, the new school campus would consist of six main buildings (Buildings A through F), which would house administrative, instructional, extracurricular, physical education, and support services. With the exception of the two-story Building D, all buildings would be single story. The design follows the natural contours of the site and uses substantial building setbacks and landscaped edges to provide a buffer between campus facilities and surrounding streets and residences.

Other project components include campus amenities such as athletic fields, hard courts, and playgrounds; vehicular access and circulation improvements with driveways from Brookside and Highland Springs Avenues; surface parking areas; pedestrian access and new sidewalks; and

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

comprehensive landscape, hardscape, lighting, and utility improvements. As illustrated in Figure 4, the site layout creates a protected central area for student recreation and gathering, separate from parking and roadways.

The Proposed Project would be designed as a contemporary school with an emphasis on maintaining a relationship with the surrounding rural residential community while establishing a distinct school identity. The design incorporates perimeter and internal landscaping with ornamental trees and shrubs to soften the massing of buildings and hardscape. The architectural style, massing, and material choices would be designed to be compatible with the community's character, which would be ensured through the California Department of General Services, Division of State Architect (DSA) development review process of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project's scale and low-profile design (predominantly single-story) are consistent with the rural setting and the site's Very Low Density Residential (VLDR) land use designation.

Furthermore, the Proposed Project is a permitted public use that is compatible with the residential neighborhood context. The design and implementation would be subject to review and approval by the District and DSA and would be consistent with the District's authority under California Government Code. The proposed school is a community-serving institution that fits appropriately within the area's planned development pattern.

Overall, Proposed Project development would transform the currently vacant site into an organized campus that enhances the area through quality architecture, landscaping, and site improvements. The design ensures visual cohesiveness and compatibility with the surrounding area.

The Proposed Project involves the construction of a low-profile school campus consisting predominantly of single-story buildings, with one 2-story structure. The design incorporates substantial building setbacks, follows the natural topography, and includes perimeter and internal landscaping. These features ensure that the Proposed Project would be compatible with the existing rural residential character of the project area. Furthermore, the Proposed Project's design would incorporate new landscape planting that would enhance the Project Site's appearance.

Therefore, the operational phase of the Proposed Project would not substantially degrade the visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Lighting effects are associated with the use of artificial light during the evening hours. There are two primary sources of light—light emanating from building interiors passing through windows and openings, and light from exterior sources (i.e., street lighting, architectural building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, landscape lighting, and signage). Excessive light

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and/or glare can impair vision, cause a nuisance, affect sleep patterns, and generate safety hazards when experienced by drivers. Uses such as residences, elderly care facilities, schools, and hotels are considered light sensitive, since occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Light spill or trespass is considered a nuisance and is typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated. With respect to lighting, the degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light source, presence of barriers or obstructions, type of light source, and weather conditions.

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light on surfaces of buildings or objects, including highly polished surfaces such as glass windows or reflective materials and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Perceived glare is the unwanted and potentially objectionable sensation experienced by a person as they look directly into the light source of a luminaire. Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with buildings with exterior façades largely or entirely composed of highly reflective glass. Daytime glare can also be generated by light reflecting off passing or parked cars. Glare is produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Glare generation is typically related to either moving vehicles or sun angles, although glare resulting from reflected sunlight can occur regularly at certain times of the day and year. Excessive glare not only impedes visibility but also increases the ambient heat reflectivity in a given area. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, hotels, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.

As shown in Figure 3, the vacant Project Site is in an urbanized area of Riverside County and is surrounded by residential uses and vacant land. No sources of light or glare currently exist on-site. However, sources of light and glare exist in the surrounding area.

Following is a discussion of potential day- and nighttime light and glare impacts resulting from the Proposed Project.

Project Construction Phase

Construction activities that would occur within the Project Site would be limited to the hours outlined by Riverside County, which prohibits construction between the hours of 6:00 pm and 6:00 am during the months of June through September, and 6:00 pm and 7:00 am during the months of October through May. With the exception of illumination during nighttime hours of the construction site for safety and security purposes, no other nighttime lighting would be required until the Proposed Project is operational. Additionally, construction activities are not anticipated to result in flat, shiny surfaces that would reflect sunlight or cause other natural glare and all material resulting from building demolition within the Project Site would be removed from the Project Site. Therefore, no short-term, construction-related impacts associated with light and

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

glare would occur. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Project Operation Phase

Daytime Glare

The Proposed Project would include architectural materials such as glazing (windows and doors) that could reflect sunlight. However, the building design would emphasize non-reflective materials, and the proportion of glazing relative to overall building façades is anticipated to be limited. The Proposed Project's low-profile, non-urban design and use of landscaping would further minimize potential reflectivity. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Nighttime Lighting and Glare

Under existing conditions, the Project Site is vacant with no artificial lighting. Project operation would introduce new sources of artificial light to the Project Site and surrounding area. Nighttime site lighting would consist of exterior building-mounted light fixtures; interior lighting for the new buildings; lighting for pedestrian walkways and common gathering areas; ground-mounted decorative lighting for landscape and architectural features; lighting for the new parking areas and drive aisles; and security lighting. As stated in Section 2.3.3, no night-time nor field lighting are proposed for the play fields or hard courts.

The exclusion of play field and hard-court lighting eliminate the most intensive potential source of area-wide light spill associated with school projects. The remaining necessary lighting for safety and operation would be downward directed, shielded, and designed to prevent trespass and spillover onto adjacent residential properties. The proposed perimeter landscaping would also help screen and buffer light sources. The proposed lighting is also typical of lighting for elementary and middle school campuses throughout the District and Riverside County.

Furthermore, the Proposed Project would be designed to comply with all applicable standards for outdoor lighting to contain direct illumination on-site and prevent glare and light pollution. Compliance with these standards, reviewed and enforced through the District's plan approval process, would ensure lighting is compatible with the rural residential setting.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

(1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

DISCUSSION

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

Based on the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the Project Site is designated as Farmland of Local Importance (DOC 2025a). However, the Project Site is currently vacant, characterized by ruderal vegetation, and is zoned Very Low Density Residential (VLDR) under the Pass Area Plan. The Proposed Project is consistent with the existing and planned non-agricultural land use context of the Project Site and its surroundings. Because the land is not zoned, planned, or utilized for agricultural purposes, and is instead designated for future residential and community-serving development, the conversion of the Project Site to a school would not conflict with an active agricultural land use policy or expectation.

Additionally, based on a review of historical aerial photographs, the Project Site appears to have been in agricultural use since at least 1938 through the early 2000s. However, the Project Site is in an urbanized area of Riverside County and is not being utilized for agricultural operations or purposes. Based on historical aerial photographs the Project Site has not been used for agricultural purposes since the early 2000s. The Project Site is not and will not be land that is used for agricultural purposes due to ongoing development in the project area and agricultural uses not being permitted under the Project Site's land use and zoning designations. Also, there are no agricultural uses or operations abutting or in proximity to the Project Site. The Project Site nor its abutting uses contain active farmland or other agricultural uses.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The Project Site is not zoned for agricultural use. The Project Site has a General Plan land use designation of The Pass Area Plan, which designates the Project Site as Very Low Density Residential (VLDR). The VLDR designation does not permit agricultural uses. Additionally, the Project Site is not subject to any Williamson Act contract (DOC 2025b), and there are no contracted agricultural lands on-site or within the immediate vicinity. Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with zoning for agricultural uses or a Williamson Act contract. Accordingly, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

- c) ***Would the proposed project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by***

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?

Forest land is defined as “land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits” (California Public Resources Code § 12220(g)). Timberland is defined as “land...which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of any commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees” (California Public Resources Code § 4526).

As shown in Figure 3, the Project Site is vacant and consists mainly of ruderal vegetation, with a few scattered trees. The Project Site is surrounded by residential uses and vacant land. The Pass Area Plan designates the Project Site as Very Low Density Residential (VLDR). It is not zoned for forest land or timberland, and no such uses are present on-site, abutting, or nearby. Additionally, the few scattered trees on-site (along the northwestern/western site boundary) are not cultivated for forest resources. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with agricultural zoning. **No impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

See previous response to Section II.c. The Project Site is not designated or zoned for forest or timber land or used for forestry. As previously stated, it is zoned Very Low Density Residential (VLDR). As substantiated in this section, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

See previous responses to Sections II.a, b, and c. The Project Site does not contain farmland or other agricultural uses and are not adjacent to or in proximity to such uses. As substantiated in these sections, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

III. Air Quality

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

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The Air Quality section addresses the impacts of the Proposed Project on ambient air quality and the exposure of people, especially sensitive individuals, to unhealthful pollutant concentrations. A background discussion on the air quality regulatory setting, meteorological conditions, existing ambient air quality in the vicinity of the Project Site, and air quality modeling can be found in Appendix A.

The primary air pollutants of concern for which ambient air quality standards (AAQS) have been established are ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine inhalable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and lead (Pb). Areas are classified under the federal and California Clean Air Act as either in attainment or nonattainment for each criteria pollutant based on whether the AAQS have been achieved. The South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB), which is managed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD), is designated nonattainment for O₃, and PM_{2.5} under the California and National AAQS, nonattainment for PM₁₀ under the California AAQS, and nonattainment for lead (Los Angeles County only) under the National AAQS (CARB 2025).

Furthermore, the South Coast AQMD has identified regional thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions and criteria air pollutant precursors, including VOC, CO, NO_x, SO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. Development projects below the regional significance thresholds are not expected to generate sufficient criteria pollutant emissions to violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

DISCUSSION

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

The South Coast AQMD adopted the 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) on December 2, 2022. Regional growth projections are used by South Coast AQMD to forecast future emission levels in the SoCAB. For Southern California, these regional growth projections are provided by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and are partially based on land use designations included in city/county general plans. Typically, only large, regionally significant projects have the potential to affect the regional growth projections. In addition, the consistency analysis is generally only required in connection with the adoption of general plans, specific plans, and significant projects.

Changes in population, housing, or employment growth projections have the potential to affect SCAG's demographic projections and therefore the assumptions in South Coast AQMD's AQMP. As mentioned in Section XIV, *Population and Housing*, the Proposed Project would serve the existing student population within the District's boundaries. Based on its scope and nature, the Proposed Project would not substantially affect housing, employment, or population projections within the region.

Additionally, described as follows in Impact b), the regional emissions that would be generated by the operational phase of the Proposed Project would be less than the South Coast AQMD emissions thresholds, which were developed by the South Coast AQMD to determine individual projects' potential contribution to cumulative air quality impacts, and would therefore not be considered by South Coast AQMD to be a substantial source of air pollutant emissions that would have the potential to affect the attainment designations in the SoCAB. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not affect the regional emissions inventory or conflict with strategies in the 2022 AQMP. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The following describes project-related impacts from regional short-term construction activities and regional long-term operation of the Proposed Project.

Regional Short-Term Construction Impacts

Construction activities would result in the generation of air pollutants. These emissions would primarily be 1) exhaust from off-road diesel-powered construction equipment; 2) dust generated by construction activities; 3) exhaust from on-road vehicles; and 4) off-gassing of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from paints.

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Construction activities for the Proposed Project would involve construction of a new school campus and would disturb approximately 36 acres on the Project Site. The Proposed Project would involve site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. Overall construction is anticipated to start in January 2028 and finish in June 2029. Construction emissions were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2022.1, and are based on the preliminary construction duration provided by the District.

Table 2 shows that maximum daily emissions for VOC, NO_x, CO, SO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} from construction-related activities would be less than their respective South Coast AQMD regional significance threshold values. Therefore, air quality impacts from project-related construction activities would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Table 2 Maximum Daily Regional Construction Emissions

Construction Phase	Pollutants (lbs./day) ^{1, 2}					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Year 2028						
Site Preparation	3	28	29	<1	10	5
Grading	3	25	28	<1	6	3
Building Construction	1	10	16	<1	1	<1
Year 2029						
Building Construction	1	9	16	<1	1	<1
Paving	2	7	11	<1	<1	<1
Architectural Coating	38	1	2	<1	<1	<1
Building Construction, Paving, and Architectural Coating	41	17	28	<1	2	1
Impact Analysis						
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	41	28	29	<1	10	5
South Coast AQMD Regional Significance Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1. South Coast AQMD 2023. Highest winter or summer emissions are reported. (See Appendix A)

1. Includes implementation of fugitive dust control measures required by South Coast AQMD under Rule 403, including watering disturbed areas a minimum of two times per day, reducing speed limit to 25 miles per hour on unpaved surfaces, and street sweeping with Rule 1186-compliant sweepers.

2. Based on preliminary information provided by the District. Where specific information regarding Proposed Project-related construction activities was not available, construction assumptions were based on CalEEMod defaults, which are based on construction surveys conducted by South Coast AQMD of construction equipment.

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Long-Term Operation-Related Air Quality Impact

Typical long-term air pollutant emissions are generated by area sources (e.g., landscape fuel use, aerosols, architectural coatings, and asphalt pavement), energy use (natural gas), and mobile sources (i.e., on-road vehicles).

As identified in the transportation study prepared for the Proposed Project (see Appendix F), the Proposed Project would generate an estimated 2,724 new average daily vehicle trips on weekdays to the Project Site. As shown in Table 3, it is anticipated that operation of the Proposed Project would result in emissions that would not exceed the South Coast AQMD regional operation-phase significance thresholds. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Table 3 Maximum Daily Regional Operation Emissions

Construction Phase	Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs./day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Mobile	9	4	76	<1	17	4
Area	3	<1	4	<1	<1	<1
Energy	<1	1	1	<1	<1	<1
Total	12	5	82	<1	17	4
South Coast AQMD Regional Significance Threshold	55	55	550	150	150	55
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1.

Notes: lbs = Pounds. Highest winter or summer emissions are reported.

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

The Proposed Project could expose sensitive receptors to elevated pollutant concentrations if it causes or significantly contributes to elevated pollutant concentration levels. Unlike regional emissions, localized emissions are typically evaluated in terms of air concentration rather than mass so they can be more readily correlated to potential health effects.

Construction LSTs

Localized significance thresholds (LSTs) are based on the California AAQS, which are the most stringent AAQS to provide a margin of safety in the protection of public health and welfare. They are designated to protect sensitive receptors most susceptible to further respiratory distress, such as asthmatics, the elderly, very young children, people already weakened by other disease or

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illness, and people engaged in strenuous work or exercise. The screening-level construction LSTs are based on the acreage of daily ground disturbance on the Project Site, distance to the nearest sensitive receptor, and Source Receptor Area (SRA). The Project Site is within SRA 29: Banning Pass Area, and the nearest off-site sensitive receptors are residences adjacent to the southern boundary of the Project Site along Chinook Street and Bunnell Street.

Air pollutant emissions generated by construction activities would cause temporary increases in air pollutant concentrations. Table 4 shows the maximum daily construction emissions (pounds per day) generated during on-site construction activities compared with the South Coast AQMD's screening-level LSTs for sensitive receptors within minimum reference distance of 82 feet (25 meters) for NO_x, CO, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} in SRA 29. As shown in Table 4, construction of the Proposed Project would not generate construction-related on-site emissions that would exceed the screening-level LSTs. Thus, project-related construction activities would not have the potential to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Impacts from construction activities would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Table 4 Localized Construction Emissions

	Pollutants(lbs/day) ^{1,2}			
	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀ ²	PM _{2.5} ²
South Coast AQMD 3.50-acre LST	193	2,179	16	9
Site Preparation 2028	27	28	9	5
Exceeds LST?	No	No	No	No
South Coast AQMD 4.00-acre LST	207	2,392	17	9
Grading 2028	24	27	5	2
Exceeds LST?	No	No	No	No
South Coast AQMD 1.31-acre LST	117	1,169	7	5
Building Construction 2028	9	13	<1	<1
Building Construction, Paving, and Architectural Coating 2029	16	24	1	<1
Exceeds LST?	No	No	No	No

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1; South Coast AQMD 2008a, 2011, and 2023.

Notes: In accordance with South Coast AQMD methodology, only on-site stationary sources and mobile equipment are included in the analysis. Screening level LSTs are based on receptors within 82 feet (25 meters) for NO_x, CO, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} in SRA 29.

1. Where specific information for project-related construction activities or processes was not available, modeling was based on CalEEMod defaults. These defaults are based on construction surveys conducted by the South Coast AQMD.

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2. Includes implementation of fugitive dust control measures required by South Coast AQMD under Rule 403, including watering disturbed areas a minimum of two times per day, reducing speed limit to 25 miles per hour on unpaved surfaces, and street sweeping with Rule 1186-compliant sweepers.

Construction Health Risk

Emissions from construction equipment primarily consist of diesel particulate matter (DPM). In 2015, the Office of Environmental Health Hazards Assessment (OEHHA) adopted guidance for preparation of health risk assessments, which included the development of a cancer risk factor and non-cancer chronic reference exposure level for DPM over a 30-year time frame (OEHHA 2015). Currently, South Coast AQMD does not require the evaluation of long-term excess cancer risk or chronic health impacts for a short-term project. The Proposed Project is anticipated to be completed in approximately 18 months, which would limit the exposure to on-site and off-site receptors. Thus, construction emissions would not pose a health risk to on-site and off-site receptors. Project-related construction health impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Operation LSTs

Operation of the Proposed Project would not generate substantial emissions from on-site stationary sources. Land uses that have the potential to generate substantial stationary sources of emissions include industrial land uses, such as chemical processing and warehousing operations where truck idling would occur on site and would require a permit from South Coast AQMD. The Proposed Project does not fall within these categories of uses. While operation of new campus would use standard on-site mechanical equipment such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, air pollutant emissions would be nominal. Localized air quality impacts related to operation-related emissions would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

Vehicle congestion has the potential to create pockets of CO called hotspots. Hotspots are typically produced at intersections, where traffic congestion is highest because vehicles are backed up and idle for longer periods and are subject to reduced speeds. These pockets could exceed the state one-hour standard of 20 parts per million (ppm) or the eight-hour standard of 9.0 ppm. Because CO is produced in greatest quantities from vehicle combustion and does not readily disperse into the atmosphere, adherence to ambient air quality standards is typically demonstrated through an analysis of localized CO concentrations.

The SoCAB has been designated attainment under both the national and California AAQS for CO. However, South Coast AQMD does not have an adopted screening criteria to determine whether a project may have the potential to generate a CO hotspot. According to Bay Area Air District, under existing and future vehicle emission rates, a project would have to increase traffic volumes

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at a single intersection to more than 44,000 vehicles per hour—or 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited—in order to generate a significant CO impact (Bay Area Air District 2023).

According to transportation study prepared for the Proposed Project (Appendix F), the intersection with the highest existing traffic volume of those studied, the intersection of Cougar Way and North Highland Springs Avenue, is projected to have 1,121 peak hour trips at the opening year of the Proposed Project (2029). With the traffic added by the Proposed Project, AM peak hour trips at this intersection would increase to 1,385 trips. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in an increase of peak hour traffic volumes that exceed the Bay Area Air District's recommended hourly screening criteria. Thus, the Proposed Project would not introduce new vehicle trips which may result in a CO hotspot when combined with existing traffic volumes. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The Proposed Project would not result in objectionable odors. The threshold for odor is if a project creates an odor nuisance pursuant to South Coast AQMD Rule 402, Nuisance, which states:

A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property. The provisions of this rule shall not apply to odors emanating from agricultural operations necessary for the growing of crops or the raising of fowl or animals.

The type of facilities that are considered to have objectionable odors include wastewater treatments plants, compost facilities, landfills, solid waste transfer stations, fiberglass manufacturing facilities, paint/coating operations (e.g., auto body shops), dairy farms, petroleum refineries, asphalt batch plants, chemical manufacturing, and food manufacturing facilities. The Proposed Project would construct a new school campus in the District's service area. As a result, the Proposed Project would not fall within the objectionable odors land uses. Emissions from construction equipment, such as diesel exhaust and volatile organic compounds from architectural coatings and paving activities may generate odors. However, these odors would be low in concentration, temporary, and would not affect a substantial number of people. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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IV. Biological Resources

Would the project:

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

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The analysis in this section is based partly on the following technical study, which is included as Appendix B to this Initial Study:

- Biological Resources Assessment, South Environmental, January 2026.

DISCUSSION

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

Candidate species are plants and animals that have been studied and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has concluded that they should be proposed for addition to the federal endangered and threatened species list. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) evaluates, lists, and protects native species threatened with extinction under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).

Sensitive biological resources are habitats⁴ or individual species that have special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, or rare. CDFW, USFWS, and organizations like the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) maintain watch lists of such resources.

Special status species is a universal term used in the scientific community for species that are considered sufficiently rare that require special consideration and/or protection and should be, or have been, listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by USFWS and/or CDFW.

Following is a summary of the findings and conclusions of the biological resources assessment prepared for the Project Site (Appendix B). The study area undertaken for the biological resources assessment included the Project Site and a 500-foot buffer around the site perimeter.

Biological Resources: Candidate, Sensitive, or Special Status Species

The biological resources assessment included a field reconnaissance on October 28, 2025, and literature review involving an assessment of appropriate reference materials and literature regarding the biological resources of the region. All habitats with the potential to be used by candidate, sensitive and special-status species were evaluated during the field reconnaissance and literature review. The assessment addressed those species listed as candidate, rare, threatened, or endangered under the state and federal endangered species laws or directed to

⁴ Per the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, habitat is where a given plant or animal species meets its requirements for food, cover, and water in both space and time.

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be evaluated under the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRCMSHCP).

Plant Communities

The literature review of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), CNPS, and Information for Planning and Consultation (IPAC) databases for special-status plant species known to occur within a nine-quad search⁵ surrounding the Project Site resulted in 57 special-status species. The list includes rare, threatened, endangered species at a federal and state level. In the case of plants, it also includes California Rare Plant Rank species with a classification of 1-4. Additionally, 21 plants were observed on-site as a part of the field reconnaissance conducted for the Project Site, which are listed in Table 1 (List of Plants Observed in the Study Area) of the biological resources assessment (Appendix B).

The 57 special-status plant species identified as occurring in the region of the Project Site and an assessment of their likelihood to inhabit the Project Site are in Appendix B of the biological resources assessment. The 21 plants observed on-site are also included in Appendix B of the biological resources assessment.

Based on the analysis provided in the biological resources assessment, no special-status species were observed within the Project Site, and there is no potential for any to occur on-site due to high disturbance from prior agricultural activities on the Project Site (last on the Project Site in the early 2000s) and a lack of native habitats that are required for special-status plant species. Therefore, impacts to special-status plant species would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Wildlife Communities

The literature review of the CNDDDB, CNPS, and IPAC databases for special-status wildlife species known to occur within a nine-quad search surrounding the Project Site resulted in 60 special-status species. The list includes rare, threatened, endangered species at a federal and state level. Additionally, the field reconnaissance conducted for the Project Site identified three wildlife species with no protected or special status: the Rock pigeon (*Columba livia*), Common raven (*Corvus corax*), and Savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*).

The 60 special-status wildlife species identified as occurring in the region of the Project Site and an assessment of their likelihood to inhabit the Project Site are presented in Appendix B of the

⁵ The nine-quad search involves querying the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) or the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) database for records in the specific 7.5-minute USGS topographic quadrangle map where the project is located, plus the eight surrounding quadrangles. It is used as a baseline to identify species that have been documented in the region, helping biologists determine which species might require field surveys or mitigation. It covers a nine-quadrangle area to account for the regional distribution of species, not just the immediate project footprint.

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biological resources assessment. The three wildlife species with no protected or special status observed on-site are not included in the assessment of Appendix B.

Based on the analysis provided in the biological resources assessment, one of the 60 special-status wildlife species identified as occurring in the region of the Project Site, burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), was determined to have a moderate potential to occur in the open fields of the Project Site. Burrowing owl is a State Candidate Endangered species⁶ and a WRCMSHCP planning species. For the other 59 special-status species listed in Appendix B, there is no potential for any to occur on-site due to high disturbance from prior agricultural activities on the Project Site (last on the Project Site in the early 2000s) and a lack of native habitats and food that are required for special-status wildlife species.

To ensure that there are no impacts to burrowing owls due to development of the Proposed Project, as required by the WRCMSHCP guidelines, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require focused surveys and pre-construction presence/absence surveys to be conducted for burrowing owls as described in the WRCMSHCP Burrowing Owl Survey Instruction, and Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would require preparation of a pre-construction burrowing owl survey. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2, impacts to burrowing owls would be reduced to a level of **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Burrowing Owl Focused Survey. Prior to project implementation, a focused protocol level breeding season survey for burrowing owls, which is defined as March 1 through August 31, shall be conducted by the Beaumont Unified School District (District) pursuant to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) 2012 Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist with prior experience with surveying for burrowing owls. The survey shall include at a minimum a habitat assessment and four focused burrow and burrowing owl surveys per the CDFW guidelines. A burrowing owl survey report shall be prepared and submitted to the District with the results of the survey.

- If burrowing owls are absent from the site as determined during the focused breeding season surveys, the preconstruction surveys described in Mitigation Measure BIO-2 will be required per the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRCMSHCP) guidelines.
- If burrowing owls or active burrowing owl burrows are detected on-site or within 500-feet of the site during the survey, a Burrowing Owl Mitigation Plan (Mitigation Plan) must be prepared, approved, and implemented prior to the start of the project. The Mitigation Plan shall include avoidance measures

⁶ The California Fish and Game Commission designated the burrowing owl a candidate for endangered species status on October 10, 2024, providing it with full California Endangered Species Act protections during a 12-month status review.

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that ensure avoidance of direct impacts to nesting burrowing owls using avoidance buffers and evicting owls from burrows outside of the nesting season if required. In addition, the Mitigation Plan shall include payment of a per-acre MSHCP fee for take of occupied burrowing owl habitat to ensure compliance with the MSHCP reserve guidelines. The Mitigation Plan shall be approved by the District and the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority prior to implementation.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Burrowing Owl Pre-Construction Survey. Prior to the commencement of ground-disturbing activities, the Beaumont Unified School District (District) shall perform a preconstruction survey for burrowing owls within areas of suitable habitat that shall be conducted within 30 days prior to ground disturbance to avoid direct take of burrowing owls. If the results of the survey indicate that no burrowing owls are present on-site, then the project may move forward with grading, upon District approval. If burrowing owls are found to be present or nesting on-site during the preconstruction survey, a Burrowing Owl Mitigation Plan shall be prepared, approved, and implemented prior to project construction, as described above.

b) *Would the proposed project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

Sensitive natural communities are communities that are considered rare in the region by regulatory agencies; known to provide habitat for sensitive animal or plant species; or known to be important wildlife corridors. Riparian habitats are those occurring along the banks of rivers and streams.

No riparian, sensitive or undisturbed native/natural habitats were documented within or adjacent to the Project Site as substantiated in biological resources assessment prepared for the Project Site (Appendix B). The Project Site is characterized as disturbed non-native grassland, no natural habitats occur on-site, and the site is in a developing area of the county that is surrounded by residential development to the north, south, and west and vacant land to the east (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*).

Additionally, there is a natural drainage feature that lines the western Project Site boundary as well as a culverted water detention basin in the southwestern end that ties into the drainage feature (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*). During the jurisdictional delineation conducted by South Environmental as a part of the biological resources assessment prepared for the Project Site, the drainage feature was determined to be a non-wetland water of the state and a streambed per the California Department of Fish and Wildlife definition (Appendix B). As shown in Figure 4, the entirety of the drainage feature and detention basin would remain and be

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protected with a 50-foot buffer. No improvements or modifications to or disturbance of the drainage feature or detention basin would occur as a part of the Proposed Project. Additionally, construction fencing would be erected along the edge of the 50-foot buffer area to help protect the drainage feature and detention basin from any construction-related impacts. Upon completion of construction activities, the fencing would be removed.

Therefore, **no impact** would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Wetlands are defined under the federal Clean Water Act as land that is flooded or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that normally does support, a prevalence of vegetation adapted to life in saturated soils. Wetlands include areas such as streams, swamps, marshes, and bogs.

As shown in Figure 3, the Project Site is vacant and consists mainly of ruderal vegetation and a few trees along the northwestern/western site boundary. There is also a natural drainage feature that lines the western Project Site boundary and a water detention basin in the southwestern end that ties into the drainage feature. During the jurisdictional delineation conducted by South Environmental as a part of the biological resources assessment prepared for the Project Site, the drainage feature was determined to be a non-wetland water of the State and a streambed per the CDFW definition (Appendix B).

As shown in Figure 4, the entirety of the drainage feature and detention basin would remain and be protected with a 50-foot buffer. No improvements or modifications to or disturbance of the drainage feature or detention basin would occur as a part of the Proposed Project. Additionally, construction fencing would be erected along the edge of the 50-foot buffer area to help protect the drainage feature and detention basin from any construction-related impacts. Upon completion of construction activities, the fencing would be removed.

Furthermore, as discussed in Section X, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, runoff from the Proposed Project's construction and post-construction phases would not be directed to the drainage feature and would not interrupt the existing hydrologic condition of the drainage feature. As discussed in Section X, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, to minimize the potential impacts from construction-related site runoff, development of the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit (2022-0057-DWQ), which requires the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that incorporates best management practices (BMP) to control sedimentation, erosion, and hazardous materials contamination of runoff during construction. As further discussed in Section X, the Proposed Project would incorporate a number of site-design, source-control, and treatment-control BMPs to ensure that no drainage flows are released into or directed toward the drainage feature.

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With implementation of the Proposed Project measures and BMPs, impacts to the drainage feature would be considered **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Wildlife movement corridors link together areas of suitable habitat that are otherwise separated by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbances. As a part of the biological resources assessment prepared for the Project Site, the site was evaluated for its function as a wildlife corridor that species use to move between wildlife habitat zones. Usually, mountain canyons or riparian corridors are used by wildlife as corridors.

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the Project Site consists of flat disturbed land with non-native grasses and is surrounded by residential development to the north, south, and west and vacant land to the east, beyond N. Highland Springs Avenue. Additionally, the drainage feature along the western Project Site boundary does not connect areas of habitat and provides little opportunities for movement due to the lack of connectivity, and the lack of native habitats in the drainage also limits use by native wildlife. As concluded in the biological resources assessment report, no wildlife movement corridors were found on or abutting the Project Site (Appendix B).

However, construction of the Proposed Project would require ground disturbance and removal of herbaceous plants that could provide potential nesting habitat for birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), California Migratory Bird Protect Act (MBPA), and Section 3513 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code. If present at the time of vegetation removal, active nests, eggs, or young could be destroyed or otherwise disturbed to a point at which the young do not survive, which would be a violation of the MBTA, MBPA, and the Fish and Game Code. In addition, indirect impacts from noise or vibration have the potential to disturb an active bird nest in adjacent landscaping to the point of failure if the nest is within immediate proximity to project activities, and this would also be a violation of the MBTA and Fish and Game Code.

Project construction could result in direct and/or indirect impacts to nesting birds, including the loss of nests, eggs, and fledglings if ground-disturbing activities occur during the nesting season (generally February 1 through August 31). Construction activities during this time may result in reduced reproductive success and may violate the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code Section 3513. If construction (including any ground-disturbing activities) occurs during the nesting season, a nesting bird survey must be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to grading activities, as outlined in Mitigation Measure BIO-3. If nesting birds are observed within or adjacent to the construction activities, avoidance of active bird nests should occur as determined by the qualified biologist to ensure compliance with these regulations.

Adherence to the MBTA, MBPA, and the Fish and Game Code regulations and implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-3 would ensure that if construction activities occur during the breeding season, appropriate measures would be taken to avoid impacts to nesting birds, if any are

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encountered. Compliance with the MBTA requirements and Mitigation Measure BIO-3 would be ensured through the District's and DSA's development review process. Therefore, impacts would be reduced to a level of **less than significant** with implementation of mitigation.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Preconstruction Nesting Bird and Raptor Survey. To avoid impacts to nesting birds within or adjacent to the Project Site and to comply with the California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503 and 3513 and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, any site clearing and ground-disturbing activities shall occur during the non-nesting (or nonbreeding) season for birds (generally, September 1st to January 31st). If this avoidance schedule is not feasible, prior to the commencement of any proposed actions (e.g., site clearing, grading) during the breeding/nesting season (generally, February 1 through August 31), a qualified monitoring biologist contracted by the Beaumont Unified School District (District) shall conduct a preconstruction survey(s) to identify any active nests in and adjacent to the Project Site no more than three days prior to initiation of the action. If the biologist does not find any active nests that would be potentially impacted, the proposed action may proceed. However, if the biologist finds an active nest within or directly adjacent to the action area (within 100 feet) and determines that the nest may be impacted, the biologist shall delineate an appropriate buffer zone (generally 500 feet) around the nest using temporary plastic fencing or other suitable materials, such as barricade tape and traffic cones. The final buffer zone shall be determined by the biologist in consultation with applicable resource agencies; in consideration of species sensitivity and existing nest site conditions; and in coordination with the District and construction contractor. The qualified biologist shall serve as a construction monitor when construction activities occur near active nest areas to ensure that no inadvertent impacts on these nests. Only specified activities (if any) approved by the qualified biologist in coordination with the construction contractor shall take place within the buffer zone until the nest is vacated. Activities that may be prohibited within the buffer zone by the biologist include but are not limited to grading and tree clearing. Once the nest is no longer active and upon final determination by the biologist, the proposed action may proceed within the buffer zone. The monitoring biologist shall prepare a survey report summarizing their findings and recommendations of the preconstruction survey. Any active nests observed during the survey shall be mapped on a current aerial photograph, including documentation of GPS coordinates, and included in the survey report. The completed survey report shall be submitted to the District prior to the commencement of construction-related activities that have the potential to disturb any active nests during the nesting season.

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

The County of Riverside Ordinance No. 559 regulates the removal of trees, and states "No person shall remove any living native tree on any parcel or property greater than one-half acre in size, located in an area above 5,000 feet in elevation and within the unincorporated area of the County

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of Riverside, without first obtaining a permit to do so, unless exempted by the provisions of Section 4 of this ordinance” (Riverside County 2000a).

As shown in Figure 3, the Project Site is currently vacant and consists mainly of ruderal vegetation, with a few trees along the northwestern/western site boundary. Project development would not impact these trees as they are a part of the existing drainage feature to remain. As shown in Figure 4, the drainage feature that runs along the entire stretch of the western Project Site boundary, would remain and be protected with a 50-foot buffer.

Thus, development of the Proposed Project would not conflict with County of Riverside Ordinance No. 559. Additionally, as stated in the biological resources assessment prepared for the Project Site, there are no protected trees on-site (Appendix B). **No impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The WRCMSHCP is a comprehensive, multijurisdictional habitat conservation planning program for western Riverside County, California. The purpose of the WRCMSHCP is to preserve native habitats, and to this end, the plan focuses on the habitat needs of multiple species rather than one species at a time. The WRCMSHCP provides coverage/take authorization for some species listed under the federal or state Endangered Species Act (ESA) as well as non-listed special-status plant and wildlife species. It also provides mitigation for impacts to special-status species and their associated habitats.

Through agreements with USFWS and CDFW, 146 listed and special-status plant and animal species receive some level of coverage under the WRCMSHCP. Of the 146 covered species, the majority have no additional survey needs or conservation requirements. Furthermore, the WRCMSHCP provides mitigation for project-specific impacts to these species, thereby reducing the degree of impact to below a level of significance, pursuant to CEQA.

Several of the species covered under the WRCMSHCP have additional survey requirements. These include the riparian communities and associated species addressed in Section 6.1.2 of the WRCMSHCP, “Protection of Species Associated with Riparian/Riverine Areas and Vernal Pools,” plants identified in Section 6.1.3, “Narrow Endemic Plant Species,” and plants and animal species addressed in Section 6.3.2, “Additional Survey Needs and Procedures.”

The Project Site is located within the WRCMSHCP boundaries. The District, acting as the lead agency for the Project, is a permittee under the WRCMSHCP and therefore is afforded coverage under the state or federal ESAs for impacts to listed species covered by the plan. The District is required to document consistency with the WRCMSHCP in conjunction with any approvals for the Proposed Project. As such, a biological resources assessment was prepared for the Project Site

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(Appendix B) to provide all necessary information required to demonstrate the Proposed Project's consistency with the WRCMSHCP.

The Project Site is not in plan-defined areas of the WRCMSHCP requiring surveys for invertebrate species, criteria area species, amphibian species, or mammalian species. Additionally, there are no WRCMSHCP conservation areas on-site or abutting the Project Site (TLMA 2006). However, the Project Site is located in a plan-defined area requiring surveys for burrowing owl.

As concluded in the biological resources assessment prepared for the Project Site, the Proposed Project is not expected to result in impacts to biological resources protected by the WRCMSHCP as there are none present within the Project Site. However, the burrowing owl was determined to have a moderate potential to occur in the open fields within the Project Site. Additionally, the Project site is within a burrowing owl survey area, as previously noted.

To ensure there are no impacts to burrowing owls due to development of the Proposed Project, as required by WRCMSHCP guidelines, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require focused surveys, and BIO-2 would require pre-construction presence/absence surveys for burrowing owls as described in the WRCMSHCP Burrowing Owl Survey Instruction. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2, impacts to the WRCMSHCP would be reduced to a level of **less than significant**.

V. Cultural Resources

Would the project:

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

The analysis in this section is based partly on the following technical study, which is included as Appendix C to this Initial Study:

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- Phase I Cultural Resources Technical Report, South Environmental, January 2026.

DISCUSSION

a) *Would the proposed project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

Section 15064.5 defines historic resources as resources listed or determined to be eligible for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission, a local register of historical resources, or the lead agency. Generally, a resource is considered “historically significant” if it meets one of the following criteria:

- i) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage;
- ii) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
- iii) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values;
- iv) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The Project Site is currently vacant land and void of any buildings and structures, consisting of open grassland, a drainage feature along its western boundary, and a water detention basin in the southwestern corner (see Figure 3). The Project Site was historically used for agriculture, and aerial photographs indicate a water storage tank and a cluster of buildings were present on the northern portion of the site until their demolition in the 1960s (Appendix C).

Prior to fieldwork, South Environmental requested a cultural resources records search from the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) as part of the cultural resources assessment (Appendix C). The search reviewed all recorded cultural resources, previous studies, and relevant inventories within a 0.5-mile radius. This research revealed 14 previous cultural resource studies within the search area and two previously recorded resources (P-33-013827 and P-33-013828) within the Project Site itself. Both were recorded in 2004 as late-20th-century refuse scatters of building material associated with the former structures.

An intensive pedestrian survey of the Project Site was conducted by South Environmental staff on October 28, 2025. The field survey confirmed that the two previously recorded refuse scatters (P-33-013827 and P-33-013828) are no longer extant. No archaeological deposits, historic-era artifacts, built features, or other cultural resources were identified. A Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File search for the Project Site also yielded negative results.

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Based on the findings of the background research and field survey, the Project Site contains no historical resources. The previously recorded resources were not eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources, and no evidence of them remains.

Based on the preceding, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

b) *Would the proposed project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

Archaeological resources are prehistoric or historic evidence of past human activities, including structural ruins and buried resources. The Project Site is currently vacant land, consisting of open grassland with a drainage feature along the western site boundary and a water detention basin in the southwestern end of the Project Site (see Figure 3). The site has been subject to historical disturbances related to agricultural use and the construction and subsequent demolition of a water tank and associated buildings in the mid-20th century. However, given the undeveloped condition of most of the Project Site, the potential exists for Project development to impact unidentified buried archaeological resources.

A Phase I cultural resources assessment was conducted for the Project Site (Appendix C). The purpose of the assessment was to determine the presence or absence of and potential impact on cultural resources. As part of this assessment, a records search was requested from the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC). The search reviewed all recorded cultural resources and previous studies within a 0.5-mile radius. This research revealed 14 previous studies and two previously recorded resources (P-33-013827 and P-33-013828) within the Project Site boundaries, both identified as 20th-century refuse scatters.

An intensive pedestrian survey of the Project Site was conducted by South Environmental staff in October 2025. The survey confirmed that the two previously recorded refuse scatters are no longer extant, and no other surface cultural resources, features, or artifacts were identified. The results of a Sacred Lands File search conducted through the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) were negative, revealing no recorded traditional cultural places within the Project Site.

Based on the results of the records search, Sacred Lands File search, and field survey, the cultural resources assessment concluded that no cultural resources requiring further investigation were identified, and the site has low archaeological sensitivity due to prior ground disturbance. However, although the assessment has not indicated sensitivity for cultural resources on the surface, Project-related ground-disturbing activities (e.g., grading and excavation) have the potential to reveal buried prehistoric or historic deposits not observed during the survey.

Therefore, while unlikely, the presence of subsurface archaeological resources remains possible, and these could be affected by construction. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would avoid or minimize potential Project impacts to archaeological resources. With implementation of

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this mitigation measure, impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to a level of **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Prior to the commencement of ground-disturbing activities, the Beaumont Unified School District (District) shall have retained the services of a qualified archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications for Archaeology as defined in 36 Code of Fed. Regs. Part 61, Appendix A, Professional Archaeologist. The archaeological consultant shall be on call during all grading and other significant ground-disturbing activities. In the event that archaeological resources are discovered during ground-disturbing activities, all such activity shall cease in the immediate area of the find, and the professional archaeological monitor shall have the authority to halt any activities adversely impacting potentially significant cultural resources until they can be formally evaluated. Suspension of ground disturbances in the vicinity of the discovery shall not be lifted until the archaeological monitor has evaluated the discovery to assess whether it is classified as a significant cultural resource pursuant to the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) definition of historical (State CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5[a]) and/or unique archaeological resource (Public Resources Code § 21083.2[g]). If the resource is classified as a significant cultural resource, the qualified archaeologist shall make recommendations on the treatment and disposition of the deposits. For example, if archaeological resources are recovered, they shall be offered to a repository with a retrievable collection system and an educational and research interest in the materials such as the Western Science Center in Hemet, or any other local museum or repository willing to and capable of accepting and housing the resource. If no museum or repository is willing to accept the resource found, the resource shall be considered the property of the District and may be stored, disposed of, transferred, exchanged, or otherwise handled by the District at its discretion. The final recommendations on the treatment and disposition of the deposits shall be developed in accordance with all applicable provisions of California Public Resource Code Section 21083.2 and State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.5 and 15126.4. The District shall follow all recommendations made by the archaeologist. The archaeologist shall prepare a final report describing all identified and curated resources (if any are found) and submit the report to the District.

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

Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 govern the discovery and treatment of human remains. These laws require specific procedures if human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, particularly if the remains are determined to be Native American.

The cultural resources assessment prepared for the Project Site included a records search and intensive pedestrian survey (Appendix C). No cemeteries, marked graves, or other indicators of

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human burial are recorded within or adjacent to the Project Site. The NAHC's Sacred Lands File search yielded negative results, indicating no known Native American cemeteries or burial sites are formally recorded at this location. Furthermore, the surface survey identified no evidence suggestive of human interment.

However, the Proposed Project involves extensive ground disturbance for the construction of school buildings, parking lots, and athletic fields. While there is no known evidence of human remains at the Project Site, the possibility of encountering previously unknown, buried human remains, whether prehistoric, historic-era, or Native American, cannot be entirely eliminated. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 would formalize these required procedures in the project plans and specifications to ensure an appropriate response. With this measure in place, potential impacts related to the disturbance of human remains would be reduced to a **less-than-significant level**.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2: In accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are found, the County Coroner shall be notified within 24 hours of the discovery. No further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall occur until the County Coroner has determined, within two working days of notification of the discovery, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the Coroner shall notify the NAHC in Sacramento within 24 hours. In accordance with California PRC, Section 5097.98, the NAHC must immediately notify those persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) from the deceased Native American. The MLD shall complete their inspection within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The MLD would then determine, in consultation with the property owner, the disposition of the human remains.

VI. Energy

Would the project:

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

DISCUSSION

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

The following is a discussion of the potential energy demands from short-term construction and long-term operational energy consumption associated with the Proposed Project.

Short-Term Construction Impacts

Electrical Energy

Electricity use during construction of the Proposed Project would vary during different phases of construction. Construction of the Proposed Project would not require electricity to power most construction equipment. Later construction phases could result in the use of electricity-powered equipment for interior construction and architectural coatings. It is anticipated that the majority of electric-powered construction equipment would be hand tools (e.g., power drills, table saws) and lighting, which would result in minimal electricity usage during construction activities. Therefore, project-related construction activities would not result in wasteful or unnecessary electricity demands. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Natural Gas Energy

It is not anticipated that construction equipment used for the Proposed Project would be powered by natural gas, and no natural gas demand is anticipated during construction. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Transportation Fuels

Transportation fuel use during construction would come from the transport and use of construction equipment, delivery vehicles and haul trucks, and construction employee vehicles.

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In addition, transportation fuel demand would come from use of off-road construction equipment. It is anticipated that the majority of off-road construction equipment, such as those used during demolition and grading, would be gas or diesel powered.

The use of energy resources by vehicles and equipment would fluctuate according to the phase of construction and would be temporary. In addition, all construction equipment would cease operating upon completion of Proposed Project construction. Thus, impacts related to transportation energy use during construction would be temporary and would not require expanded energy supplies or the construction of new infrastructure.

Moreover, to limit wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption, the construction contractors are anticipated to minimize nonessential idling of construction equipment during construction, in accordance with Section 2449 of the California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9. Construction trips would also not result in unnecessary use of energy since the Proposed Project Site is centrally located in the greater Riverside County area and is served by numerous regional freeway systems (e.g., Interstate 10) that provide the most direct routes from various areas of the region. Thus, energy use during construction of the Proposed Project would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Long-Term Impacts During Operation

Operation of the Proposed Project would generate new demand for electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuels. Operational use of energy would include heating, cooling, and ventilation of the proposed buildings; water heating; off-site vehicle use; and use of on-site equipment and appliances.

Electrical and Natural Gas Energy

As shown in Table 5, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in 818,648 kilowatt hours of electricity use per year and 2,456,552 thousand kilo-British thermal units per year.

Table 5 **Electricity and Natural Gas Consumption**

Land Use	Electricity (kWh/year)	Natural Gas (kBtu/year)
Project Buildings	667,800	2,456,552
Parking Lot	150,847	0
Total	818,648	2,456,552

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1. Appendix A.

Note: kWh=kilowatt-hour

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Electrical service to the Project Site would be provided by Southern California Edison (SCE), and natural gas service would be through Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). Development associated with the Proposed Project would also be built to meet the Building Energy Efficiency Standards and California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), which would improve building energy efficiency performance for electricity and natural gas use when compared to existing development in the region.

In addition, SCE is required to meet the renewable energy production goals of the California Renewable Portfolio Strategy (RPS). The RPS is a phased requirement for load serving entities, like SCE, to increase the proportion of in-state sales of electricity being procured from eligible renewable and carbon-free sources until 2045 when the goal is to achieve 100 percent of in-state sales be procured from carbon-free sources. The utility company's compliance with the State's RPS program would support the goals outlined in Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines of promoting the use of renewable energy and decreasing reliance on fossil fuels.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Transportation Energy

Operation of the proposed project would consume transportation energy consumption from motor vehicle use associated with employees and visitors to the Project Site. The efficiency of these motor vehicles is unknown, such as the average miles per gallon. Estimates of transportation energy use are based on the overall vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and its associated transportation energy use. Based on the transportation study prepared for the Proposed Project, the project would generate 2,724 daily trips (Appendix F). While the Proposed Project would generate an increase in vehicle trips to the Project Site, the Proposed Project would serve the local population and may provide a closer option as a school campus for the nearby student population.

Furthermore, fuel efficiency of vehicles after buildout would on average improve compared to vehicle fuel efficiencies experienced under existing conditions, resulting in a lower per capita fuel consumption assuming travel distances, travel modes, and trip rates remain the same. The improvement in fuel efficiency would be attributable to the statewide fuel reduction strategies and regulatory compliances (e.g., Corporate Average Fuel Economy [CAFE] standards), resulting in new cars that are more fuel efficient and the attrition of older, less energy-efficient vehicles. The CAFE standards are not directly applicable to land use development projects, but to car manufacturers. Thus, the employees and visitors do not have direct control in determining the fuel efficiency of vehicles that are manufactured and available. However, compliance with the CAFE standards by car manufacturers would ensure that vehicles produced in future years have greater fuel efficiency and would generally result in an overall benefit of reducing fuel usage by providing more energy-efficient vehicle options. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The state's electricity grid is transitioning to renewable energy under California's Renewable Energy Program. Renewable sources of electricity include wind, small hydropower, solar, geothermal, biomass, and biogas. Electricity production from renewable sources is generally considered carbon neutral. The RPS goals have been updated since adoption of SB 1078 in 2002. In general, California has RPS requirements of 50 percent by 2026, 52 percent by 2027, 60 percent by 2030, 90 percent by 2035, 95 percent by 2040, and 100 percent by 2045.

The statewide RPS requirements do not directly apply to individual development projects, but to utilities and energy providers such as SCE, whose compliance with RPS requirements would contribute to the state objective of transitioning to renewable energy. As previously stated, the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the current Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. This infrastructure would reduce reliance on fossil fuels and align with state goals to increase the use of renewable energy. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of California's RPS Program. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

VII. Geology and Soils

Would the project:

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

DISCUSSION

- a) *Would the proposed project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*
- i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.
 - ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?
 - iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
 - iv) Landslides?

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Fault Rupture

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones are regulatory zones surrounding the surface traces of active faults in California that have ruptured in the last 11,000 years (DOC 2026a). An active fault has the potential for surface rupture, and a structure for human occupancy cannot be placed over the fault but must be a minimum distance from the fault (generally 50 feet).

Based on the California Geological Survey's Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation mapper, there are no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones on or adjacent to the Project Site (DOC 2026b). The nearest Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone is the Banning Fault of the San Andreas Fault Zone approximately 0.6 mile northeast. No active faults, trace faults or any other faults traverse through or encroach on the boundaries of the Project Site (DOC 2026b, 2026c). Since no active faults or any other fault exist on site, surface rupture would not occur. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Seismic Ground Shaking

The most significant geologic hazard to the design life of the proposed Project is the potential for moderate to strong ground shaking resulting from earthquakes generated on the faults in seismically active Southern California. The type and magnitude of seismic hazards affecting the Project Site is dependent on the distance to causative faults, the intensity, and the magnitude of the seismic event.

As previously discussed, the Banning Fault of the San Andreas Fault Zone is approximately 0.6-mile northeast of the Project Site. This fault and others in the region are considered capable of producing strong shaking at the Project Site, thereby exposing people or structures on the site to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death. The intensity of ground shaking on the Project Site would depend on the magnitude of the earthquake, distance to the epicenter, and the geology of the area between the epicenter and the Project Site.

The State regulates development in California through a variety of tools that reduce hazards from earthquakes and other geologic hazards. The California Building Code (CBC) (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2) 2022 edition, adopted by reference in Title 15 (Buildings and Construction), Chapter 15.04 (Building Regulation) of the Riverside Code of Ordinances, contain provisions to safeguard against major structural failures or loss of life caused by earthquakes or other geologic hazards. The CBC contains provisions for earthquake safety based on factors including occupancy type, the types of soil and rock on-site, and the strength of ground motion with specified probability of occurrence at the site. Project development would be required to adhere to the provisions of the CBC, which are enforced by the Division of the State Architect during the building plan check and development review process. Compliance with the requirements of the CBC for structural safety during a seismic event would reduce hazards from strong seismic ground shaking.

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Compliance with the provisions of the CBC would reduce impacts resulting from strong seismic ground shaking. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Liquefaction

Liquefaction refers to loose, saturated sand or gravel deposits that lose their load-supporting capability when subjected to intense shaking. Liquefaction potential varies based upon three main contributing factors:

- Cohesionless, granular soils having relatively low densities (usually of Holocene age).
- Shallow groundwater (generally less than 50 feet).
- Moderate to high seismic ground shaking.

Cohesionless and granular soils are sand or gravel, typically with little or no clay content. Soil liquefaction generally occurs in submerged granular soils and non-plastic silts during or after strong ground shaking. Per the Riverside County Mapping Portal for Liquefaction, the Project Site has a low susceptibility for liquefaction (Riverside County 2026). Additionally, based on the California Department of Conservation, the Project Site is not subject to liquefaction. The nearest liquefaction zone is approximately 23.6 miles southwest of the Project Site at Rawson Canyon (DOC 2026b).

Since no areas of liquefaction exist on site, and the Proposed Project would be constructed in compliance with CBC, impacts from liquefaction would not occur. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Landslides

Landslides are the downslope movement of geologic materials. Slope failures in the form of landslides are common during strong seismic shaking in areas of steep hills.

According to the US Land Slide Inventory and Susceptibility Mapper, the Project Site is primarily considered an area of very low landslide potential; however, the Project Site's southern edge is rated as having a possible and probable landside area (USGS 2025). However, the overall site topography can be characterized as relatively flat, with no notable change in elevation. The Project Site is also surrounded by residential to the north, south and east, and a paved road and flat vacant land to the east. There are no steep hills or bluffs on, adjacent to, or in the vicinity of the Project Site. Furthermore, the nearest landslide zone is approximately 23.45 miles southwest of the Project Site, near Black Mountain (DOC 2026b). Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Erosion is the movement of rock and soil from place to place and is a natural process. Common agents of erosion in the project region include wind and flowing water. Significant erosion typically occurs on steep slopes where stormwater and high winds can carry topsoil down hillsides. Erosion can be increased greatly by earth-moving activities (e.g., excavation and grading) if erosion control measures are not used.

Following is a discussion of the potential erosion impacts resulting from the Proposed Project's construction and operational phases.

Construction Phase

Development at the Project Site involves site preparation, grading, and construction activities that would disturb soil and temporarily leave exposed soil on the ground surface. Common means of soil erosion from construction sites include water, wind, and being tracked off site by vehicles. However, development on the Project Site is subject to local and state codes and requirements for erosion control and grading during construction.

For example, Project development is required to comply with standard regulations, including South Coast AQMD Rules 402 (Nuisance) and 403 (Fugitive Dust), which would reduce construction erosion impacts. Rule 403 requires that fugitive dust be controlled with best available control measures so that the presence of such dust does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emissions source. Rule 402 requires dust suppression techniques be implemented to prevent dust and soil erosion from creating a nuisance off site. For example, as outlined in Table 1 of Rule 403, Best Available Control Measures, control measures to reduce erosion during grading and construction activities include stabilizing backfilling materials when not actively handling, stabilizing soils during clearing and grubbing activities, and stabilizing soils during and after cut-and-fill activities.

Additionally, the Construction General Permit (CGP) issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (Order 2022-0057-DWQ) regulates stormwater discharges from construction activities that disturb one acre or more of land and requires preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to minimize erosion, sedimentation, and pollutant discharges to receiving waters. For example, types of BMPs that are incorporated in SWPPPs and would help minimize impacts from soil erosion include:

- **Erosion controls.** Cover and/or bind soil surface, to prevent soil particles from being detached and transported by water or wind. Erosion control BMPs include mulch, soil binders, and mats.
- **Sediment controls.** Filter out soil particles that have been detached and transported in water. Sediment control BMPs include barriers and cleaning measures such as street sweeping.

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- **Tracking controls.** Tracking control BMPs minimize the tracking of soil off site by vehicles; for instance, stabilizing construction roadways and entrances/exits.

Adherence to the BMPs in the SWPPP and with local and state codes and requirements for erosion control and grading during construction would reduce, prevent, or minimize soil erosion from project-related grading and construction activities.

Furthermore, the Proposed Project does not contain any subterranean levels and would not require extensive excavation, which could expose more soil to erosion during the construction phase.

Therefore, soil erosion impacts from Project-related grading and construction activities would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Operation Phase

The Project Site is nearly flat with gentle slopes from the northeast to the southwest and consists primarily of vacant land. No major slopes, bluffs, or waterways are on or adjacent to the Project Site. After Project completion, the Project Site would be developed with institutional uses, parking areas and drive aisles, sports fields and courts, and roadway and landscape improvements and would not contain bare or exposed soil. The proposed landscaping would be water conserving and have deep root systems that enable soil stabilization and minimize erosion. Additionally, a good portion of the Project Site would be developed with hard surfaces (see Figure 4). Upon completion of the Proposed Project, the potential for soil erosion or the loss of topsoil is expected to be extremely low. Therefore, soil erosion impacts from the proposed Project's operation phase would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Hazards from liquefaction were previously addressed in Section VII.a.iii, and landslide hazards were previously addressed in Section VII.a.iv. As concluded in these sections, impacts resulting from landslides or liquefaction would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Lateral Spreading

Lateral spreading is a type of liquefaction-induced ground failure associated with the lateral displacement of surficial blocks of sediment resulting from liquefaction in a subsurface layer (Caltrans 2020). Due to the low potential for liquefaction on the Project Site, the potential for lateral spreading is considered low. Additionally, development of the Proposed Project would be required to adhere to the provisions of the CBC, which are enforced by the Division of the State

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Architect during the building plan check and development review process. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Subsidence

Subsidence occurs when the level of the ground decreases, as if the surface is sinking. Subsidence can either be sudden (as in a sinkhole) or happen gradually overtime. It can be caused by mining, groundwater pumping, or fossil fuel extraction, creating empty underground spaces that can collapse and cause the soil above to drop. Erosion, natural cave collapses, and seismic activity can also cause subsidence.

Based on a review of the US Geological Survey map, “Areas of Land Subsidence in California,” the Project Site is not in an area of subsidence (USGS 2026). Additionally, development of the Proposed Project would be required to adhere to the provisions of the CBC, which are enforced by the Division of the State Architect during the building plan check and development review process. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Collapsible Soils

The collapse of soils occurs with (1) an open, partially unstable, partially saturated fabric; (2) sufficient total stress to make the soil structure metastable; (3) the presence of a bonding agent or sufficient soil suction to stabilize the soil in the metastable condition; and (4) the addition of water, which reduces soil suction or softens/destroys the bonding agent, thereby causing shear failures at the inter-aggregate or inter-particle contacts (Caltrans 2024).

The Project Site does not contain shallow groundwater and the area with the nearest well, approximately 1.4 miles northwest, has approximately 456.08 depth to groundwater (CDWR 2026c). Therefore, the potential for groundwater to create collapsible soils on the Project Site is not present. Additionally, development of the Proposed Project would be required to adhere to the provisions of the CBC, which are enforced by the Division of the State Architect during the building plan check and development review process. Therefore, impacts would **be less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

d) *Would the proposed project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?*

Expansive soils contain certain types of clay minerals that shrink when they dry out and swell when soils become wet, resulting in the potential for cracking building foundations and in some cases, structural distress of the buildings themselves.

Based on the web soil survey mapper the underlying soil of the Project Site is comprised entirely of Hanford coarse sandy loam (USDA 2025). Soil Plasticity Index (PI) identifies the soil’s ability to change shape, and the International Building Code (IBC) states a PI of 15 or greater (IBC Section

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1803.5.3) is considered an expansive soil. The entire Project Site is composed of Hanford coarse sandy loam with a PI of 8.0, identifying that expansive soils do not exist on-site.

Additionally, impacts from expansive soil are commonly and effectively reduced by various design techniques such as 1) proper design of foundations, slabs, streets, and other improvements subject to the influence of the soils; 2) overexcavation of the expansive soils/bedrock and replacement with less-expansive fill soils; 3) control of surface and subsurface drainages to prevent moisture variations; and 4) combinations of these various techniques (UFC 2004). Development of the Proposed Project would be required to adhere to the provisions of the CBC, which are enforced by the Division of the State Architect during the building plan check and development review process.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

As discussed in Section 2.3.5, *Utility and Service Systems*, there are two options for the provision of wastewater service to the Project Site: Option One and the preferred option is for the City of Beaumont to provide wastewater service to the Project Site. This is also the preferred option for the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health, which oversees wastewater service in the unincorporated areas of the county and requires that project proponents connect to an existing wastewater provider's infrastructure if it is within 200 feet of the infrastructure. Since there is a sewer main in Brookside Avenue (which is approximately 10 feet from the northern Project Site boundary) that is owned, operated, and maintained by the City of Beaumont, the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health has requested that the District connect to the City's sewer main and in doing so, the City would provide wastewater service to the Project Site. Under Option One, the Proposed Project would not require the installation or use of a septic tank or alternative wastewater disposal system. The Proposed Project would include construction of sewer laterals to existing sewer main in Brookside Avenue.

Alternatively, and if the City of Beaumont determines that it cannot provide wastewater service to the Project Site, the District would proceed with Option Two, which would require the District to provide an advanced treatment system on-site in the form of an OWTS for the Proposed Project. The OWTS would be required to be designed, constructed, installed, and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the County of Riverside's LAMP, which outlines the specific requirements and regulations for installation and operation of an OWTS. The LAMP allows for the use of OWTS within the jurisdiction of Riverside County while protecting water quality and public health. The LAMP also requires that an OWTS report be prepared by certain professionals, which must be registered with the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health and possess at least one of the following current and valid California registrations: Professional Engineer, Professional Geologist, and/or Registered Environmental Health Specialist.

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Based on the preceding, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Paleontological resources or fossils are remains of ancient plants and animals that can provide scientifically significant information about the history of life on earth. This sensitivity is determined by rock type, history of the geologic unit in producing significant fossils, and fossil localities that are recorded from that unit.

As shown on Figure 3, the Project Site is vacant and is covered with light to moderate growth of ruderal vegetation. A portion of the Project Site has been subject to disturbances related to prior agricultural uses occurring on the Project Site. However, given the undeveloped condition of the Project Site, the potential exists for development of the Proposed Project to impact unidentified paleontological resources that may underlie the site.

Additionally, based on a search of the University of California Museum of Paleontology, 51 localities of the 215 localities discovered within Riverside County have the same epoch (Holocene to late Pleistocene) as the Project Site (UCMP 2026, DOC 2026d). Therefore, there is the potential to unearth unknown paleontological resources on-site.

However, implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would avoid or minimize potential project impacts to paleontological resources. With implementation of this mitigation measure, impacts to paleontological resources would be reduced to a **less-than-significant** level.

Mitigation Measure GEO-1: In the event that fossils or fossil locality deposits are discovered during ground disturbing activities (e.g., trenching, soil removal), excavation within 100 feet of the fossil locality shall be temporarily halted until removal occurs. The construction contractor shall notify a qualified paleontologist to investigate its significance. If the fossil locality is determined to be significant by the qualified paleontologist, the paleontologist shall work with the Beaumont Unified School District (District) and construction contractor to follow accepted professional standards, such as further testing for evaluation or data recovery, as necessary. The paleontologist shall notify the appropriate agencies to determine procedures that shall be followed before construction is allowed to resume at the location of the find. If the District determines that avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist shall prepare an excavation plan for mitigating the effect of the project based on the qualities that make the resource important.

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VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the project:

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Scientists have concluded that human activities are contributing to global climate change by adding large amounts of heat-trapping gases, known as greenhouse gases (GHG), into the atmosphere. The primary source of these GHGs is fossil fuel use. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified four major GHGs—water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and ozone (O₃)—that are the likely cause of an increase in global average temperatures observed within the 20th and 21st centuries. Other GHG identified by the IPCC that contribute to global warming to a lesser extent include nitrous oxide (N₂O), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and chlorofluorocarbons.⁷

Information on manufacturing of cement, steel, and other “life cycle” emissions that would occur as a result of the Proposed Project are not applicable and are not included in the analysis.⁸ Black carbon emissions are not included in the GHG analysis because the California Air Resources Board (CARB) does not include this pollutant in the state’s Senate Bill 32 (SB 32) inventory and treats

⁷ Water vapor (H₂O) is the strongest GHG and the most variable in its phases (vapor, cloud droplets, ice crystals). However, water vapor is not considered a pollutant, but part of the feedback loop rather than a primary cause of change.

⁸ Life cycle emissions include indirect emissions associated with materials manufacture. However, these indirect emissions involve numerous parties, each of which is responsible for GHG emissions of their particular activity. The California Resources Agency, in adopting the CEQA Guidelines Amendments on GHG emissions found that lifecycle analyses were not warranted for project-specific CEQA analysis in most situations, for a variety of reasons, including lack of control over some sources, and the possibility of double-counting emissions (CNRA 2018). Because the amount of materials consumed during the operation or construction of the Project is not known, the origin of the raw materials purchased is not known, and manufacturing information for those raw materials are also not known, calculation of life cycle emissions would be speculative. A life-cycle analysis is not warranted (LCI 2008).

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this short-lived climate pollutant separately.⁹ A background discussion on the GHG regulatory setting and GHG modeling can be found in Appendix A of this Initial Study.

DISCUSSION

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

Global climate change is not confined to a particular project area and is generally accepted as the consequence of global industrialization over the last 200 years. A typical project, even a very large one, does not generate enough greenhouse gas emissions on its own to influence global climate change significantly; hence, the issue of global climate change is, by definition, a cumulative environmental impact.

Based on the Transportation Study prepared for the Proposed Project, the project would generate 2,724 daily trips (Appendix F), resulting in an increase in mobile source emissions. The Proposed Project would also result in an increase in water demand, wastewater and solid waste generation, area sources (e.g., consumer cleaning products), and energy usage (i.e., natural gas and electricity). Annual average construction emissions were amortized over 30 years and included in the emissions inventory to account for one-time GHG emissions from the construction phase of the Proposed Project. As shown in Table 6, construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not generate annual emissions that exceed the South Coast AQMD bright-line threshold of 3,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂e) per year (South Coast AQMD 2010). Therefore, the Proposed Project's cumulative contribution to GHG emissions would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Table 6 Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Source	GHG (MTCO ₂ e/Year)	Percentage
Mobile ¹	1,813	85%
Area	2	0%
Energy	260	12%
Water	3	0%
Solid Waste	42	2%
Refrigerants	<1	0%
Amortized Construction Emissions ²	16	1%

⁹ Particulate matter emissions, which include black carbon, are analyzed in Section III, *Air Quality*. Black carbon emissions have sharply declined due to efforts to reduce on-road and off-road vehicle emissions, especially diesel particulate matter. The state's existing air quality policies will virtually eliminate black carbon emissions from on-road diesel engines within 10 years (CARB 2017).

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Table 6 **Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Source	GHG (MTCO ₂ e/Year)	Percentage
Total	2,135	100%
South Coast AQMD Bright-Line Threshold	3,000 MTCO ₂ e/Yr	—
Significant?	No	—

Source: CalEEMod, Version 2022.1. Appendix A.

Notes: MTCO₂e = metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalent.

1. Vehicle trips provided by DJ&A (Appendix F). Trip purpose percentage updated to represent lower percentage of staff trips and higher percentage of student based on national averages of pupil to staff ratios provided by the National Center for Education Statistics (see Appendix A).
2. Total construction emission are amortized over 30 years per South Coast AQMD Working Group methodology (South Coast AQMD 2008).

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

Applicable plans adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions include CARB's Scoping Plan and the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). A consistency analysis with these plans is provided as follows.

CARB Scoping Plan

CARB's latest Climate Change Scoping Plan (2022) outlines the State's strategies to reduce GHG emissions in accordance with the targets established under AB 32, SB 32, and AB 1279 (CARB 2022). The Scoping Plan is applicable to State agencies and is not directly applicable to cities/counties and individual projects. However, new regulations adopted by the state agencies outlined in the Scoping Plan result in GHG emissions reductions at the local level. As a result, local jurisdictions benefit from reductions in transportation emissions rates, increases in water efficiency in the building and landscape codes, and other statewide actions that affect a local jurisdiction's emissions inventory from the top down. Statewide strategies to reduce GHG emissions include the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) and changes in the corporate average fuel economy standards (e.g., California Advanced Clean Cars program).

The Proposed Project's GHG emissions would be reduced through compliance with the programs and regulations identified by the Scoping Plan and implemented by state, regional, and local agencies to achieve the statewide GHG reduction goals of Assembly Bill (AB) 32, Senate Bill (SB) 32, and AB 1279. Thus, the Proposed Project would not conflict with the above statewide strategies identified to implement the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

SCAG adopted the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal, in April 2024. Connect SoCal is a long-term plan for Southern California region that details the development, integrated management and operation of transportation systems and facilities that will function as an intermodal transportation network for the SCAG metropolitan planning area (SCAG 2024). This plan outlines a forecast development pattern that demonstrates how the region can sustainably accommodate needed housing and job centers with multimodal mobility options. The overarching vision is to expand alternatives to driving, advance the transition to clean-transportation technologies, promote integrated and safe transit networks, and foster transit-oriented development in compact and mixed-use developments (SCAG 2024). In addition, Connect SoCal is supported by a combination of transportation and land use strategies that outline how the region can achieve California's GHG-emission-reduction goals and federal Clean Air Act requirements. The projected regional development, when integrated with the proposed regional transportation network in Connect SoCal, would reduce per-capita GHG emissions related to vehicular travel and achieve the GHG reduction per capita targets for the SCAG region.

The Proposed Project would serve up to 1,200 TK-8 students in the District's service area. While the Proposed Project would generate 2,724 weekday trips to the Project Site, these trips would be redistributed from other schools in the District that students within the attendance of the Proposed Project currently attend. The Proposed Project would also potentially provide a closer option for these students, reducing existing VMT. As described in Section XVII, *Transportation*, the Proposed Project screens out of VMT analysis as a local-serving K-12 public school and would therefore have a less than significant impact with respect to VMT. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not interfere with SCAG's ability to implement the regional strategies in Connect SoCal. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the project:

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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The analysis in this section is based partly on the following technical study, which is included as Appendix D to this Initial Study:

- Title 5 Schools Facilities Evaluation Report, PlaceWorks, March 2026.

DISCUSSION

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

The term “hazardous material” can be defined in different ways. For purposes of this environmental document, the definition of “hazardous material” is the one outlined in the California Health and Safety Code, Section 25501:

Hazardous materials that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, pose a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. Hazardous materials include, but are not limited to, hazardous substances, hazardous waste, and any material that a handler or the unified program agency has a reasonable basis for believing that it would be injurious to the health and safety of persons or harmful to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment.

“Hazardous waste” is a subset of hazardous materials, and the definition is essentially the same as in the California Health and Safety Code, Section 25117, and in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 66261.2:

Hazardous wastes are those that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may either cause, or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed.

Hazardous materials can be categorized as hazardous nonradioactive chemical materials, radioactive materials, and biohazardous materials (infectious agents such as microorganisms, bacteria, molds, parasites, viruses, and medical waste).

Exposure of the public or the environment to hazardous materials could occur through but not limited to the following means: improper handling or use of hazardous materials or waste, particularly by untrained personnel; transportation accident; environmentally unsound disposal methods; and/or fire, explosion, or other emergencies. The severity of potential effects varies with the activity conducted, the concentration and type of hazardous material or wastes present, and the proximity of sensitive receptors.

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Following is a discussion of the Project's potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine use, storage, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials during the construction and operational phases.

Construction

Hazardous materials (e.g., fuel, oils, solvents, paints) would be routinely transported, stored, and used at the Project Site during construction. The routine transportation, use, and disposal of hazardous materials during construction and operation may pose health and safety hazards to workers if the hazardous materials are improperly handled. The handling, use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials during the construction phase of the Proposed Project would comply with existing regulations of several agencies, including US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Cal/OSHA, California Department of Transportation (DOT), and Riverside County Department of Environmental Health. Additionally, construction projects typically maintain supplies on-site for containing and cleaning small spills of hazardous materials. However, construction activities would not involve a significant amount of hazardous materials. Project construction workers would be trained in the proper use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials.

As discussed in Section X, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, construction activities would also be conducted in accordance with the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) as part of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The primary objective of the SWPPP is to identify, construct, implement, and maintain best management practices (BMP) to reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater discharges and authorized non-stormwater discharges from the construction site. BMPs for hazardous materials may include, but are not limited to, off-site refueling, placement of generators on impervious surfaces, establishing cleanout areas for cement, etc. While the risk of exposure to hazardous materials cannot be eliminated, adherence to existing regulations would ensure compliance with safety standards related to the use and storage of hazardous materials and with the safety procedures mandated by applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Compliance with these regulations would ensure that risks resulting from the routine transportation, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials or hazardous waste associated with the Proposed Project are not significant. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Operation

Operation of the Proposed Project would involve the use of hazardous materials typical of school facilities such as cleaning and maintenance supplies (cleaners, gasoline, paint, and pesticides). The Proposed Project includes construction of a new school that would use cleaners

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and other chemicals in relatively small quantities, which are not typically considered hazardous materials that could result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

The use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials during both construction and operational phases would be governed by existing regulations of several agencies, including EPA, DOT, Cal/OSHA, and Riverside County Department of Environmental Health. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts.

Furthermore, while highly unlikely due to the proposed use, in the event of a hazardous materials spill of greater amount or toxicity than on-site personnel could safely contain and clean up, assistance would be requested from the Riverside County Fire Department at Fire Station 22. As also mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, all Material Safety Data Sheets for any potentially hazardous project would be provided that inform employees and first responders as to the necessary remediation procedures in the case of accidental release.

Therefore, substantial hazards to the public or the environment arising from the routine use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials would be **less than significant**. No mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Following is a discussion of the potential hazards impacts that could arise through the accidental release of hazardous materials from the Project's construction and operational phases.

Hazardous Materials Associated with Project Construction and Operation

See previous response to Section III.5.a. As concluded in that section, hazards to the public or the environment arising from the routine use of hazardous materials during the Proposed Project's construction and operation phases would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are necessary. Additionally, the Proposed Project consists of the development of a school facility, which would not generate air toxics requiring a South Coast AQMD permit.

Hazardous Materials Associated with Project Site Conditions

Based on a review of historical aerial photographs, the Project Site appears to have been in agricultural use since at least 1938 through the early 2000s. According to the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner, pesticides requiring a use permit have not been issued for the Project Site within the last five years. A review of the Environmental Data Resources (EDR)

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Radius Map Report for the Project Site dated October 17, 2025, did not identify facilities in the database records search within a one-mile radius that present a recognized environmental condition (REC) to the Project Site. Review of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor Database, EnviroStor Cortese list, and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker, did not identify any facilities in the databases on the Project Site or in the vicinity (Appendix D).

Additionally, based on the Title 5 School Facilities Evaluation report prepared for the Proposed Project, the Project Site is not within 2,000 feet of a significant disposal of hazardous waste or listed as a hazardous substance release site, and no corrective action or cleanup activities are required for the Project Site (Appendix D). No high-pressure natural gas transmission pipelines or hazardous liquid pipelines were identified within 1,500 feet of the Project Site. The Title 5 School Facilities Evaluation report identified several large diameter water pipelines (≥ 12 -inch diameter), and the associated pipeline flooding analysis concluded that the full flow rupture of any of the pipelines would not pose a significant risk to students and staff. There are no high-voltage transmission lines (>50 kV) within 100 to 350 feet of the property lines of the Project Site. Additionally, the Project Site is not within 500 feet of a busy traffic corridor per Public Resources Code Section 21151.8(b)(9) and Education Code Section 17213(d)(9); thus, there is no potential for air quality health risk related to busy traffic corridors.

Furthermore, a Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) is in the process of being prepared by the District for the Project Site under DTSC oversight. As a part of the PEA process a scoping meeting was conducted by and between the District, DTSC, and Padre Environmental (consultant preparing the PEA on behalf of the District). Padre prepared a PEA scoping document for the meeting and the District's and DTSC's review and consideration. Per the PEA scoping document, based on historical use of the Project Site, the following chemicals of potential concern (COPC) were identified and are being assessed as a part of a PEA work plan:

- Organochlorine pesticides (OCPs), arsenic, and lead in soil from agricultural use since at least 1938 through the early 2000s.
- OCPs in soil from the application of termiticides and/or ant control around the perimeter of former building foundations at the Project Site (1938–1961).
- Lead in soil from weathering of lead-based paint (LBP), around the perimeter of former building foundations at the Project Site (1938–1961).
- Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs) at the base of a pole-mounted electrical transformer along Brookside Avenue.

The PEA work plan, which requires DTSC review and approval, would be implemented in general accordance with the DTSC guidance documents and requirements, including DTSC's human

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health screening evaluation pursuant to DTSC's Human and Ecological Health Office (HERO) Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) Note No. 3 modified screening levels (revised April 2025), or EPA regional screening levels (updated in November 2024) for analytes not defined in Note 3. The final DTSC-approved PEA report will be made available to the public for review and comment pursuant to Option A of the California Education Code (CEC) Section 17213.1. The District will be required to implement any measure identified in the DTSC-approved PEA report. Also, upon final review and approval of the PEA report by DTSC, a letter No Further Action (NFA) would be issued to the District by DTSC.

With regulatory oversight by DTSC and District implementation of any measure outlined in the DTSC-approved PEA report, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Starlight Elementary School is 0.13 mile west of the Project Site boundary (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*). As discussed in Section IX.a, construction and operation of the Proposed Project would handle small amounts of hazardous materials typical of construction activities and school-related activities (during operation), similar to Starlight Elementary School. The use, transportation, and storage of hazardous materials would be required to comply with all applicable state and federal regulations that would ensure the proper handling of such materials. As discussed in Section IX.b, there is no evidence that a hazardous materials release or threatened release has occurred on the Project Site or within a 0.25-mile radius of the Project Site. Additionally, as discussed above in Section IX.b, with regulatory oversight by DTSC, District implementation of any measure outlined in the DTSC-approved PEA report, and DTSC issuance of an NFA, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The following environmental databases were searched for hazardous materials sites on the Project Site and within a quarter mile radius.

- Cortese List, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2026a)
- EnviroStor, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2026b)
- GeoTracker, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB 2026)
- Hazardous Waste Tracking System, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2026c)
- EnviroMapper, US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2026b)

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- Solid Waste Information System, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle 2026)
- Oil and Gas Well Finder (DOC 2026e)

The Project Site was not identified on any of the databases searched. Additionally, there are no active oil wells on or within a 0.25 mile of the Project Site according to the Oil and Gas Well Finder database (DOC 2026e).

Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Based on a review of Google Earth aerial maps, the Project Site is not within two miles of an existing airport or proposed airport runway. The nearest airport is the Banning Municipal Airport, approximately 5.75 miles southwest of the Project Site. Based on the Riverside County Airport Compatibility Plan Document, the Project Site is not within any of the compatibility zones, airspace plan, or noise compatibility contours (RCALUC 2026). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise related to air travel for people residing or working in the project area. **No impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Riverside County has a Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and an Emergency Management Program for emergency response within Riverside County. The County's Emergency Notification System, Alert RivCo, provides information, training, and community-wide outreach to residents, businesses, visitors, and community organizations to better equip themselves and others in the event of a disaster or emergency. Additionally, Riverside County has an established Emergency Operation Plan.

The County's Emergency Management Program utilizes the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Both SEMS and NIMS are emergency management systems that provide a consistent template for all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of their cause, size, location, or complexity.

The County's Fire, Sheriff, Public Works, Animal Control, and public transit as well as water, power, communications companies, and other non-government organizations handle smaller

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incidents that occur on a day-to-day basis. For large incidents, the County's Emergency Management Department coordinates a multi-agency response. The Riverside County Emergency Management Department provides Emergency Management services to Riverside County through the provision of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Manager. The EOC Manager is responsible for the overall function of the EOC, and the EOC Director is responsible for development of the County's disaster plans, disaster training and exercise program, and oversight of the County's EOC.

The Proposed Project involves the development of a new public school and would have no impact on emergency response or evacuation plans. During the construction and operation phases, the Proposed Project would not interfere with any of the daily operations of the Riverside County Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, or EOC, which support emergency planning and response efforts in Riverside County. All construction activities would be required to be performed per the County's and Riverside County Fire Department's standards and regulations. The Proposed Project would be required to provide the necessary on- and off-site access and circulation for emergency vehicles and services during the construction and operation phases.

Development of the Proposed Project includes street improvements along the southern side of Brookside Avenue and western side of N. Highland Springs Avenue, which includes roadway pavement, curb and gutter, sidewalks, and landscaping. However, construction along these roadway frontages would not require road closures or otherwise impact the functionality of Brookside Avenue or N. Highland Springs Avenue as public safety access routes. Additionally, neither of these roadways is a designated evacuation route in the Riverside County General Plan Circulation or Safety Elements.

Additionally, during project construction, emergency-vehicle access to the Project Site or surrounding areas would not be restricted. Roads surrounding the Project Site would remain open to regular traffic as well as emergency vehicles. Additionally, in the event of an emergency (e.g., structural fire), emergency services access to the surrounding residential uses would not be impacted by the Proposed Project's construction phase, since adequate access for emergency vehicles and personnel exists. Construction activities along Brookside Avenue or N. Highland Springs Avenue roadway frontages would also be temporary and short-term and would cease upon completion of the proposed improvements.

The Proposed Project would also be required to go through the Department of State Architect's (DSA) development review and permitting process and would be required to incorporate all applicable design and safety standards and regulations in the CBC to ensure that project development does not interfere with the provision of local emergency services (provision of adequate access roads to accommodate emergency response vehicles, adequate numbers/locations of fire hydrants, etc.).

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Based on the preceding, implementation of the Proposed Project (both the construction and operational phases) would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with emergency response or evacuation plans. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

As shown in Figure 3, the Project Site is in a developing area of the county. The Project Site is bounded by residential development to the north and south, vacant land to the east, and vacant land and residential development to the west. There is no combustible wildland vegetation on or anywhere near the Project Site. The Project Site has good access and would be served by adequate water infrastructure for fire protection purposes. The Proposed Project would also be required to be designed and constructed in accordance with the most current California Building Code and California Fire Code, as well as all applicable requirements of Riverside County Fire Department and DSA. Furthermore, there would be no impact for wildland fire risks due to implementation of the Proposed Project, as substantiated in Section XX, *Wildfire*. The Project Site is not on or near land classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

X. Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the project:

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

DISCUSSION

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

Urban runoff from storms or nuisance flows (runoff during dry periods) from development projects can carry pollutants to receiving waters. Runoff can contain pollutants such as oil, fertilizers, pesticides, trash, and sediment. This runoff can flow directly into local streams or into storm drains and continue through pipes until it is released untreated into a local stream or

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waterway. Untreated stormwater runoff degrades water quality in surface waters and groundwater and can affect drinking water, human health, and plant and animal habitats.

The construction and operational phases of the Proposed Project could have the potential to impact water quality. Construction activities may impact water quality due to sheet erosion of exposed soils. Operational related activities of the Proposed Project (e.g., runoff from parking areas, solid waste storage areas, and landscaped areas) would generate pollutants that could adversely affect the water quality of downstream receiving waters if effective measures are not used to keep pollutants out of and remove pollutants from urban runoff.

The following is a discussion of the potential impacts that the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Project could have on water resources and quality.

Construction Phase

Clearing, grading, excavation, and construction activities associated with the Proposed Project may impact water quality through soil erosion and increasing the amount of silt and debris carried in runoff. Additionally, the use of construction materials such as fuels, solvents, and paints may present a risk to surface water quality. Finally, the refueling and parking of construction vehicles and other equipment on-site during construction may result in oil, grease, or related pollutant leaks and spills that may discharge into the storm drain system.

To minimize these potential impacts, development of the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit (CGP) (2022-0057-DWQ). The CGP requires the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that incorporates best management practices (BMP) to control sedimentation, erosion, and hazardous materials contamination of runoff during construction. The State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) mandates that projects that disturb one or more acres of land must obtain coverage under the Statewide CGP. The CGP also requires that prior to the start of construction activities, the project applicant (in this case the District) must file Permit Registration Documents (PRD) with SWRCB, which includes a Notice of Intent, risk assessment, site map, annual fee, signed certification statement, SWPPP, and post-construction water balance calculations. The District's construction contractor is required to maintain a copy of the SWPPP on-site at all times and implement all construction BMPs identified in the SWPPP during construction activities. Prior to the commencement of a grading activities, the District is required to provide proof of filing of the PRDs with SWRCB, which include preparation of the SWPPP. The SWPPP must describe construction BMPs that address pollutant source reduction and provide measures/controls to mitigate potential pollutant sources. These include, but are not limited to:

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- Erosion controls (e.g., earth dikes and swales, mulching, slope drains, compost blankets)
- Sediment controls (e.g., silt fence, sediment trap, sandbag, or straw bale barriers)
- Tracking controls (e.g., stabilized construction entrance/exit, tire wash)
- Nonstorm water management (e.g., dewatering practices, vehicle, and equipment cleaning)
- Materials and waste management (e.g., material storage, hazardous waste management, soil management)
- Good housekeeping practices

Submittal of the PRDs and implementation of the SWPPP and its associated BMPs throughout the construction phase of the Proposed Project will address anticipated and expected pollutants of concern due to construction activities. Therefore, construction phase impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Operational Phase

Once the Proposed Project has been constructed, urban runoff could include a variety of contaminants that could impact water quality. Runoff from buildings and parking lots typically contain oils, grease, fuel, antifreeze, byproducts of combustion (such as lead, cadmium, nickel, and other metals), as well as fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and other pollutants. Precipitation at the beginning of the rainy season may result in an initial stormwater runoff (first flush) with high pollutant concentrations.

School districts in California, including the District, are not currently regulated under the County of Riverside's municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4) permit or Small MS4 Phase II permits. However, the Proposed Project is required to comply with the post-construction performance standards under the SWRCB's CGP. The performance standards specify runoff reduction requirements for all sites not covered by Phase I or Phase II MS4 permits to minimize and mitigate stormwater runoff impacts. The following is a discussion of site-design, source-control, and treatment-control BMPs that could be incorporated into the Proposed Project. At this phase of the planning process, detailed design drawings have not yet been developed, and the Proposed Project is in the conceptual design phase.

Site Design BMPs

Site design BMPs would be incorporated into the Proposed Project's design to reduce the potential impacts on surface and groundwater quality. These may include, but are not limited to, maximizing pervious areas, minimizing directly connected impervious areas, use of on-site ponding areas (i.e., detention basins), constructing hardscape with permeable materials, and

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implementing hydrologically functional landscape design. Site design BMPs and features that would be incorporated into the development plans for the proposed school campus include:

- Incorporate trees, open space, and landscaping to mitigate urban heat island impacts.
- Include mostly native plants and drought-tolerant plants in landscaping plans.
- Use of effective irrigation systems to minimize water usage.

In addition, an existing natural drainage feature comprising approximately 1.5 acres along the western boundary of the 37.46-acre Project Site would be preserved in its current condition and would not be disturbed by the Proposed Project. A minimum 50-foot buffer from the edge of the drainage feature would be maintained along its entire length to protect water quality and hydrologic function of the drainage feature.

Source Control BMPs

Source control BMPs effectively minimize the potential for typical urban pollutants to contact stormwater, thereby limiting water quality impacts downstream. A variety of source control BMPs would be incorporated into the Proposed Project and implemented throughout the operation of the campus, including the following:

- Educational materials related to urban runoff provided to all employees, students, and staff.
- Inspection and maintenance of site BMPs—catch basins, grate inlets, etc.
- Compliance with the Municipal Code and Uniform Fire Code.
- Provide storm drain stenciling or signage on all storm drain inlets and catch basins per County requirements, as applicable.
- Properly design and inspect on a regular basis all trash storage areas, loading docks, outdoor storage areas, and outdoor work areas.

Treatment Control BMPs

Treatment control BMPs (single or in combination) remove anticipated pollutants of concern from on-site runoff. They can range from natural treatment systems, such as vegetated swales, detention basins, and constructed wetlands, to proprietary control measures. The Proposed Project would be required to provide appropriate treatment control BMPs to reduce peak flows and treat stormwater prior to discharge into Riverside County's storm drain system.

Furthermore, as part of the statewide mandate to reduce trash in receiving waters, the District would adhere to the requirements of the SWRCB Trash Amendments. The requirements include the installation and maintenance of full-capture trash screening devices at curb inlets, grate inlets, and catch basin inlets. The trash screening devices must be certified by the SWRCB.

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With implementation of the BMP features previously describe, as well as compliance with State, Riverside County, and local regulations and code requirements, the Proposed Project would have a **less-than-significant** impact on surface or groundwater quality during the operational phase. No mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The Project Site is located within the Beaumont Groundwater Basin and would receive water service from the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District (BCVWD). BCVWD's water supply portfolio includes local groundwater from Edgar Canyon, groundwater extracted from the Beaumont Basin, imported supplies purchased through the San Geronio Pass Water Agency, and recycled water supplies from the City of Beaumont (BCVWD 2021). The Beaumont Groundwater Basin is adjudicated and managed under the oversight of the Beaumont Basin Watermaster. BCVWD's groundwater supply for 2025 was reported to be approximately 22 percent of the total water supply source (BCVWD 2021).

BCVWD projects that total water demand within its service area would increase from approximately 16,929 acre-feet per year (AFY) in 2025 to approximately 20,660 AFY by 2045 under normal-year conditions. BCVWD also plans to expand its water banking reserves over the next 25 years, increasing stored supplies to levels sufficient to meet projected 2045 demand for multiple years without additional imported deliveries. As discussed in Section XIX.a under *Utilities and Service Systems*, the Proposed Project would increase water demand by approximately 5,301 gallons per day (GPD) or 5.94 AFY, which represents less than 1 percent of BCVWD's existing system-wide demand. This incremental increase would not measurably affect groundwater extraction rates or impede sustainable groundwater management of the Beaumont Groundwater Basin.

Groundwater is not anticipated to be encountered during construction. The nearest monitored well indicates groundwater depths of approximately 456 feet below ground surface, and no shallow groundwater conditions have been identified on the Project Site (CDWR 2026c). Therefore, construction dewatering would not be required and would not affect groundwater levels or recharge.

Accordingly, the Proposed Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge, and impacts would be **less than significant**. No mitigation measures are necessary.

c) *Would the proposed project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:*

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- i) *result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;*
- ii) *substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;*
- iii) *create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or*
- iv) *impede or redirect flood flows?*

Erosion or Siltation

Erosion and siltation impacts that could result from alteration of drainage patterns would, for the most part, occur during the Proposed Project's construction phase, which would include site preparation and grading activities. Environmental factors that affect erosion include topography, soil type, wind, and rainfall. Siltation is associated with sediment transport and deposition in waterways. The Proposed Project would not involve the alteration of any natural drainage channels or any watercourse.

The Proposed Project's construction includes groundwork activities which would expose loose soil to potential wind and water erosion. If not controlled, the transport of these materials to local waterways would temporarily increase suspended sediment concentrations and release pollutants attached to sediment particles into local waterways. As previously stated, the Proposed Project would be required to submit PRDs and a SWPPP to the SWRCB for approval prior to the commencement of construction activities. The SWPPP would describe the BMPs to be implemented during the Proposed Project's construction activities, including:

- Minimize disturbed areas of the site.
- Preserve existing vegetation to the maximum extent practicable.
- Revegetate exposed areas as quickly as possible.
- Install on-site sediment basins to prevent off-site migration of erodible materials, as needed.
- Install velocity dissipation devices at outlets of sediment basins.
- Implement dust control measures, such as silt fences and regular watering of areas.
- Stabilize construction entrances/exits.
- Install storm drain inlet protection measures.
- Install sediment control measures along the site, such as silt fences or gravel bag barriers.

The site design, source control, and treatment control BMPs for the operational phase are previously described in Section X.a. Although the Proposed Project would introduce impervious surfaces compared to existing conditions, it would preserve an approximately 1.5-acre natural

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drainage feature along the western boundary of the 37.46-acre Project Site and maintain a 50-foot buffer along its entire length. Preservation of this drainage feature would maintain the existing drainage pattern in that portion of the Project Site.

Implementation of the Proposed Project's construction and operational phase BMPs would therefore ensure that erosion and siltation impacts would be **less than significant**. No mitigation measures are necessary.

Surface Runoff

The Proposed Project would comply with the post-construction requirements of the CGP issued by the SWRCB. Site design, source control, and treatment BMPs would be incorporated to treat stormwater prior to discharge into the County's existing drainage system and to reduce peak runoff flows to pre-project levels. The Proposed Project would not create substantial new sources of polluted runoff beyond those typical of institutional development. During construction, the contractor would prepare and implement a SWPPP, which would include erosion and sediment control measures to minimize pollutant discharge from the site. During operation, permanent BMPs would minimize runoff volume and associated pollutant loading through detention, infiltration, and water quality treatment features. With implementation of these measures, the Proposed Project would not substantially increase the rate or volume of stormwater runoff in a manner that would result in flooding or exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm drain facilities. Therefore, impacts related to stormwater drainage systems would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Stormwater Drainage Systems

The Proposed Project would comply with the post-construction requirements of the CGP issued by the SWRCB. Site design, source control, and treatment BMPs would be incorporated to treat stormwater prior to discharge into Riverside County's existing drainage system and to reduce peak runoff flows to pre-project levels. During construction, the construction contractor would prepare and implement a SWPPP, which would include erosion and sediment control measures to minimize pollutant discharge from the site. During operation, permanent BMPs would minimize runoff volume and associated pollutant loading through detention, infiltration, and water quality treatment features. Also, part of the roadway improvements proposed along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue would include curb and gutter improvements. With implementation of these measures, the Proposed Project would not substantially increase the rate or volume of stormwater runoff in a manner that would result in flooding or exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm drain facilities. Therefore, impacts related to stormwater drainage systems would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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Impede or Redirect Flood Flows

The Project Site is located within FEMA Zone X, an area identified as having minimal flood hazard and not subject to the 100-year floodplain (FEMA 2008). As such, the site is not located within a mapped high-risk flood area.

While the Proposed Project would introduce additional impervious surfaces relative to existing conditions (i.e., undeveloped barren land), the project would preserve the approximately 1.5-acre natural drainage feature along the entire western boundary of the Project Site. This drainage feature would remain in its current condition and would not be modified by construction or operational activities. Furthermore, a 50-foot buffer would be maintained along the full length of the drainage feature to protect its hydrologic function, reduce erosion potential, and maintain natural conveyance and infiltration capacity.

With preservation of the existing drainage feature and implementation of required stormwater management and best management practices, the Proposed Project would not substantially alter existing drainage patterns or impede or redirect flood flows in a manner that would result in flooding impacts. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

d) *In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the proposed project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?*

Flood Hazard

The Project Site is located within FEMA Zone X, an area identified as having minimal flood hazard and not subject to the 100-year floodplain (FEMA 2008). As such, the Project Site is not located within a mapped high-risk flood area.

Tsunami

Tsunamis are a type of earthquake-induced flooding produced by large-scale sudden disturbances of the sea floor. Tsunami waves interact with the shallow sea floor when approaching a landmass, resulting in an increase in wave height and a destructive wave surge into low-lying coastal areas. The Project Site is approximately 54 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, the Project Site is outside the tsunami hazard zone and would not be affected by a tsunami.

Seiche Zones

A seiche is an oscillating surface wave in a restricted or enclosed body of water, generated by ground motion, usually during an earthquake. Seiches are of concern for water storage facilities because inundation from a seiche can occur if the wave overflows a containment wall, such as

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the wall of a reservoir, water storage tank, dam, or other artificial body of water. There are no large aboveground water storage tanks or lakes in close proximity to the Project Site that could result in a seiche. In addition, the Project Site is not in a dam inundation zone (CDWR 2026a). Therefore, the Project Site would not be at risk from flooding due to seiches.

Dam Inundation

The Project Site is not located in a dam inundation zone and therefore there are no impacts associated with dam failure (CDWR 2026a).

Conclusion

Based on the preceding, the Proposed Project would not risk releasing pollutants as the result of floods, tsunami, or seiche. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board administers and updates the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin (Basin Plan), which establishes beneficial uses and water quality objectives for surface water and groundwater resources within the region. The Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Basin Plan (RWQCB 2025). Project construction would comply with the CGP and require preparation and implementation of a SWPPP incorporating BMPs to control erosion, sedimentation, and pollutant discharges. Post-construction BMPs would further improve stormwater quality through filtration, infiltration, and treatment of runoff prior to discharge. Also, the approximately 1.5-acre natural drainage feature along the western boundary would be preserved and a 50-foot buffer would be maintained along its full length. With implementation of these measures, the Proposed Project would be consistent with applicable Basin Plan requirements.

The Project Site is located within the Beaumont Groundwater Basin, which is managed and adjudicated by the Beaumont Basin Watermaster (BCVWD 2021). Groundwater recharges in the basin through percolation of precipitation, surface runoff, and imported water that infiltrates through streambeds and recharge facilities. Although the basin is adjudicated and therefore not subject to preparation of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), it is managed to achieve and maintain sustainable yield conditions consistent with SGMA objectives, including avoidance of chronic lowering of groundwater levels, reduction of storage, degraded water quality, land subsidence, and surface water depletions (SWRCB 2026).

According to the latest Watermaster report, the Beaumont Basin safe yield was recently increased to 7,100 AFY and the groundwater basin is operating under sustainable yield conditions (Beaumont Basin Watermaster 2024). Implementation of the Proposed Project would not

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interfere with a sustainable groundwater management plan, as the Proposed Project's water demand of 5.94 AFY would use a combination of groundwater, surface water, and recycled water supply sources. The Proposed Project would not substantially increase groundwater extraction, interfere with established pumping allocations, reduce recharge areas, or otherwise conflict with basin management objectives. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a sustainable groundwater management plan or the objectives of SGMA.

In summary, the Proposed Project would not interfere with the Basin Plan water quality objective or any groundwater management objectives. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XI. Land Use and Planning

Would the project:

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

DISCUSSION

a) *Would the proposed project physically divide an established community?*

The Proposed Project involves development of a new TK-8 school on an undeveloped site (see Figures 3 and 4). The Proposed Project would not introduce a physical barrier that would separate land uses that are not already separated. Connections between residential uses surrounding the Project Site would remain and not be impeded or impacted in any way. Except for new driveways accessing the northern portion of the Project Site, which is formed by Brookside Avenue, the Proposed Project would not physically change or disrupt the surrounding neighborhood's street patterns or otherwise impede movement through the neighborhoods.

Additionally, while there are established residential uses surrounding the Project Site, project development would not physically divide these communities in any way because the Proposed

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Project would be developed within the confines of the Project Site and would not introduce roadways or other infrastructure improvements that would bisect or transect the residential communities. The Proposed Project's school use is compatible with the uses surrounding the Project Site.

Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The Proposed Project involves construction of a new public school with internal parking areas, multiple school buildings, and facilities. According to the Riverside County General Plan, the Project Site is in the Pass Area Plan and has a land use designation of Very Low Density Residential (VLDR). Permitted uses include single-family (detached) residential, and limited agriculture (2016). The Proposed Project would be considered an educational use.

In response to the District's inquiries with Riverside County pursuant to Government Code Section 65402 and Public Resources Code Section 21151.2, the County has indicated that the proposed use is consistent with the existing general plan and zoning. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with the land use or zoning designations of the Project Site. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XII. Mineral Resources

Would the project:

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

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DISCUSSION

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

Pursuant to the mineral land classifications of the California Geologic Survey, the Project Site is located in a Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) designated as MRZ-3, which indicates the area contains known or inferred mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance (CGS 2025). However, no mineral resource recovery sites of statewide, regional, or local significance exist on or in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site. Additionally, mining on the Project Site would be incompatible with the surrounding uses, which consist mostly of residential uses. The Project Site is also not in an area with active mineral extraction operations, nor does it support such operations. Also, mining would be incompatible with the surrounding uses and is not a permitted use under the zoning designations of the Project Site.

Furthermore, no oil or energy extraction and/or generation activities exist on the Project Site. A review of California Geologic Energy Management Division's well finder indicates that there are no oil or energy wells on or within proximity of the Project Site (CalGEM 2026).

Finally, based on the Title 5 School Facilities Evaluation prepared for the Proposed Project (Appendix D), the Project Site is not within 300 feet of an active oil or natural gas well.

Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

See previous response to Section XII.a. As substantiated in this section, **no impact** related to loss of locally important mineral recovery sites would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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XIII. Noise

Would the project result in:

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

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. It is known to have several adverse effects on people, including hearing loss, speech and sleep interference, physiological responses, and annoyance. Based on these known adverse effects of noise, the federal government, State of California, and Riverside County have established criteria to protect public health and safety and to prevent disruption of certain human activities. Additional information on noise and vibration fundamentals is contained in Appendix E.

Certain land uses are particularly sensitive to noise and vibration. The Riverside County Code of Ordinances defines noise sensitive uses as private or public school, hospital, residential, care facility for the elderly, and religious institution. Noise-sensitive receptors near the Project Site are single-family residential uses to north, south, and west.

Ambient Noise Monitoring

The Project Site is located south of Brookside Avenue and west of N. Highland Springs Avenue, in a predominantly residential neighborhood with single-family uses to the north, south, and west and recreational uses and open space to the east (see Figure 3). The dominant noise environment

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is traffic noise on Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue. In addition, typical residential activities, dogs barking, birds, and wind noise contribute to the existing ambient noise environment.

To determine existing ambient noise levels in the project area, four locations for short-term (15-minute) measurements were selected and measurements taken around/in the surrounding residential areas of the Project Site. All measurements were taken by PlaceWorks on Thursday, November 20, 2025, in the afternoon hours. Continuous ambient noise monitoring was also conducted during the weekday. The short-term sound level meter (Larson Davis LxT) used for noise monitoring satisfies the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard for Type 1 instrumentation. The sound level meter was set to “slow” response and “A” weighting (dBA) and calibrated prior to and after each monitoring period.

Measurements were at least five feet above the ground and away from reflective surfaces. Temperatures were moderate, ranging from approximately 59 degrees to 61 degrees Fahrenheit, with wind speeds of up to 8 miles per hour and moderate humidity during the noise measurement period. Noise measurement locations are described as follows and shown in Figure 5, *Approximate Noise Monitoring Locations*. The results of the noise monitoring are summarized in Table 7. Complete interval noise monitoring data is provided in Appendix E.

Table 7 Short-Term Noise Measurements Summary

Monitoring Location	Description	15-minute Noise Level, dBA						
		Leq	Lmax	Lmin	L50	L25	L8	L2
ST-1	At the eastern end of Norman Road 11/29/25, 12:07 pm	47.8	65.8	37.0	41.8	44.6	50.4	57.0
ST-2	At the southeastern portion of the Project Site 11/20/25, 1:38 pm	44.3	55.2	37.2	42.8	44.5	47.5	51.1
ST-3	At the southwestern portion of the Project Site 11/20/25, 2:03 pm	42.8	64.7	35.9	39.6	41.5	45.9	49.4
ST-4	At south end of Brookside Avenue, approximately 364 feet from N. Highland Springs Avenue. 11/20/25, 12:39	56.8	69.5	39.5	52.6	57.9	61.7	64.0

Source: PlaceWorks 20025.

TK-8 SCHOOL: BROOKSIDE AVENUE AND NORTH HIGHLAND SPRINGS AVENUE
 INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
 BEAUMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



Source: Nearmap 2025.

Figure 5
 Noise Monitoring Locations

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- **Short-Term Location 1 (ST-1)** was at the eastern end of Norman Road, adjacent to the driveway at 40675 Norman Road, approximately 101 feet east of the southern end of Sandra Drive, and approximately 69 feet northeast of the residence at 40690 Norman Road. A 15-minute noise measurement began at 12:07 pm on Thursday, November 20, 2025. The noise environment is characterized by a windy environment; residential noise such as wind chimes, dogs, and cars; and small planes flying overhead in the distance. Noise levels measured 47.8 dBA Leq and 65.8 dBA Lmax during the measurement period at ST-1.
- **Short-Term Location 2 (ST-2)** was on the southeastern portion of the Project Site, approximately 52 feet from the residential CMU wall to the south, and approximately 1,345 feet south of the residences to the north. A 15-minute noise measurement began at 1:38 pm on Thursday, November 20, 2025. The noise environment is characterized primarily by residential traffic on N. Highland Springs Avenue and activity from the surrounding residences, which includes gardening tools, dogs barking, birds, and yelling children. Noise levels measured 44.3 dBA Leq and 55.2 dBA Lmax during the measurement period at ST-2.
- **Short-Term Location 3 (ST-3)** was on the southwestern portion of the Project Site, approximately 55 feet north of the south residential wall, and approximately 1466 feet south of the residences to the north. A 15-minute noise measurement began at 2:03 pm on Thursday, November 20, 2025. The noise environment is characterized primarily by activity from the surrounding residences, which includes gardening tools, dogs barking, birds, and residential traffic on Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue.
- **Short-Term Location 4 (ST-4)** was on the south end of Brookside Avenue, approximately 364 feet from N. Highland Springs Avenue. A 15-minute noise measurement began at 12:39 pm on Wednesday, November 20, 2025. The noise environment is characterized primarily by residential traffic on Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue, and small planes flying in the distance.

Applicable Noise Standards

County of Riverside General Plan Noise Element

The County of Riverside General Plan Noise Element addresses noise through goals, objectives, and policies designed to provide noise-compatible land use relationships by establishing noise standards that guide design and siting which minimizes noise impacts from significant noise generators. The following policies are applicable to the Proposed Project:

- **Policy N 1.1.** Protect noise-sensitive land uses from high levels of noise by restricting noise-producing land uses from these areas. If the noise-producing land use cannot be relocated, then noise buffers such as setbacks, landscaping, or block walls shall be used.

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- **Policy N 1.6.** Minimize noise spillover or encroachment from commercial and industrial land uses into adjoining residential neighborhoods or noise-sensitive uses.
- **Policy N 2.3.** Mitigate exterior and interior noises to the levels listed in Table 8 to the extent feasible for stationary sources at residential land uses shown below:

Table 8 Stationary Source Land Use Noise Standards

Residential Land Use	Interior Standards	Exterior Standards
10:00 pm to 7:00 am	40 dBA—10-minute Leq	45 dBA—10-minute Leq
7:00 am to 10:00 pm	55 dBA—10-minute Leq	65 dBA—10-minute Leq

Source: Riverside County General Plan Noise Element.

Note: These are only preferred standards; final decision will be made by the Riverside County Planning Department and Office of Public Health.

- **Policy N 4.1.** Prohibit facility-related noise received by any sensitive use from exceeding the following worst-case noise levels:
 - 45 dBA—10-minute Leq between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am.
 - 65 dBA—10-minute Leq between 7:00 am and 10:00 pm.
- **Policy N 4.2.** Develop measures to control non-transportation noise impacts.
- **Policy N 13.1.** Minimize the impacts of construction noise on adjacent uses within acceptable practices.
- **Policy N 13.2.** Ensure that construction activities are regulated to establish hours of operation in order to prevent and/or mitigate the generation of excessive or adverse noise impacts on surrounding areas.
- **Policy N 13.4.** Require that all construction equipment utilizes noise reduction features) e.g., mufflers and engine shrouds) that are no less effective than those originally installed by the manufacturer.

County of Riverside Code of Ordinances

Following are noise exemptions outlined in Section 9.52.020 (Exemptions) of Chapter 9.52 (Noise Regulations).

Sound emanating from the following sources is exempt from the provisions of this chapter:

- Public or private schools and school-sponsored activities.

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- Private construction projects located within one-quarter of a mile from an inhabited dwelling, provided that:
 - Construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 pm and 6:00 am during the months of June through September, and
 - Construction does not occur between the hours of 6:00 pm and 7:00 am during the months of October through May.
- Property maintenance, including, but not limited to, the operation of lawnmowers, leaf blowers, etc., provided such maintenance occurs between the hours of 7:00 am and 8:00 pm.
- Heating and air conditioning equipment. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Guidelines.

Additionally, Riverside County regulates and enforces noise standards (see Table 9) through Chapter 9.52, Noise Regulation, of the Riverside County Code of Ordinances. The county restricts exterior noise levels generated at a property from exceeding established limits during daytime and nighttime hours.

Table 9 Riverside County Exterior Noise Standards

General Plan Foundation Component	General Plan Land Use Designation	Maximum Decibel Level (dBA Lmax)	
		7:00 am–10:00 pm	10:00 pm–7:00 am
Community Development	Residential ¹	55	45
	Commercial ²	65	55
	Light Industrial	75	55
	Heavy Industrial	75	75
	Business Park	65	45
	Public Facility	65	45
	Specific plan Residential	55	45
	Specific Plan Commercial	65	55
	Specific Plan Light Industrial	75	55
	Specific Plan Heavy Industrial	75	75
Rural Community	Estate Density Residential	55	45
	Very Low Density Residential		
	Low Density Residential		
Rural	Rural Residential	45	45
	Rural Mountainous		
	Rural Desert		

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Table 9 Riverside County Exterior Noise Standards

General Plan Foundation Component	General Plan Land Use Designation	Maximum Decibel Level (dBA Lmax)	
		7:00 am–10:00 pm	10:00 pm–7:00 am
Agriculture	Agriculture	45	45
Open Space	Conservation	45	45
	Conservation Habitat		
	Recreation		
	Rural		
	Watershed		
	Mineral Resources	75	75

Source: Riverside County Municipal Code, Chapter 9.52, Noise Regulation, Section 9.52.040.

1. Estate Density Residential, Very Low Density Residential, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Medium High Density Residential, High Density Residential, Very High Density Residential, Highest Density Residential.
2. Retail Commercial, Office Commercial, Tourist Commercial, Community Center.

Riverside County does not have regulatory standards for construction or operational noise and vibration sources. As such, the FTA guidelines for construction noise at residential uses of 80 dBA Leq, a vibration standard of 0.2 inches per second (in/sec) peak particle velocity (PPV) cannot be exceeded to protect normal residential buildings, and a standard of 0.08 in/sec PPV cannot be exceeded to protect old or historically significant structures.

DISCUSSION

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

Following is a discussion of the construction and operational noise impacts as a result of development of the Proposed Project.

Construction Noise

Construction of the Proposed Project is anticipated to occur over a period of approximately 18 months, commencing in January 2028 and ending in June 2029. Construction activities would disturb the majority of the Project Site; approximately 1.5 acres (a natural drainage feature along the wester Project Site boundary) of the 37.46-acre Project Site would remain in its existing condition and not be disturbed in any way. Demolition of existing site features/improvements would be limited to soil disturbance and clearing and grubbing of existing vegetation; no soil

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export or import is anticipated since soil on the Project Site is anticipated to be balanced. Construction staging areas, including earth stockpiling, storage of equipment and supplies, and related activities would be within the boundaries of the Project Site. The site layout and design elements would provide a buffer between the proposed campus facilities and the surrounding residences; they would also create a protected area separate from the surrounding streets and parking lots for the children's sport courts/fields and gathering and recreation areas.

Noise generated during construction is based on the type of equipment used, the location of the equipment relative to sensitive receptors, and the timing and duration of the noise-generating activities. Noise levels from construction activities are dominated by the loudest piece of construction equipment. The dominant noise source is typically the engine, although work piece noise (such as dropping of materials) can also be noticeable.

The noise produced at each construction phase is determined by combining the Leq contributions from the three loudest pieces of equipment used at a given time while accounting for the ongoing time variations of noise emissions (commonly referred to as the usage factor). Heavy equipment, such as a dozer or a loader, can have maximum, short-duration noise levels of up to 85 dBA at 50 feet. However, overall noise emissions vary considerably, depending on what specific activity is being performed at any given moment.

Noise attenuation due to distance, the number and type of equipment, and the load and power requirements to accomplish tasks at each construction phase would result in different noise levels from construction activities at a given receptor. Since noise from construction equipment is intermittent and diminishes at a rate of at least 6 dBA per doubling of distance (conservatively disregarding other attenuation effects from air absorption, ground effects, and shielding effects provided by intervening structures or existing solid walls), the average noise levels at noise-sensitive receptors could vary considerably, because mobile construction equipment would move around the site (site of each development phase) with different equipment mixes, loads, and power requirements.

The expected construction equipment mix was estimated and categorized by construction activity using the Federal Highway Administration Roadway Construction Model (RCNM). Assuming the nearest off-site sensitive receptor to the closest boundary for project construction activities, construction-related noise levels would be up to 70 dBA Leq at the residential uses to the south and west during grading and paving activities. Construction noise levels at receptors further away are estimated to be even less. The results are summarized in Table 10. Modeled construction noise levels are offset to account for existing noise walls shielding residential uses to the south and north of the Project Site.

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Table 10 Project-Related Construction Noise Level, dBA at the Nearest Receptors

Construction Activity Phase ¹	Noise Levels in dBA Leq				
	RCNM Reference Noise Level	Receptor to South ²	Receptor to East	Receptor to North ²	Receptor to West
Distance (feet)	50	190	295	200	265
Site Prep	81	66	65	64	66
Grading	84	70	69	67	70
Distance (feet)	50	235	285	400	630
Building Construction	79	63	64	56	57
Architectural Coating	77	60	62	54	55
Distance (feet)	50	100	150	175	335
Paving	79	70	69	63	62
Exceeds 80 dBA Leq Standard?		No	No	No	No

Source: FHWA's RCNM software. See Appendix E.

Note: Distance measurements were taken using Google Earth (2025) from the boundary of work areas to the nearest receptors (see Figure 4 for the boundaries of the work areas associated with the Proposed Project).

1. -3 dBA applied to account for existing property line wall.
2. -5 dBA applied to account for existing property line wall.

Receptors to the south and west would be exposed to temporary, periodic, short-term noise levels of up to 70 dBA Leq during grading and paving activities. The Proposed Project's construction activities would occur within the noise standard exempt time frame identified in Section 9.52.020 of the Riverside County Code of Ordinances, which are 6:00 am to 6:00 pm during the months of June through September, and 7:00 am to 6:00 pm during the months of October through May. The Proposed Project's construction activities would not exceed FTA's construction noise standard at residential uses (80 dBA Leq).

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Operational Off-Site Traffic Noise

A project will normally have a significant effect on the environment related to traffic noise if it substantially increases the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas. Most people can detect changes in sound levels of approximately 3 dBA under normal, quiet conditions, and changes of 1 dBA to 3 dBA under quiet, controlled conditions. Changes of less than 1 dBA are usually indiscernible. A significant impact would occur if the following traffic noise increases occur relative to the existing noise environment:

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- 1.5 dBA in ambient noise environments of 65 dBA CNEL and higher
- 3 dBA in ambient noise environments of 60 to 64 dBA CNEL
- 5 dBA in ambient noise environments of less than 60 dBA CNEL

Traffic volume data for the new trips associated with the Proposed Project are provided in the transportation study prepared for the Proposed Project (Appendix F). Per the transportation study, the Proposed Project is anticipated to increase existing daily trips by 2,724 new daily project associated trips, with 876 AM peak trips and 192 PM peak trips. The data provided in the transportation study presents the street and locations with scenarios for existing, existing with project conditions, 2029 no project, and 2029 with project conditions.

Vehicle traffic noise levels were estimated using the FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model. The FHWA model predicts noise levels through a series of adjustments to a reference sound level. These adjustments account for distances from the roadway, vehicle traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, car/truck mix, number of lanes, and road width. Table 11 shows modeled traffic noise levels and project-related traffic noise increases.

Table 11 Project-Related Increases in Traffic Noise, dBA CNEL at 50 Feet

Roadway	Segment		Average Daily Traffic Noise Levels, dBA CNEL					
	From	To	Existing	Existing With Project	Project Increase (Existing)	2029 No Project	2029 With Project	Project Increase (2029)
Brookside Avenue	Bellflower Ave	the West	64	65	1	64	66	1
N. Highland Springs Avenue	Brookside Ave	Cougar Way	68	69	1	68	69	1
N. Highland Springs Avenue	Cougar Way	Discovery Way	70	70	<1	70	70	<1

Source: FHWA Highway Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-108) in Appendix E. Based on traffic volumes provided in the transportation study (see Appendix F).

As demonstrated in Table 11, with the addition of project trips, noise levels along all analyzed roadway segments would increase by up to 1 dBA as a result of the Proposed Project. The addition of Proposed Project trips would be below the +1.5 dBA significance threshold for traffic noise increases over existing conditions. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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Parking Lot Noise Impacts

The residences located north of the Project Site, adjacent to Brookside Avenue, could be exposed to noise due to vehicles idling, doors opening and closing, and voices in the proposed parking lots on the north side of the Project Site (see Figure 4). These activities would occur for short periods of approximately 10 to 20 minutes during student drop-off in the morning and student pick-up midafternoon. However, these periods are short term and would occur only during the daytime.

Based on noise measurements conducted from a prior project by PlaceWorks, during student drop-off at an elementary school for a similar project, the average noise level measured 55 dBA Leq at 40 feet. The distance from the nearest school drop-off areas to the nearest residential receptor to the north (190 feet) would result in a combined school drop-off noise levels of 44 dBA Leq at the nearest residential property lines to the north, without accounting for the existing masonry walls of the residences to the north. The Proposed Project's parking lot noise would not exceed Riverside County exterior daytime or nighttime hourly noise standards of 65 dBA and 45 dBA Leq, respectively.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Playfield Noise

The Proposed Project would include playfields and hard courts, as shown in Figure 4, which would generate noise during the school day from children playing in the fields and courts. The nearest sensitive receptors to the proposed playfields would be the residences to the south approximately 125 feet from the nearest playfield. If the playfields were rented out by the District per the California Education Code 38130 (Civic Center Act) soccer games/practices would be a likely use of the fields. Soccer games/practices typically generate noise levels of 60 dBA Leq at 15 feet from the soccer field. This noise level is associated with two full soccer teams scrimmaging, coaches and referees, and approximately 40 spectators. At 125 feet, noise levels would attenuate to approximately 42 dBA Leq at the nearest residences to the south, without accounting for the existing masonry walls (which would remain) that line the entire stretch of the southern Project Site boundary. Noise from the playfields would not exceed Riverside County exterior daytime or nighttime hourly noise standards of 65 dBA and 45 dBA Leq, respectively. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Stationary Noise

The Proposed Project would include rooftop heating, ventilation, and cooling (HVAC) equipment for the proposed school buildings. Rooftop HVAC units could conservatively generate noise levels of up to 74 dBA at 5 feet. The nearest residential receptors would be approximately 275 feet to the north of the nearest project building with the potential for rooftop HVAC. Not accounting for rooftop parapets, HVAC noise levels at the residential receptors to the north would be approximately 39 dBA for a single HVAC unit and approximately 45 dBA for four units. This would

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not exceed Riverside County exterior daytime or nighttime hourly noise standards of 65 dBA and 45 dBA Leq, respectively. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

Potential vibration impacts associated with the Proposed Project are usually related to the use of heavy construction equipment. Construction can generate varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the construction procedures and equipment. The use of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish with distance from the source. The effect on buildings in the vicinity of the construction site varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and receptor-building construction. The effects from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibrations at moderate levels, to slight structural damage at the highest levels. Vibration from construction activities rarely reaches the levels that can damage structures.

Table 12 summarizes vibration levels for typical construction equipment at a reference distance of 25 feet. Typical construction equipment for the Proposed Project can generate vibration levels ranging up to 0.21 inches per second (in/sec) PPV at 25 feet. Vibration levels at a distance greater than 50 feet would attenuate to 0.074 in/sec PPV or less.

Table 12 Project-Related Construction Vibration Damage Levels

Equipment	Levels, PPV (in/sec)			
	FTA Reference at 25 Feet	Receptor to North 90 feet	Receptor to South 50 feet	Receptor to West 210 feet
Vibratory Roller	0.21	0.031	0.074	0.009
Large Bulldozer	0.089	0.013	0.031	0.004
Loaded Trucks	0.076	0.013	0.031	0.004
Jackhammer	0.035	0.011	0.027	0.003
Small Bulldozer	0.003	0.005	0.012	0.001
Exceed 0.2 in/sec PPV Standard?		No	No	No

Source: FTA 2018. See Appendix E.

Note: Distance measurements were conducted using Google Earth (2025) from the boundary of work areas to the nearest receptors.

Vibration levels at the nearest receptor 50 feet to the south of the Project Site would attenuate to 0.074 in/sec PPV. As shown in Table 12, the proposed construction activities would not exceed

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the 0.2 in/sec PPV FTA standard at any adjacent receptors to proposed construction vibration activity. In addition, as an educational land use, the Proposed Project would not include any new operational vibration sources.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

- c) *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the proposed project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

The nearest airport to the Project Site, Banning Municipal Airport, is approximately 5.75 miles to the southeast. The Project Site is located outside the 60 dBA CNEL noise contour for Banning Municipal Airport. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in increased exposure of people working at or visiting the Project Site to aircraft noise. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XIV. Population and Housing

Would the project:

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

DISCUSSION

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

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The Proposed Project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly. Directly, the Proposed Project involves the construction of a new public TK-8 school, which is intended to serve existing and anticipated students within the established district boundaries; it does not propose any new housing, commercial development, or other population-generating uses. Indirectly, the Proposed Project would connect to existing utility infrastructure along Brookside and N. Highland Springs Avenues, requiring only localized access and safety improvements, such as driveways, sidewalks, and curb/gutter within the public right-of-way, and no major extensions of roads, water, or sewer lines that would enable new development. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

The Proposed Project would not displace any people or housing, as the site is entirely vacant and contains no existing residential structures or occupants. No construction of replacement housing would be necessitated. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XV. Public Services

Would the project:

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

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DISCUSSION

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

Fire protection?

The Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) currently provides fire protection and emergency medical services to the Project Site and surrounding area via Battalion 3. RCFD services also include fire suppression, emergency medical, rescue, and fire prevention, and hazardous materials coordination services. There are 101 fire stations throughout Riverside County and 7 fire stations in Battalion 3. The nearest fire stations to the Project Site are Station 22 at 10055 Avenida MiraVilla, approximately 1.8 miles to the northwest, and Station 20 at 1550 E. 6th Street, approximately 2.05 miles south of the Project Site. RCFD also has mutual aid agreements with other nearby fire departments (RCFD 2026).

Project implementation could result in a slight increase in calls for fire protection and emergency medical service in the event that a fire or other emergency event occurs on site. However, considering the existing firefighting resources available in and near the service area covered by Battalion 3, impacts on fire protection and emergency services as a result of the Proposed Project are not expected to occur. Additionally, in the event of an emergency at the Project Site that required more resources than Fire Stations 20 and 22 could provide, RCFD would direct resources to the site from other stations nearby and, if needed, would request assistance from other nearby fire departments through their mutual aid agreements.

Project implementation is also not anticipated to impede or increase RCFD's response times to either the Project Site or the surrounding vicinity. Based on a review of Google Earth, travel time to the Project Site from Station 20 is approximately 6 minutes and from Station 22 is approximately 8 minutes. Additionally, the Project Site is an infill development site already served by RCFD; therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in an expansion of RCFD's service area.

Additionally, the District involves RCFD in the development review process to ensure necessary fire prevention, life safety, and emergency response features are incorporated. The Proposed Project would incorporate design features to minimize potential demand on RCFD and ensure a high level of safety. For example, all new buildings would be designed and constructed under the strict oversight of DSA for compliance with structural, fire, and life safety codes. The school would feature monitored fire sprinkler and alarm systems throughout. Also, new on-site water lines would be installed, and fire hydrants would be connected to these lines at locations required by RCFD to ensure adequate fire flow and distribution. The adequacy of water pressure and availability would be verified by RCFD during plan check review.

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Emergency vehicle access to the Project Site would be provided via the proposed driveways along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue, which connect to the internal drive aisle system. This system would be designed to serve as the required fire access and circulation network, providing necessary turning radii and clearance. Knox Boxes (or other approved emergency access systems) would be installed at secured gates to provide immediate access for emergency personnel. All site and building improvements related to fire safety and access would be subject to review and approval by RCFD and DSA.

Furthermore, development of the Proposed Project is required to comply with the most current adopted fire codes, building codes, and nationally recognized fire and life safety standards of the County and RCFD, which impose design standards and requirements that seek to minimize and mitigate fire risk. Compliance with these codes and standards is ensured through RCFD's and DSA's development review and building permit process.

Based on the preceding, the Proposed Project would not adversely affect RCFD's ability to provide adequate service and would not require new or expanded fire facilities that could result in adverse environmental impacts. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Police protection?

The Riverside County Sheriff's Department (RCSD) provides police service to the region, including the Project Site. RCSD is composed of the following divisions: coroner/public administrator, corrections operations, emergency operations division, major crimes bureau, media information bureau, patrol stations, project management office, recruiting, sheriff's court services, special enforcement bureau, special investigations bureau, support services, and 911 dispatch communications (RCSD 2024). The nearest sheriff station to the Project Site is the RCSD Southwest Station at 50290 Main Street in unincorporated Riverside County, approximately 9.88 miles southwest of the Project Site.

Project implementation could result in a slight increase in calls for police protection services. However, considering the existing police resources available in and near Riverside County, project impacts on police services (including response times) are not expected to occur. The Project Site is also an infill site already served by RCSD; therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in an expansion of their service area. Additionally, in the event of an emergency at the Project Site that required more resources than RCSD Southwest Station at 50290 Main Street could provide, RCSD would direct resources to the site from other local sheriff stations nearby and, if needed, would request assistance from other nearby police departments.

Furthermore, the District involves RCSD in the development review process in order to ensure that the necessary police protection features are incorporated into development projects. All site and building improvements proposed under the Proposed Project would be subject to review and approval by RCSD. For example, the Proposed Project would be designed with RCSD Standard Building Security Specifications and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

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principles, which include natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcements, and maintenance and management.

Based on the preceding, the Proposed Project would not adversely affect RCSD's ability to provide adequate service and would not require new or expanded police facilities that could result in adverse environmental impacts. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Schools?

Demand for schools in an area is usually determined by the area's population. The Proposed Project does not include the development of new homes, which lead to an increase in student generation and thereby, the need for additional school facilities. The Proposed Project would not induce population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly. The Proposed Project involves the development of a new TK-8 school. Project development would result in an improvement to the existing school services and facilities in the area, as it would provide a new school campus with new building spaces, a courtyard, and other support services for the future students, staff, and personnel of the proposed TK-8 School. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Parks?

See response to Section XVI.a. As substantiated in that section, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Other public facilities?

The need for new or the expansion of existing library services and facilities is tied to population growth. No residential development is proposed as a part of the Proposed Project, and project development is not expected to generate a need for new or additional library services or facilities. The Proposed Project involves development of a new TK-8 school. Students of the new school campus would also make use of and be served by the resources, facilities, and programs proposed on the new school campus, which include a library. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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XVI. Recreation

Would the project:

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

DISCUSSION

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

The Proposed Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or recreational facilities in a manner that would cause or accelerate substantial physical deterioration. The Proposed Project is a fully programmed school campus designed to accommodate all recreational needs of its students and staff on-site. It includes dedicated athletic facilities such as baseball and soccer fields, hard courts, playgrounds, a gymnasium, and a multipurpose room. This self-contained recreational design ensures that the operational demand generated by the school population would be internalized and would not transfer to nearby public parks. Consequently, the Proposed Project would not generate substantial new demand on existing off-site park and recreational facilities. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

As shown in Figure 4, the Proposed Project would feature a number of on-site amenities to serve the student population, including natural turf soccer and baseball fields, a dirt track, sports

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courts, courtyards, playfields, and playgrounds. The Proposed Project does not involve the construction or expansion of any recreational facilities beyond those proposed on-site to serve the future students and operations of the school. Additionally, the Proposed Project does not propose or require construction or expansion of any existing off-site recreational facilities within Riverside County. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XVII. Transportation

Would the project:

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

The analysis in this section is based partly on the following technical study, which is included as Appendix F to this Initial Study:

- Transportation Study, DJ&A, February 2026.

DISCUSSION

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

Following is a discussion of the Proposed Project's potential impacts on a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system. Specifically, the following discussion demonstrates that Project development would not conflict with nor preclude the County from implementing adopted programs, plans, and policies addressing the circulation system. The

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evaluation was conducted by reviewing County documents related to transportation: The Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and County Ordinance No. 726.

Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element: The Pass Area Plan

The Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element is focused on connecting growth centers at key locations throughout the County by expanding transportation choice in the County. While the element supports continuing programs to improve travel by cars and trucks, it provides guidance on expanding the options for transit and alternative modes of transportation such as pedestrian and bicycle mobility. As stated in the Circulation Element, the intent of the element is to establish a comprehensive multimodal transportation system that is safe, achievable, efficient, environmentally, and financially sound, and accessible (County of Riverside 2020).

According to the Riverside County General Plan, the Project Site is in the Pass Area Plan, which guides development, land use, and transportation. The Project Site is within the Cherry Valley Policy Area of the Pass Area Plan (Riverside County 2021). Policies of the General Plan and Area Plan levels implement the Riverside County Vision in a range of subject areas. Following is a discussion of how the Proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable components of the Circulation Element.

Vehicular Access and Circulation

As discussed in Section 2.3.4, *Access, Circulation, and Parking*, vehicular access to the Project Site would be provided via driveways along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue. The driveways would connect to the internal drive aisle system, which would connect to the internal parking areas, serve as the student drop-off/pick-up circulation feature (for both parents and school buses), and serve a part of the internal fire access and circulation system. The Pass Area identifies Brookside Avenue as a secondary 100-foot right-of-way (ROW) and N. Highland Springs Avenue as an Arterial (128-foot ROW).

Design and construction of the proposed driveways would be required to adhere to the District's design standards, which are imposed on school development projects during DSA's development review process. For example, all proposed driveways would provide sufficient driveway sight distance (Appendix F). There are no significant horizontal curves proposed along Brookside Avenue or N. Highland Springs Avenue in the vicinity of the Proposed Project driveway locations.

The Proposed Project Site plan includes three pick-up/drop-off areas. There are two proposed parent pick-up/drop-off areas, one accessed from Brookside Avenue, and one accessed from Highland Springs Avenue. The Brookside Avenue pick-up/drop-off area is over 500 feet long and the Highland Springs Avenue pick-up/drop-off area is over 800 feet long. The bus pick-up/drop-off is approximately 200 feet in length. These pick-up/drop-off areas are proposed to

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accommodate school activities on-site and to minimize queuing onto either Brookside Avenue or N. Highland Springs Avenue.

The City of Beaumont follows roadway design standards published by the County of Riverside (2023). County Standard Plan No. 208 requires that any non-residential driveway be at least 150 feet from the flow line of an intersecting street. Based on a review of the conceptual site plan for the school, all proposed driveways are more than 150 feet from the flow line of the Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue intersection. Later stages of site plan design should ensure that the project driveways remain a minimum 150 feet from an intersecting street.

While SB 743 has shifted the determination of CEQA impacts from levels of service (LOS) to vehicle miles traveled (VMT), LOS is still used by the City of Beaumont (per the City's Traffic Impact Analysis Study Guidelines) and the County of Riverside (per the Riverside County Traffic Impact Analysis Preparation Guidelines). LOS evaluation has been included for informational purposes only in the transportation study prepared for the Proposed Project (Appendix F).

The Proposed Project supports and implements the following policies of the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element, including but not limited to:

- **C-3.1.** Design, construct, and maintain Riverside County roadways as specified in the Riverside County Road Improvement Standards and Specifications. The standards shown in Figure C-4 may be modified by Specific Plans, Community Guidelines, or as approved by the Director of Transportation if alternative roadway standards are desirable to improve sustainability for the area.
- **C-3.6.** Require private developers to be primarily responsible for the improvement of streets and highways that serve as access to developing commercial, industrial, and residential areas. These may include road construction or widening, installation of turning lanes and traffic signals, and the improvement of any drainage facility or other auxiliary facility necessary for the safe and efficient movement of traffic or the protection of road facilities.
- **C-3.13.** Design street intersections, where appropriate, to assure the safe, efficient passage of through traffic and the negotiation of turning movements.
- **C-3.14.** Design curves and grades to permit safe movement of vehicular traffic at the road's design speed. Design speed should be consistent with and complement the character of the adjacent area.
- **C-3.15.** Provide adequate sight distances for safe vehicular movement at a road's design speed and at all intersections.

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Furthermore, the Proposed Project supports and implements the following policies of the Pass Area Plan Circulation Element:

- **PAP 10.1.** Design and develop the vehicular roadway system per Figure 7, Circulation, and in accordance with the Functional Classifications section of the General Plan Circulation Element.

Pedestrian and Alternative Modes of Transportation

As discussed in Section 2.3.4, *Access, Circulation, and Parking*, pedestrian and bicycle access to the Project Site would be provided via Brookside Avenue on the north and N. Highland Springs Avenue on the east. The Proposed Project's new public sidewalks would connect to the public sidewalks along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue via newly painted pedestrian crosswalks. In addition, school crossing guards would be stationed at the new crosswalks to ensure the safety of the students.

Under existing conditions, there are no sidewalks, crosswalks, bike-lines, or public transit services providing connections to the proposed school site. Existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities are limited, both adjacent to and near the Project Site, with sidewalks on Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue. There are no existing striped, on-street bike lanes in the vicinity of the Project Site. However, existing low-speed streets where cyclists are permitted to ride in the street or on the sidewalks are already provided abutting and surrounding the Project Site and surrounding properties. Furthermore, Section 21100(h) of the California Vehicle Code allows bicyclists to ride on sidewalks. Recommendations outlined in the Transportation Study were incorporated into the Proposed Project's design (Appendix F).

Additionally, project implementation would include bicycle parking spaces on-site in accordance with CALGreen standards. The bicycle racks would be placed in designated areas near the entrance of the proposed school building. The bicycle racks and storage would be for school employees and students.

The Proposed Project supports and implements the following policies of the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element:

- **C 1.2.** Support development of a variety of transportation options for major employment and activity centers including direct access to transit routes, primary arterial highways, bikeways, park-n-ride facilities, and pedestrian facilities.
- **C 1.7.** Encourage and support the development of projects that facilitate and enhance the use of alternative modes of transportation, including pedestrian-oriented retail and activity centers, dedicated bicycle lanes and paths, and mixed-use community centers.

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- **C-4.1.** Provide facilities for the safe movement of pedestrians within developments, as specified in the Riverside County Ordinances Regulating the Division of Land of the County of Riverside.
- **C 4.9.** Review all existing roadways without pedestrian facilities when they are considered for improvements to determine if new pedestrian facilities are warranted. New roadways should also be assessed for pedestrian facilities.
- **C 17.4.** Ensure that alternative modes of motorized transportation, such as buses, trains, taxi cabs, etc., plan and provide for transportation of recreational and commuting bicyclists and bicycles on public transportation systems. Coordinate with all transit operators to ensure that bicycle facilities are provided along and/or near all transit routes, whenever feasible. New land developments shall be required to provide bicycle facilities to existing or future planned transit routes.

Furthermore, the Proposed Project supports and implements the following policies of the Pass Area Plan Circulation Element:

- **PAP 11.1.** Design and develop the vehicular roadway system per Figure 7, Circulation, and in accordance with the Functional Classifications section of the General Plan Circulation Element Implement the Trails and Bikeway System, Figure 8, as discussed in the Non-motorized Transportation section of the General Plan Circulation Element.

Conclusion

As demonstrated above, Project development would not conflict with any components of the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element or the Pass Area Plan, including the principals, goals, or policies. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

On September 27, 2013, SB 743 started a process that fundamentally changed transportation impact analyses as part of CEQA compliance. SB 743 eliminated auto delay, LOS, and other similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as the sole basis for determining significant impacts under CEQA. As part of the current CEQA Guidelines, the criteria “shall promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses” (Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1)). Pursuant to SB 743, the California Natural Resources Agency adopted revisions to the CEQA Guidelines on December 28, 2018, to implement SB 743. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 describes how transportation impacts are to be analyzed after SB 743. Under the Guidelines, metrics related to “VMT” were

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required beginning July 1, 2020, to evaluate the significance of transportation impacts under CEQA for development projects, land use plans, and transportation infrastructure projects. State courts ruled that under the Public Resources Code Section 21099, subdivision (b)(2), “automobile delay, as described solely by level of service or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment” under CEQA, except for roadway capacity projects. The guidelines establish that proposed development projects with one or more of the following attributes may be exempt from a full VMT Analysis:

- **Criteria 1:** Project is in a Transit Priority Area (TPA). The Project Site is within 0.5 mile of a TPA, which includes a major transit stop or an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor.
- **Criteria 2:** Project is in a Low VMT Area. A low VMT area is defined as an individual traffic analysis zone where total daily Origin/Destination VMT per service population is 15 percent or less than the city average total daily Origin/Destination VMT per service population.
- **Criteria 3:** Project Type Screening. Projects for the following land uses can be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact:
 - Local-serving K-12 public schools
 - Local-serving parks and daycare centers
 - Local-serving retail uses less than 50,000 square feet
 - Local-serving hotels (e.g., non-destination hotels)
 - Local-serving student housing projects
 - Local-serving assembly uses (places of worship, community organizations)
 - Community institutions (public libraries, fire stations, local government)
 - Affordable, supportive, or transitional housing
 - Assisted living facilities
 - Senior housing (as defined by HUD)
 - Projects generating less than 836 daily VMT

As a TK-8 school, the Proposed Project would be eligible to be screened out from the need for a full project-level VMT analysis under Criteria 3 of the screening process since the Proposed Project is a local-serving K-8 school. No additional VMT analysis is required for the Proposed Project. As a local serving land use, the Proposed Project is anticipated to have a **less-than-significant** impact related to VMT, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

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The Project Site is vacant and contains no driveways or roadways on the site. The proposed access and circulation are discussed in Section 2.3.4, *Access, Circulation, and Parking*, and would include driveways along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue. The driveways would connect to the internal drive aisle system, which would connect to the internal parking areas, serve as the student drop-off/pick-up circulation feature (for both parents and school buses), and serve a part of the internal fire access and circulation system. As discussed in Section XVII.a, the Proposed Project would provide adequate sight distance, which is the continuous length of roadway visible to a driver.

Additionally, as a part of the Proposed Project, several roadway improvements would be implemented along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Avenue, which are public streets that are owned and maintained by Riverside County. However, coordination with Riverside County is recommended to address roadway improvements associated with LOS impacts. As previously discussed, LOS evaluation has been included in Appendix F for informational purposes and is not a CEQA threshold.

DSA and RCFD have adopted design standards that preclude the construction of any unsafe roadway, circulation, or access design features for school developments. Design and construction of the proposed access and circulation improvements would be required to adhere to DSA standards and RCFD's Technical Policies and Standards, which are imposed on development projects during DSA's development review process. Compliance with the established design standards would ensure that hazards due to design features would not occur, and that the placement of the vehicular access and circulation improvements would not create a conflict for motorists, pedestrians, or bicyclists traveling within or around the Project Site.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

d) *Would the proposed project result in inadequate emergency access?*

Access to the Project Site would be provided via new access driveways from Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue. As discussed in Section 2.3.4, *Access, Circulation, and Parking*, the driveways would connect to the internal drive aisle system to internal parking areas and student drop-off/pick-up areas and would serve a part of the internal fire access and circulation system. As discussed in Section XVII.c, all driveways and internal drive isles (including fire lanes) would be designed to provide adequate sight distance and not present any geometric design hazards.

To ensure adequate emergency and fire access, project improvements would be designed in compliance with applicable County, RCFD, CBC, and DSA standards (e.g., minimum lane width and turning radius).

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Additionally, DSA would review plans, specifications, and construction to confirm compliance with fire and life safety standards, including roadway requirements for emergency vehicles. Further, DSA, Riverside County and RCFD would review and approve new driveway connections to the public rights-of-way. With these measures in place, emergency vehicles would have adequate access to all areas of the Project Site.

Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with emergency access. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the project:

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☒	☐

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DISCUSSION

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

- i) **Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or**

The Project Site does not contain a known tribal cultural resource that is listed in the California Register of Historical Resource or in a local register of historical resources (NPS 2025; OHP 2026). Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k) defines local register of historical resources as a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution. There is also no local ordinance or resolution that identifies the Project Site containing a tribal cultural resource that also constitutes a historical resource. **No impact** related to tribal cultural resources that are listed or eligible for listing on the CRHR or local register would occur, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

- ii) **A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe**

The provisions of CEQA, PRC Sections 21080.3.1 et seq. (also known as AB 52), require meaningful consultation with California Native American tribes on potential impacts to tribal cultural resources. As defined in PRC Section 21074, tribal cultural resources are sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe.

As part of the AB 52 process, a Native American tribe must submit a written request to the relevant lead agency if it wishes to be notified of projects that require CEQA public noticing and are within its traditionally and culturally affiliated geographical area. The lead agency must provide written, formal notification to the tribes that have requested it within 14 days of determining that a project application is complete or deciding to undertake a project. The tribe must respond to the lead agency within 30 days of receipt of the notification if it wishes to engage in consultation on the project, and the lead agency must begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving the request for consultation. Consultation concludes

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when either 1): the parties agree to mitigation measures to avoid a significant effect, if one exists, on a tribal cultural resource, or 2) a party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached. AB 52 also addresses confidentiality during tribal consultation per PRC Section 21082.3(c).

In accordance with the provisions of AB 52, on December 9, 2025, the District sent letters to the following tribes: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cahuilla Band of Indians, Fort Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe, Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla and Cupeno Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Ramona Band of Cahuilla, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, Serrano Nation of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, and Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation. The 30-day noticing requirement under AB 52 concluded on January 7, 2026 (approximately 30 days from the date the tribes received the notification letter).

Four of the 13 tribes notified, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, Ft. Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe, and Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation responded to the District's consultation letters. One of the tribes, Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians (Tribe), responded and requested consultation; the other three tribes declined consultation. The District and Tribe conducted a virtual tribal consultation meeting on January 8, 2026. Subsequent to the virtual meeting, the Tribe submitted a letter to the District that the Tribe concluded their consultation and did not request any mitigation measures or further information or meetings. Therefore, pursuant to the requirements under AB 52, the District completed its tribal consultation process.

Additionally, an NAHC Sacred Lands File search for the Project Site yielded negative results, indicating no formally recorded sacred sites or traditional cultural places. Furthermore, the intensive cultural resources survey conducted for the Project Site as a part of the cultural resources assessment identified no surface-level tribal cultural resources (Appendix C).

Furthermore, in the unlikely event that tribal cultural resources, including human remains, are uncovered during ground-disturbing activities, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 require that disturbance of the site shall remain halted until the Riverside County Coroner has conducted an investigation. If the remains are determined to be Native American, NAHC will be contacted to identify the Most Likely Descendant for recommendations on treatment. Mitigation Measure CUL-2 formalizes these required procedures in the project specifications.

Based on the preceding, impacts on tribal cultural resources would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

Would the project:

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

DISCUSSION

- a) *Would the proposed project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

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Water Supply Facilities

No water delivery service is provided to the Project Site under existing conditions as it is currently vacant and undeveloped. The Project Site is outside of the water delivery service area of Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District. Therefore, the District would coordinate with BCVWD to provide water delivery service to the Project Site, which would require LAFCO annexation of the Project Site into BCVWD's service area and issuance of a water will serve letter from BCVWD. The LAFCO process would be a District-driven action that would allow BCVWD to annex the Project Site into its service area and allow BCVWD to provide water delivery service to the Project Site. Upon annexation, BCVWD would provide water service to the Project Site.

BCVWD relies on surface water imported from the State Water Project, groundwater pumped from the Beaumont Groundwater Basin, and non-potable untreated surface water and groundwater that can be used for recycling purposes (BCVWD 2021). BCVWD's service area covers approximately 28 square miles and includes the unincorporated community of Cherry Valley (BCVWD 2021).

There is currently no existing water demand at the Project Site because the land is undeveloped and barren. Water demand estimates with implementation of the Proposed Project are included in Table 13. As shown in the table, the Proposed Project would result in 5,301 gallons per day (GPD) (or 5.94 acre-feet per year [AFY]) of water demand. This is well within BCVWD's forecast water surplus of 5,606 AF for 2045 and projected increase in water demand of 3,731 AFY between 2025 and 2045 (BCVWD 2021). Accordingly, the Proposed Project would not substantially affect BCVWD's long-term water supply reliability for normal years.

Table 13 **Proposed Water Demands**

Proposed Use	Outdoor Irrigated Area (SF)	Outdoor Water Generation Rate (GPD/SF) ¹	Outdoor Water Use (GPD)	Building Area (SF)	Indoor Water Generation Rate (GPD/SF)¹	Indoor Water Demand (GPD)	Total Water Use (GPD)
School Facilities	65,340	0.024	1,607	102,611	0.036	3,694	5,301

Source: BCVWD 2021; Banning 2012.

1. Outdoor non-potable water demand for the school facilities was estimated based on the approved landscape plans. The total irrigated area was converted using an assumed demand factor of 1.2 acre-feet per year per acre (AFY/A) and converted to gallons per day per square foot for consistency with project calculations.

2. The potable indoor water use factor of 1.76 AFY/A for schools is derived from the City of Banning's Public Facilities water demand factor. Although the Project Site is located within the Cherry Valley, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District does not publish a specific potable water demand factor for school uses in its Urban Water Management Plan or Water Master Plan. Therefore, the City of Banning factor was applied as the nearest jurisdictional proxy within the same service region and hydrologic setting. The Banning factor is considered appropriate and conservative for planning-level analysis because both cities are served by the same regional water supply conditions and exhibit comparable institutional land use characteristics.

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The Proposed Project would require new on-site water infrastructure to connect to the existing potable water mains within Brookside Avenue and Highland Springs Avenue. However, no new off-site water supply, treatment, or major transmission facilities would be required. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not require or result in the construction of new or expanded water supply facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. Additionally, the Proposed Project would be required to comply with state and local water conservation regulations, including CALGreen requirements for indoor water use reductions and site-specific irrigation efficiency measures, as well as the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinances that mandate water-saving landscaping practices. The District would also pay connection fees to support system maintenance and capital improvements necessary to serve new growth.

BCVWD's 2020 UWMP identifies shortfalls in supply due to single and multiple consecutive dry years and identifies the management strategies to ensure a reliable supply despite the shortfalls (BCVWD 2021). The Proposed Project's increase in water demand is nominal (5.94 AFY) compared to the total water demand of 19,988 AFY in 2045. The BCVWD's 2020 UWMP shows that BCVWD has a surplus of water supplies during normal years through the year 2045. However, during single dry years and multiple dry years, BCVWD would need to implement the Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) to ensure that all its customer needs can be met. The WSCP outlines the required demand reduction actions during various stages and discusses how BCVWD would implement said actions to minimize shortfalls between available supplies and demands. BCVWD anticipates demand reductions of up to 40 percent of normal demands during extreme water supply shortages (BCVWD 2021).

Although the Proposed Project would require the construction of new water pipelines within the Project Site, the pipelines would connect to the existing water infrastructure in the adjacent streets. No new or expanded water infrastructure or water treatment facilities would be required, and impacts would be **less than significant**. No mitigation measures are necessary.

Wastewater Collection, Conveyance, and Treatment Facilities

Wastewater collection and conveyance service is not currently provided to the Project Site under existing conditions as it is vacant and undeveloped. The District is seeking two options for wastewater service. Option One and the preferred option is for the City of Beaumont to provide wastewater service to the Project Site. This is also the preferred option for the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health, which oversees wastewater service in the unincorporated areas of the county and requires that project proponents connect to an existing wastewater provider's infrastructure if it is within 200 feet of the infrastructure. Since there is a sewer main in Brookside Avenue (which is approximately 10 feet from the northern Project Site boundary) that is owned, operated and maintained by the City of Beaumont, the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health has requested that the District connect to the City's sewer main and in doing so, the City would provide wastewater service to the Project Site.

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The Project Site is outside of the wastewater service area of the City of Beaumont. Therefore, and in response to the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health's request, under Option One the District would coordinate with the City of Beaumont to provide wastewater conveyance service to the Project Site, which would require LAFCO annexation of the Project Site into the City of Beaumont's service area and issuance of a wastewater will serve letter from the City. The LAFCO process would be a District-driven action that would allow the City to annex the Project Site into its service area and provide wastewater service to the Project Site.

If annexed, the City of Beaumont would provide wastewater collection and conveyance service to the Project Site. As part of the Proposed Project and under Option One, new on-site sewer lines would connect to the existing sewer main in Brookside Avenue. No off-site sewer line construction or upsizing would be required to accommodate the Proposed Project. However, some construction would occur within the public right-of-way of Brookside Avenue to make the necessary infrastructure connections to the existing sewer main. The proposed wastewater system improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with the City of Beaumont standards and would require City approval. Under Option One, the City of Beaumont would provide wastewater collection and conveyance service to the Project Site. The City of Beaumont's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) No. 1 has a current permitted capacity of six million gallons per day (MGD) (RWQCB 2023). Wastewater generation estimates under the Proposed Project are included in Table 14. As shown in the table, the Proposed Project would result in an increase of 2,768 GPD or 0.003 MGD.

Table 14 Proposed Wastewater Generation

Proposed Use, Building Area (SF)	Rate (GPD/SF)¹	Projected Wastewater (GPD)	Projected Wastewater (MGPD)
102,611	0.027	2,768	0.003

Source: Beaumont 2021.

1. The Public Facilities wastewater unit factor is 1,175 gallons per day per acre listed on Table 3.3, Wastewater Unit Factors for Projecting Future Flows, in the City's Wastewater Master Plan.

The WWTP has a permitted treatment capacity of about 6.0 MGD under its current NPDES permit (Order No. R8-2022-0042). The Proposed Project would result in less than 0.1 percent of the current permitted capacity. In addition, the Proposed Project would include the installation of low flow plumbing fixtures that are required by the CALGreen, further reducing the Proposed Project's wastewater generation.

As a part of the Proposed Project and under Option One, new on-site sewer infrastructure would be installed and connect to the existing 8-inch sewer main along Brookside Avenue (Beaumont 2021). No new or expanded municipal sewer lines would be required to accommodate the Proposed Project. However, some construction would occur within the public right-of-way of

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Brookside Avenue or N. Highland Springs Avenue to make the necessary infrastructure connections to the existing sewer main. The proposed wastewater system improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with the City of Beaumont standards and would require approval from the City Engineer. No new or expanded wastewater infrastructure or wastewater treatment facilities would be needed with implementation of the Proposed Project.

Alternatively, and if the City of Beaumont determines that it cannot provide wastewater service to the Project Site, the District would proceed with Option Two, which would require the District to provide an advanced treatment system on-site in the form of an OWTS for the Proposed Project. The OWTS would be required to be designed, constructed, installed, and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the County of Riverside's LAMP, which outlines the specific requirements and regulations for installation and operation of an OWTS. The LAMP allows for the use of OWTS within the jurisdiction of Riverside County while protecting water quality and public health. The LAMP helps protect groundwater sources and surface water bodies from contamination by providing standards for the proper design, placement, installation, maintenance, and assessment of an OWTS (RCDEH 2024).

Therefore, under either option, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Stormwater Drainage Facilities

Impacts related to storm drainage facilities were previously addressed in Section X.c.iii. The Proposed Project would comply with the post-construction requirements of the CGP issued by the SWRCB. Site design, source control, and treatment BMPs would be incorporated to treat stormwater prior to discharge into Riverside County's existing drainage system and to reduce peak runoff flows to pre-project levels.

During construction, the District's construction contractor would prepare and implement a SWPPP, which would include erosion and sediment control measures to minimize pollutant discharge from the site. During operation, permanent BMPs would minimize runoff volume and associated pollutant loading through detention, infiltration, and water quality treatment features. Also, part of the roadway improvements proposed along Brookside Avenue and N. Highland Springs Avenue would include curb and gutter improvements. In addition, the natural drainage feature along the western boundary of the Project Site would be preserved and a 50-foot buffer would be maintained along its entire length.

With implementation of these measures, the Proposed Project would not substantially increase the rate or volume of stormwater runoff in a manner that would result in flooding or exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm drain facilities. Therefore, impacts related to stormwater drainage systems would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures would be required.

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Electricity and Natural Gas Services and Facilities

Electrical and Natural Gas Energy

As shown in Table 5, *Electricity and Natural Gas Consumption*, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in 818,648 kilowatt hours of electricity use per year and 2,456,552 kilo-British thermal units per year of natural gas usage.

Electrical service to the Project Site would be provided by SCE. Total electricity consumption in SCE's service area was approximately 79,341 gigawatt-hours (GWh) in 2024 (CEC 2026a). The increase due to the Proposed Project is approximately 0.1 percent of the total electricity consumption for SCE in 2024 of 79,341 GWh.

Natural gas service would be through SoCalGas. Total natural gas consumption in SoCalGas's service area was approximately 4,959 million of therms in 2024 (CEC 2026b). Natural gas service is provided by SoCalGas through connections to existing off-site natural gas pipelines and new on-site infrastructure. The increase due to the Proposed Project is less than 0.1 percent of the total natural gas consumption for SoCalGas in 2024 of 4,959 million of therms.

Development associated with the Proposed Project would also be built to meet the latest Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen, which would improve building energy efficiency performance for electricity and natural gas use when compared to existing development in the region. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Project would result in a **less than significant** impact related to electricity and natural gas and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Telecommunication Facilities

Telecommunications services for the District include contracted voice communications through Verizon Communications, with the District using Verizon-provided VoIP telephone service at its Educational Support Facility (District Office) under a monthly recurring or contract arrangement. Current District telephone service is delivered through Verizon, and the District owns its handsets and manages the system to accommodate needs such as voicemail, call forwarding, and other features as part of its telecommunications infrastructure plan (BUSD 2016).

Telecommunication facilities for the Project Site would be provided through connection to the existing telecommunications infrastructure in the vicinity of the Project Site. Required extensions or connections would utilize existing rights-of-way and established network facilities. As a result, potential impacts related to the expansion of telecommunications services associated with the Proposed Project are considered **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

- b) ***Would the proposed project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?***

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As previously substantiated in XIX.a, BCVWD has sufficient water supplies to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

- c) ***Would the proposed project result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?***

As previously substantiated in XIX.a, there is existing wastewater treatment capacity in the WWTP for the Proposed Project's estimated wastewater generation. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

- d) ***Would the proposed project generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?***

The District contracts solid waste and recycling with Waste Management Collection & Recycling Inc. (WM), which would then provide solid waste collection services to the Project Site (BUSD 2025). Solid waste generated by the Proposed Project would be transported to the Lamb Canyon Landfill, which is operated by Riverside County. Disposal data for the landfill is shown in Table 15. As shown in the table, the landfill has a Residual Disposal Capacity of 3,264 tons per day.

Table 15 Landfill Capacity

Landfill	Maximum Permitted Throughput (tons/day)	Average Disposal (tons/day) ¹	Residual Disposal Capacity (tons/day) ²	Remaining Capacity, (cubic yards)	Estimated Closing Year
Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill 16411 State Hwy 79 Beaumont, CA 92223	5,000	1,736	3,264	14,540,000	4/1/2032

Source: CalRecycle 2024;2025a.

1. The 2024 disposal rate represents the amount of waste landfilled at the Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill, which was reported as 607,583 tons for the year. Dividing this annual total by 350 operating days (accounting for holidays) results in an average daily disposal rate of approximately 1,736 tons per day.
2. The residual daily disposal capacity is the difference between the maximum permitted daily capacity of 5,000 tons/day and the 2024 daily disposal rate of 1,736 tons/day

Based on the building square footages, the Proposed Project is estimated to generate a net increase of about 718 pounds per day (0.34 tons per day) of solid waste, as shown in Table 16.

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Table 16 Proposed Project Solid Waste Generation

School Buildings (SF)	Generation Rate (ponds/SF/day)	Proposed Project Solid Waste Generation (pounds/day)	Proposed Project Solid Waste Generation (tons/day)
102,611	0.007	718	0.34

Source: CalRecycle 2025b.

Notes: SF = square feet

As demonstrated in Table 15, there is adequate landfill capacity in the region for the Proposed Project's forecast solid waste disposal, and project development would not require additional landfill capacity at the landfill(s) serving Beaumont. Additionally, the total amount of solid waste expected to be generated under the Proposed Project would be minimal compared to the residual daily disposal capacity of the landfills.

Furthermore, substantial reductions in solid waste from construction materials can be achieved through recycling, reuse, and diversion programs. CALGreen Section 5.408, Construction Waste Reduction, Disposal and Recycling, mandates recycling and/or salvaging for reuse a minimum of 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste. The Proposed Project would comply with CALGreen's goal of reusing or recycling the Proposed Project's construction waste.

Based on the preceding, impacts on landfill capacity would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

e) *Would the proposed project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

Solid waste would be generated during construction and operation of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would comply with all regulations pertaining to solid waste, such as the California Integrated Waste Management Act and local recycling and waste programs. The Proposed Project would comply with all applicable laws and regulations and make every effort to reuse and/or recycle the construction debris that would otherwise be taken to a landfill. Section 5.408 of CALGreen requires that at least 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from nonresidential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. Hazardous waste, such as paint used during construction, would be disposed of only at facilities permitted to receive it in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations. The Proposed Project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste disposal. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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XX. Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

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

Wildland fire protection in California is the responsibility of the local, state, or federal government. State Responsibility Areas (SRA) are where the State of California has the primary financial responsibility for the prevention and suppression of wildland fires. The SRA forms one large area over 31 million acres, for which the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) provides wildland fire prevention and protection services.

Local responsibility areas (LRA) include incorporated cities, cultivated agriculture lands, and portions of the desert. LRA fire protection is typically provided by city fire departments, fire protection districts, counties, and CAL FIRE under contract to local governments. CAL FIRE uses an extension of the SRA Fire Hazard Severity Zone model as the basis for evaluating fire hazard in LRAs. The local responsibility area hazard rating reflects flame and ember intrusion from adjacent wildlands and from flammable vegetation in the urban area. Riverside County Fire Department

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Office of Emergency Services currently provides fire protection and emergency medical services to Riverside County.

Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) are identified by Moderate, High and Very High in an SRA, and Very High in an LRA. The Project Site is not in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The closest very high FHSZ that is mapped by CAL FIRE in an SRA is 0.19 mile northeast (RCFD 2026); in the LRA, the closest very high FHSZ is approximately 0.42 mile north of the Project Site (CAL FIRE 2026). Land between the edge of the nearest FHSZ and the Project Site is open space and residential development.

DISCUSSION

a) *Would the proposed project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

The Proposed Project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The Proposed Project is a public school, which by its nature requires and will be designed with a site-specific emergency operations plan that will be coordinated with RCFD and other local emergency responders. As detailed in the project description and design, the Proposed Project would incorporate required emergency access features, including dedicated fire lanes within the internal drive aisle system, multiple access points from public roadways, and the installation of fire hydrants connected to an adequate water supply. These features would be reviewed and approved by RCFD and DSA as part of the plan check and permitting process.

Additionally, the Proposed Project would not alter regional transportation networks or block existing emergency routes. It introduces a defined, managed facility whose emergency plans will be integrated into the broader community response framework.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

b) *Would the proposed project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

The Proposed Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks or expose occupants to substantial new risks from wildfire spread or pollutant concentrations. The Project Site is in an area of flat topography with gentle slopes, which does not promote rapid wildfire spread like steep terrain. The Proposed Project would transform the currently vacant site that is covered in ruderal vegetation into a maintained school campus, constituting a significant fuel modification. This change replaces continuous dry vegetation with irrigated landscaping, non-combustible buildings, hardscape, and athletic fields, thereby reducing the available fuel load on the site itself. The new school would be constructed to current, stringent building codes under the review of DSA, incorporating fire-resistive materials and site design that includes perimeter setbacks for

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defensible space. Furthermore, the Proposed Project includes designed emergency vehicle access and a new on-site water system with fire hydrants, as required and approved by RCFD, ensuring adequate infrastructure for firefighting.

While the region experiences seasonal winds, the Proposed Project does not alter regional wind patterns, and the site's flatness combined with the fuel reduction inherent in development mitigates wind-driven fire risk relative to the existing condition. Consequently, the Proposed Project replaces a wildland fuel source with a managed, low-fuel-intensity institutional use and does not create a new wildfire hazard.

Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

c) *Would the proposed project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

The Proposed Project involves the construction of new on-site infrastructure, including access driveways, a water distribution system with fire hydrants, and underground utility connections. This infrastructure is designed to reduce fire risk, not exacerbate it. The on-site water lines and hydrants will create a dedicated emergency water source to serve the new school campus, enhancing firefighting capability. Access roads and drive aisles are designed to double as necessary fire lanes, improving emergency response over the existing vacant condition. All new electrical and telecommunications lines would be installed underground, eliminating the fire risk associated with overhead power lines. The utility connections to Brookside and N. Highland Springs Avenues would be made within the existing public right-of-way to existing mains, requiring no significant off-site extensions that could create new fuel breaks or disturbances in wildland areas.

While construction of this infrastructure would result in temporary, localized environmental impacts (e.g., grading, trenching, dust), these are typical of development projects and would be mitigated through standard construction best management practices as analyzed in other sections of this Initial Study. The operation and maintenance of this infrastructure are intrinsic to the school's function and would not create ongoing impacts that exacerbate wildfire risk or cause significant environmental harm.

Therefore, the impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

d) *Would the proposed project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?*

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The Project Site is described as having flat topography with gentle slopes draining to the south/southwest, and it is not located in a mapped flood hazard zone. The Proposed Project would implement a comprehensive, engineered on-site drainage collection, conveyance, and treatment system designed to manage stormwater runoff from the newly developed campus. This system is intended to control the rate and improve the quality of runoff, mitigating changes to pre-existing drainage patterns. The design will comply with all Riverside County standards and will be subject to review and approval by the County's Public Works department (for public right-of-way areas) and DSA.

As addressed previously, the Proposed Project does not exacerbate wildfire risks, and the Project Site's flat terrain is not prone to post-fire slope instability or landslides. The proposed drainage improvements are intended to reduce potential flooding risks by managing increased impervious surface runoff through controlled infrastructure. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not expose occupants or adjacent properties to significant new risks from flooding or slope instability. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐

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Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

DISCUSSION

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

As substantiated in Section 3.IV, *Biological Resources*, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in an impact on biological resources. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, impacts to biological resources would be reduced to a level of less than significant.

As substantiated in Section 3.V, *Cultural Resources*, no historic resources were identified on the project site. However, project-related ground-disturbing activities (e.g., grading and excavation) have the potential to reveal unknown buried cultural deposits. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Furthermore, project-related ground-disturbing activities (e.g., grading and excavation) have the potential to reveal unknown buried paleontological resources. However, as substantiated in Section 3.VII, *Geology and Soils*, impacts to paleontological resources were deemed to be **less than significant** with implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1.

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

The issues relevant to the proposed project development are confined to the immediate project site. Additionally, the Project Site is in an area of the county where supporting utility infrastructure (e.g., electricity, natural gas, and drainage) and services (e.g., solid waste collection) currently exist. Project implementation would not require the construction of new or expansion of utility infrastructure for water, sewer, electricity, or natural gas as no such services or facilities are needed to support the proposed project.

Furthermore, impacts related to other topical areas such as air quality, GHG, hydrology and water quality, and traffic would not be cumulatively considerable with development of the Proposed Project in conjunction with other cumulative projects, as analyzed in this Initial Study.

In consideration of the preceding factors, the Proposed Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be rendered **less than significant**; therefore, project impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

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

As substantiated in the respective topical sections of this Initial Study, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts in the areas of air quality, GHG, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, or wildfire, which may cause adverse effects on human beings. Therefore, impacts related to these environmental effects were deemed less than significant.

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