COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

Planning and Development

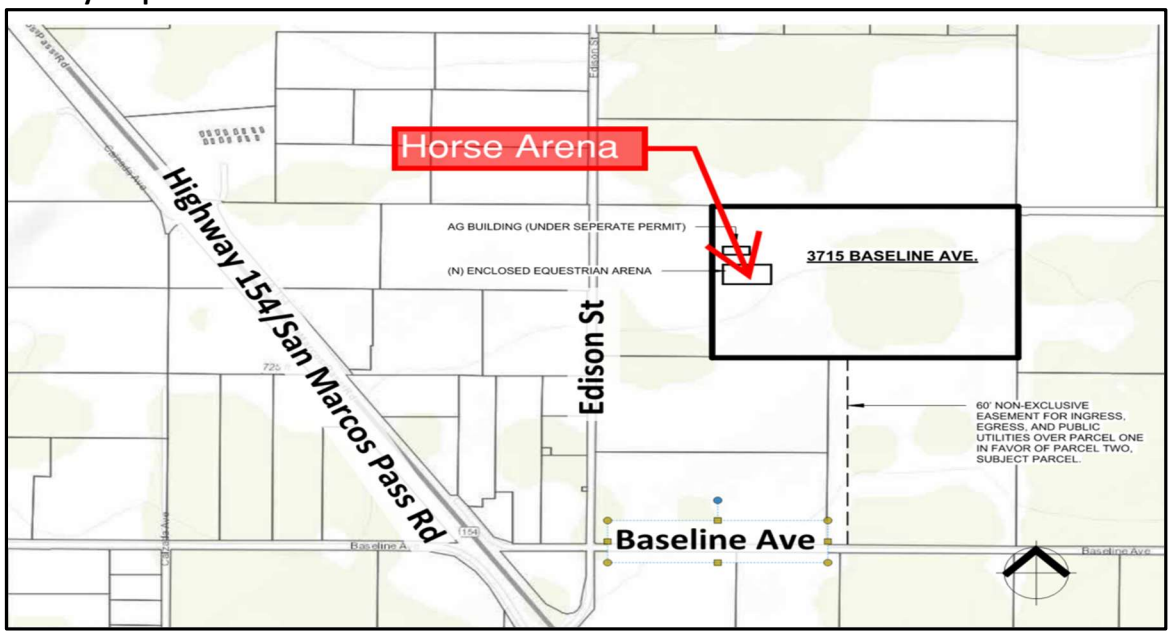
# Mitigated Negative Declaration

## Landon Equestrian Arena

## Case Nos. 24DVP-00035 and 26NGD-00001

## May 26, 2026

**Vicinity Map**




tions


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# 1.0 REQUEST/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a request for a Development Plan (Case No. 24DVP-00035) to allow construction of a new 45,000-gross-square-foot (gsf) enclosed equestrian arena (see Figure 1. Arena Elevations). The proposed project also includes a request for a Land Use Permit (Case No. 26LUP-00055) to incorporate the arena as an expansion of the existing equestrian facilities. The requested Development Plan and associated equestrian facility operation will include a new 300-gsf water well pump house for fire suppression and a new 22,000-sf stormwater retention basin. The proposed Development Plan includes a request for a waiver to allow unimproved, unmarked/unstriped parking areas within the AG-II Zone District (pursuant to LUDC Section 35.36.090.B.2.). Grading for the equestrian facility will include 702 cubic yards (cy) of cut, 891 cy of fill, and 189 cy net import of fill. No trees are proposed for removal. The equestrian facility will be open daily from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and available to private clients for horse training, breeding and boarding. The facility will not be open to the general public. The facility operation will include seven full-time employees. Two of the employees will live on the subject property in two existing permitted Agricultural Employee Dwellings. The expanded equestrian facility will be served by a new private on-site wastewater treatment system and the existing single-parcel domestic and agricultural water system with private well. The Proposed Project be all-electric with no natural gas hookups, and will retain Central Coast Community Energy as the energy provider or otherwise utilize 100% carbon free electricity. The Proposed Project will commit to the use of electrified off-road landscaping equipment for ongoing operations and maintenance. The Proposed Project will provide dedicated space for organic waste and recycling receptacles and implement a Solid Waste Management Plan (including posting of educational signage) to sort and collect recyclables and organic waste.

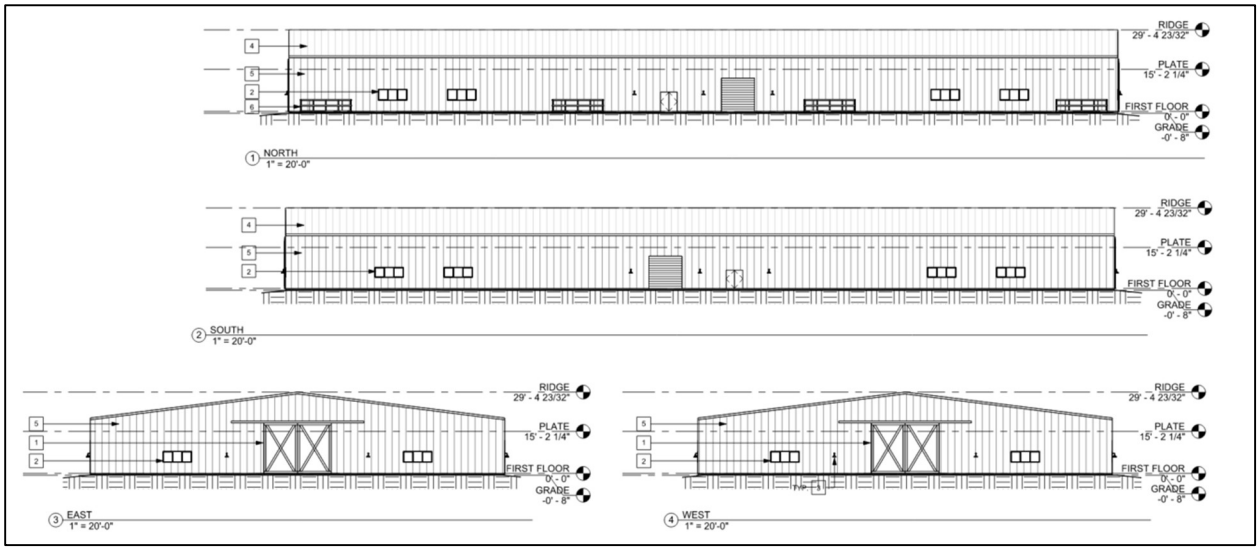



**FIGURE 1 ARENA ELEVATIONS**

# 2.0 PROJECT LOCATION

| **2.1 Site Information** | |
|---|---|
| Comprehensive Plan Designation | Rural Area, Agricultural Commercial/40-acre minimum parcel (AC) |
| Zoning District, Ordinance | Chapter 35.21 – Agricultural Zones, Agriculture II/40-acre minimum lot (AG-II-40 |
| Site Size | 50.78 acres |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Present Use & Development | Approximately 33 acres of irrigated orchard grass and pasture mix, irrigation reservoir, agricultural employee dwellings, equestrian barns and corrals, hay barns, garage/storage barn | |
| Surrounding Uses/Zoning | North: Single family residential, agricultural/orchard (AG-II-40)<br>South: Single family residential, equestrian facilities (AG-II-40)<br>East: Single family residential, Equestrian facilities (AG-II-40)<br>West: Single family residential, equestrian facilities (AG-1-10) | |
| Access | Accessed from the south via an existing 60-foot-wide/1,500-foot-long non-exclusive private driveway easement from Baseline Avenue | |
| Public Services | Water Supply: | Single parcel water system and private well |
| | Sewage: | Private on-site wastewater treatment systems |
| | Fire: | County Fire Department, station no. 32 |

# 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

### 3.1 PHYSICAL SETTING

Existing onsite development includes a permitted 9,900-gsf garage/equipment storage building, four (4) permitted 1,024-gsf single stall horse barns, a permitted 2,208-gsf horse breeding barn, a permitted 1,933-gsf hay barn, a permitted 1.950-gsf hay barn, two permitted (2) 900-gsf Agricultural Employee Dwellings, a permitted 2,940-gsf stall barn, a permitted 2,880-gsf stall barn, 9.7 acres of commercial irrigated hay pasture, 20.2 acres of commercial irrigated orchard grass, a private well/single parcel water system for agricultural and domestic use, three on-site drywell septic systems, and a 26,400-sf irrigation pond. The surrounding area is characterized by equestrian, agricultural and rural residential land uses.

The subject parcel topography is relatively flat with an average terrain slope trending around 2% from the northwest to southeast direction. Elevations within the proposed arena development area range from 706 to 719 feet above sea level. Drainage of the subject parcel is typical of agricultural practices with an internal network of unpaved access roads and runoff directed to vegetated areas for infiltration. Existing vegetation on the subject parcel consists of primarily cultivated pasture and grass that is harvested and stored as hay/feed for horses. Soils on the proposed arena development site consist primarily of Ballard gravelly fine sandy loam, which includes older desiccated surficial sediments composed of dark brown to brown clayey silty sands and gravels. The subject parcel contains one surface water body that is a 19,000-square-foot man-made irrigation reservoir located approximately 700 feet southeast of the proposed arena development site.

### 3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

The environmental baseline (from which the project's impacts are measured) consists of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as described above. In addition to the on the ground conditions described above, the environmental baseline includes the permits/case numbers listed below (including a proposed Conditional Use Permit that will be analyzed using a tiered approach under the Programmatic Final Environmental Impact Report [SCH No. 2021110353/Case No. 23EIR-00003] for the County of Santa Barbara Agricultural Enterprise Ordinance):

- 90-LUN-044 Land Use Permit to allow construction of barn/shed
- 92-CP-083/93-LUN-244 Conditional Use Permit and Land use Permit to allow validation and placement of four existing mobile homes (1 primary residence, 2 agricultural employee dwellings, 1 office)
- 96-RZ-008/96-AP-005 Rezone from 40-AG to AG-II-40 and new landowner assumption of
- 03LUP-00000-00491 Land Use Permit to allow exterior lighting around horse pens

- 06LUP-00000-00645 Land Use Permit to allow construction of 2,830-sf bar, four 256-sf single-stall horse barns, and a 2,200-sf horse breeding barn
- 24AGP-00013 New landowner assumption of Agricultural Preserve Contract Number 96-AP-005
- 24LUP-00124 Land Use Permit to allow construction of 9,900-gsf equipment storage/garage for existing equestrian facility
- 25CUP-00021 Conditional Use Permit to allow small-scale events as an agricultural enterprise use that will take place in a defined 160,000-gsf outdoor area that is adjacent to the north and east walls of the proposed equestrian facility (24DVP-00035); CEQA Guidelines Section 16168(c)(4) checklist will be prepared for the CUP

## 4.0 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS CHECKLIST

The following checklist indicates the potential level of impact and is defined as follows:

**Potentially Significant and Unavoidable Impact:** A fair argument can be made, based on the substantial evidence in the file, that an effect may be significant.

**Significant but Mitigable:** Incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from a Potentially Significant Impact to an Insignificant Impact.

**Insignificant Impact:** An impact is considered adverse but does not trigger a significance threshold.

**No Impact:** There is adequate support that the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to the subject project.

**Beneficial Impact:** There is a beneficial effect on the environment resulting from the project.

**Reviewed Under Previous Document:** The analysis contained in a previously adopted/certified environmental document addresses this issue adequately for use in the current case and is summarized in the discussion below. The discussion should include reference to the previous documents, a citation of the page(s) where the information is found, and identification of mitigation measures incorporated from the previous documents.

## 4.1 AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

| Will the proposal result in: | Potent. Signif. and Unavoid. | Significant but Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public or the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view? | | | X | | |
| **b.** Change to the visual character of an area? | | | X | | |
| **c.** Glare or night lighting which may affect adjoining areas? | | X | | | |
| **d.** Visually incompatible structures? | | | X | | |

**Existing Setting.** The project site is located approximately ½ mile Northeast of the intersection of Baseline Avenue and Edison Street, in a rural area within the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan area. The project site is bounded by agriculturally zoned properties on all sides. The area is characterized by pastures, equestrian uses, vineyards, and single-family dwellings (ranchettes). Public views in this area are dominated by trees which intervene between the public roads and the ranchette development. The primary public viewshed for this project is the foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains. (describe topography, elevation, skyline major features, development, etc). Views of this site are limited to immediately adjacent neighboring properties.

**Environmental Thresholds.** The County's Visual Aesthetics Impact Guidelines classify coastal and mountainous areas, the urban fringe, and travel corridors as "especially important" visual resources. A project may have the potential to create a significantly adverse aesthetic impact if (among other potential effects) it would impact important visual resources, obstruct public views, remove significant amounts of vegetation, substantially alter the natural character of the landscape, or involve extensive grading visible from public areas. The guidelines address public, not private, views.

**Impact Discussion.**

**(*a-b, d) Insignificant:*** The proposed project will result in additional permanent structures and improvements on the subject property that will alter the visual appearance of the site. However, as discussed below, the proposed structures and improvements are: 1) located within a relatively flat area adjacent to existing development; 2) not highly visible from Baseline Avenue or Edison Street due to distance and intervening trees and shrubs located between the structures and highway; 3) will not obstruct views of the Santa Ynez Mountains from the public roads; and 4) will be screened by trees and the Applicant will be required to obtain final review and approval from the Central Board of Architectural Review (CBAR) (Mitigation Measure MM-1) prior to Land Use Permit issuance. Therefore, the proposed project will not create an aesthetically offensive site open to the public or obstruct a scenic view or vista, and impacts are considered **insignificant**.

Pursuant to the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan Outdoor Lighting Regulations, exterior lighting shall be minimized and shielded to reduce impacts on nocturnal ecosystems and night sky access. All outside illumination for aesthetic and decorative purposes that is not fully shielded (full cutoff) shall be prohibited between 9:00 PM and sunrise the following day. Except for fully shielded (full cutoff) lights, lighting associated with outdoor recreational facilities, including equestrian arenas, may only be illuminated between 9:00 PM and sunrise the following day to complete a specific organized recreational event that is in progress. Illumination of trees, landscaping, and building facades is not permitted. Where walkway and/or driveway lighting is deemed necessary for safety reasons, zero cut-off fixtures shall be used. Interior lighting emission should be low-level and carefully planned to prevent exterior light spread (i.e. 'lantern effect'). The project will include minimal exterior lighting to provide light near structure doorways for safety purposes. Lighting during events will be turned off by 10:00 PM. All proposed light fixtures will be reviewed and approved by P&D and CBAR under Case No. 25BAR-00002. Adherence to Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan Outdoor Lighting Regulation will effectively mitigate any impacts associated with increased lighting from the proposed project, including avoidance of excessive lighting and glare, therefore impacts are considered **insignificant**.

***(c) Significant but Mitigable:*** Proposed structures include an enclosed horse arena and water pump house which will have maximum heights of approximately 29.5 and 10.5 feet, respectively. Neither of these two structures will be visible from public roads or viewpoints, due to distance and intervening vegetation

between the structures and the public viewing areas. The horse arena will be located approximately 1/3 of a mile from Baseline Avenue at the nearest point, and 830 feet from Edison Street at the nearest point. The proposed pump house will be located immediately adjacent at the northwest corner of the proposed arena.

The LUDC requires design review for all structures that require a Development Plan. The Central Board of Architectural Review (CBAR) reviewed the proposed project (at a conceptual level) on February 14, 2025, and June 13, 2025 (Attachment 1). CBAR had no objections to the conceptual structure designs or the site layout, as shown in the attached project plans (Attachment 2). CBAR provided comments and recommendations for the applicant to incorporate in the final design. Mitigation measure MM-1 requires the proposed project to return to the CBAR for preliminary and final review following approval by the decision maker.

Pastures, equestrian uses, vineyards, and ranchettes characterize the general area in the vicinity of the project site. In order to be visually compatible with the existing on-site structural development and surrounding rural development and uses, the proposed project has been designed to include rural/agrarian architectural elements. Mitigation Measure MM-2 requires the use of natural building materials and colors that are compatible with surrounding terrain (earth-tones and non-reflective paints). The proposed landscaping consists of primarily native and drought tolerant species that have been sited to visually blend in with the existing vegetation and soften views from immediately adjacent properties. Building materials, paint colors, and proposed landscaping are subject to CBAR review and approval.

MM-1 and MM-2 will ensure the proposed project will not result in visually incompatible structures or a change to the visual character of the area, therefore impacts to aesthetics/visual resources resulting from the proposed project are considered **significant but mitigable**.

**Cumulative Impacts.** As discussed above, implementation of the project is not anticipated to result in any substantial change in the aesthetic character of the area. To ensure special protection of the aesthetic resources of the Santa Ynez Valley, Design Review is required for approval of a Development Plan. CBAR design guidance addresses the need to maintain the rural character of agriculturally-zoned parcels. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in substantial changes to the aesthetic character of the area, since the proposed development is designed to be compatible with the existing agrarian structural development, and CBAR review and approval is required for the design of all new structures. Compatibility with the rural character of the area and surrounding development is ensured through appropriate scale, form, and treatments applied to the proposed development. With inclusion of project-specific mitigation, the proposed project will be compatible with the visual character of the surrounding area.

Additionally, the distance between the development location would be far enough such that the cumulative development with permanent facilities would not result in cumulative obstruction of scenic vistas or views, change to the visual character of an areas, or visually incompatible structures. Other development projects would be required to adhere to lighting and design review requirements in the County Land Use and Development Code, which would reduce the potential for lighting to affect adjoining areas. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to aesthetics and visual resources impacts is not cumulatively considerable, and its cumulative effect is **insignificant**.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** The following mitigation measures would reduce the project's aesthetic impacts to an insignificant level:

1. **MM-1-AES-04 BAR Required**. The Owner/Applicant shall obtain Board of Architectural Review (BAR) approval for project design. All project elements (e.g., design, scale, character, colors, materials and landscaping shall be compatible with vicinity development and shall conform in all respects to BAR approval (25BAR-00002).
   **TIMING:** The Owner/Applicant shall submit architectural drawings of the project for review and shall obtain final BAR approval prior to issuance of Land Use Permit. Grading plans, shall be submitted to P&D concurrent with or prior to BAR plan filing.
   **MONITORING:** The Owner/Applicant shall demonstrate to P&D compliance monitoring staff that the project has been built consistent with approved BAR design and landscape plans prior to Final Building Inspection Clearance.

2. **MM-2-AES-06 Building Materials**. Natural building materials and colors compatible with surrounding terrain (earth-tones and non-reflective paints) shall be used on exterior surfaces of all structures, including water tanks and fences. Material and color specifications shall be reviewed and approved by the Board of Architectural Review.
   **PLAN REQUIREMENT:** Materials and colors shall be denoted on building plans.
   **TIMING:** Structures shall be painted prior to Final Building Inspection Clearance.
   **MONITORING:** P&D compliance monitoring staff shall inspect prior to Final Building Inspection Clearance.

With the incorporation of these measures, residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

## 4.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Significant but Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use, impair agricultural land productivity (whether prime or non-prime) or conflict with agricultural preserve programs? | | | **X** | | |
| **b.** An effect upon any unique or other farmland of State or Local Importance? | | | **X** | | |

**Setting**

*Background*

Agricultural lands play a critical economic and environmental role in Santa Barbara County. Agriculture continues to be Santa Barbara County's major producing industry with a gross production value of over $1.6 billion (Santa Barbara County Agricultural Production Report, 2019). In addition to the creation of food, jobs, and economic value, farmland provides valuable open space and maintains the County's rural character.

*Physical*
The existing 50.78-acre parcel currently supports 9.7 acres of commercial irrigated hay pasture and 20.2 acres of commercial irrigated orchard grass, primarily used to board horses. The property adjoins agricultural parcels ranging from approximately 20 to 70 acres; these neighboring properties to the north, south, east and west are used for single family residential and similar purposes as the subject site. Approximately 69 percent of the soils on the 50.78-acre parcel are Class II prime soils, according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey. The proposed arena will be sited entirely on Class II soils. The soils within the proposed arena development area are described as Ballard gravelly fine sandy loam derived from valley alluvial fan remnants of sandstone and acid shale. These soils are within an 18-acre portion (of the subject parcel) which is considered to be Prime Farmland, as designated by the Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The eastern half of the subject parcel contains areas classified as Grazing Land and Farmland of Local Importance, but there are no new uses proposed on those areas.

The subject property is currently a participant in the County's Agricultural Preserve Program pursuant to the Williamson Act under Contract No. 96-AP-005/24AGP-00013. As such, the Proposed Project was reviewed by the Agricultural Preserve Advisory Committee (APAC) for its consistency with the County's Uniform Rules for parcels in Agricultural Preserve. On January 9, 2025, APAC determined that the Proposed Project is consistent with the Uniform Rules, specifically Uniform Rule 2-3.2 (Principal Boarding and Breeding).

***Regulatory***
***County Thresholds Manual***
The County's Agricultural Resources Guidelines (approved by the Board of Supervisors, August 1993) provide a methodology for evaluating agricultural resources. These guidelines utilize a weighted point system to serve as a preliminary screening tool for determining significance. The tool assists planners in identifying whether a previously viable agricultural parcel could potentially be subdivided into parcels that are not considered viable after division. A project which would result in the loss or impairment of agricultural resources would create a potentially significant impact. The Point System is intended to measure the productive ability of an existing parcel as compared to proposed parcels. The tool compares availability of resources and prevalent uses that benefit agricultural potential but does not quantifiably measure a parcel's actual agricultural production.

Initial Studies are to use this Point System in conjunction with any additional information regarding agricultural resources. The Initial Study assigns values to nine particular characteristics of agricultural productivity of a site. These factors include parcel size, soil classification, water availability, agricultural suitability, existing and historic land use, comprehensive plan designation, adjacent land uses, agricultural preserve potential, and combined farming operations. If the tabulated points total 60 or more, that parcel is considered viable for the purposes of analysis. The project would be considered to have a potentially significant impact if the division of land of a viable parcel would result in parcels that did not either score over 60 in themselves or resulted in a score with a significantly lower score than the existing parcel. Any loss or impairment of agricultural resources identified using the Point System could constitute a potentially significant impact and warrants additional site specific analysis.

**Impact Discussion.**
(a, b) The Proposed Project would divide the 18-acre Prime Farmland portion of the 50.78-acre subject parcel into three functional areas (see hatched Areas 1, 2, and 3 in Figure 2). The 18-acre portion represents Prime Farmland, as designated in the California Important Farmland maps that are compiled

by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) of the California Division of Land Resource Protection. The subject site can be analyzed under four functional areas, including:

1. 2.9-acre northern prime portion (irrigated pasture)
2. 9.5-acre middle prime portion – (proposed equestrian arena)
3. 4.6-acre southern prime portion – (irrigate pasture)
4. 22.4-acre eastern portion – (irrigated pasture/orchard grass)

For Agricultural Suitability and Productivity analysis purposes, Areas 1 and 3 were grouped together because the soils have the same NRCS classification (Class II) and will continue to be cultivated as pasture for equestrian use. Area 2 was previously cultivated for orchard crops and was cleared and planted with orchard grass between late 2023 and early 2024. In late 2024, orchard grass cultivation was ceased and a 9,900-sf barn/garage was permitted and constructed on the northern portion of Area 2 in 2025. The remainder of Area 2 will be contain the proposed equestrian arena and its associated 22,000-sf stormwater detention basin. Area 4 contains approximately 10.5 acres of Class II soils and 11.9 acres of Class III soils; and will continue to be cultivated for equestrian uses (pasture/grazing and hay production).

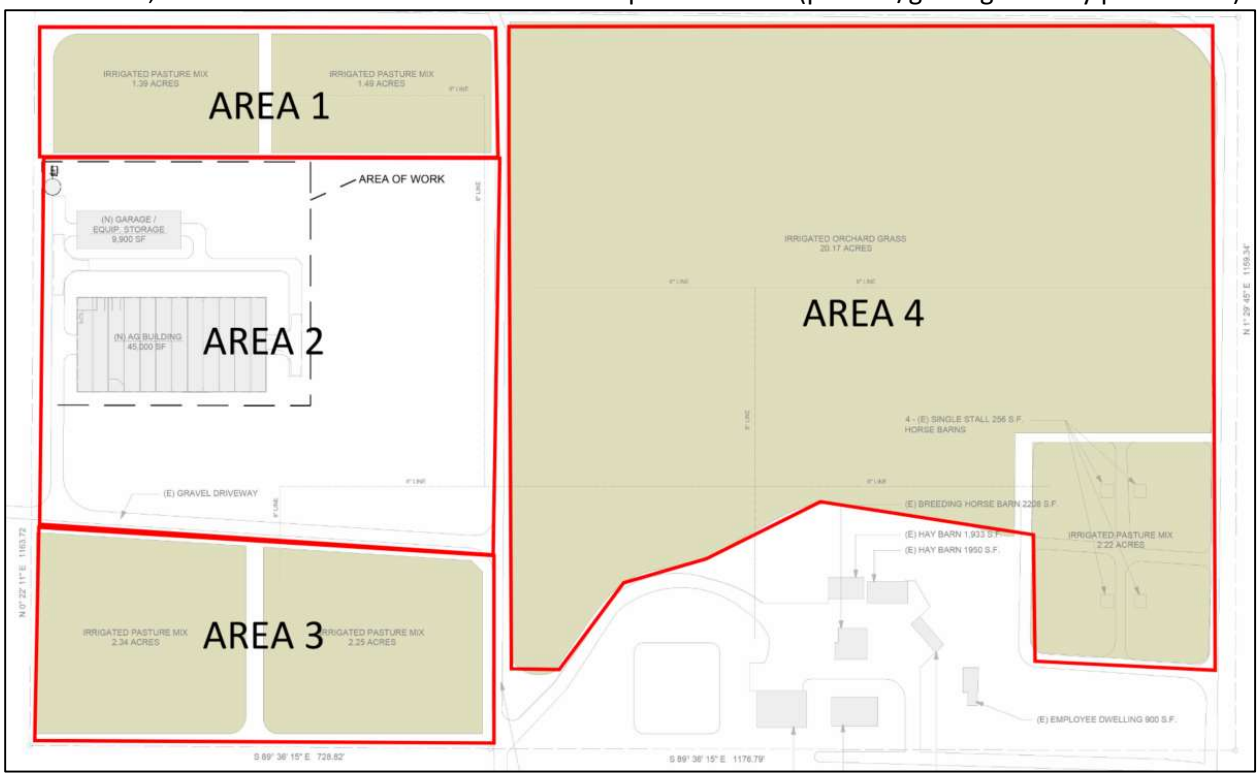



**FIGURE 2 AGRICULTURAL FUNCTION MAP**

Application of the Agricultural Suitability and Productivity Point System contained in the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual indicates that the existing parcel is rated at 75 points. This screening of the agricultural land value of the existing parcel is shown in the points assessment below (Table 4.2-1).

According to the points analysis, the Proposed Project would not result in the loss or impairment of viable agricultural land. The agricultural land involved in the Proposed Project would remain viable after project implementation. Adverse agricultural resources impacts would be **insignificant**.

**Table 4.2-1 Agricultural Suitability and Productivity Analysis**

| Agricultural Suitability and Productivity | | | Current |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Parcel size** | | | |
| • Less than 5 acres | 0-3 | | |
| • 5-10 acres | 4-6 | | 9 |
| • 10-40 acres | 7-8 | | |
| • 40-100 acres | 9-10 | | |
| **Soil classification** | | | |
| • Class I | 14-15 | | 12[1] |
| • Class II | 11-13 | | |
| • Class III | 8-10 | | |
| **Water availability** | | | |
| • Adequate supply | 12-14 | | 9 |
| • May be marginal | 8-11 | | |
| **Agricultural Suitability (crops)** | | | |
| • Highly suitable for irrig. crops | 8-10 | | |
| • Highly suitable for irrig. ornamentals, pasture, dry farming | 6-8 | | 5 |
| • Mod. suitable for irrig. crops | 4-5 | | |
| • Low suitability for any crops | 1-3 | | |
| **Existing and Historic Land Use** | | | |
| • Active ag. Production | 5 | | |
| • Maintained range | 5 | | 3 |
| • Unmaintained, productive w/in last 10 years | 3-5 | | |
| • Vacant | 1-3 | | |
| **Comprehensive Plan Designation** | | | |
| • A-II | 5 | | 5 |
| • A-I | 4 | | |
| **Adjacent Land Uses** | | | |
| • Surrounded by ag. Operations w/adequate support uses | | 9-10 | 9 |
| • Surrounded by ag. Operations w/o adequate support uses | | 7-8 | |
| **Agricultural Preserve Potential** | | | |
| • Can qualify for prime agricultural preserve by itself, or is in a preserve | | 5-7 | |
| • Can qualify for non-prime agricultural preserve by itself | | 2-4 | 5 |
| • Can qualify for prime agricultural preserve with adjacent parcels | | 3-4 | |
| • Can qualify for non-prime agricultural preserve with adjacent parcels | | 1-3 | |
| • Cannot qualify 0 | | | |
| **Combined Farming Operations** | | | |
| • Provides a significant component of a combined farming operation | | 5 | |
| • Provides an important component of a combined farming operation | | 3 | 3 |
| • Provides a small component of a combined farming operation 3 | | | |
| • No combined operation 0 | | | |
| **TOTAL** | | | 60 |

[1] NRCS Prime (Class II) classification accounts for approximately 69% of the total parcel acreage (50.78 acres). Therefore, approximately 69% (8.97) of the 13 eligible Class II points were assigned to the current parcel. Similarly, 31% (3.1) of the 10 eligible Class III points were assigned to the current parcel. Total points = 12.

***(a-b) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project consists of a commercial equestrian facility that will provide daily boarding, training and breeding operations. The equestrian operation will be open daily from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m, but it will not be open to the general public. New structural development will include a horse arena and one water pump house that will be located on approximately 2.13 acres of existing pasture area. Although the Proposed Project will result in the conversion of approximately 2.13 acres of irrigated pastures to structural development, the horse arena will support the agricultural uses on-site, including the proposed boarding, training and breeding operation. The proposed structures are underlain by Class II soil. Structures are generally clustered into two areas; along the southern boundary of the subject parcel and the equestrian arena area along the western boundary. The proposed Proposed Project will intensify and support the existing agricultural cultivation uses on the subject parcel by clustering commercial equestrian uses and continuing cultivation of irrigated pasture and grass on the remaining Prime Farmland. As discussed in the Environmental Setting above, the Proposed Project will not result in a potentially adverse effect upon the eastern portion (area designated as FMMP Farmland of Local Importance) of the subject parcel.

The Proposed Project is consistent with the Santa Barbara County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and will not conflict with the County's agricultural preserve program. Pursuant to Uniform Rule 1-4.1 (Principal Dwelling), the principal dwelling and all non-agricultural accessory structures and roads shall occupy no more than two acres or three percent of the parcel, whichever is smaller. Therefore, the subject 50.78-acre parcel is required to maintain a maximum 1.52-acre non-agricultural development envelope. The subject parcel does not contain a principal dwelling, although it does contain two Agricultural Employee Dwelings (AEDs). Pursuant to Uniform Rule 1-4.1.B.3., farm buildings, corrals, and permitted AEDs shall not be subject to the maximum non-agricultural development envelope. Additionally, pursuant to Uniform Rule 2-3.2 (Principal Boarding and Breeding), prime preserve parcels shall maintain a minimum of 20 acres of irrigated pasture. Approximately 30 acres of pastures and orchard grass on site will continue to be irrigated with the Proposed Project. Uniform Rule 2-3.2.D states that the total area of land covered by all permanent improvements, excluding the principal dwelling, shall not exceed 20 percent of the premises or 20 acres, whichever is less. Based on this rule, the subject parcel cannot exceed 10.16 acres of permanent improvements. The total existing and proposed covered, uncovered, and landscape improvements will be approximately 121,720 square feet (2.78 acres), which is well below the applicable limit. As was discussed above, APAC reviewed the Proposed Project for its consistency with the County's Uniform Rules and determined that the Proposed Project is consistent with the Uniform Rules, including Rule 1-4.1 and Rule 2-3.2.

The Proposed Project will not impact any neighboring agricultural operations. As discussed in Section 4.14 below, Baseline Avenue and Edison Street would not become overused or obstructed as a result of the Proposed Project. Additionally, as discussed in Sections 4.1 and 4.11, lighting and noise associated with the arena will be subject to restrictions which will ensure that use of the arena does not impact any neighboring agricultural operations.

In summary, the Proposed Project will support the existing and proposed agricultural uses on-site and the Proposed Project has been designed to minimize loss of irrigated pasture areas. The Proposed Project is consistent with the County's Uniform Rules and will not result in impacts to any current or future agricultural operations in the vicinity. Therefore, impacts to agricultural resources would be **insignificant.**

**Cumulative Impacts**. In the Northern Santa Barbara County region (Santa Maria, Lompoc Valley/Santa Ynez Valley), there are a total of 10 approved or pending permit applications that allow horse boarding, breeding, and training. Horse arenas could result in impacts to agricultural land if horse boarding, breeding

and training included site uses that would degrade agricultural land or result in the conversion of agricultural land. The County's Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant issue constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the Proposed Project has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for agricultural resources. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to the regionally significant loss of agricultural resources is not considerable, and its cumulative effect on regional agriculture is **insignificant**.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** Impacts are **insignificant**. No mitigations are necessary.

## 4.3a AIR QUALITY

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** The violation of any ambient air quality standard, a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, or exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (emissions from direct, indirect, mobile and stationary sources)? | | | **X** | | |
| **b.** The creation of objectionable smoke, ash or odors? | | | **X** | | |
| **c.** Extensive dust generation? | | | **X** | | |

**Existing Setting:** The project site is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin under the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (APCD). As the local air quality management agency, the Santa Barbara County APCD is responsible for monitoring air pollutant levels to ensure National Ambient Air Quality Standards and California Ambient Air Quality Standards are met, and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards. Depending on whether the standards are met or exceeded, Santa Barbara County is classified as being in "attainment" or "nonattainment". Currently, Santa Barbara County is in nonattainment for the State standards for ozone and Particulate Matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less ($PM_{10}$) (Santa Barbara APCD 2022a).

**County Environmental Threshold:** Chapter 5 of the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (as revised in August 2024) addresses the subject of air quality. The thresholds provide that a Proposed Project will not have a significant impact on air quality if operation of the Proposed Project will:

- emit (from all project sources, mobile and stationary), less than the daily trigger for offsets for any pollutant (currently 240 pounds per day for $NO_x$ and ROC, and 80 pounds per day for $PM_{10}$);
- emit less than 25 pounds per day of oxides of nitrogen ($NO_x$) or reactive organic compounds (ROC) from motor vehicle trips only;
- not cause or contribute to a violation of any California or National Ambient Air Quality Standard (except ozone);
- not exceed the APCD health risk public notification thresholds adopted by the APCD Board; and
- be consistent with the adopted federal and state Air Quality Plans.

No thresholds have been established for short-term impacts associated with construction activities. However, the County's Grading Ordinance requires standard dust control conditions for all projects involving grading activities. Long-term/operational emissions thresholds have been established to address mobile emissions (i.e., motor vehicle emissions) and stationary source emissions (i.e., stationary boilers, engines, and chemical or industrial processing operations that release pollutants).

**Impact Discussion/Methodology:**
Air pollutant emissions generated by project construction and operation were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2022.1.1.43 CalEEMod uses project-specific information, including the project's land uses, square footages for different uses, and location, to quantify

a project's construction and operational emissions, assess climate hazards and vulnerabilities, identify environmental burdens, and evaluate benefits of various emission reduction, climate risk reduction, and health and equity measures. The analysis reflects the construction and operation of the project as described under Section 1.0 (Project Description).

Construction emissions modeled include emissions generated by construction equipment used on-site and emissions generated by vehicle trips associated with construction, such as worker and vendor trips. CalEEMod estimates construction emissions by multiplying the amount of time equipment is in operation by emission factors. Construction of the Proposed Project was analyzed based on a general construction timeframe and standard CalEEMod assumptions on construction equipment. Construction would occur over approximately six months. This analysis assumes the Proposed Project would comply with all applicable regulatory standards. The Proposed Project would comply with Santa Barbara County APCD Rules as outlined in the attached condition letter (Attachment 3).

Operational emissions modeled include mobile source emissions (i.e. vehicle emissions), energy emissions, area source emissions, and stationary sources emissions (i.e. generators, fire pumps). Mobile source emissions are generated by vehicle trips to and from the project site. Emissions attributed to energy use include natural gas consumption by appliances as well as for space and water heating. Area source emissions are generated by landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products and architectural coatings.

***(a-c) Insignificant:***
*Short-Term Construction Impacts.* Project-related construction activities would require grading that has been minimized to the extent possible under the circumstances. Earth moving operations at the project site would not have the potential to result in significant project-specific short-term emissions of fugitive dust and $PM_{10,}$ with the implementation of standard dust control measures that are required for all new development in the County. These measures include, but are not limited to, keeping soils damp, limiting vehicles to speeds of less than 15 miles per hour (mph), installing gravel pads, re-vegetation requirements, and designation of a dust monitor during all earthmoving activities.

Emissions of ozone precursors ($NO_x$ and ROC) during project construction would result primarily from the on-site use of heavy earthmoving equipment. Construction-phase emissions estimates of ROC, sulfur dioxide, PM10, PM2.5, and NOx emissions were estimated with CalEEmod and the project would generate less than one ton per year. Due to the limited period of time that grading activities would occur on the project site, construction-related emissions of $NO_x$ and ROC would not be significant on a project-specific or cumulative basis. However, due to the non-attainment status of the air basin for ozone, the project should implement measures recommended by the APCD to reduce construction-related emissions of ozone precursors to the extent feasible. Compliance with these measures is routinely required for all new development in the County.

*Long-Term Operation Emissions.* Long-term emissions that would result from project-generated vehicle trips, along with stationary sources (i.e. natural gas usage) have been calculated in Table 2 below, pursuant to the CalEEMod computer model program (Attachment 4):

**Table 4.3a-1 Summary of Long-Term Operational Impacts**

| | Criteria Pollutants (lb./day) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Emission Source** | **$NO_x$** | **ROC** | **$PM_{10}$** |
| Mobile Sources (Vehicles) (CalEEMod) | 1.37 | 1.79 | 2.29 |

| ***Greater than 25 lbs./day?*** | ***No*** | ***No*** | ***N/A*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Area Sources (Energy/Natural Gas, Consumer Products) (CalEEMod) | >0.01 | 1.41 | <0.01 |
| **Totals** | **1.37** | **3.20** | **2.29** |
| **Threshold** | **240 lb./day** | **240 lb./day** | **80 lb./day** |

As shown in Table 2 above, the estimated pollutant emissions from vehicle trips and area sources associated with long-term operations were well below the County Environmental Thresholds. As discussed above, the CalEEMod analysis assumed the project would comply with all applicable regulatory standards. The Proposed Project would comply with Santa Barbara County APCD Rules as outlined in the attached condition letter (Attachment 3). The Proposed Project would not cause or contribute to a violation of any California or National Ambient Air Quality Standard, nor would the Proposed Project exceed the APCD health risk public notification thresholds adopted by the APCD Board. The Proposed Project would be consistent with the adopted federal and state Air Quality Plans. Therefore, the Proposed Project's long-term impacts on air quality would be **insignificant**.

**Cumulative Impacts**. The County's Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the Proposed Project has been found not to exceed the significance criteria for air quality. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to regionally significant air pollutant emissions is not cumulatively considerable, and its cumulative effect is **insignificant**.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact:** Impacts are **insignificant**. No mitigations are necessary.

## 4.3b AIR QUALITY - GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

| **Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Will the project:** | **Poten. Signif. and Unavoid.** | **Signif. But Mitigable** | **Insignif.** | **No Impact / Beneficial Impact** | **Reviewed Under Previous Document** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a**. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | | | **X** | | |
| **b.** Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | | | | **X** | |

**Existing Setting:** Greenhouse gases (GHG) include carbon dioxide ($CO_2$), methane ($CH_4$), nitrous oxide ($N_2O$), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride ($SF_6$), and nitrogen trifluoride ($NF_3$) (California Health and Safety Code, § 38505(g)). These gases create a blanket around the earth that allows light to pass through but traps heat at the surface, preventing its escape into space. While this is a naturally occurring process known as "the greenhouse effect," human activities have accelerated the generation of GHG emissions above pre-industrial levels (U.S. Global Change Research

Program 2018). The global mean surface temperature increased by approximately 1.8°F (1°C) in the past 80 years, and is likely to reach a 2.7°F (1.5°C) increase between 2030 and 2050 at current global emission rates (IPCC 2023).

The largest source of GHG emissions from human activities in the United States is from fossil fuel combustion for electricity, heat, and transportation. Specifically, the *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gasses and Sinks: 1990-2022* (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2024) states that the primary sources of GHG emissions from fossil fuel combustion in 2022 included electricity production (25%), transportation (29%), industry (30%), agriculture (10%), and commercial and residential end users (31%, combined).

The County of Santa Barbara's 2030 Climate Action Plan (2030 CAP) and the accompanying Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) contain a detailed description of the Proposed Project's existing regional setting as it pertains to GHG emissions. Regarding non-stationary sources of GHG emissions within Santa Barbara County specifically, the transportation sector produces 48% of the total emissions, followed by natural gas used in buildings and facilities (21%), agriculture (14%), electricity used in buildings and facilities (7%), off-road equipment (5%), and solid waste (4%) sectors (2030 CAP).

The overabundance of GHG in the atmosphere has led to a warming of the earth and has the potential to substantially change the earth's climate system. More frequent and intense weather and climate-related events are expected to damage infrastructure, ecosystems, and social systems across the United States (U.S. Global Change Research Program 2018). California's Central Coast, including Santa Barbara County, will be affected by changes in precipitation patterns, reduced foggy days, increased extreme heat days, exacerbated drought and wildfire conditions, and acceleration of sea level rise leading to increased coastal flooding and erosion (Langridge, Ruth 2018).

Global mean surface warming results from GHG emissions generated from many sources over time, rather than emissions generated by any one project (IPCC 2014). As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15355, and discussed in Section 15130, "'Cumulative impacts' refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." Therefore, by definition, climate change under CEQA is a cumulative impact.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(b) states that a lead agency "should focus its analysis on the reasonably foreseeable incremental contribution of the project's [GHG] emissions to the effects of climate change." A project's individual contribution may appear small but may still be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, it is not appropriate to determine the significance of an individual project's GHG emissions by comparing against state, local, or global emission rates. Instead, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research recommends using an established or recommended threshold as one method of determining significance during CEQA analysis (OPR 2008, 2018). A lead agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution to an existing cumulatively significant issue, such as climate change, is not significant based on supporting facts and analysis [CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(2)].

**County Environmental Thresholds:** In 2024, Santa Barbara County adopted its 2030 Climate Action Plan (2030 CAP), with an emission reduction goal of 50 percent below 2018 levels by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 or sooner, which are in line with the State's GHG emission reduction goals. The 2030 CAP is a qualified greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, which allows discretionary non-industrial projects to tier their GHG emissions analysis off the 2030 CAP Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) if the project is found consistent with the 2030 CAP. To aid in determining a project's consistency with the 2030 CAP, the County has developed the Climate Action Plan Consistency Checklist (Checklist). A project found to be consistent with the 2030 CAP that tiers GHG

emissions analysis off the 2030 CAP PEIR will have an insignificant environmental impact in regards to GHG emissions.

Concurrent with adoption of the 2030 CAP, Santa Barbara County adopted new GHG emissions thresholds of significance (Thresholds) for non-industrial stationary source projects based on the County's 2030 GHG target (i.e., 50 percent below 2018 levels by 2030). The thresholds were developed and adopted consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7, Thresholds of Significance. The thresholds are designed to identify (1) a cumulatively considerable contribution to an existing adverse condition, and (2) a cumulatively significant impact in combination with other projects causing related impacts. A CEQA lead agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution to an existing cumulatively significant issue, such as climate change, is not significant based on supporting facts and analysis (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130, Discussion of Cumulative Impacts, Subsection (a)(2)). The CEQA Guidelines direct that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered insignificant if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure designed to alleviate the cumulative impact (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(3)). Any non-industrial stationary source project that does not demonstrate consistency with the 2030 CAP shall be subject to the following applicable threshold based on project type: 2.68 metric tons $CO_2$ equivalent (MT $CO_2$e) per year per resident for residential projects; 2.63 MT $CO_2$e/year per employee for non-residential projects; and 2.67 MT $CO_2$e/year per service person for mixed-use projects. If the estimated GHG emissions are less than the applicable threshold, staff can conclude that the project will have an insignificant environmental impact, and the project would require no further analysis. For projects that exceed the threshold, mitigation measures are needed.

**Impact Discussion:**
***(a-b) insignificant/No Impact:*** The Proposed Project has been found consistent with the 2030 Climate Action Plan, as demonstrated by the Climate Action Plan Consistency Checklist (Attachment 5). The Proposed Project can therefore tier GHG emissions analysis from the 2030 CAP PEIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5. Based on the 2030 CAP measures included in the Proposed Project description and applied as mitigation measures, the Proposed Project would result in less than significant GHG emissions and would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact related to GHG emissions and climate change.

Measure TR-2 (Large Employers – Transportation Deman Management/TDM) of the 2030 CAP does not apply to the Proposed Project because the Proposed Project will employ a maximum of seven full-time employees. Inclusion of this measure is not required for consistency with the 2030 CAP.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** Impacts are **insignificant**. No mitigations are necessary.

**Cumulative Impacts:**
The Proposed Project's total greenhouse gas emissions would be less than the applicable threshold. Therefore, the Proposed Project's incremental contribution to a cumulative effect is not cumulatively considerable and the project's greenhouse gas emissions will not have a significant impact on the environment.

**References:**

County of Santa Barbara Sustainability Division, Community Services Department, *Climate Action Plan*, August 2024.

County of Santa Barbara Sustainability Division, Community Services Department, *Final Environmental Impact Report for the Climate Action Plan*, May 2024.

County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development, *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual*, October 2008 (Revised August 2024).

Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), *CEQA and Climate Change: Addressing Climate Change Through California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review,* June 2008.

Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), *CEQA and Climate Change Advisory, Discussion Draft,* December 2018.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II, and III to the Firth Assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Mayer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 151 pp.

IPCC, 2023: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, H. Lee and J. Romero (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, pp. 1-34, doi: 10.59327/IPCC/AR6-9789291691647.001

Langridge, Ruth (University of California, Santa Cruz). California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, Central Coast Summary Report, September 2018.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*, Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gasses and Sinks: 1990-20122*, April 2024.

U.S. Global Change Research Program, *Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II*: Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States, 2018.

## 4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Flora** | | | | | |
| **a.** A loss or disturbance to a unique, rare or threatened plant community? | | | | **X** | |
| **b.** A reduction in the numbers or restriction in the range of any unique, rare or threatened species of plants? | | | | **X** | |
| **c.** A reduction in the extent, diversity, or quality of native vegetation (including brush removal for fire prevention and flood control improvements)? | | | | **X** | |
| **d.** An impact on non-native vegetation whether naturalized or horticultural if of habitat value? | | | | **X** | |
| **e.** The loss of healthy native specimen trees? | | | | **X** | |

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **f.** Introduction of herbicides, pesticides, animal life, human habitation, non-native plants or other factors that would change or hamper the existing habitat? | | | | **X** | |
| **Fauna** | | | | | |
| **g.** A reduction in the numbers, a restriction in the range, or an impact to the critical habitat of any unique, rare, threatened or endangered species of animals? | | | | **X** | |
| **h.** A reduction in the diversity or numbers of animals on-site (including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish or invertebrates)? | | | | **X** | |
| **i.** A deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat (for foraging, breeding, roosting, nesting, etc.)? | | | | **X** | |
| **j.** Introduction of barriers to movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species? | | | | **X** | |
| **k.** Introduction of any factors (light, fencing, noise, human presence and/or domestic animals) which could hinder the normal activities of wildlife? | | | **X** | | |

**Existing Plant and Animal Communities/Conditions.**

*Background and Methods:*

Santa Barbara County has a wide diversity of habitat types, including chaparral, oak woodlands, wetlands and beach dunes. These are complex ecosystems and many factors are involved in assessing the value of the resources and the significance of project impacts. For this project, a site visit was conducted on May 17, 2024. The following analysis is based on this information.

*Flora*:

The 50.78-acre site consists primarily of irrigated pasture and orchard grass for equestrian boarding. Most of the site had been used for orchard crops previous to being an equestrian facility. The proposed equestrian arena site was being irrigated for orchard grass, but has recently been mowed and left fallow. There are no existing trees within the proposed equestrian arena development site. One coastal live oak exists in an open field approximately 100 feet east of the proposed equestrian arena. No special status plants are expected to occur in the area. The site does not contain natural plant communities considered rare by the California Dept. of Fish and Game (2003).

*Fauna:*
Mammals and birds common to the area include: coyote (*Canis latrans*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), striped (*Mephitis mephitis*) and spotted skunk (*Spilogale gracilis*), badger (*Taxidea taxus*), weasel (*Mustela frenata*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), ringtail (*Bassariscus astutus*), brush rabbit (Sylvilagus bachmani), cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii)*, hare (*Lepu californicus*), California vole (*Microtus californicus*), woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes*), mouse (*Peromyscus spp*.), gopher (*Thomomys bottae*), gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*), ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), hawks (*Accipiter spp., Buteo spp*.), falcons (*Falco spp*.), owls (*Tyto alba, Otus kennicottii, Bubo virginianus, Speotyto cunicularia*), ravens (*Corvus corax*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), magpies (*Pica spp*.), California quail (*Callipepla californica*), band-tailed pigeon (*Columba fasciata*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), hummingbird (*Calypte spp*.), sapsuckers (*Sphyrapicus ruber*), and woodpeckers (*Picoides spp*.). No sensitive plant or animal species are known or expected to occur on-site.

**Environmental Thresholds.** Santa Barbara County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008) includes guidelines for the assessment of biological resource impacts. The following thresholds are applicable to this project:

**Impact Discussion.**
***(a-j) No Impact:*** No natural plant communities or habitats exist on the site and no sensitive wildlife species are known to inhabit the premises or use the site for breeding or foraging. Additionally, no native or specimen trees are located in the area of project disturbance. As a result, **no impacts** to biological resources are anticipated.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact[2].** No impacts are identified. No mitigation is necessary.

***(k) Insigificant:*** The Proposed Project will result in the introduction of additional equestrian activities, human presence, lighting and noise, however, the project site and surrounding area are currently subject to these types of human disturbances. The subject property has been utilized to board horses, and there are several existing agricultural, equestrian, and residential uses both on the property and surrounding the property. As discussed in Section 4.1 above, lighting associated with the Proposed Project will be required to comply with the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan Outdoor Lighting Regulations, which require any exterior night lighting installed on the project site to be minimized and shielded to reduce impacts on nocturnal ecosystems. Adherence to Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan Outdoor Lighting Regulations will effectively mitigate any impacts associated with increased lighting from the Proposed Project. Light and noise associated with the proposed equestrian arena would be temporary and infrequent, ceasing at or prior to 10:00 PM, such that the temporary increase in light and noise is not expected to substantially alter the normal activities of wildlife. Based on the present uses and development on the property, as well as the infrequency of equestrian activity at the arena, the Proposed Project will not hinder the normal activities of wildlife and impacts are **insignificant**.

[2] May require payment of fees for review and comment by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, pursuant to Section 711.4 of the California Fish and Game Code. These fees shall be paid at the end of the environmental review process prior to filing the Notice of Determination. Pursuant to Section 711.4(c)(3) of the Fish and Game Code, "no project shall be operative, vested or final, nor shall local government permits for the project be valid until the filing fees required pursuant to this section are paid." Additionally, the County of Santa Barbara Clerk of the Board charges an Administrative Handling Fee for all environmental document filings including Notice of Exemptions and Notice of Determinations. Please refer to the Clerk of the Board's website for the most up-to-date fees (http://countyofsb.org/ceo/cob/ceqa.sbc). This fee shall be paid at the time the document is filed with the Clerk of the Board.

**Cumulative Impacts**. Since the Proposed Project would not significantly impact biological resources on-site, it would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on the County's biological resources.

## 4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

| Will the proposal: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of any object, building, structure, area, place, record, or manuscript that qualifies as a historical resource as defined in CEQA Section 15064.5? | | | **X** | | |
| **b.** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a prehistoric or historic archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Section 15064.5? | | | **X** | | |
| **c.** Disturb any human remains, including those located outside of formal cemeteries? | | | **X** | | |

| Will the proposal: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **d.** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in the Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:<br><br>1) 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<br><br>2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. | | | **X** | | |

**County Environmental Thresholds**. Chapter 8 of the Santa Barbara County Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (2008, revised February 27, 2018) contains guidelines for the identification, significance evaluation, and mitigation of impacts to cultural resources, including archaeological, historic, and tribal cultural resources. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, these guidelines specify that if a resource cannot be avoided, it must be evaluated for importance under specific CEQA criteria. CEQA Section 15064.5(a)(3)A-D contains the criteria for evaluating the importance of archaeological and historic resources. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the significance criteria for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources: (A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage; (B) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past; (C) 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; or (D) Has yielded, or may be likely

to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The resource also must possess integrity of at least some of the following: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. For archaeological resources, the criterion usually applied is (D).

CEQA calls cultural resources that meet these criteria "historical resources". Specifically, a "historical resource" is a cultural resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources, or included in or eligible for inclusion in a local register of historical resources, as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1, or deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1. As such, any cultural resource that is evaluated as significant under CEQA criteria, whether it is an archaeological resource of historic or prehistoric age, a historic built environment resource, or a tribal cultural resource, is termed a "historical resource".

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that "a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment." As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b), substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired. The significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project: (1) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; (2) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources; or (3) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

For the built environment, a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Weeks and Grimmer 1995), is generally considered as mitigated to an insignificant impact level on the historical resource.

**Existing Setting.**
For at least the past 10,000 years, the area that is now Santa Barbara County has been inhabited by Chumash Indians and their ancestors. Based on a records search conducted at the CCIC (Central Coast Information Center of the University of California, Santa Barbara) on January 8, 2025, zero recorded archaeological sites are located within 2,000 feet of the project site (Attachment 6). The CCIC found there was a moderated potential for cultural resources to be within the project area. Therefore, the CCIC recommended a qualified archaeologist conduct father archival and field study. A Phase 1 archaeological survey was conducted in April 2026 by Terry Joslin Azevedo. The survey identified no archaeological resources within the Proposed Project area proposed for development. As a result of the negative findings, no further archaeological work was required or recommended. The field investigation did not identify any historic cultural materials or historic structures located within the Proposed Project area.

Santa Barbara County received no tribal requests to participate in government-to-government consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.3.1 and in accordance with the provisions of Assembly Bill (AB) 52. On April 10, 2026, a formal notice of application completeness for the Proposed Project was sent to Matthew Vestuto, Chair, Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians, Kenneth Kahn, Tribal Chairman of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, and Gabriel Frausto, Chairman

of the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation (Attachment 7). The notice provided an opportunity for consultation under AB 52, and included a description of the Proposed Project. No reply was received and no tribal cultural resources (TCRs) were identified on the subject parcel.

**Impact Discussion:**
***(a-d) Insignificant:*** As discussed above, no cultural resources were identified within or adjacent to the project area. As a result, the Proposed Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of any historical resource, cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a prehistoric or historic archaeological resource, disturb any human remains, or cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource. In order to comply with cultural resource policies, the development project would be conditioned with a standard archaeological discovery clause which requires that any previously unidentified cultural resources discovered during site development are treated in accordance with the County's Cultural Resources Guidelines [Chapter 8 of the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (rev.2/2018)]. Impacts would be **insignificant**.

**Cumulative Impacts**. Since the Proposed Project would not significantly impact cultural resources, it would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on the County's cultural resources with implementation of the mitigation measures described below.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** No impacts are identified. No mitigation is necessary.

## 4.6 ENERGY

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Substantial increase in demand, especially during peak periods, upon existing sources of energy? | | | **X** | | |
| **b.** Requirement for the development or extension of new sources of energy? | | | **X** | | |

**Existing Setting:** Electricity is provided to the subject parcel by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). The Proposed Project does not include any components which will require consumption of natural gas.

**Impact Discussion:**
***(a-b.) Insignificant:*** The County has not identified significance thresholds for electrical and/or natural gas service impacts (Thresholds and Guidelines Manual). Private electrical and natural gas utility companies provide service to customers in Central and Southern California, including the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County. The Proposed Project consists of a new 45,000-square-foot (sf) enclosed climate-controlled equestrian arena and 300-sf fire suppression water pump house, and energy use is estimated as follows:

**Energy Use**

| Multiplier | Project Demand |
|---|---|
| Natural Gas<br>(13.7 million BTU per capita[3]) | N/A. No Natural Gas use is proposed. |
| Electricity<br>(estimated by Applicant Design Team) | 420 megawatt hours per year (MWh/year) |

In summary, the Proposed Project would have a negligible effect on regional energy needs. No adverse impacts would result. Impacts would be **insignificant**.

**Cumulative Impacts**. The Proposed Project's contribution to the regionally significant demand for energy is not considerable, and is therefore **insignificant**.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** No mitigation is required. Residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

## 4.7 FIRE PROTECTION

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Introduction of development into an existing high fire hazard area or exposure of people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? | | | | **X** | |
| **b.** Project-caused high fire hazard? | | | | **X** | |
| **c.** Introduction of development into an area without adequate water pressure, fire hydrants or adequate access for fire fighting? | | **X** | | | |
| **d.** 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? | | **X** | | | |

[3] http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/states/residential.cfm/state=CA#ng

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **e.** Introduction of development that will substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan, emergency evacuation plan, or fire prevention techniques such as controlled burns or backfiring in high fire hazard areas? | | | | **X** | |
| **f.** Development of structures beyond safe Fire Dept. response time? | | | | **X** | |

**Existing Setting:** The Proposed Project is not located within a High Fire Hazard Area. It is located within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Code Applicability area.

**County Standards.** The following County Fire Department standards are applied in evaluating impacts associated with the proposed development:

- The emergency response thresholds include Fire Department staff standards of one on-duty firefighter per 4,000 persons (generally 1 engine company per 12,000 people, assuming three firefighters/station). The emergency response time standard is approximately 5-6 minutes.
- Water supply thresholds include a requirement for 750 gpm at 20 psi for urban single family dwellings in urban and rural developed neighborhoods, and 500 gpm at 20 psi for dwellings in rural areas (lots larger than five acres).
- The ability of the County's engine companies to extinguish fires (based on maximum flow rates through hand held line) meets state and national standards assuming a 5,000 square foot structure. Therefore, in any portion of the Fire Department's response area, all structures over 5,000 square feet are an unprotected risk (a significant impact) and therefore should have internal fire sprinklers.
- Access road standards include a minimum width (depending on number of units served and whether parking would be allowed on either side of the road), with some narrowing allowed for driveways. Cul-de-sac diameters, turning radii and road grade must meet minimum Fire Department standards based on project type.
- Two means of egress may be needed and access must not be impeded by fire, flood, or earthquake. A potentially significant impact could occur in the event any of these standards is not adequately met.

**Impact Discussion.**

***(a-b, e-f) No Impact:*** The Proposed Project is not located within a High Fire Hazard Area, and does not involve new fire hazards. The Proposed Project will not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or fire prevention techniques because it is on a private property with sparse trees and maintained vegetation such as irrigated pasture and orchard grass. The project is located in an area with an adequate response time from fire protective services. Fire response services will continue to be provided by Santa Barbara County Fire Station No. 32 located at 906 Airport Road in Santa Ynez. Fire response time from this fire station is approximately five minutes.

***(c-d) Significant but Mitigable:*** Predictions about the long-term effects of global climate change in California include increased incidence of wildfires and a longer fire season, due to drier conditions and warmer temperatures. Any increase in the number or severity of wildfires has the potential to impact resources to fight fires when they occur, particularly when the state experiences several wildfires

simultaneously. Such circumstances place greater risk on development in high fire hazard areas. The project is located within the WUI applicability area, which will require that the project incorporate a defensible space plan, access for emergency vehicles, use of fire-resistant building materials to reduce exposure of the project to wildfire, a private fire hydrant system, interior building fire sprinklers. The project was reviewed by the Santa Barbara County Fire Department and implementation of a Master Fire Protection Plan was recommended in a comment letter (Attachment 3), including a Fire Apparatus Access Plan, a Stored Water Fire Plan and a Fuel Management Plan. These recommendations have been incorporated in Mitigation Measure MM-3. The Proposed Project will include two new driveway hammerheads for emergency equipment vehicle turnaround, a fire sprinkler system inside the arena, three new fire hydrants, a new 76,000 above-ground water tank and a new 300-square-foot fire hydrant pump house located immediately adjacent to the water tank. Therefore, impacts caused by lack of existing fire-fighting infrastructure are considered **significant but mitigable.**

**Cumulative Impacts.** Since the Proposed Project would not create significant fire hazards, it would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on fire safety within the County.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** The following mitigation measures would reduce the project's fire hazard impacts to an insignificant level:

**MM-3-FIRE County of Santa Barbara Fire Department Conditions of Approval** (Attachment 3).

**1.** A Master Fire Protection Plan shall be submitted to the fire department for review and approval and shall include:
   a. Fire Apparatus Access Plan
   b. Stored Fire Suppression Water Plan
   c. Fuel Management Plan
   d. Building Occupancy Information

   **TIMING:** Prior to Land Use Clearance

**2.** **Defensible Space Plan** of 100 feet (or to property line, whichever is nearer) around the proposed structures and any existing structures on the property. Reference County of Santa Barbara Fire Department Development Standard #6.
   **TIMING**: Prior to Construction.

**3.** **Roadway Standards**
   a. All weather surface
   b. Access ways shall be unobstructed and extended to within 150 feet of all portions of the exterior walls of the first story building.
   c. Dead-end access exceeding 150 feet shall terminate with a fire department approved turnaround.
   d. A minimum of 13 feet, 6 inches of vertical clearance shall be provided and maintained for the life of the project for emergency apparatus access.
   e. Reference County of Santa Barbara Fire Department Development Standard #1.

   **TIMING:** Prior to Construction.

**4.** One new fire hydrant shall be installed.
   a. The fire department shall have on file a set of approved fire hydrant plans prior to any work being started.

b. Fire hydrant shall be located per fire department specifications and provide a flow rate that meets the calculation requirements outlined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).
c. Commercial fire hydrants shall consist of one 4-inch outlet and two 2-1/2-inch outlets.
d. A set of approved fire hydrant plans, stamped and dated by the fire department shall be kept at the job site and available upon request.
e. Water systems shall be installed exactly as the approved fire hydrant plans dictate. No changes or modifications to these plans shall take place without prior fire department approval.
f. No work shall be covered or otherwise rendered inaccessible or unviewable prior to inspection by a fire department representative.
g. Curb faces shall be painted red to 7.5 ft on both sides of the fire hydrant.
    i. A 3-foot clear space shall be maintained around the circumference of all fire hydrants except as otherwise required or approved. Posts, fences, vehicles, growth, trash, storage and other materials or things shall not be placed or kept near fire hydrants
        1. Clearance shall be maintained for the life of the project.
h. Submit a stored water plan to the fire department for review that complies with the requirements of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1142.
    i. Plans for a stored water fire protection system shall be approved by the fire department.
    ii. Required water supplies for fire protection shall be installed and made serviceable prior to construction and for the life of the project.
    iii. All above ground water piping, including all pipes at the water tank as well as fire hydrant locations, shall consist of galvanized metal.

**TIMING:** Prior to Construction.

**5.** An automatic fire sprinkler system shall be installed.
a. Fire sprinkler plans shall be approved by the fire department prior to installation.
b. Water systems shall be installed exactly as the approved plans dictate. No changes or modifications to these plans shall take place without prior fire department approval.
c. No work shall be covered or otherwise rendered inaccessible or unviewable prior to inspection by the fire department.

**6.** Because a fire sprinkler system shall be installed, the following acceptance testing is required.
a. A flush of dedicated underground mains and lead-in connections shall be witnessed by the fire department Inspector prior to connecting to the overhead fire sprinkler system.
b. Prior to covering any pipes, the sprinkler system shall be inspected at the rough plumbing stage (i.e., exposed pipe, fittings, hangers, and bracing stage) by the fire department inspector.
c. The sprinkler system shall be hydrostatically tested at 200 psi for 2 hours.

**7.** The applicant shall be required to pay Fire Department Development Impact Mitigation Fees in accordance with Chapter 15 of the Santa Barbara County Code.
a. Payment shall be made according to the schedule of fees in place on the date fees are paid. As of the date of this letter, fees currently are as follows:
    i. Nonresidential-Retail/Commercial fees $0.77 per square foot (January 23, 2025).

With the incorporation of this measure, residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

## 4.8 GEOLOGIC PROCESSES

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving exposure to or production of unstable earth conditions such as landslides, earthquakes, liquefaction, soil creep, mudslides, ground failure (including expansive, compressible, collapsible soils), or similar hazards? | | | | **X** | |
| **b.** Disruption, displacement, compaction or overcovering of the soil by cuts, fills or extensive grading? | | | | **X** | |
| **c.** Exposure to or production of permanent changes in topography, such as bluff retreat or sea level rise? | | | | **X** | |
| **d.** Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | | | | **X** | |
| **e.** Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site? | | | | **X** | |
| **f.** Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands or dunes, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river, or stream, or the bed of the ocean, or any bay, inlet or lake? | | | | **X** | |
| **g.** The placement of septic disposal systems in impermeable soils with severe constraints to disposal of liquid effluent? | | | | **X** | |
| **h.** Extraction of mineral or ore? | | | | **X** | |
| **i.** Excessive grading on slopes of over 20%? | | | | **X** | |
| **j.** Sand or gravel removal or loss of topsoil? | | | | **X** | |
| **k.** Vibrations, from short-term construction or long-term operation, which may affect adjoining areas? | | | | **X** | |
| **l.** Excessive spoils, tailings or over-burden? | | | | **X** | |

**Existing Setting:** The Proposed Project site lies on the upper terrace of the Santa Ynez River alluvial plain. Soils consist of Ballard Gravelly Fine Sant Loam. The subject parcel topography is relatively flat with an average terrain slope trending around 2% from the northwest to southeast direction. Elevations within the proposed equestrian arena development area range from 706 to 719 feet above sea level. Drainage of the subject parcel is typical of agricultural practices with an internal network of unpaved access roads and runoff directed to vegetated areas for infiltration.

**Impact Discussion:**
***(a-l.) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project site does not have substantial geological constraints or slopes exceeding 20%. The Proposed Project would not result in excessive grading. As such, the Proposed Project would not result in impacts related to geological resources.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** No impacts are identified. No mitigations are necessary.

## 4.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/RISK OF UPSET

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** In the known history of this property, have there been any past uses, storage or discharge of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel or oil stored in underground tanks, pesticides, solvents or other chemicals)? | | | | X | |
| **b.** The use, storage or distribution of hazardous or toxic materials? | | | | X | |
| **c.** A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (e.g., oil, gas, biocides, bacteria, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions? | | | | X | |
| **d.** Possible interference with an emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan? | | | | X | |
| **e.** The creation of a potential public health hazard? | | | | X | |
| **f.** Public safety hazards (e.g., due to development near chemical or industrial activity, producing oil wells, toxic disposal sites, etc.)? | | | | X | |
| **g.** Exposure to hazards from oil or gas pipelines or oil well facilities? | | | | X | |
| **h.** The contamination of a public water supply? | | | | X | |

**Existing Setting:** The subject parcel does not contain the use of any known hazardous materials in sufficient quantities to pose a public health risk. Properties which are known, or discovered, to contain hazardous materials are subject to the removal and/or treatment requirements of the California Fire Code. Within the County, the Environmental Health Services Hazardous Materials Unit (HMU) must review and approve any proposed plan to decontaminate a site found to contain a hazardous material.

**Impact Discussion:**
***(a-h.) Insignificant:*** There is no evidence that hazardous materials were used, stored or spilled on site in the past, and there are no aspects of the proposed use that would include or involve hazardous materials at levels that would constitute a hazard to human health or the environment.

**Cumulative Impacts:** Since the Proposed Project will not create significant impacts with respect to hazardous materials and/or risk of upset, it will not have a cumulatively considerable effect on safety within the County.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** No impacts are identified. No mitigations are necessary.

## 4.10 LAND USE

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Structures and/or land use incompatible with existing land use? | | X | | | |
| **b.** Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | | | X | | |
| **c.** The induction of substantial unplanned population growth or concentration of population? | | | | X | |
| **d.** The extension of sewer trunk lines or access roads with capacity to serve new development beyond this proposed project? | | | | X | |
| **e.** Loss of existing affordable dwellings through demolition, conversion or removal? | | | | X | |
| **f.** Displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | | | | X | |

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **g.** Displacement of substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | | | | **X** | |
| **h.** The loss of a substantial amount of open space? | | | **X** | | |
| **i.** An economic or social effect that would result in a physical change? (i.e. Closure of a freeway ramp results in isolation of an area, businesses located in the vicinity close, neighborhood degenerates, and buildings deteriorate. Or, if construction of new freeway divides an existing community, the construction would be the physical change, but the economic/social effect on the community would be the basis for determining that the physical change would be significant.) | | | | **X** | |
| **j.** Conflicts with adopted airport safety zones? | | | | **X** | |

**Existing Setting.** The Proposed Project site is located approximately 0.5-mile northeast of the intersection of Highway 154 and Baseline Avenue in the rural area of the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan area. The project site is bounded by agriculturally-zoned properties on all sides. Pastures, equestrian uses, vineyards, and single-family dwellings (ranchettes) characterize the general area. Existing on-site development includes a permitted 9,900-gsf garage/equipment storage building, four (4) permitted 1,024-gsf single stall horse barns, a permitted 2,208-gsf horse breeding barn, a permitted 1,933-gsf hay barn, a permitted 1.950-gsf hay barn, two permitted (2) 900-gsf Agricultural Employee Dwellings, a permitted 2,940-gsf stall barn, a permitted 2,880-gsf stall barn, 9.7 acres of commercial irrigated hay pasture, 20.2 acres of commercial irrigated orchard grass, a private well/single parcel water system for agricultural and domestic use, three on-site drywell septic systems, and a 26,400-sf irrigation pond. The property is subject to the provisions of: 1) the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, including the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan; and 2) the Santa Barbara County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC).

**Environmental Threshold.** The Thresholds and Guidelines Manual contains no specific thresholds for land use. Generally, a potentially significant impact can occur if a project would result in substantial growth inducing effects or result in a physical change in conflict with County policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

**Impact Discussion.**
***(c-g, i-j) No Impact/Insignificant.*** The Proposed Project does not cause a physical change that conflicts with adopted environmental policies or regulations. The project is not growth inducing, and does not result in the loss of affordable housing, loss of open space, or a significant displacement of people. No demolition or alteration of any existing dwellings is proposed. The project does not involve the extension of a sewer trunk line or extension of any access roads with capacity to serve new development beyond the proposed project. Ther project does not conflict with any airport safety zones. The project is compatible with existing land uses.

***(a) Significant but Mitigable:*** Commercial equestrian facilities are an allowed use in the AG-II-40 Zone District with a Land Use Permit. The Proposed Project is also required to obtain approval of a Development Plan because the total existing and proposed structural development will exceed 20,000 square feet in gross floor area. As discussed in Section 4.1 above, all proposed structures are subject to Design Review and must be finished with natural colors and building materials to ensure that the development is visually compatible with the character of the surrounding area (AES-MM-1 and AES-MM-2). Additionally, all structures are required to comply with the AG-II development standards contained in the LUDC (e.g., height limit, setbacks, parking, etc.).

The Proposed Project is also subject to all applicable requirements and policies contained in the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan. Relevant policies and development standards from the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan are provided in Section 9 below. The proposed equestrian arena will be compatible with existing Land Use policies related to Aesthetics, Noise, and Transportation/Circulation, as discussed in Sections 4.1, 4.11, and 4.14, respectively. The proposed equestrian activities of the Proposed Project will be consistent with the County Land Use and Development Code and the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan, particularly in regards to visual impacts. The Proposed Project therefore will have a **significant but mitigable** impact on Land Use.

**Cumulative Impacts**. The operation of a commercial equestrian facility on Proposed Project site would be consistent with existing development in this region of the County. The implementation of the Proposed Project is not anticipated to result in any substantial change to the site's conformance with environmentally protective policies and standards or have significant growth inducing effects. Thus, the Proposed Project would not cause a cumulatively considerable effect on land use.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** Mitigation Measures MM-1 AND MM-2 (see section 4.1 above for full description) would reduce the Proposed Project's land use impacts to an insignificant level.

With the incorporation of these measures, residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

## 4.11 NOISE

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Long-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds (e.g. locating noise sensitive uses next to an airport)? | | | **X** | | |

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **b.** Short-term exposure of people to noise levels exceeding County thresholds? | | X | | | |
| **c.** Project-generated substantial increase in the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas (either day or night)? | | | X | | |

**Existing Setting.** The Proposed Project site is located outside of 65 dB(A) noise contours for roadways, public facilities, airport approach and take-off zones. Surrounding noise-sensitive uses consist of existing single family dwellings on adjacent parcels. The closest residence is on a separate parcel under the same ownership as proposed site property and is approximately 200 feet west of the proposed equestrian arena. The closest residence under different ownership on an adjacent parcel is approximately 860 feet south of the proposed arena.

**Environmental Threshold.** Noise is generally defined as unwanted or objectionable sound which is measured on a logarithmic scale and expressed in decibels (dB(A)). The duration of noise and the time period at which it occurs are important values in determining impacts on noise-sensitive land uses. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and Day-Night Average Level ($L_{dn}$) are noise indices which account for differences in intrusiveness between day- and night-time uses. County noise thresholds are: 1) 65 dB(A) CNEL maximum for exterior exposure, 2) 45 dB(A) CNEL maximum for interior exposure of noise-sensitive uses, and 3) an increase in noise levels by 3 db(A) – either individually or cumulatively when combined with other noise-generating sources when the existing (ambient) noise levels already exceed 65 db(A) at outdoor living areas or 45db(A) at interior living areas. Noise-sensitive land uses include: residential dwellings; transient lodging; hospitals and other long-term care facilities; public or private educational facilities; libraries, churches; and places of public assembly.

Noise from grading and construction activity proposed within 1,600 feet of sensitive receptors, including schools, residential development, commercial lodging facilities, hospitals or care facilities, would generally result in a potentially significant impact. According to EPA guidelines average construction noise is 95 dB(A) at a 50' distance from the source. A 6 dB drop occurs with a doubling of the distance from the source. Therefore, locations within 1,600 feet of the construction site would be affected by noise levels over 65 dB(A).

**Impact Discussion:**
**(*a, c) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project consists of construction of a 45,000-square-foot commercial equestrian facility that will provide daily boarding, breeding, and training of horses. Long-term noise generated on-site would not: 1) exceed County thresholds, or 2) substantially increase ambient noise levels in adjoining areas. Noise sensitive uses on the Proposed Project site would not be exposed to or impacted by off-site noise levels exceeding County thresholds. Impacts would be **insignificant**.

***(b) Significant but Mitigable:*** Noise generated from heavy equipment during grading and construction can temporarily exceed County noise thresholds of 65 dB(A) CNEL for a distance of up to approximately 1,600 feet. During grading and construction on the project site, temporary construction noise could result in significant, short-term noise impacts, which may affect nearby residents. . Therefore, impacts caused by

construction noise are considered **significant but mitigable.** Mitigation Measure MM-4 will mitigate short-term construction-related noise impacts to an insignificant level by limiting construction days and hours.

**Cumulative Impacts**. The implementation of the project is not anticipated to result in any substantial noise effects. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute in a cumulatively considerable manner to noise impacts.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** The following mitigation measures would reduce the project's noise effects to an insignificant level:

> **MM-4-Noise-02 Construction Hours.** The Owner/Applicant, including all contractors and subcontractors shall limit construction activity, including equipment maintenance and site preparation, to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. No construction shall occur on weekends or State holidays. Non-noise generating construction activities such as interior plumbing, electrical, drywall and painting (depending on the compressor noise levels) are not subject to these restrictions. Any subsequent amendment to the Comprehensive General Plan, applicable Community or Specific Plan, or Zoning Code noise standard upon which these construction hours are based shall supersede the hours stated herein.
> PLAN REQUIREMENTS: The Owner/Applicant shall provide and post a sign stating these restrictions at all construction site entries.
> TIMING: Signs shall be posted prior to commencement of construction and maintained throughout construction.
> MONITORING: The Owner/Applicant shall demonstrate that required signs are posted prior to grading/building permit issuance and pre-construction meeting. Building inspectors and permit compliance staff shall spot check and respond to complaints.

With the incorporation of these measures, residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

## 4.12 PUBLIC FACILITIES

| Will the proposal require or result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** A need for new or altered police protection and/or health care services? | | | **X** | | |
| **b.** Student generation exceeding school capacity? | | | | **X** | |
| **c.** Significant amounts of solid waste or breach any federal, state, or local standards or thresholds relating to solid waste disposal and generation (including recycling facilities and existing landfill capacity)? | | **X**[4] | | | |

[4] Cumulatively considerable impact

| Will the proposal require or result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **d.** The relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities (sewer lines, lift-stations, etc.) the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? | | | **X** | | |
| **e.** The relocation or construction of new or expanded storm water drainage or water quality control facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? | | | **X** | | |

**Existing Setting:** The Proposed Project will develop a new commercial equestrian facility on a parcel that is currently developed with agricultural employee dwellings and agricultural accessory structures. The total amount of new structural development will be approximately 45,300 square feet. Police protection for the project site is provided by the County Sheriff's Department. Emergency medical services are provided by the Santa Barbara County Fire Department. The closest emergency healthcare facilities are in Santa Ynez and Santa Maria. The existing development is served by an existing private on-site wastewater treatment system. The proposed equestrian arena will be served by a new private on-site wastewater treatment system.

**County Environmental Thresholds:**
*Schools:* A significant level of school impacts is generally considered to occur when a project would generate sufficient students to require an additional classroom.

*Solid Waste:* A project is considered to result in significant impacts to landfill capacity if it would generate 196 tons per year of solid waste. This volume represents 5% of the expected average annual increase in waste generation, and is therefore considered a significant portion of the remaining landfill capacity. In addition, construction and demolition waste from remodels and rebuilds is considered significant if it exceeds 350 tons. A project which generates between 40-196 tons per year of solid waste is considered to have a cumulative adverse impact on solid waste generation, and mitigation via a Solid Waste Management Plan is recommended.

**Impact Discussion:**
***(a-b) Insignificant/No Impact:*** The size, scale and type of the proposed commercial equestrian facility would not cause the need for any new or altered emergency or health care services beyond those already provided, and existing service levels are sufficient to serve the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would not result any new habitable structures and would not induce population growth or exceed school capacities. School fees would be paid as required by State Law.

***(c) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project is expected to generate approximately 98.3 tons of solid waste from construction activities associated with the new equestrian arena. The estimate for construction is based on a rate shown in Table 4.12-1 and is discussed further below. Additionally, the Proposed Project is expected to

generate approximately 72.48 tons of operational-related solid waste annually, as shown in Table 4.12-2 and discussed further below.

*Short-term Construction Impacts:*

Project construction is estimated to generate approximately 98.3 tons of waste stream, and annual operation is estimated to generate 40.5 tons of waste stream. The Proposed Project would not generate solid waste in excess of County thresholds for construction (350 tons) and annual operation (196 tons/yr). The estimate for construction is based on the waste stream generation rates shown in Table 4.12-1 below.

**Table 4.12-1: Estimated Construction Solid Waste Generation**

| Proposed | Construction Waste Generation Rate (lbs/sf) | Estimated Solid Waste (2,000 lb = 1 ton) |
|---|---|---|
| Construction of 45,300[5] sf | 4.34[6] | 98.3 tons (196,602 lbs) |

Table 4.12-1 uses a rate of 4.34 lbs./sq. ft. to estimate solid waste generation based on rates representative of construction of new traditional commercial construction. The project includes construction of a pre-fabricated 45,000-sf covered horse arena and a 300-sf pump house for fire suppression water. Because of the pre-fabricated nature of the structures, the lack of traditional flooring, and the simplistic overall design of the arena, a rate of 4.34 lbs./sq. ft. is likely a substantial overestimation for the horse arena. Construction of the pre-fabricated horse arena is expected to produce very little waste. This can be attributed to the fact that pre-fabricated structure kits are made in a controlled factory, so recycling and waste reduction is simplified and the construction process is streamlined. Additionally material cuttings are eliminated which decreases the amount of waste generated.

The Proposed Project will be subject to the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) Construction Waste Management Requirements, including but not limited to submittal of a construction waste management plan that demonstrates compliance with California Green Building Code Standard Section 5.408.1.1, and at least a 65 percent reduction of construction waste pursuant to California Green Building Code Standard Section 5.408.1.3. Application of standard CALGreen Construction Waste Management Requirements during building permit processing will ensure that impacts related to solid waste generation during construction are **insignificant**. Additionally, Mitigation Measures MM-5 and MM-6 have been applied to reduce construction employee-generated trash onsite.

*Long-Term Operational Impacts:*

The proposed equestrian activities will generate animal solid waste. The Proposed Project was reviewed by Santa Barbara County Environmental Health Services and a letter with recommended Conditions of Approval was provided (Attachment 3). Per the letter, all animal waste shall be managed through implementation of an Animal Waste Management Plan, as required in Mitigation Measure MM-6.

The solid waste generation estimate for annual operation is based on the waste stream generation rates shown in Table 4.12-2 below. The Proposed Project would generate approximately 72.48 tons of solid waste per year, which is less than the 196 tons per year threshold of significance as identified in the County's Thresholds Manual. All solid waste would be contained via recycling, trash bins, and composting stations. Pursuant to Assembly Bill 939 requirements, at least 50 percent of the solid waste generated will be diverted

[5] Includes 300-sf pump house for fire suppression water.
[6] This estimate is based on the US Environmental Protection Agency's Estimating 2003 Building-Related Contruction and Demolition Materials Amounts, dated March 2009.

from the landfill. The Proposed Project would not generate excessive solid waste that would affect Tajiguas Landfill, which has a remaining capacity of 7,345,787 cubic yards (California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery Solid Waste Information System [CalRecycle SWIS] Site Activity Details for 42-AA-0015 Tajiguas Sanitary Landfill and Resource Recovery Center, accessed May 2026). Therefore, impacts related to solid waste generation during operation of the Proposed Project are **insignificant**.

**Table 4.12-2: Estimated Annual Solid Waste Generation**

| Proposed | Annual Operations Waste Generation Rate (Tons/yr[7]) | Estimated Solid Waste |
|---|---|---|
| Annual Operation 45,300[6] sf | 0.0016 | 72.48 tons/yr |

Summary. As discussed above, the Proposed Project operations would not generate significant amounts of solid waste or breach any national, state, or local standards or thresholds relating to solid waste disposal or generation (including recycling facilities and existing landfill capacity). The estimated amount of solid waste generated during construction by the Proposed Project (98.3 tons) is likely an overestimation because a majority of the proposed construction (45,300 sf) will consist of pre-fabricated agricultural structures. Additionally, the project will be required to prepare a construction waste management plan per CalGreen requirements. Once operational, the project would generate approximately 72.48 tons of solid waste per year, which is less than the 196 tons per year threshold of significance as identified in the County's Thresholds Manual. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not have a potentially significant short-term or long-term impact related to solid waste disposal or generation.

***(d-e) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project will not cause the need for new or expanded public wastewater treatment facilities because it will include a new private on-site wastewater treatment system, and the proposed new system has been found adequate to serve the Proposed Project - per the April 30, 2026 Environmental Health Services (EHS) letter (Attachment 3). Adherence to EHS requirements for new septic systems would ensure that impacts would be less than significant. Final review and approval of the septic system design by EHS will be required prior to issuance of the associated Land Use Permit for the equestrian facility.

The Proposed Project would create new impervious surfaces that could result in greater surface runoff from the site since there would be less open ground capable of absorbing rainwater. This increased surface runoff would be accommodated within a new 22,000-square-foot stormwater retention basin. The Proposed Project includes stormwater control measures contained in a Tier 2 Stormwater Control Plan (Praxis Engineering, December 1, 2025, Attachment 8), which will ensure that stormwater on the site is captured and impacts are minimized. Final review and approval of the Tier 2 Stormwater Control Plan by the County Public Works Project Clean Water Division will be required prior to issuance of the associated Land Use Permit for the equestrian facility. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have an insignificant impact on public facilities related to wastewater treatment and stormwater drainage. Impacts would be **insignificant**.

**Cumulative Impacts**. The County's Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the Proposed Project incorporates mitigation for short-term construction and long-term operational solid waste impacts and has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for public services. As mentioned in the Environmental Thresholds discussion above, a project which generates between 40-196 tons/year of solid waste is considered to have a cumulative impact. The

[7] Figure is based on Industry & National Standards as discussed in the County of Santa Barbara Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (January 2021).

project was reviewed by the Santa Barbara County Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division and implementation of a Solid Waste Management Plan was recommended in a comment letter (Attachment 3). These recommendations have been incorporated in Mitigation Measures MM-5 and MM-6. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to the regionally significant demand for public services is cumulatively considerable, and impacts are considered **significant but mitigable**.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** The following mitigation measures would reduce the project's public service impacts to an insignificant level:

**MM-5 SolidW-01 Solid Waste-SRSWMP**. The Owner/Applicant/Permittee shall develop and implement a Source Reduction and Solid Waste Management Plan (SRSWMP) describing proposals to reduce the amount of waste generated during construction and throughout the life of the project and enumerating the estimated reduction in solid waste disposed at each phase of project development and operation.
**PLAN REQUIREMENTS:** The plan shall include but not limited to:

a. Construction Source Reduction:
    i. A description of how fill will be used on the construction site, instead of landfilling,
    ii. A program to purchase materials that have recycled content for project construction.
b. Construction Solid Waste Reduction:
    i. Recycling and composting programs including separating excess construction materials onsite for reuse/recycling or proper disposal (e.g., concrete, asphalt, wood, brush). Provide separate onsite bins as needed for recycling.
c. Operation Source Reduction:
    i. A detailed set of office procedures such as use of duplex copy machines and purchase of office supplies with recycled content.
    ii. A program to purchase materials that have recycled content for operation (e.g., office supplies, etc.).
d. Operation Solid Waste Reduction:
    i. Specify [#] sq ft of space and/or bins for storage of recyclable materials within the project site
    ii. Establish a recyclable material pickup area.
    iii. A green waste source reduction program, including the creation of lot composting areas,
    iv. Participate in an existing recycling program (may require establishment of private pick-up depending on availability of County sponsored programs).

**TIMING:** The Owner/Applicant shall
1. Submit a SRSWMP to P&D permit processing staff for review and approval prior to issuance of LUP
2. Include the recycling area on building plans. Program components shall be implemented prior to Final Building Clearance and maintained throughout the life of the project.
**MONITORING:** During operation, the Owner/Applicant/Permittee shall demonstrate to P&D compliance staff as required that solid waste management components are established and implemented. The Owner/Applicant shall demonstrate to P&D compliance staff that all required components of the approved SRSWMP are in place as required prior to Final Building Clearance.

**MM-6 SolidW-03 Solid Waste-Construction Site.** The Owner/Applicant shall provide an adequate number of covered receptacles for construction and employee trash to prevent trash & debris from blowing offsite, shall ensure waste is picked up weekly or more frequently as needed, and shall ensure site is free of trash and debris when construction is complete.
**PLAN REQUIREMENTS:** All plans shall contain notes that the site is to remain trash-free throughout construction.

**TIMING:** Prior to building permit issuance, the Owner/Applicant shall designate and provide P&D with the name and phone number of a contact person(s) responsible for trash prevention and site clean-up. Additional covered receptacles shall be provided as determined necessary by P&D.
**MONITORING:** Permit compliance monitoring staff shall inspect periodically throughout grading and construction activities and prior to Final Building Inspection Clearance to ensure the construction site is free of all trash and debris.

**MM-6 Animal Waste Management Plan.** The Applicant shall submit an animal waste management plan to Environmental Health Services (EHS) for review and approval.
**PLAN REQUIREMENTS:** The plan shall include but not be limited to the following requirements:
(a) Method and frequency of cleaning.
(b) Means of waste transport.
(c) Description of short-term storage facilities, if any.
(d) Method and area of waste disposal.
(e) Drainage plan and moisture control measures.
(f) A list of any equipment necessary to implement the plan.
**TIMING:** Prior to Issuance of Land Use Permit, the Owner/Applicant shall obtain approval of the proposed Animal Waste Management Plan from EHS.
**MONITORING:** The animal solid waste management plan may be amended with approval from EHS. Facilities, permitted uses, and waste handling operations shall be conducted and maintained in a manner that does not promote the production of offensive odors or excessive vectors as determined by EHS.

With the incorporation of these measures, residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

## 4.13 RECREATION

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Conflict with established recreational uses of the area? | | | X | | |
| **b.** Conflict with biking, equestrian and hiking trails? | | | X | | |
| **c.** Substantial impact on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities (e.g., overuse of an area with constraints on numbers of people, vehicles, animals, etc. which might safely use the area)? | | | X | | |

**Existing Setting:** The Proposed Project site is located at 3715 Baseline Avenue, approximately 1.3 miles north of the town of Santa Ynez. The Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan Parks, Recreation, and Trails map depicts proposed on-road trails along both Baseline Avenue and Edison Street. The project site is not immediately adjacent to either proposed trail.

**County Environmental Threshold:** The Thresholds and Guidelines Manual contains no threshold for park and recreation impacts. However, the Board of Supervisors has established a minimum standard ratio of 4.7 acres of recreation/open space per 1,000 people to meet the needs of a community. The Santa Barbara County Parks Department maintains more than 900 acres of parks and open spaces, as well as 84 miles of trails and coastal access easements.

**Impact Discussion:**
***(a-c) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project site is not located on or near any established recreational uses, including biking, equestrian or hiking trails. The Proposed Project will not result in any conflicts with the proposed on-road trail, nor would the project preclude the future establishment of a trail following this alignment in the future. No adverse impacts would result. The Proposed Project would not result in any population increase and would have no adverse impacts on the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities, either in the project vicinity or County-wide. Therefore, project impacts on recreation would be **insignificant**.

**Cumulative Impacts**. Since the Proposed Project would not affect recreational resources, it would not have a cumulatively considerable effect on recreational resources within the County.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** No mitigation is required. Residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

## 4.14 TRANSPORTATION

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities? | | | **X** | | |
| **b.** Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)? | | | **X** | | |
| **c.** Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | | | **X** | | |
| **d.** Result in inadequate emergency access? | | | **X** | | |

**Existing Setting:** The subject parcel is located on the north side of Baseline Avenue, approximately 0.5 mile northeast of the Highway 154/Edison Street roundabout intersection. According to the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan, Baseline Avenue is a major east/west route that connects the communities of Ballard, Santa Ynez, and Los Olivos, in concert with several north/south routes, such as Edison Street.

**County Environmental Thresholds.**
On December 28, 2018, the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted proposed revisions to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.3 and Appendix G: Environmental Checklist Form, Section XVII, Transportation. Section 15064.3 includes new criteria for determining the significance of a project's transportation impacts. Specifically, Section 15064.3(a) states "vehicle miles traveled is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts." Therefore, the following thresholds reflect the specific guidance set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 regarding estimating vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and developing thresholds of significance for VMT and transportation impacts.

According to the County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual, a significant transportation impact would occur when there is:

**a. Potential Conflict with a Program, Plan, Ordinance, or Policy.** The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' (SBCAG) 2050 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SBCAG 2021) and the County's Comprehensive Plan, zoning ordinances, capital improvement programs, and other planning documents contain transportation and circulation programs, plans, ordinances, and policies. A significant impact may occur if a project conflicts with the overall purpose of an applicable transportation and circulation program, plan, ordinance, or policy, including impacts to existing transit systems and bicycle and pedestrian networks pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1).

**b. Potential Impact to VMT.** The County expresses thresholds of significance in relation to existing or baseline County VMT. Specifically, the County compares the existing and baseline County VMT (i.e., pre-construction) to a project's VMT. The County presumes that land use or transportation projects meeting any of the screening criteria within Table 4.14-1, absent substantial evidence to the contrary, would have less than significant VMT impacts and would not require further analysis (County of Santa Barbara 2021a).

**Table 4.14-1 Screening Criteria for Land Use Projects**

| Screening Category | Project Requirements to Meet Screening Criteria |
|---|---|
| Small Projects | A project that generates 110 or fewer average daily trips |
| Locally Serving Retail | A project that has locally serving retail uses that are 50,000 square feet or less, such as specialty retail, shopping center, grocery/food store, bank/financial facilities, fitness center, restaurant, or café. If a project also contains a non-locally serving retail use(s), that use(s) must meet other applicable screening criteria. |
| Projects Located in a VMT Efficient Area | A residential or office project that is located in an area that is already 15 percent below the county VMT (i.e., "VMT efficient area"). The County's Project-Level VMT Calculator determines whether a proposed residential or office project is located within a VMT efficient area. |
| Projects near Major Transit Stop | A project that is located within a ½ mile of a major transit stop or within a ½ mile of a bus stop on a high-quality transit corridor (HQTC). A major transit stop is a rail station or a bus stop with two or more intersecting bus routes with service frequency of 15 minutes or less during peak commute periods. A HQTC is a corridor with fixed route bus service with frequency of 15 minutes or less during peak commute periods. However, these screening criteria do not apply if project-specific or location-specific information indicates the project will still generate significant levels of VMT. Therefore, in addition to the screening criteria listed above, the project should also have the following characteristics:<br>– Floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.75 or greater;<br>– Consistent with the applicable SBCAG Sustainable Communities Strategy (as determined by the County); |

| Screening Category | Project Requirements to Meet Screening Criteria |
|---|---|
| | – Does not provide more parking than required by the County's Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances; and<br>– Does not replace affordable housing units (units set aside for very low income[8] and low income[9] households) with a smaller number of moderate or high-income housing units. |
| Affordable Housing | A residential project that provides 100 percent affordable housing units (units set aside for very low income and low income households); if part of a larger development, only those units that meet the definition of affordable housing satisfy the screening criteria. |

**c. Design Features and Hazards.** A significant impact occurs if a project will increase roadway hazards. An increase could result from existing or proposed uses or geometric design features.

**d. Emergency Access.** A significant impact occurs if a project impedes emergency access vehicles.

**Impact Discussion:**
***(a-d) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project includes daily boarding, breeding, and training operations for horses. Daily operations are not expected to result in more than 33 Average Daily Trips[10], which would be well below the 110 ADT threshold screening criteria. Access will continue to be provided from an existing southern driveway via a 60-foot-wide easement to Baseline Avenue. No improvements are proposed to the existing driveway. The onsite roads will be 20 feet wide and will provide access from the existing driveway to the equestrian arena. Parking for the equestrian facility will be accommodated adjacent to (along) the onsite roads. The Proposed Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses. The Proposed Project would not preclude implementation of or interfere with SBCAG's major projects shown in Figure 1-3 of the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SBCAG 2021). Accordingly, the Proposed Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system. Impacts would be **insignificant.**

**Cumulative Impacts**. The County's Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the project has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for transportation. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to the regionally significant transportation

[8] As referenced in California Government Code Section 65584(f)(2) and defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 50079.5(a), "'Very low income households' means persons and families whose incomes do not exceed the qualifying limits for very low income families as established and amended from time to time pursuant to Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937. ... In the event the federal standards are discontinued, the department shall, by regulation, establish income limits for very low income households for all geographic areas of the state at 50 percent of area median income, adjusted for family size and revised annually."
[9] As referenced in California Government Code Section 65584(f)(2) and defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 50079.5(a), "'Lower income households' means persons and families whose income does not exceed the qualifying limits for lower income families as established and amended from time to time pursuant to Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937. ... In the event the federal standards are discontinued, the department shall, by regulation, establish income limits for lower income households for all geographic areas of the state at 80 percent of area median income, adjusted for family size and revised annually."
[10] Institute of Transportation Engineers online Trip Generation Explorer, filters included: Recreational Category, Arena Title, Weekday, Average Daily Trip Period, https://itetripgen.net/, accessed on May 1, 2026.

impacts is not considerable, and is insignificant. The Proposed Project's contribution to cumulative VMT impacts and other Traffic/Circulation impacts is **not cumulatively considerable.**

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** No mitigation is required. Residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

## 4.15 WATER RESOURCES/FLOODING

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a.** Changes in currents, or the course or direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh waters? | | | **X** | | |
| **b.** Changes in percolation rates, drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface water runoff? | | | **X** | | |
| **c.** Change in the amount of surface water in any water body? | | | **X** | | |
| **d.** Discharge, directly or through a storm drain system, into surface waters (including but not limited to wetlands, riparian areas, ponds, springs, creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, tidal areas, bays, ocean, etc) or alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, or thermal water pollution? | | | **X** | | |
| **e.** Alterations to the course or flow of flood water or need for private or public flood control projects? | | | **X** | | |
| **f.** Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding (placement of project in 100 year flood plain), accelerated runoff or tsunamis, sea level rise, or seawater intrusion? | | | **X** | | |
| **g.** Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of groundwater? | | | **X** | | |
| **h.** Change in the quantity of groundwater, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations or recharge interference? | | | **X** | | |

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **i.** Overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin? Or, a significant increase in the existing overdraft or over-commitment of any groundwater basin? | | | **X** | | |
| **j.** The substantial degradation of groundwater quality including saltwater intrusion? | | | **X** | | |
| **k.** Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies? | | | | **X** | |
| **l.** Introduction of storm water pollutants (e.g., oil, grease, pesticides, nutrients, sediments, pathogens, etc.) into groundwater or surface water? | | **X** | | | |

**Existing Setting.** The Proposed Project is not located within the FEMA Regulatory Special Flood Hazard Area. The subject parcel is located within the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin (SYRVGB). Since the volume of water extracted annually in the SYRVGB does not exceed the basin's safe yield, this basin is not considered over drafted.

**County Water Resources Thresholds.** A project is determined to have a significant effect on water resources if it would exceed established threshold values which have been set for each over drafted groundwater basin. These values were determined based on an estimation of a basin's remaining life of available water storage. If the project's net new consumptive water use (total consumptive demand adjusted for recharge less discontinued historic use) exceeds the threshold adopted for the basin, the project's impacts on water resources are considered significant.

A project is also deemed to have a significant effect on water resources if a net increase in pumpage from a well would substantially affect production or quality from a nearby well.

**Water Quality Thresholds.** A significant water quality impact is presumed to occur if the project:

- Is located within an urbanized area of the county and the project construction or redevelopment individually or as a part of a larger common plan of development or sale would disturb one (1) or more acres of land;
- Increases the amount of impervious surfaces on a site by 25% or more;
- Results in channelization or relocation of a natural drainage channel;
- Results in removal or reduction of riparian vegetation or other vegetation (excluding non-native vegetation removed for restoration projects) from the buffer zone of any streams, creeks or wetlands;
- Is an industrial facility that falls under one or more of categories of industrial activity regulated under the NPDES Phase I industrial storm water regulations (facilities with effluent limitation; manufacturing; mineral, metal, oil and gas, hazardous waste, treatment or disposal facilities;

landfills; recycling facilities; steam electric plants; transportation facilities; treatment works; and light industrial activity);

- Discharges pollutants that exceed the water quality standards set forth in the applicable NPDES permit, the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) Basin Plan or otherwise impairs the beneficial uses[11] of a receiving water body;
- Results in a discharge of pollutants into an "impaired" water body that has been designated as such by the State Water Resources Control Board or the RWQCB under Section 303 (d) of the Federal Water Pollution Prevention and Control Act (i.e., the Clean Water Act); or
- Results in a discharge of pollutants of concern to a receiving water body, as identified by the RWQCB.

**Impact Discussion**

***(a-f) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project would create minor amounts of additional storm water runoff as a result of newly constructed impermeable surfaces (i.e. structures, driveways). Construction activities such as grading could also potentially create temporary runoff and erosion problems. The project includes stormwater control measures contained in a Tier 2 Stormwater Control Plan (Praxis Engineering, December 1, 2025, Attachment 8), which will ensure that stormwater on the site is captured and impacts are minimized. Final review and approval of the Tier 2 Stormwater Control Plan by County Public Works Project Clean Water Division staff will be required prior to issuance of the associated Land Use Permit for the equestrian facility. In addition, application of standard County grading, erosion, and drainage-control measures would ensure that no significant increase of erosion or storm water runoff would occur. Therefore impacts related to storm water runoff will be **insignificant**.

The Proposed Project is not within a special flood hazard zone and therefore impacts related to flood hazards will be **insignificant.**

***(g-k) Insignificant:*** The Proposed Project will be supplied water by the existing single-parcel domestic and agricultural water well system, which extracts water from the SYVRGWB. The County's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual does not establish a threshold of significance for this basin since it is not over drafted. Water use for the Proposed Project will be similar to existing uses onsite that include residential uses and irrigated pastures and hay fields for horses. The proposed development will include one restroom containing a sink and toilet, a new fire suppression water pumphouse with a 94,000-gallon water storage tank, and irrigation for new landscape and trees that will visually screen the 30-foot-tall arena building. Therefore, there is an adequate supply of water for the project, the project would not contribute to overdraft of groundwater resources, and the project's impact on water supplies will be **insignificant**.

Additionally, the proposed new connection to the existing single-parcel water system has been found adequate to serve the project per Environmental Health Services (letter dated March 20, 2026 – Attachment 3) and per the the well pump test report provided by Groundwater Solutions, Inc. (Attachment 9). Adherence to Environmental Health Services requirements for new septic systems would ensure that the proposed wastewater treatment system does not result in degradation of groundwater quality. Final review and approval of the septic system design by Environmental Health Services will be required prior to P&D issuance of the associated Land Use Permit for the equestrian facility, therefore impacts will be **insignificant**.

[11] Beneficial uses for Santa Barbara County are identified by the Regional Water Quality Control Board in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin, or Basin Plan, and include (among others) recreation, agricultural supply, groundwater recharge, fresh water habitat, estuarine habitat, support for rare, threatened or endangered species, preservation of biological habitats of special significance.

***(l) Significant but Mitigable:*** The Proposed Project could adversely affect surface water quality by increasing the volume and decreasing the quality of stormwater runoff, and potentially introducing animal waste into stormwater runoff. The Proposed Project would also involve the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and household cleaners and chemicals. Runoff from driveways, parking areas, and cultivated fields could introduce oil and other hydrocarbons and fertilizers and pesticides into drainage facilities. However, the project would be expected to generate only minor amounts of storm water pollutants. Minor amounts of such household hazardous material and other contaminants would not present a significant potential for release of waterborne pollutants and would be highly unlikely to create a public health hazard. Additionally, the applicant will be required to develop and implement an animal waste management plan (MM-6, discussed in Section 4.4 above).

Short-term construction activities such as grading could also potentially create temporary runoff and erosion problems. Other potential short-term construction impacts to surface water quality may include accidental pollutant/chemical spills or discharge of materials from the use of concrete, oil/gas, water runoff, or on-site fueling stations. To address these potential impacts to water resources in the project vicinity, Mitigation Measures MM-7, MM-8 and MM-9 below are proposed. Therefore, the Proposed Project impact to water quality is **significant but mitigable**.

**Cumulative Impacts**. The County's Environmental Thresholds were developed, in part, to define the point at which a project's contribution to a regionally significant impact constitutes a significant effect at the project level. In this instance, the Proposed Project has been found not to exceed the threshold of significance for water resources. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to the regionally significant issues of water supplies and water quality is not considerable, and its cumulative effect on Water Resources/Flooding is **insignificant**.

**Mitigation and Residual Impact.** The following mitigation measures would reduce the project's water resource impacts to an insignificant level:

> **MM-7 Geo-02 Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.** Where required by the latest edition of the California Green Code and/or Chapter 14 of the Santa Barbara County Code, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) and/or an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP) shall be implemented as part of the project. Grading and erosion and sediment control plans shall be designed to minimize erosion during construction and shall be implemented for the duration of the grading period and until re-graded areas have been stabilized by structures, long-term erosion control measures or permanent landscaping. The Owner/Applicant shall submit the SWPPP, SWMP or ESCP) using Best Management Practices (BMP) designed to stabilize the site, protect natural watercourses/creeks, prevent erosion, convey storm water runoff to existing drainage systems keeping contaminants and sediments onsite. The SWPPP or ESCP shall be a part of the Grading Plan submittal and will be reviewed for its technical merits by P&D. Information on Erosion Control requirements can be found on the County web site re: Grading Ordinance Chapter 14 (https://www.countyofsb.org/1042/Grading-Code) refer to Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Requirements; and in the California Green Code for SWPPP (projects < 1 acre) and/or SWMP requirements.
> PLAN REQUIREMENTS: The grading and SWPPP, SWMP and/or ESCP shall be submitted for review and approved by P&D prior to approval of land use clearances. The plan shall be designed to address erosion, sediment and pollution control during all phases of development of the site until all disturbed areas are permanently stabilized.
> TIMING: The SWPPP requirements shall be implemented prior to the commencement of grading and throughout the year. The ESCP/SWMP requirements shall be implemented between

November 1st and April 15th of each year, except pollution control measures shall be implemented year round.
MONITORING: P&D Building and Safety staff shall perform site inspections throughout the construction phase.

**MM-8. WatConv-04 Equipment Storage-Construction**. The Owner/Applicant shall designate a construction equipment filling and storage area(s) to contain spills, facilitate clean-up and proper disposal and prevent contamination from discharging to the storm drains, street, drainage ditches, creeks, or wetlands. The areas shall be no larger than 50 x 50 foot unless otherwise approved by P&D and shall be located at least 100 feet from any storm drain, waterbody or sensitive biological resources.
PLAN REQUIREMENTS: The Owner/Applicant shall designate the P&D approved location on all Zoning, Grading, and Building permits.
TIMING: The Owner/Applicant shall install the area prior to commencement of construction.
MONITORING: P&D Building and Safety staff shall ensure compliance prior to and throughout construction.

**MM-9. WatConv-05 Equipment Washout-Construction.** The Owner/Applicant shall designate a washout area for the washing of concrete trucks, paint, equipment, or similar activities to prevent wash water from discharging to the storm drains, street, drainage ditches, creeks, or wetlands. Note that polluted water and materials shall be contained in this area and removed from the site bi-monthly. The area shall be located at least 100 feet from any storm drain, water body, or sensitive biological resources.
PLAN REQUIREMENTS: The Owner/Applicant shall designate the P&D approved location on all Zoning, Grading, and Building permits.
TIMING: The Owner/Applicant shall install the area prior to commencement of construction.
MONITORING: P&D Building and Safety staff shall ensure compliance prior to and throughout construction.

With the incorporation of these measures, residual impacts would be **insignificant**.

# 5.0 INFORMATION SOURCES

## 5.1 County Departments Consulted:

Police, Fire, Public Works, Flood Control, Parks, Environmental Health, Special Districts, Regional Programs, Other : _____

## 5.2 Comprehensive Plan:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ____ | Seismic Safety/Safety Element | ____ | Conservation Element |
| ____ | Open Space Element | X | Noise Element |
| ____ | Coastal Plan and Maps | X | Circulation Element |
| ____ | ERME | X | Land Use Element |

## 5.3 Other Sources:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | Field work | X | Ag Preserve maps |
| X | Calculations | X | Flood Control maps |
| X | Project plans | X | Other technical references |
| ____ | Traffic studies | | (reports, survey, etc.) |
| X | Records | X | Planning files, maps, reports |
| X | Grading plans | X | Zoning maps |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | Elevation, architectural renderings | X | Soils maps/reports |
| | Published geological map/reports | X | Plant maps |
| X | Topographical maps | X | Archaeological maps and reports |
| X | Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual | | Other |

California Geological Survey (CGS). 2026. Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/eqzapp/

County of Santa Barbara. 2021a. Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual. Amended January 2021. https://cosantabarbara.app.box.com/s/vtxutffe2n52jme97lgmv66os7pp3lm5

County of Santa Barbara. 2024. 2030 Climate Action Plan. https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/2be6b30f-cf7b-4584-bfbb-ab9903749f31

Santa Barbara County Association of Governments. 2025. Connected 2050 Regional Transportation Plan Sustainable Communities Strategy. https://www.sbcag.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Connected2050_August2025.pdf

## 6.0 PROJECT SPECIFIC *(short- and long-term)* AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

The Proposed Project does not have potential impacts that cannot be feasibly mitigated to less than significant levels.

I. Project specific impacts which are of unavoidable significance levels: **None**

II. Project specific impacts which are potentially significant but can be reduced to less than significant levels with incorporation of mitigation measures: **Aesthetics, Fire Protection, Noise, Public Facilities, and Water Resources**

III. Potentially significant adverse cumulative impacts: **None**

## 7.0 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

| **Will the proposal result in:** | **Poten. Signif. and Unavoid.** | **Signif. But Mitigable** | **Insignif.** | **No Impact / Beneficial Impact** | **Reviewed Under Previous Document** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1.** 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, contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions or significantly increase energy consumption, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | | | **X** | | |

| Will the proposal result in: | Poten. Signif. and Unavoid. | Signif. But Mitigable | Insignif. | No Impact / Beneficial Impact | Reviewed Under Previous Document |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2.** Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term benefits to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals? | | | **X** | | |
| **3.** 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.) | | | **X** | | |
| **4.** Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | | **X** | | | |
| **5.** Is there disagreement supported by facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts and/or expert opinion supported by facts over the significance of an effect which would warrant investigation in an EIR? | | | **X** | | |

1. There are no impacts to biological resources, greenhouse gas emissions, energy resources, or cultural resources.
2. There are no short-term environmental goals that will be achieved by the Proposed Project to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals.
3. As discussed throughout this document, the project does not have any impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable. Any contribution of the project to significant cumulative impacts will be adequately reduced by mitigation measures identified to address project-specific impacts.
4. The project will allow for the construction of a 45,000-sf enclosed climate-controlled equestrian arena, and a 300-sf well water pump house. As discussed in this document, with implementation of identified required mitigation measures, all impacts to human beings, either directly or indirectly, will be adequately reduced to less than significant levels.
5. There is no known disagreement among experts regarding the projects impacts.

# 9.0 INITIAL REVIEW OF PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE SUBDIVISION, ZONING AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

**Zoning**

The Proposed Project is consistent with the requirements of the Santa Barbara County Land Use and Development Code (Inland Zoning Ordinance). The AG-II- zoning of the site allows for Equestrian Facilities with a Conditional Use Permit (LUDC 35.21.030).

Comprehensive Plan

The Proposed Project will be subject to all applicable requirements and policies under the Santa Barbara County Land Use and Development Code and the County's Comprehensive Plan. This analysis will be provided in the forthcoming Staff Report. Policies that pertain to the Proposed Project include, but are not limited to the following:

1. **Land Use Development Policy No. 4:** Prior to issuance of a development permit, the County shall make the finding, based on information provided by environmental documents, staff analysis, and the applicant, that adequate public or private services and resources (i.e., water, sewer, roads, etc.) are available to serve the proposed development. The applicant shall assume full responsibility for costs incurred in service extensions or improvements that are required as a result of the Proposed Project. Lack of available public or private services or resources shall be grounds for denial of the project or reduction in the density otherwise indicated in the land use plan. Affordable housing projects proposed pursuant to the Affordable Housing Overlay regulations, special needs housing projects or other affordable housing projects which include at least 50% of the total number of units for affordable housing or 30% of the total number of units affordable at the very low income level shall be presumed to be consistent with this policy if the project has, or is conditioned to obtain all necessary can and will serve letters at the time of final map recordation, or if no map, prior to issuance of land use permits.

2. **Hillside and Watershed Protection Policy No. 7:** Degradation of the water quality of groundwater basins, nearby streams, or wetlands shall not result from development of the site. Pollutants, such as chemicals, fuels, lubricants, raw sewage, and other harmful waste, shall not be discharged into or alongside coastal streams or wetlands either during or after construction.

3. **Historical and Archaeological Policy No. 2:** When developments are proposed for parcels where archaeological or other cultural sites are located, project design shall be required which avoids impacts to such cultural sites if possible.

4. **Visual Resources Policy No. 2:** In areas designated as rural on the land use plan maps, the height, scale, and design of structures shall be compatible with the character of surrounding natural environment, except where technical requirements dictate otherwise. Structures shall be subordinate in appearance to natural landforms; shall be designed to follow natural contours of the landscape; and shall be sited so as not to intrude into the skyline as seen from public viewing places.

5. **Noise Element Policy No. 1:** In the planning of land use, 65dB Day-Night Average Sound Level should be regarded as the maximum exterior noise exposure compatible with noise-sensitive uses unless noise mitigation features are included in the project design.

**Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan Policies and Development Standards**

The Proposed Project will be subject to all applicable requirements and policies under the Santa Ynez Valley Community Plan. This analysis will be provided in the forthcoming Staff Report. Policies and development standards that pertain to the proposed project include, but are not limited to the following:

1. **Policy VIS-SYV-3:** The night sky of the Santa Ynez Valley shall be protected from excessive and unnecessary light associated with new development and redevelopment.

2. **Policy WW-SYV-2:** Pollution of surface and groundwater shall be avoided. Where contribution of potential pollutants of any kind is not prohibited and cannot be avoided, such contribution shall be minimized to the maximum extent practical.

## 10.0 RECOMMENDATION BY P&D STAFF

**On the basis of the Initial Study, the staff of Planning and Development:**

___ Finds that the proposed project WILL NOT have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, recommends that a Negative Declaration (ND) be prepared.

**X** Finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures incorporated into the REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION would successfully mitigate the potentially significant impacts. Staff recommends the preparation of an ND. The ND finding is based on the assumption that mitigation measures will be acceptable to the applicant; if not acceptable a revised Initial Study finding for the preparation of an EIR may result.

___ Finds that the Proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and recommends that an EIR be prepared.

__ Finds that from existing documents (previous EIRs, etc.) that a subsequent document (containing updated and site-specific information, etc.) pursuant to CEQA Sections 15162/15163/15164 should be prepared.

Potentially significant unavoidable adverse impact areas:

___ With Public Hearing __**X**__ Without Public Hearing

**PREVIOUS DOCUMENT:** None

**PROJECT EVALUATOR:** **Steve Conner** **DATE:** May 26, 2026

## 11.0 DETERMINATION BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEARING OFFICER

X I agree with staff conclusions. Preparation of the appropriate document may proceed.
___ I DO NOT agree with staff conclusions. The following actions will be taken:
___ I require consultation and further information prior to making my determination.

**SIGNATURE:**__Glenn Beyeler_____ **INITIAL STUDY DATE**: _May 26, 2026

**SIGNATURE:**_____ **DRAFT NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE**:_____

**SIGNATURE:**_____ **REVISION DATE:** _____

**SIGNATURE:**_____ **FINAL NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE:** _____

## 12.0 ATTACHMENTS

1. CBAR Minutes (February and June 2025)
2. Project Plans
3. Compiled Departmental Project Condition Letters
4. CalEEMod Projected Project Emissions - Detailed Report (May 2026)
5. County of Santa Barbara Climate Action Plan Consistency Checklist for Proposed Project
6. CCIC letter (January 2025)
7. AB52 Tribal Notice (April 2026)
8. Tier 2 Stormwater Control Plan (December 2025)
9. Well Capacity Testing and Reporting (December 2025)

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