CITY OF SANTA MARIA
Environmental Checklist / Initial Study
Bellecrest Residences Project
(PD2022-0008/GPZ2022-0003)

1. Project Title and Location

Bellecrest Residences Project
1571 East Main Street
Santa Maria, California 93454
Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 128-052-014 and 128-052-023 (14.43 acres)

2. Lead Agency, Contact and Preparer

City of Santa Maria
Community Development Department
110 South Pine Street, Suite 101
Santa Maria, California 93458
Carol Ziesenhenne, Senior Planner
805-925-0951, x 1607
cziesenhenne@cityofsantamaria.org

3. Project Sponsor's Name and Address

Coastal Community Builders
330 James Way, Suite 270
Pismo Beach, California 93449

4. General Plan Designation

The project site has a land use classification of Lower-Density Residential (LWDR-4).

5. Zoning Designation

The project site is zoned Single Family Residential with a Planned Development overlay (PD/R-1).

6. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The 14.43-acre project site (Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APN] 128-052-014 and 128-052-023) is located at 1571 East Main Street in the city of Santa Maria, California. The project site is positioned north of East Main Street, east of Jonathan

Place, South of Rowland Drive, and west of Navarra Way. The project site is bounded to the north, east, and west by single-family residential development. Pioneer Valley High School is also adjacent to the eastern portion of the project site. The project site is bounded to the south by East Main Street and undeveloped land. Agricultural land is located to the south of the project site outside city limits in Santa Barbara County, adjacent to East Main Street.

Based on aerial imagery records, the project site was historically used for agriculture dating back to the 1950s. Currently, the site is developed with a single-family residence with accessory structures, driveways, a tennis court, and landscaping. These features are located at the northwestern portion of the site. In addition, the project site contains trees, bushes, and other vegetation primarily within the northern half of the site.

7. Brief Description of Project

The Bellecrest Residences Project (hereafter referred to as "project" or "proposed project") involves the demolition of the existing single-family residence and associated structures and the development of a gated, 100 percent senior age-restricted residential community. The residential community would include 142 single-family residential lots; a community clubhouse with a pool, spa, and cabanas; an outdoor living and activity lawn; and a pet-friendly pocket park with a covered gazebo and outdoor seating. The project includes a General Plan Land Use Amendment and Zone Change to facilitate development of the proposed residential community. This would change the project site's land use classification from Lower-Density Residential (LWDR-4) to Medium Density Residential (MDR-12) and zoning from Single Family Residential with a Planned Development overlay (PD/R-1) to Medium Density Residential with a Planned Development overlay (PD/R-2). Figure 1 shows the regional location of the project site. Figure 2 shows the project site with the existing land use classification and zoning of the project site. Figure 3 shows the project site with the proposed land use classification and zoning of the project site. Figure 4 shows the site plan of the proposed project. Figure 5 shows the phasing plan for the proposed project. Figure 6 through Figure 9 provide visual renderings of the proposed project.

Residential Units and Amenities

The proposed project would include 142 single-family residential lots comprised of ~~52~~ 54, 2,040-square-foot lots; ~~50~~ 48, 2,550-square-foot lots, ~~and 40~~ 36, 2,960-square-foot lots, and 4, 3,080 square-foot lots. The single-family residences would all be one-story buildings with a maximum building height of 22 feet 9 inches. The site plan includes a mixture of attached single-family residences (with a shared common wall along the property line) and detached single-family residences. Each residential lot would include a private yard. The lots would also include setbacks from internal streets ranging from 5 to 8 feet. Senior citizen housing typically

accommodates one to two people per household. Accordingly, the 142 residences proposed would accommodate up to 284 additional residents in Santa Maria.

The community clubhouse would be located at the southwest portion of the project site. The community clubhouse building would include an assembly room, card room, kitchen, fitness gym, storage, janitor's closet, and restrooms. The community clubhouse would be constructed up to 25 feet 4 inches tall. The outdoor living and activity lawn, pool, spa, cabanas, pool equipment building, and barbecue area would be located adjacent to the community clubhouse building. The 7,737-square-foot, pet-friendly pocket park and pavilion would be located on the northern portion of the project site. In addition, a six-foot wall would be installed parallel to Main Street to shield vehicle headlights of residents or visitors within the project site.

Access, Circulation, and Parking

Access to the project site would be provided from the south via a driveway connecting to East Main Street. ~~and from the north via a connection to~~ Spruce Drive would provide an exit-only connection to Rowland Drive as well as emergency access to the project site for first responders. An entry access kiosk would be used to provide entry to the gated community. The circulation layout would consist of internal ~~one-lane~~ two-lane streets which connect in a grid-like pattern. The posted speed limit would be 15 miles per hour. The project would install Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant pedestrian crosswalks to facilitate pedestrian travel. In addition, speed bumps would be installed along the main common guest parking streets to increase pedestrian safety. The streets would be designed to accommodate travel for 40-foot fire engines and 35-foot garbage trucks. The project would include guest parking spaces located primarily on the eastern and western ends of the project site. Garaged parking would be included within the residential lots for residents. The proposed project would provide 352 parking spaces consisting of 284 resident spaces and 68 guest parking spaces, which would exceed the City-required 284 parking spaces pursuant to Municipal Code Chapter 12-32.

Landscaping and Open Space

The proposed project would include approximately 198,303 square feet of landscaping throughout residential front and side yards (108,260 square feet) and common areas (90,043 square feet). The proposed project would plant a total of 272 new trees. Trees and plants used would be species with low water usage. Landscaping would be installed with moisture retentive soil and use drip or micro-spray irrigation to minimize water use.

Utilities and Stormwater Management

Water and sewer services would be provided to the project site by the City of Santa Maria. Electricity would be procured from Central Coast Community Energy (3CE) and provided to the project site through Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) electric lines. The Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) would provide natural gas services to the project site.

The proposed project would include an approximately 22,757-square-foot stormwater retention basin located south of the community pool and 15 underground storage chambers totaling 19,845 additional square feet located underneath the guest parking areas. The stormwater retention basins and underground chambers would be designed to accommodate the 100-year storm event. Stormwater would be diverted to existing City storm drainpipes underlying East Main Street.

Demolition and Construction

The proposed project would occur in three phases and include demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, architectural coating, and landscaping within each phase. Removal of the existing single-family residence and associated structures would result in approximately 2,500 square feet of demolition debris. During construction, 311 trees would be removed. These trees consist of a mix of avocado trees and other non-native orchard-type trees. Construction is anticipated to start in January 2025 and be completed approximately December 2028. Construction would take place 6 days per week, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Construction equipment and worker vehicles would be staged at the center of the project site to provide separation from construction activities and adjacent residences. Construction activities are anticipated to require approximately 4,500 cubic yards of soil cut, all of which would be reused as fill material on-site. An additional 31,550 cubic yards of fill material would be imported from off-site sources.

During construction, best management practices (BMP) for noise reduction would be required. Specific construction noise BMPs are detailed further in Environmental Checklist Section 13, *NOISE*, below.

8. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

Agency	Permits/Other Approvals
City of Santa Maria Community Development Department	Planned Development Permit (PD2022-0008), and General Plan Land Use Amendment and Zone Change approval (GPZ2022-0003), and Condition of Approval for the use of Tier 4 engine standards during construction

9. California Native American Tribes Consultation

Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 and Section 21080.3.2 requires public agencies to consult with California Native American Tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of avoiding, protecting, and/or mitigating impacts to tribal cultural resources as defined for projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

In May 2024, the City of Santa Maria sent letters to the local Native American contacts identified by the NAHC. No requests for consultation on this project were received.

Figure 1 Regional Location

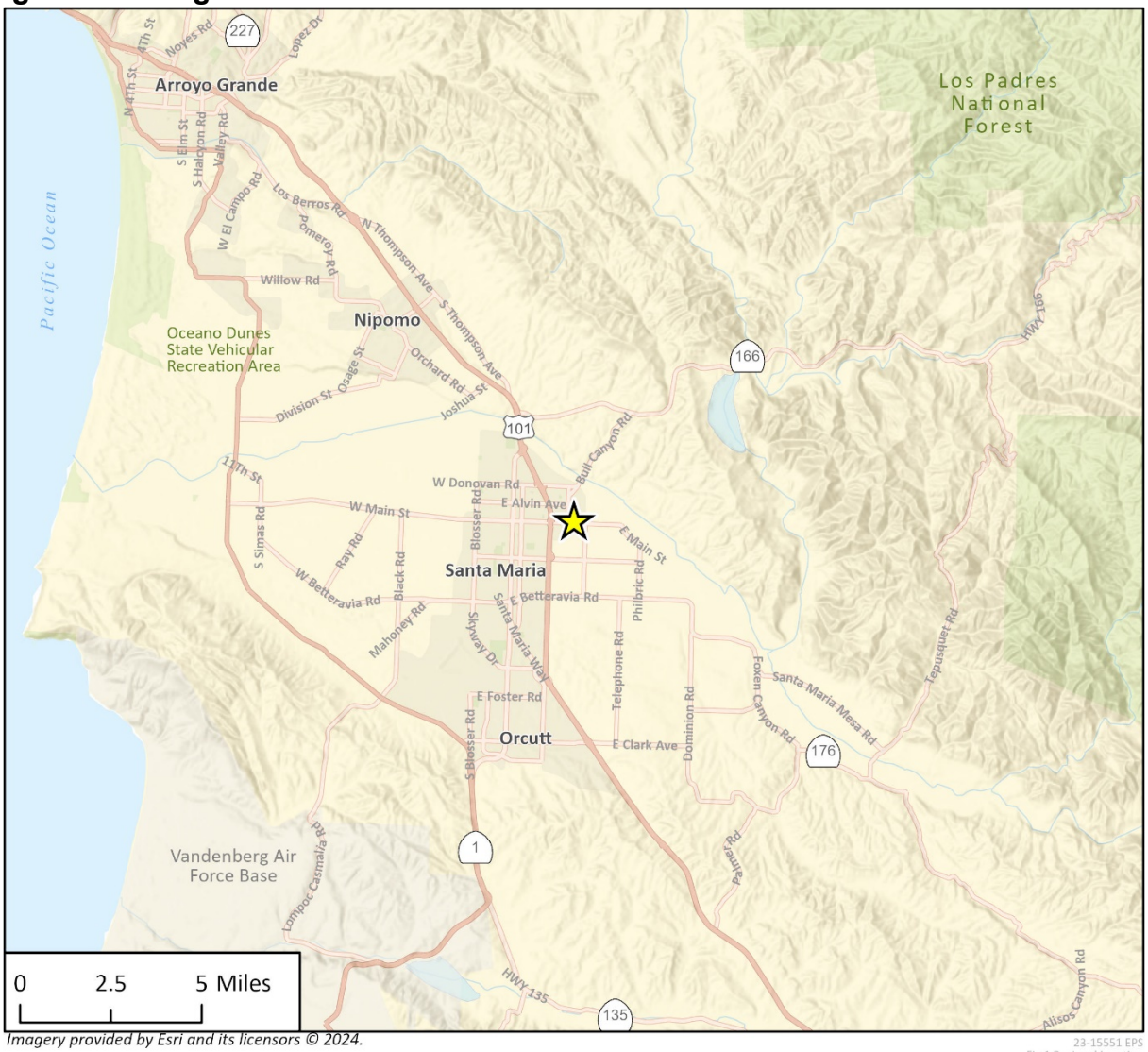

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Fig 1 Regional Location

★ Project Location

N

Figure 2 Project Site – Existing Land Use and Zoning

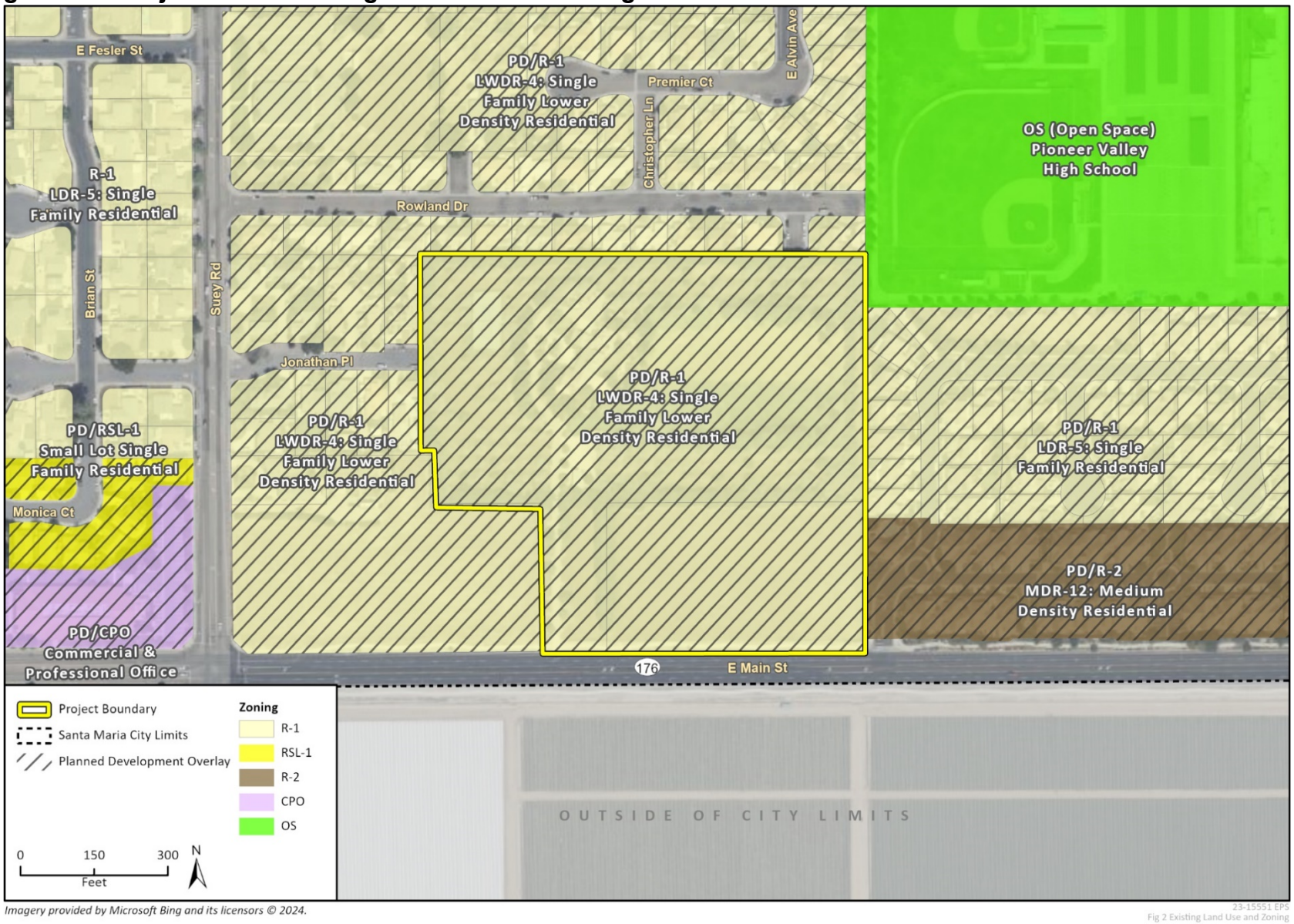

Figure 3 Project Site – Proposed Land Use and Zoning

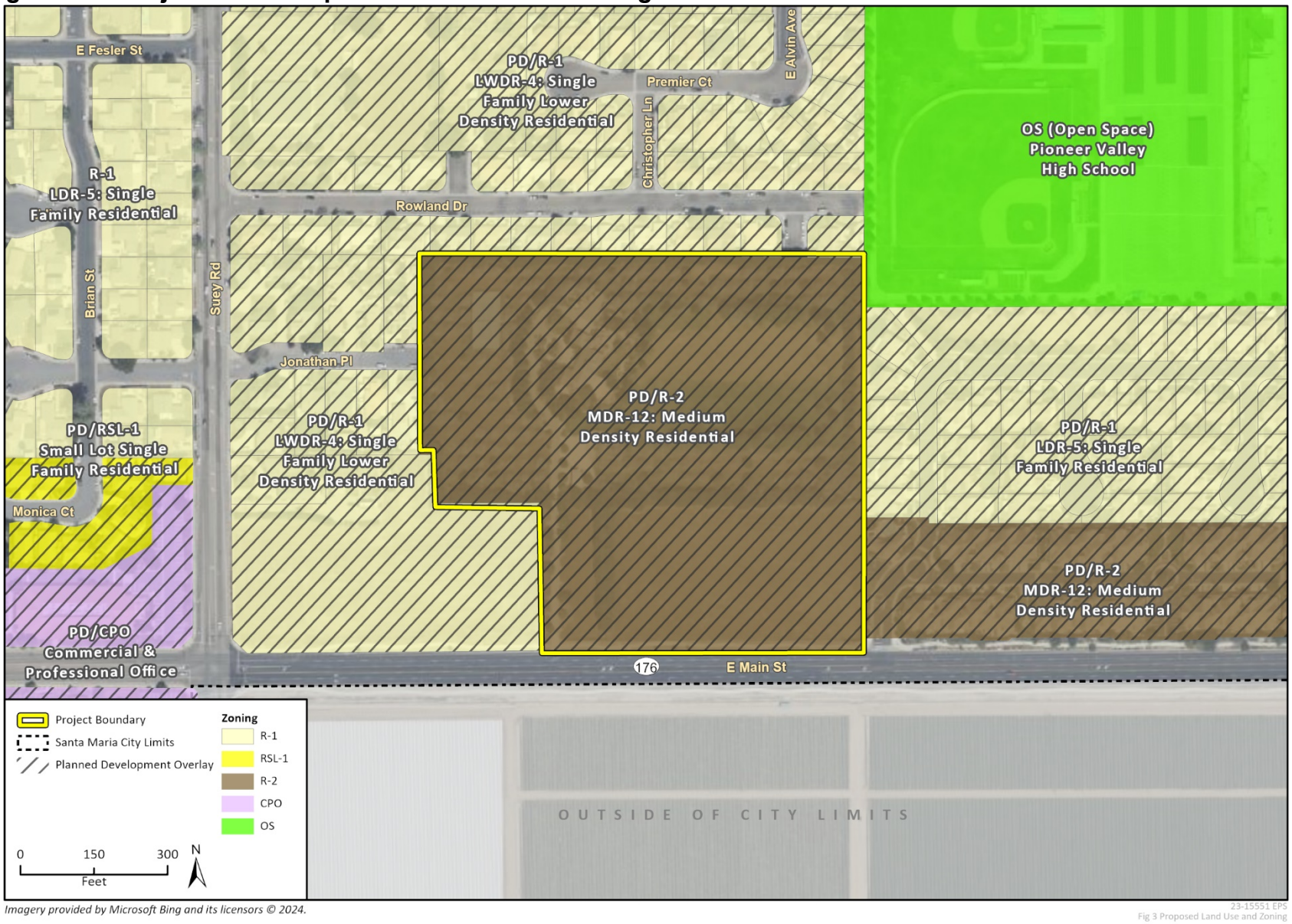

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Fig 3 Proposed Land Use and Zoning

Figure 4 Site Plan

SITE STATISTICS

LOTS:

TOTAL LOTS PROPOSED: 142 LOTS

LOT TYPES: (54) LOT TYPE A - 40 X 51 (2,040SF)
(48) LOT TYPE B - 50 X 51 (2,550SF)
(36) LOT TYPE C - 40 X 74 (2,960SF)
(4) LOT TYPE D - 40 X 77 (3,080SF)

PARKING SPACES:

TOTAL RESIDENT SPACES REQUIRED = 145 SPACES

PROPOSED RESIDENT SPACES:
PLAN TYPE 1: (54) - 1 GARAGE/DU + 1 OFF-STREET/DU = 108
PLAN TYPE 2: (24) - 2 GARAGE/DU = 48 SPACES
PLAN TYPE 3: (24) - 2 GARAGE/DU = 48 SPACES
PLAN TYPE 4A: (16) - 2 GARAGE/DU = 32 SPACES
PLAN TYPE 4B: (20) - 2 GARAGE/DU = 40 SPACES
PLAN TYPE 4C: (4) - 2 GARAGE/DU = 8 SPACES

TOTAL RESIDENT SPACES PROPOSED = 284 SPACES
GUEST SPACES PROPOSED = 79 SPACES
TOTAL PARKING SPACES PROPOSED = 363 SPACES

LEGEND

1. ENTRY ACCESS KIOSK
2. GATED ENTRY
3. PROJECT SIGNAGE/ENTRY MONUMENT
4. GUEST PARKING LOCATION
5. OUTDOOR LIVING & FIREPLACE
6. MAIL KIOSKS & BULLETIN
7. HANDICAP PARKING STALLS
8. EXIT ONLY W/ BOLLARDS (EMERGENCY ACCESS)
9. STORMWATER BASIN
10. BBQ ZONE
11. POOL
12. SPA
13. CABANAS
14. THE CLUBHOUSE
15. PET FRIENDLY POCKET PARK
16. THE PAVILION
17. OUTDOOR ACTIVITY LAWN
18. POOL EQUIPMENT BUILDING
19. SITE WALL & SCUPPER WATER FEATURE
20. ENTRY COURTYARD

LOT TYPE A - 40X51 (2,040SF)
LOT TYPE B - 50X51 (2,550SF)
LOT TYPE C - 40X74 (2,960SF)
LOT TYPE D - 40X77 (3,080SF)
KEY LOT W/ OPT. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

GRAPHIC SCALE 0 50 75 100

EHD STUDIO INC ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

BELLECREST RESIDENCES
1571 E. MAIN ST. - SANTA MARIA, CA 93454

ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN
07/10/24

A3
PLANNING PACKAGE

Figure 5 Phasing Plan

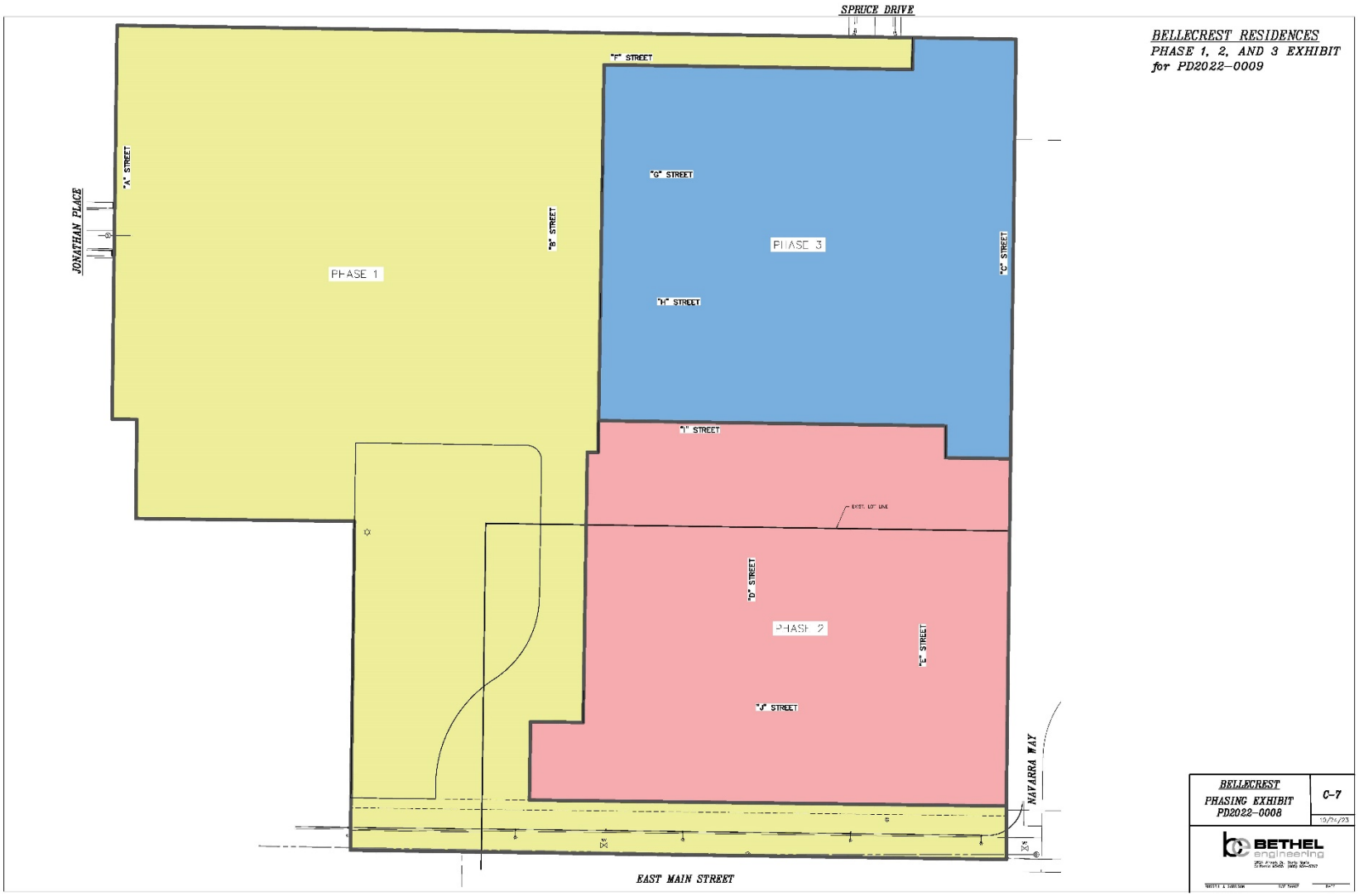

Figure 6 Project Site Rendering – Project Entry

Figure 7 Project Site Rendering – Main Access Road

Figure 8 Project Site Rendering - Clubhouse

Figure 9 Project Site Rendering – Pocket Park

1. AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099,

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

Discussion:

a. According to the City's General Plan, there are no designated scenic vistas near the project site (City of Santa Maria 2001). While views of rolling hillsides are available to the west of the project site, these views are obscured under existing conditions due to existing single family residential development and Pioneer Valley High School facilities. The proposed single-family residences would be a maximum height of 22 feet 9 inches, and the club house would be a maximum height of 25 feet 4 inches. Therefore, the project would not include substantially taller buildings than the surrounding development and would not obscure views of the surrounding area from existing residences or roadways. As such, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, and this impact would be *less than significant*.

b. According to the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) California State Scenic Highway System Map, there are no designated state scenic highway corridors in Santa Maria (Caltrans 2018). Therefore, the project would not substantially damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway. *No impact* would occur.

c. According to California Public Resources Code Section 21071, an urbanized area is defined as an incorporated city that has a population of at least 100,000 people. According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), Santa Maria has a population of 109,477 (DOF 2023). Therefore, the project site is located in an urbanized area, and

this analysis describes if the project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. The project includes a General Plan Land Use Amendment and Zone Change to facilitate development of the proposed residential community. The project would be constructed consistent with the design requirements within the Medium Density Residential with a Planned Development overlay (PD/R-2) zone, including height restrictions, setback requirements, and restrictions on building materials. Because the project would be consistent with the design requirements of the PD/R-2 zone, the project would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality. This impact would be *less than significant*.

d. The project site is adjacent to East Main Street and, therefore, experiences lighting from the headlights of vehicles under existing conditions. The project site is adjacent to existing residential development which produces a minimal amount of light from indoor/exterior lighting and sources of glare primarily from motor vehicles. Nighttime construction of the project would not be required; therefore, construction would not introduce substantial temporary lighting to the project site or surrounding areas. Project lighting would be shielded downward and directed away from surrounding residences in accordance with Section 12-32.20 of the City's Municipal Code. Furthermore, the proposed six-foot wall that would run parallel to Main Street would shield vehicle headlights of residents or visitors within the project site. Pursuant to Section 12-7.15 of the City's Municipal Code, shiny and reflective materials would not be used for roofing or sliding materials, which would minimize glare. Therefore, the project would not create substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

2. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

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

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

Discussion:

a-e. According to the DOC's California Important Farmland Finder, the project site is designated as Other Land and Grazing Land, and does not include Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland (DOC 2024a). According to the DOC's California Williamson Act Enrollment Finder, the project site is not subject to a Williamson Act contract (DOC 2024b). There is no forest land or timberland on the

project site or proximate to the project site. The project does not include activities that would result in the conversion of forest land or agricultural land to non-agricultural use. Therefore, *no impacts* to agriculture and forestry resources would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

3. AIR QUALITY

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

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

Discussion:

a. The project site is located within the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB) and subject to the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (SBCAPCD). SBCAPCD has published the *Scope and Content of Air Quality Sections in Environmental Documents* to provide guidance for assessing and mitigating air quality and greenhouse gas impacts of development projects (SBCAPCD 2022a). According to these guidelines, a project may be inconsistent with the applicable air quality plan if it would cause the existing population to exceed forecasts contained in the most recently adopted air quality management plan (AQMP). The AQMP applicable to the project is the 2022 Ozone Plan. Table 3-1 of the 2022 Ozone Plan uses countywide growth forecasts from the DOF to project future air pollution (SBCAPCD 2022b). The 2022 Ozone Plan notes the DOF projections are similar to the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' (SBCAG) Regional Growth Forecast 2050 (SBCAPCD 2022b). For the purposes of this analysis, the Regional Growth Forecast 2050 is used as it provides population projections at a city-level, whereas Table 3-1 of the 2022 Ozone Plan provides population projections at the county-level (SBCAG 2019, SBCAPCD 2022b). The Regional Growth Forecast 2050 anticipates the population of Santa Maria to grow to 127,600 by 2030 (SBCAG 2019). According to the DOF, the current population of Santa Maria is 109,477 (DOF 2023). The additional 284 residents that could be accommodated by the project would increase the population of Santa Maria to 109,761, which would not exceed the City's Regional Growth Forecast 2050 of 127,600 people. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the population projections included within

the 2022 Ozone Plan. Further, the development of the site would be required to comply with all SBCAPCD rules and regulations for construction and operation. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. This impact would be *less than significant*.

b. As the local air quality management agency, the SBCAPCD is required to monitor air pollutant levels to ensure National Ambient Air Quality Standards and California Ambient Air Quality Standards for criteria pollutants are met. If these standards are met for a specific pollutant, the SCCAB is classified as being in "attainment". If these standards are not met for a specific pollutant, the SCCAB is classified as being in "nonattainment" and SBCAPCD is required to develop strategies to meet the standards which are currently exceeded. According to SBCAPCD, the SCCAB is designated nonattainment for the California Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone and particulate matter measuring 10 microns or less in diameter (PM_{10}) (SBCAPCD 2024).

   SBCAPCD has not adopted quantitative significance criteria for temporary construction emissions associated with conventional land development projects. However, SBCAPCD recommends quantification of construction-related emissions from construction activities and uses 25 tons per year for reactive organic compounds (ROC) and nitrous oxide (NO_X), which are ozone precursors, as a guideline for determining the significance of construction impacts. For other construction projects involving standard grading and building activities, SBCAPCD (2022) notes that consistency with the air quality management plan requires the implementation of mitigation measures to minimize dust generation. This analysis uses 25 tons per year as a significance threshold for construction-related emissions. Long-term air quality impacts occur during project operation and include emissions from equipment or processes used in the project. These emissions must be summed to determine the significance of the project's long-term impact on air quality. Based on the criteria suggested by the SBCAPCD (2022), a project would not have a significant air quality effect on the environment if operation of the project would:

   - Emit (from all project sources, mobile and stationary), less than the daily trigger (Currently 240 pounds per day for NO_x and ROC, 80 pounds per day for PM_{10}, and 240 pounds per day for attainment pollutants (except particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter and carbon monoxide [CO]) for offsets set in the Air Pollution Control District New Source Review Rule, for any pollutant; and

   - Emit less than 25 pounds per day of NOx or ROC from motor vehicle trips only; and

   - Not cause or contribute to a violation of any California or National Ambient Air Quality Standard (except Q3); and

   - Not exceed the Air Pollution Control District health risk public notification thresholds adopted by the Air Pollution Control District Board (10 excess cancer cases in a million for cancer risk and a Hazard Index of more than one [1.0] for non-cancer risk); and

- Be consistent with the adopted federal and state air quality plans.

The California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2022.1.1.22 was used to estimate the project's air pollution emissions. CalEEMod uses project-specific information, including the project's land uses, square footage for land uses, construction equipment parameters, and location, to model a project's construction and operational emissions. The analysis reflects the construction and operation of the project as described in Initial Study Section 7, *Brief Description of Project*.

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. Operational emissions include mobile source emissions (i.e., vehicle emissions), energy emissions, area source emissions, and stationary sources emissions (i.e., generator). Mobile source emissions are generated by vehicle trips to and from the project site, which was derived from the *VMT Analysis Memorandum* prepared for the project by Associated Transportation Engineers in December 2023 (Appendix A). 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.

Construction Emissions

Project construction would generate temporary air pollutant emissions primarily associated with fugitive dust (PM_{10}) and exhaust emissions from heavy construction equipment and construction vehicles. The project's estimated unmitigated construction emissions are summarized in **Table 1**. As shown therein, annual construction emissions of ROG and NO_x would be approximately 1 ton each, which would not exceed the 25 tons per year threshold recommended by SBCAPCD. However, because the Santa Barbara County portion of the SCCAB is designated nonattainment for the state PM_{10} standard, construction emissions control measures are required for all projects involving earthmoving activities regardless of size or duration to reduce PM_{10}. These measures are described in Section 6.1 of SBCAPCD's *Scope and Content of Air Quality Sections in Environmental Documents* and include measures such as use of water to suppress dust, limiting on-site vehicle speeds to 15 miles per hour, scheduling earth-moving activities during periods of low wind, and designating construction personnel to monitor and document the dust control program. These measures would be included as conditions of the Planned Development permit and applied to the project. With adherence to required SBCAPCD dust prevention measures, project construction would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

Table 1 Estimated Maximum Annual Construction Emissions

	Estimated Maximum Annual Emissions (tons per year)					
	ROG	**NO_x**	**CO**	**SO_2**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Construction Emissions	1	1	4	<1	<1	<1
SBCAPCD Thresholds	*25*	*25*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**

ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_2 = sulfur dioxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

See Appendix B for air quality modeling results

Operational Emissions

Operational emissions would include emissions associated with mobile sources (vehicle trips); energy sources (natural gas use); and area sources (landscape maintenance equipment, consumer products, and architectural coating associated with on-site operational activities). **Table 2** summarizes the operational emissions that would result from the project and compares the emissions with SBCAPCD operational significance thresholds. As shown therein, the project would result in a daily maximum of 11 pounds ROG emissions, 3 pounds NOx emissions and 17 pounds CO emissions, which would not exceed SBCAPCD operational significance thresholds for criteria air pollutants. Therefore, operation of the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Table 2 Operational Emissions

Source	Maximum Emissions (pounds per day)[1]					
	ROG	**NO_X**	**CO**	**SO_2**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Area Source	9.2	<0.1	8.0	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	<0.1	1.4	0.6	<0.1	0.1	0.1
Mobile	2.0	1.1	9.6	<0.1	1.6	0.4
Totals (Rounded)	**11.0**	**3.0**	**17.0**	**<0.1**	**2.0**	**1.0**
Threshold (all sources)	*240*	*240*	*80*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
Threshold (mobile only)	*25*	*25*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*

[1]Totals may not add up due to rounding.
ROG = reactive organic gases; NOx = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_2 = sulfur dioxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter
See Appendix B for air quality modeling results.

c. Sensitive receptors are people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants, such as the elderly, children, people with asthma or other respiratory illnesses, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, due to the population that occupies the uses and the activities involved. Sensitive receptor locations include schools, parks and playgrounds, day care centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residences. The closest sensitive receptors to the project site are the single-family residences adjacent to the east, north, and west of the project site. The recreational fields of Pioneer High School abut the northeastern border of the project site. In addition, as phased development of the proposed project occurs, new residents of the proposed project could be temporarily exposed to construction emissions from additional phased development. The potential for project construction and operation to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations is discussed below.

   As discussed in Threshold 3(b), the project would result in emissions of fugitive dust during construction. However, these emissions would be temporary and would be reduced in compliance with SBCAPCD-required dust control measures. Following construction, the project would not generate substantial fugitive dust. Therefore, the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of fugitive dust emissions.

   Traffic-congested roadways and intersections have the potential to generate elevated localized CO levels (i.e., CO hotspots). According to SBCAPCD guidance, due to the relatively low background ambient CO levels in Santa Barbara County, including the City of Santa Maria, localized CO impacts are not anticipated to exceed CO health-related air quality standards. Accordingly, the project's CO emissions would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Toxic air contaminants (TAC) are a diverse group of air pollutants that may cause or contribute to an increase in deaths or serious illness, or that may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. The primary TAC emitted by project implementation would be diesel particulate matter (DPM) generated by heavy-duty equipment and diesel-fueled delivery and haul trucks during construction activities. Generation of DPM from construction projects typically occurs in a single area for a short period. Project construction would last approximately 3 years. Dose is positively correlated with time, meaning a longer exposure period would result in a higher exposure level for the Maximally Exposed Individual. The risks estimated for a Maximally Exposed Individual are higher if a fixed exposure occurs over a longer period of time. Young children are more sensitive to exposure to some carcinogens than adults. Therefore, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment has implemented age sensitivity factors that take into account the increased sensitivity of children during early development stages (i.e., third trimester exposure to 16 years). Given the age sensitivity factors, exposure at a young age to even short-term projects have the potential to result in substantial risk exposure (California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment 2015).

The maximum daily PM_{10} emissions during demolition and construction would be approximately 10.4 pounds per day in 2025, which would drop to less than 1 pound per day from 2026 to 2028 (Appendix B). The project applicant has indicated construction equipment would be equipped with Tier 4[1] engines. The use of Tier 4 construction equipment would assist in minimizing PM_{10} emissions. The project would implement applicable AQMP requirements and control strategies intended to reduce emissions from construction equipment and activities. The project would be required to comply with the CARB Air Toxics Control Measure which limits diesel powered equipment and vehicle idling to no more than five minutes at a location, and the CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation and On-Road Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicles Regulation which set requirements for off-road and on-road diesel-powered construction vehicle efficiencies including the use of best available control technology to minimize DPM emissions. Compliance with these requirements would minimize emissions of TACs during construction. However, given the construction area's proximity to nearby sensitive receptors, impacts from TACs could be *potentially significant*, and mitigation would be required.

The project would not include any stationary sources of air pollution once operational. Therefore, the project's operational impacts related to TAC and DPM emissions from stationary sources would be *less than significant*.

d. During construction activities, heavy equipment and vehicles would emit odors associated with vehicle and engine exhaust and during idling. However, these odors would be intermittent and temporary, would generally disperse with distance, and would cease upon completion of project construction. Project construction would not generate other emissions leading to odors that would affect a substantial number of people.

[1] Tier 4 emissions standards are the most stringent emissions standards for nonroad diesel engines set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency

Section 5.3.4 of the SBCAPCD *Scope and Content of Air Quality Sections in Environmental Documents* guidance document provides a list of projects that have the potential to generate substantial odor complaints. The uses include fast food restaurants, bakeries, and coffee roasting facilities (SBCAPCD 2022a). The project would not involve operation of facilities identified by SBCAPCD that could result in substantial odors. Therefore, project operation would not generate other emissions leading to odors that would affect a substantial number of people. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

AQ-1 Construction Emissions Reduction. During demolition and construction, the project applicant shall require the construction contractor to implement the following measures to minimize diesel particulate matter emissions:

- Diesel powered equipment shall be replaced by electric equipment when available. Electric auxiliary power units shall be used to the maximum extent feasible.
- On-road heavy-duty equipment shall be equipped with model year 2010 engines or newer.
- Alternative fuel (natural gas, propane, electric, etc.) construction equipment shall be incorporated where available.
- All construction equipment shall be maintained in tune with the manufacturer's specifications.
- Catalytic converters shall be installed on gasoline-powered equipment prior to use.
- Electricity shall be supplied to the site from the existing power grid to support the electric construction equipment. If connection to the grid is determined to be infeasible for portions of the project, a non-diesel fueled generator shall be used.
- Construction staging shall be located at the southern central portion of the project site to provide space from surrounding residences such that exhaust and other construction emissions do not enter the fresh air intakes to buildings, air conditioners, and windows.

Plan Requirements and Timing. These measures shall be shown within the construction contract for the project and reviewed by the construction contractor prior to the start of construction. The construction contractor shall implement these requirements during demolition and construction activities.

Monitoring. The City Community Development Department staff will verify that the construction contractor has implemented these requirements prior to the start of

construction by confirming the construction equipment meets the above requirements, and the staging area is designated on the construction plans.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measure: With implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, impacts to sensitive receptors would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

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

Discussion:

a. The project site is primarily undeveloped but previously disturbed and includes an existing residence and is located adjacent to existing residential development. Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) conducted a review of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) for recorded occurrences of special-status plant and wildlife taxa occurring in the region. The CNDDB query included records from nine United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles containing and surrounding the site: *Santa Maria, Oceano, Nipomo, Huasna Peak, Guadalupe, Twitchell Dam, Casmalia, Orcutt, and Sisquoc, California* (CDFW 2024a). The CNDDB results output is based on reported occurrences of special-status taxa and does not constitute a comprehensive inventory of biological

resources for any given area. Other database search results included the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2024).

Based on the results of these queries, there are 40 special-status plant species and 29 special-status animal species that have been documented within the nine-quadrangle search area (CDFW 2024a, CNPS 2024). However, due to the developed nature of the project site and surrounding area and lack of native, riparian, or other suitable habitat, special-status species are not expected to occur onsite. Existing trees within the project site could contain bird nests and birds that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code. Protected birds include all common songbirds, waterfowl, shorebirds, hawks, owls, eagles, ravens, crows, native doves and pigeons, swifts, martins, swallows, and others, including their body parts (feathers, plumes etc.), nests, and eggs. Project construction would involve tree removal, which could result in direct impacts to nesting birds. Furthermore, disturbance from project demolition and construction activities, such as noise, may affect protected nesting birds in existing trees near the site. Therefore, impacts to nesting birds would be *potentially significant*, and mitigation is required.

b-c. The project site is primarily undeveloped but previously disturbed and includes an existing single-family residence and appurtenant structures and surrounded by residential development and roadways. No riparian habitat is located on the project site. According to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the project site is not located within designated critical habitat for threatened or endangered species (USFWS 2024a). According to the USFWS's National Wetlands Inventory, the project site does not contain wetlands (USFWS 2024b). The closest designated wetland is a freshwater pond approximately 0.5-mile east of the project site. The project would not involve or require the direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other adverse effects to the freshwater pond. Accordingly, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community or wetlands, and *no impact* would occur.

d. The project site is primarily undeveloped but previously disturbed and includes an existing single-family residence and appurtenant structures and surrounded by residential development and roadways which does not provide for regional or local migration for wildlife. Based on a review of CDFW's Biogeographic Information and Observation System map, the project site is not designated as an essential habitat connectivity area (CDFW 2024b). Accordingly, the project site is not used for substantial wildlife migration, and the project would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, nor impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. *No impact* would occur.

e. The City's General Plan Resource Management Element identifies the Santa Maria River, Orcutt Creek, and vernal pool complexes adjacent to Orcutt Creek as significant habitat within the city. The project would not be located proximate to these areas or disrupt these habitats (City of Santa Maria 2001). Project construction would require the

removal of 311 trees from the project site. These trees consist of a mix of avocado trees and other non-native orchard trees. However, the project applicant would be required to comply with the Section 12-44.04(n) of the City's Municipal Code which requires preservation of or if preservation is infeasible, replacement of trees of suitable species would be required. The project would replace 272 trees with a mix of street trees, canopy trees, accent trees, and perimeter screening trees. These replacement trees in addition to the payment of in-lieu fees for additional trees would be consistent with the City of Santa Maria and General Plan Implementation Program 7 for Biological Resources, which requires enforcement of the tree replacement standards within Chapter 44 of Title 12 of the Municipal Code (City of Santa Maria 2001). Therefore, the project would not conflict with City policies related to tree replacement. This impact would be *less than significant*.

f. The project site is not located in an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan area (CDFW 2024c). Therefore, the project would not conflict with these plans, and *no impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

BIO-1 Pre-Construction Nesting Bird Surveys and Avoidance. To avoid and minimize impacts to nesting bird species, including special-status species (e.g., burrowing owl) and species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code, all initial vegetation clearing and ground disturbance activities for the project shall be limited to the period between September 1 and February 1 (i.e., outside of nesting bird season).

If initial vegetation clearing and ground disturbance cannot be conducted during this time period, the applicant shall conduct a pre-construction survey for active bird nests within the limits of the project site and a 300-foot buffer, with an allowed reduction in this buffer, if approved by the City, due to right-of-entry and/or line-of-sight issues. Surveys shall be conducted by a City-approved qualified biologist.

Surveys shall be conducted no less than 7 days prior to any construction activities. If no active nests are located, ground-disturbing construction activities can proceed, and no further mitigation will be required. If active nests are located, then all construction work must be conducted outside a no disturbance buffer zone (up to 300 feet for raptors, and up to 100 feet for all other species). No direct disturbance to nests shall occur until the young are no longer reliant on the nest site as determined by the City-approved qualified biologist. The approved biologist shall conduct monitoring of the nest until all young have fledged, at which time construction activities can occur within the previously established no disturbance zone.

Plan Requirements and Timing. The results of the surveys shall be reported to the City Community Development Department prior to issuance of grading permits.

No disturbance buffers shall be demarcated in the field (e.g., fencing, flagging) prior to initiation of construction activities in the vicinity of an active nest.

Monitoring. The City Community Development Department staff will verify that a pre-construction nesting bird survey has been conducted, if required based on construction timing, and shall verify that no disturbance avoidance buffers have been established prior to issuance of a grading permit. The approved biologist shall be responsible for monitoring active nests, if any occur.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measure: With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, potential impacts to nesting birds would be avoided and impacts would be *less than significant*.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

This section is based on the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared by Rincon in July 2024 for the proposed project (Appendix C).

Discussion:

a. Background research and a field survey were conducted as part of the Cultural Resources Assessment (Rincon 2024, Appendix C) to identify potential historical resources on or proximate to the project site. The field survey and background research identified the project site as a historic-age (i.e., over 45 years old) property; however, the property has been determined ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or as a City of Santa Maria Historical Landmark. Therefore, the project site does not qualify as a historical resource. Therefore, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource and no impact would occur.

b. The records search completed as part of the Cultural Resources Assessment did not identify previously recorded cultural resources within the project site. The project site is underlain by Sorrento sandy loam and Sorrento loam (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2024). Due to the underlying soil and previous disturbance, the project site has a low archaeological sensitivity. As part of the Cultural Resources Assessment, a California Historical Resources Information System records search was conducted to identify potential archaeological resources on-site. The records search indicated there are no known prehistoric or historic archaeological resources within or adjacent to the project site. No archaeological resources were identified during the field survey. In addition, past cultural resource studies reviewed as part of the Cultural Resources Assessment which were performed within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site did not identify or record any prehistoric or historic archaeological resources. Therefore, it is unlikely that ground disturbing activities associated with project construction would encounter archaeological resources. However, there is still a potential to encounter unknown archaeological resources during ground-disturbing activities. Therefore, the project could have a *potentially significant* impact related to substantially altering an archaeological resource, and mitigation would be required.

c. No known human remains are present at the project site. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains during construction, the State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that all construction activities halt in the vicinity of the discovery and the County Coroner be contacted immediately. The County Coroner would make a determination of origin and disposition of the human remains pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the coroner would notify the NAHC, which would determine and notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD would complete an inspection of the site within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The MLD would be responsible for the ultimate disposition of the remains, as required by Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. Recommendations by the MLD may include: (1) the nondestructive removal and analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American human remains; (2) preservation of Native American human remains and associated items in place; (3) relinquishment of Native American human remains and associated items to the descendants for treatment; or (4) other culturally appropriate treatment.

   With compliance with existing regulations prescribed in the State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.8, impacts to human remains would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

CUL-1 Unanticipated Discovery of Cultural Resources. If archaeological resources are unexpectedly encountered during ground-disturbing activities, work within 50 feet of the find shall halt and an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology shall be contacted immediately to evaluate the resource. If the resource is determined by the qualified archaeologist to be prehistoric, then a Native American representative shall also be contacted to participate in the evaluation of the resource. If the qualified archaeologist and/or Native American representative determines it to be appropriate, archaeological testing for California Register of Historical Resources eligibility shall be completed. If the resource proves to be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources and significant impacts to the resource cannot be avoided via project redesign, a qualified archaeologist shall prepare a data recovery plan tailored to the physical nature and characteristics of the resource, per the requirements of California Code of Regulations Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)(3)(C). The data recovery plan shall identify data recovery excavation methods, measurable objectives, and data thresholds to reduce any significant impacts to cultural resources related to the resource. Pursuant to the data recovery plan, the qualified archaeologist and Native American representative, as appropriate, shall recover and document the scientifically consequential information that justifies the resource's significance. The City shall review and approve the treatment plan and archaeological testing as appropriate, and the resulting documentation shall be submitted to the regional repository of the California Historical Resources Information System, per California Code of Regulations Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)(3)(C).

Plan Requirements and Timing. These measures shall be shown within the construction contract for the project and reviewed by the construction contractor prior to the start of construction. The construction contractor shall stop construction if an archaeological resource is found and alert the City. The City Community Development Department shall retain the qualified archaeologist. The qualified archaeologist shall be responsible for determining when construction work can continue within 50 feet of the find.

Monitoring. The City Community Development Department staff will verify that this measure is incorporated into the construction contract. If required, the City Community Development Department staff shall review and approve the treatment plan and archaeological testing prior to the qualified archaeologist starting the recovery and documentation process.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measure: With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

6. ENERGY

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

Discussion:

a. *Construction Impacts* During project construction, energy would be consumed in the form of petroleum-based fuels used to power off-road construction vehicles and equipment on the project site, construction worker travel to and from the project site, and vehicles used to deliver materials to the site. Energy use during construction would be temporary in nature, and construction equipment used would be typical of similar-sized construction projects in the region. In addition, construction contractors would be required to comply with the provisions of California Code of Regulations Title 13 Sections 2449 and 2485, which prohibit off-road diesel vehicles and diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles, respectively, from idling for more than five minutes and would minimize unnecessary fuel consumption. Construction equipment would be subject to the United States Environmental Protection Agency Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard, and trucks would be subject to the CARB Advanced Clean Trucks regulation, both of which would also minimize inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary fuel consumption (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2004). These regulations would result in the efficient use of energy necessary to construct the project. Therefore, project construction would not result in potentially significant effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, and this impact would be *less than significant*.

Operational Impacts Operation of the project would require energy use in the form of electricity, natural gas, and gasoline fuel consumption. Natural gas and electricity would be used for heating and cooling systems, lighting, appliances, water use, off-road equipment operation, and overall operation of the project. Gasoline consumption would be attributed to vehicular travel from residents and employees traveling to and from the project site. The project would be required to comply with standards set forth in the California Building Code (CBC) Title 24, which would minimize the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during operation**.** The California Green Building Standards Code requires implementation of energy-efficient light fixtures and building materials into the design of new construction projects. The Building Energy Efficiency Standards requires newly constructed buildings to meet energy performance

standards set by the California Energy Commission. These standards are specifically crafted for new buildings to achieve energy efficient performance. The standards are updated every 3 years, and each iteration increases energy efficiency standards. In addition to these requirements, the use of nonrenewable energy resources would be further reduced as the percentage of electricity generated by renewable resources provided by 3CE continues to increase in compliance with state requirements through Senate Bill (SB) 100, which requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 60 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2045. With adherence to existing regulatory requirements, project operation would not result in potentially significant environmental effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy. This impact would be *less than significant*.

b. The project would involve the consumption of electricity and natural gas. However, new structures would be required to comply with Title 24 Building, Energy, and Green Buildings Standards (California Building Code, Title 24, Parts 4, 6 and 11) which address efficiency of buildings, appliances, insulation and roofing, lighting, and water and space heating and cooling equipment. Accordingly, the project would not conflict with state regulations designed to promote energy efficiency. Furthermore, with implementation of applicable state regulations designed to achieve energy efficiency, the project would be consistent with the City General Plan Objective 6.1.b(2) to encourage site design which maximizes energy efficiency in private facilities (City of Santa Maria 2001). Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

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

Discussion:

a.i. The project site is not intersected by an earthquake fault designated on the Alquist-Priolo Zoning Map (DOC 2021). The closest fault to the project site is the Santa Maria Fault, located approximately 1.3-miles west of the project site (USGS 2024). Therefore, the project would not cause the risk of loss, injury, or death involving fault rupture. *No impact* would occur.

a.ii. The project site is proximate to faults such as the Santa Maria Fault (1.3-miles west), San Luis Range fault system (1.8-miles east), and West Huasna fault zone (4-miles

east), which could trigger seismic ground shaking at the project site (USGS 2024). However, the project design would be required to meet the seismic design criteria of the CBC, which requires that all improvements be constructed to withstand anticipated ground shaking from regional fault sources. The CBC requires that a licensed geotechnical engineer be retained to design the project components to withstand probable seismically induced ground shaking and consolidate recommendations into a site-specific geotechnical report. The CBC requires that a final geotechnical investigation be performed after project design plans are finalized and prior to construction, and that a final geotechnical report be completed to provide engineering and design requirements. All construction would adhere to the specifications, procedures, and site conditions contained in the final design plans, which would comply with the seismic recommendations of a California-registered, professional geotechnical engineer contained in the geotechnical report in accordance with the CBC. The final structural design would be subject to approval and follow-up inspection by the City. Implementation of the applicable CBC requirements and local agency enforcement would ensure that the project would not directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking. This impact would be *less than significant*.

a.iii. The City's 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies the project site as being within a moderate risk area for liquefaction (City of Santa Maria 2017). Although the project site may be subject to liquefaction, risks associated with liquefaction would be minimized with implementation of CBC requirements, including incorporation of recommendations from a site-specific geotechnical report into project design. The City's Municipal Code requires that all recommendations of the required soil survey and geotechnical evaluations, or other actions proposed by the project engineer and approved by the City Engineer, be incorporated into construction plans (Municipal Code Section 11-3.04(c)). With compliance with the CBC, the project would not directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving liquefaction. This impact would be *less than significant*.

a.iv. The project site is generally flat and is surrounded by flat land devoid of substantial elevation change. The project would not create substantial elevation changes with surrounding parcels or otherwise result in the risk of landslides. Therefore, *no impact* related to landslides would occur.

b. Construction of the project would require grading and other ground-disturbing activities which could increase the potential for erosion. As the overall footprint of construction activities would exceed one acre, the project would be required to comply with the *General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities*, Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002 (Construction Stormwater General Permit), adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). This state requirement was developed to ensure that stormwater is managed, and that erosion is controlled on construction sites. The Construction Stormwater General Permit requires preparation and implementation of a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), which requires implementation of BMPs to control stormwater run-on and runoff from construction work sites. BMPs may include,

but would not be limited to, physical barriers to reduce erosion and sedimentation, construction of sedimentation basins, limitations on work periods during storm events, use of infiltration swales, protection of stockpiled materials, and a variety of other measures to be identified by a qualified SWPPP developer that would substantially reduce erosion from occurring during construction. With adherence to the Construction Stormwater General Permit, project construction would not result in substantial erosion. During operation, the project would not include ongoing activities that would have the potential to result in substantial erosion. Overall, the project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. This impact would be *less than significant*.

c. As discussed in Threshold 7(a.iv) the project site and surrounding area are flat and not subject to landslides. As discussed in Threshold 7(d) below, the soil underlying the project site is not expansive. Therefore, the risk of collapse on the project site is low. On-site groundwater pumping would not occur as a result of the project; therefore, the project would not lead to subsidence. Therefore, the project would not result in on- or off-site landslides, subsidence, or collapse. While the project site is subject to liquefaction, compliance with the CBC would ensure potential hazards associated with liquefaction are addressed and minimized through project design. Therefore, the project would not result in on- or off-site lateral spreading or liquefaction. This impact would be *less than significant*.

d. Expansive soils are soils with high shrink-swell potential. The shrink-swell potential is low if the soil has a linear extensibility of less than three percent (USDA 2017). The project site is underlain by Sorrento sandy loam and Sorrento loam (USDA 2024). Sorrento sandy loam has a linear extensibility rating of 1.6 percent and Sorrento loam has a linear extensibility rating of 2.6 percent, indicating a low shrink-swell potential (USDA 2024). Therefore, no expansive soils are located on the project site. The project would not introduce risk to life or property as a result of expansive soil. *No impact* would occur.

e. The project would connect to the City's sanitary sewer system and would not require the use of septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

f. Paleontological resources, or fossils, are the evidence of once-living organisms preserved in the rock record. They include both the fossilized remains of ancient plants and animals and the traces thereof (e.g., trackways, imprints, burrows). Paleontological resources are not found in soil but are contained within the geologic deposits or bedrock that underlies the soil layer. Typically, fossils are greater than 5,000 years old (i.e., older than middle Holocene in age) and are typically preserved in sedimentary rocks. Although rare, fossils can also be preserved in volcanic rocks and low-grade metamorphic rocks under certain conditions (Society of Vertebrate Paleontology [SVP] 2010). Fossils occur in a non-continuous and often unpredictable distribution within some sedimentary units, and the potential for fossils to occur within sedimentary units depends on several factors. It is possible to evaluate the potential for geologic units to contain scientifically important paleontological resources, and therefore evaluate the potential for impacts to those

resources and provide mitigation for paleontological resources if they are discovered during construction of a development project (SVP 2010).

The project site is located in the *Santa Maria* quadrangle, which was mapped by Sweetkind et al. (2021), who identified one geologic unit underlying the project site: Holocene alluvial fan and fluvial deposits (Sweekind et al. 2021). Holocene-aged sediments are generally considered too young (i.e., less than 5,000 years old) to preserve paleontological resources (SVP 2010). Therefore, Holocene alluvial fan and fluvial deposits have low paleontological sensitivity. Furthermore, the project site has been subject to previous ground disturbance from construction of the existing residence and previous farmsteads on-site (discussed in Appendix C) and, therefore, there is low potential for intact paleontological resources to be present within the project site. Construction activities would require excavations up to ten feet deep. Although the site has a low paleontological sensitivity, the possibility remains unanticipated paleontological resources could be discovered during ground-disturbing activities. Therefore, this impact would be *potentially significant*, and Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required to reduce potential impacts.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

GEO-1 Unanticipated Discovery of Paleontological Resources. In the event of a fossil discovery by construction personnel, the construction contractor shall halt all construction activities within the immediate vicinity of the fossil, and a Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall be retained to evaluate the find prior to resuming construction activity. If it is determined the fossil(s) is (are) scientifically significant, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall complete the following conditions to mitigate impacts to significant fossil resources:

- **Fossil Salvage.** If fossils are discovered, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall have the authority to halt or temporarily divert construction equipment within 50 feet of the find until the Qualified Professional Paleontologist evaluate the discovery and determine if the fossil may be considered significant. Bulk matrix sampling may be necessary to recover small invertebrates or microvertebrates from within paleontologically sensitive deposits.

- **Fossil Preparation and Curation.** Once salvaged, significant fossils shall be identified to the lowest possible taxonomic level, prepared to a curation-ready condition, and curated in a scientific institution with a permanent paleontological collection along with all pertinent field notes, photos, data, and maps. Fossils of undetermined significance at the time of collection may also warrant curation at the discretion of the Qualified Professional Paleontologist.

- **Final Paleontological Report.** The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall submit a report describing the results of the paleontological monitoring efforts associated with the project. The report shall include a summary of the field and laboratory methods, an overview of the project geology and paleontology, a list

of taxa recovered (if any), an analysis of fossils recovered (if any) and their scientific significance, and recommendations. The report shall be submitted to the City Community Development Department.

Plan Requirements and Timing. The construction contractor shall stop work immediately within a 50-foot radius if a fossil is discovered. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall carry out fossil salvage, preparation, and curation after discovery of fossils. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall submit the Final Paleontological Report to the City Community Development Department. City staff shall review and approve the report.

Monitoring. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall have the authority to halt or temporarily divert construction equipment within 50 feet during fossil salvage activities.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measure: With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, potential impacts to paleontological resources would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

Discussion:

a-b. Climate change is the observed increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans along with other substantial changes in climate (such as wind patterns, precipitation, and storms) over an extended period. Climate change is the result of numerous, cumulative sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions contributing to the warming of Earth's surface. GHG emissions occur both naturally and as a result of human activities, such as fossil fuel burning, decomposition of landfill wastes, raising livestock, deforestation, and some agricultural practices. GHGs produced by human activities include carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane, NOx, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

The majority of individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to directly influence climate change. However, physical changes caused by a project can contribute incrementally to cumulative effects that are significant, even if individual changes resulting from a project are limited. The issue of climate change typically involves an analysis of whether a Project's contribution towards an impact would be cumulatively considerable. "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064[h][1]).

According to the *CEQA Guidelines*, projects can tier from a qualified GHG reduction plan, which allows for project-level evaluation of GHG emissions through the comparison of the proposed project's consistency with the GHG reduction policies included in a qualified GHG reduction plan. This approach is considered by the Association of Environmental Professionals (2016) in its white paper, *Beyond 2020 and Newhall*, to be the most defensible approach presently available under CEQA to determine the significance of a project's GHG emissions.

The City of Santa Maria has not adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing impacts related to GHG emissions. Neither the SBCAPCD, the California

Office of Planning and Research, CARB, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, or any other state or applicable regional agency has adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing GHG emissions that is applicable to the project. In the absence of any adopted numeric threshold, the significance of the project's GHG emissions is evaluated consistent with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.4(b) by considering whether the project complies with applicable plans, policies, regulations and requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. For this project, the most directly applicable adopted regulatory plans to reduce GHG emissions are the 2022 Scoping Plan and SBCAG 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). GHG emissions from the construction and operation of the project are provided for informational purposes.

Consistency With Applicable Plans and Policies

2022 Scoping Plan. The principal state plans and policies are Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, and the subsequent legislation, SB 32. The quantitative goal of AB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The goal of SB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and to Net Zero by 2045. Pursuant to these targets, the 2022 Scoping Plan was created to outline goals and measures for the state to achieve the reductions. The 2022 Scoping Plan focuses on outcomes needed to achieve carbon neutrality by assessing paths for clean technology, energy deployment, natural and working lands, and others, and is designed to meet the state's long-term climate objectives and support a range of economic, environmental, energy security, environmental justice, and public health priorities. The project would be consistent with these goals through project design. Although the project would not be all-electric, the project would be required to implement solar panels and electric vehicle charging stations as required by state renewable energy requirements in the Title 24 Green Building Code and Building Efficiency Energy Standards which, in part, help fulfill 2022 Scoping Plan goals. The project would be provided electricity by 3CE, which would increase its renewable energy procurement in accordance with SB 100, which requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 60 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2045. In addition, as described further in Environmental Checklist Section 17, *TRANSPORTATION*, the project would generate approximately 54 percent less average daily traffic than typical single family residential housing (Appendix A) and therefore would not generate substantial GHG emissions associated with mobile trips. Because the project would comply with state regulations designed to reduce GHG emissions consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan, the project would not conflict with the 2022 Scoping Plan. This impact would be *less than significant*.

SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS. SBCAG has incorporated a sustainable community strategy into its RTP/SCS, which is designed to help the region achieve its SB 375 GHG emissions reduction targets. The SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS demonstrates that the SBCAG region would achieve its regional emissions reduction targets for the 2020 and 2035 target years (SBCAG 2021). The SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS achieves these targets through implementation of goals that include reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT),

preserving open space, agricultural land, and sensitive biological resources, and promoting transit use. As described further in Environmental Checklist Section 17, *TRANSPORTATION*, the project would generate approximately 54 percent less average daily traffic than typical single family residential housing (Appendix A) and therefore would not generate substantial VMT. The project would not result in the loss of existing open space or agricultural land. As described in Environmental Checklist Section 4, *BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES,* the project would not result in substantial impacts related to sensitive biological resources. The project would be located approximately 500 feet from an existing bus stop and therefore provide transit options to the project site. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Quantified GHG Emissions

GHG emissions from the construction and operation of the project are provided for informational purposes. GHG emissions associated with project construction and operation were estimated using CalEEMod, with the assumptions described in Environmental Checklist Section 3, *AIR QUALITY*. CalEEMod modeling outputs are included in Appendix B. For the purposes of this GHG analysis, it was assumed the project would have a 30-year lifetime. Construction emissions were amortized over the project's estimated 30-year lifetime, because construction emissions are confined to a relatively short period of time in relation to the overall life of the project. As shown in Table 3, construction of the project would generate approximately 1,756 metric tons of CO_2 equivalent.[2] This would equate to 59 metric tons of CO_2 equivalent amortized over 30 years.

Table 3 Estimated GHG Emissions During Construction

	Emissions (MT of CO_2e)
Total	1,756
Total Amortized over 30 Years	59
MT of CO_2e = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent *See Appendix B for CalEEMod outputs.*	

Operation of the project would generate GHG emissions associated with vehicle trips, area sources, energy, water usage and wastewater generation, solid waste generation, and refrigeration. As shown in **Table 4**, total combined annual GHG emissions generated by the project would be approximately 764 metric tons of CO_2 equivalent. As described above, these quantified GHG emissions are provided for informational purposes only. Because the project would be consistent with applicable GHG emissions reduction plans, the 2022 Scoping Plan and SBCAG 2050 RTP/SCS, the project would have a less than significant impact related to GHG emissions.

[2] Carbon dioxide *equivalent* is a unit of measurement used to standardize the climate effects of various GHGs in terms of the amount of CO_2 that would create the same amount of global warming.

Table 4 Combined Annual GHG Emissions

Emission Source	Annual Emissions (MT of CO_2e)
Construction	**59**
Operation	705
Mobile	291
Area	2
Energy	386
Water	6
Waste	19
Refrigeration	0.4
Total Emissions	**764**
MT of CO_2e = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent *Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.* *See Appendix B for CalEEMod outputs.*	

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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

Discussion:

a-b. Project demolition and construction activities would involve the use of potentially hazardous materials such as fuels, oils and lubricants, solvents and cleaners, cements and adhesives, paints and thinners, degreasers, cement and concrete, and asphalt mixtures, which are all commonly used in construction. The transport, use, and storage of hazardous materials during construction of the project would be conducted in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws, such as the Hazardous Material Transportation Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the California Hazardous Materials Management Act, and California Code of Regulations Title 22. Furthermore, if hazardous materials are transported on state highways and routes, Caltrans regulates

the safe transportation of hazardous materials on state highways and routes, as described in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Structures/foundations built before the 1970s were regularly constructed with asbestos containing materials; however, permits to construct the existing single-family residence was issued in 1974 and the residence and appurtenant structures were completed in 1981 (Appendix C). Therefore, the project site is unlikely to contain asbestos containing materials. In addition, due to the 2006 ban on mercury-added products and previous ground-disturbance at the project site, mercury is not considered to be a hazard at the project site. Because the foundations on the project site could have potentially been constructed before the federal ban on the manufacture of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) and lead-based paint in 1978, it is possible that the concrete slabs contain PCBs and the structures contain lead-based paint. Demolition ~~of the on-site concrete foundations~~ could result in health hazard impacts to workers if not remediated prior to construction activities. However, demolition and construction activities would be required to adhere to California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Department of Toxic Substances Control regulations which are the regulatory agencies that oversee ~~and PCBs~~ risks related to hazardous materials. In addition, due to the historical agricultural practices the property, the potential exists for the presence of residual quantities of agricultural chemicals and other hazardous materials, including undocumented residual quantities of pesticides and organochlorine pesticides. Ground disturbing activities during construction could expose construction workers to residual agricultural chemicals via direct contact with or inhalation of soil dust particles. However, the project would be required to follow all applicable testing, handling and disposal procedures required by the Santa Barbara County Department of Environmental Health Services Hazardous Materials Division and DTSC. With adherence to applicable regulatory requirements, project construction would not result in substantial hazards due routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or risk upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Operation of the project would not include land uses associated with the use, transportation, storage, or generation of significant quantities of hazardous materials. Operation of the project may result in an incremental release in the use of common household hazardous materials such as cleaning and degreasing solvents. Use of these materials would create minimal hazard to the public or environment. Furthermore, the City operates and maintains a household hazardous waste facility that would allow residents to safely dispose of household hazardous waste including, but not limited to, oil, used oil filters, paint, and household cleaning supplies (City of Santa Maria 2024a). Therefore, project operation would not result in substantial hazards due to routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or risk upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials. This impact would be *less than significant*.

c. The northeastern corner of the project site abuts Pioneer Valley High School. As described in Threshold 9(a-b), construction of the project would occur in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations which would minimize the potential for construction to result in the release of hazardous materials. The use of materials associated with construction such as cement, concrete, and adhesives would be

temporary and cease following completion of construction. The project includes residential uses which are not associated with the ongoing long-term handling of hazardous materials. Because the project does not involve development of any uses or operations that would result in the emission of hazardous materials, the project would not emit hazardous materials within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. This impact would be *less than significant*.

d. The following databases were reviewed in May 2024 for known hazardous materials contamination at the project site:

   - SWRCB's Geotracker database (SWRCB 2024)
   - The California Department of Toxic Substances Control's EnviroStor database (California Department of Toxic Substances Control 2024)

   Based on a review of these databases, no hazardous material sites are listed at the project site or surrounding vicinity. Therefore, the project would not be located on a hazardous materials site that would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. *No impact* would occur.

e. The closest airport to the project site is the Santa Maria Airport, located approximately 4.4-miles southwest of the project site. The project site is located outside of the noise and safety contours for the Santa Maria Airport (SBCAG 2023). Therefore, the project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area due to proximity to an airport. *No impact* would occur.

f. The City's 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies emergency response procedures, including evacuation procedures, in the event of a hazard occurring, including earthquakes, dam failure, wildfire, and hazardous material release (City of Santa Maria 2017). Project construction would occur entirely within the project site and no street closures would be required. The temporary construction traffic would not induce substantial traffic in the area such that evacuation on roadways surrounding the project site could be hindered. The project would not involve the development of structures within roadways that could potentially impair implementation of or physically interfere with the procedures outlined within the 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plan. As described in Initial Study Section 7, *Brief Description of Project*, the project's internal streets would be designed to accommodate travel for 40-foot fire engines which would allow for emergency response at the project site. The project would be reviewed by the Santa Maria City Fire Department (SMFD) to ensure the project's circulation patterns are adequately sized to accommodate emergency vehicles and the turning radii of emergency vehicles in accordance with the California Fire Code, adopted by right in Chapter 9-28 of the City's Municipal Code. Required reviews to ensure compliance would confirm that first responders could adequately access the project site to carry out emergency response procedures outlined within 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plan as necessary. As such, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. This impact would be *less than significant*.

g. The project site is not located within or near a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone or state responsibility area. The nearest Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone is located approximately 1-mile east of the project site on the eastern side of the Santa Maria River (CAL FIRE 2023). The Santa Maria River provides fire protection to Santa Maria. Furthermore, the project site is surrounded by existing development and agricultural activities which are devoid of wildland features. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. This impact would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			X	
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			X	
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i. Result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;			X	
ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;			X	
iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or			X	
iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?				X
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				X
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?			X	

Discussion:

a. Project demolition and construction activities, including on-site operation of heavy equipment during grading, would temporarily disturb surface and subsurface soils, which could result in erosion and sedimentation. The project site is relatively flat, so the potential for slope-based soil erosion is low. However, stormwater runoff could result in short-term erosion in areas of exposed soils. As described in Environmental Checklist Section 7, *GEOLOGY AND SOILS*, construction would be required to comply the with Construction Stormwater General Permit, which mandates preparation and implementation of a SWPPP and associated BMPs to control

stormwater run-on and runoff from construction work sites. In addition, Section 8-12A.08 of the City's Municipal Code requires BMPs to be implemented during construction activities. BMPs may include, but would not be limited to, physical barriers to reduce erosion and sedimentation, construction of sedimentation basins, limitations on work periods during storm events, use of infiltration swales, protection of stockpiled materials, and a variety of other measures to be identified by a qualified SWPPP developer that would substantially reduce erosion from occurring during construction. With adherence to these regulations, project construction would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

During operation, the project would be required to comply with the standards and requirements of the City's Public Works Department Engineering Division, Section 8-12A.04 of the City's Municipal Code, which sets forth prohibited discharges, as well as the Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast Region (Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board [CCRWQCB], Resolution No. R3-2013-0032). To fulfill the post-construction requirements of the CCRWQCB, the project would include an approximately 22,757-square-foot stormwater retention basin located south of the community pool and 15 underground storage chambers totaling 19,845 additional square feet located underneath the guest parking areas. The stormwater retention basin and underground chambers would be designed to filter stormwater and minimize the amount of pollutants in stormwater runoff from the project site. To demonstrate compliance with these requirements, a Stormwater Control Plan would be required for the project. By complying with existing state and local regulations and incorporating design provisions to reduce stormwater pollutants, the project would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

b. The project site overlies the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin. The project would introduce additional impervious surfaces compared to existing conditions. However, the project includes approximately 198,303 acres of landscaped area, which would allow for stormwater to percolate groundwater at the project site. The project would receive water from the City of Maria, which sources water, in part, from the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin (City of Santa Maria 2021). The Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin was adjudicated in 2008, and as part of the adjudication agreement, the City is entitled 14,300 acre-feet per year of groundwater from the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin (City of Santa Maria 2021). Even with these management restrictions, the City anticipates having sufficient supply to reliably meet projected water demands in Santa Maria through 2045 (City of Santa Maria 2021). As described further in Environmental Checklist Section 19, *UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS*, the project's potential resulting population increase is well within the growth projections of the City's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). Since the project's population would be within the City's UWMP growth projections, there would be sufficient water supply to meet projected water demands of the project. The project would receive groundwater in accordance with the City's groundwater pumping restrictions, which would ensure the project would not substantially decrease

groundwater supplies or otherwise impede groundwater management of the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin. This impact would be *less than significant*.

c.i As described in Threshold 10(a), project construction would be required to adhere to the requirements of the Construction Stormwater General Permit and Section 8-12A.08 of the City's Municipal Code, which requires implementation of BMPs to reduce erosion during construction. During operation, the project would not include ongoing activities that would have the potential to result in substantial erosion. Operation of the project would be required to adhere to the CCRWQCB's Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements and implement a Stormwater Control Plan to demonstrate compliance with stormwater management requirements, including erosion minimization. With adherence to these regulatory requirements, the project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. This impact would be *less than significant*.

c.ii The project would add impervious surfaces to the project site. However, the project would involve construction of a stormwater retention basin located south of the community pool and 15 underground storage chambers. These stormwater control features would accommodate stormwater from a 100-year storm event. As shown in the Preliminary Drainage Study prepared for the project in February 2024 (Appendix D), pre-development flows for a 100-year storm event on the project site are 15.71 cubic feet per second. With implementation of the proposed stormwater control infrastructure, the post-developed 100-year storm event flows on the project site would be 1 cubic foot per second. Therefore, the project would substantially reduce the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site. This impact would be *less than significant*.

c.iii As described in Threshold 10(a), project construction would be required to adhere to the requirements of the Construction Stormwater General Permit and Section 8-12A.08 of the City's Municipal Code, which requires implementation of BMPs to reduce stormwater pollutants during construction. Operation of the project would be required to adhere to the CCRWQCB's Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements and implement a Stormwater Control Plan to demonstrate compliance with stormwater management requirements, including minimizing stormwater pollutants and flows. In addition to the stormwater management areas, the project would include landscaped areas and other open space which would allow for groundwater percolation. With adherence to these regulatory requirements, the project would not create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. This impact would be *less than significant*.

c.iv-d. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates the project site as Zone X, meaning an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2024). The project site is approximately 14-miles east of the Pacific Ocean and, therefore, is not subject to tsunamis. No large, enclosed bodies of water are adjacent to the project site and the project site is not subject to seiche. Accordingly, the project would not impede or

redirect flood flows or risk release of pollutants due to being in a flood hazard, tsunami hazard, or seiche zone. *No impact* would occur.

e. The CCRWQCB Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Basin is the Water Quality Control Plan applicable to the project site. This plan defines beneficial uses, sets forth water quality objectives, and establishes programs to manage the quality of surface water and groundwater and achieve those water quality objectives for protection of beneficial uses (CCRWQCB 2019). As stated in Threshold 10(a), the project construction would be required to obtain coverage under the Construction Stormwater General Permit which requires preparation and implementation of a SWPPP which includes project-specific erosion and sediment control BMPs to control erosion, sediment release, and otherwise reduce the potential for discharge of pollutants from construction into stormwater and good housekeeping BMPs such as vehicle maintenance and proper storage of construction materials to reduce the potential for leaks and spills. Compliance with the Construction Stormwater General Permit would ensure project construction would not impair beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater identified in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Basin. Operation of the project would comply with the CCRWQCB Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements which would ensure stormwater generated during operation is treated and managed to reduce pollutants. With adherence to these requirements, the project would not impair beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater identified in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast Basin. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan. *No impact* would occur.

   As described in Threshold 10(b), the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin is adjudicated. Adjudicated basins are not required to have a Groundwater Sustainability Plan, and no Groundwater Sustainability Plan has been prepared for the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a groundwater sustainability plan. *No impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING

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

Discussion:

a. The project is a proposed residential development consistent with the surrounding residential development to the north, east, and west of the project site. The project would be 100 percent deed restricted to seniors. The project does not include elements, such as the construction of highways, that would physically divide surrounding established communities. The project would not create, close, or impede existing public or private roads, or create barriers to movement or accessibility within the surrounding community. Therefore, the project would not physically divide an established community. *No impact* would occur.

b. The project site currently has a land use classification of Lower-Density Residential (LWDR 4) and is zoned Single Family Residential with a Planned Development overlay (PD/R-1). The project proposes to change the current land use and zoning to Medium Density Residential (MDR-12) and Medium Density Residential with a Planned Development overlay (PD/R-2), respectively. The project has been designed in accordance with the requirements of the MRD-12 land use and PD/R-2 zoning, as designated by the City. Once approved, the project would be consistent with the underlying land use and zoning designations. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 3, the proposed land use and zoning would be consistent with the land use and zoning designations of residences adjacent to the project site to the east. As such, the project's proposed land use and zoning changes would not introduce incompatible development with the surrounding area or otherwise result in environmental impacts due to land use conflicts. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

12. MINERAL RESOURCES

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

Discussion:

a-b. Within the city of Santa Maria, the primary resources suitable for mining and conservation are sand, rock, and oil (City of Santa Maria's Resources Management Element of the General Plan 2001). The Santa Maria River channel is considered to be a valuable mineral resource for sand and rock. The project site is approximately 1-mile west of the Santa Maria River and located outside the City-designated Areas of Operational, Existing, or Abandoned Oil Facilities. According to Figure RME-4 of the City's General Plan Resource Management Element, the project site is located in Mineral Resource Zone 2 (MRZ-2). This zone is designated for areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or areas with a high likelihood of mineral deposits existing. However, the project site is located within an existing residential area zoned for residential use, currently developed with a residence and appurtenant structures, and surrounded by existing residences. Accordingly, the project site is not a location currently used for nor conducive for mineral resource extraction or mining. As such, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a valuable known mineral resource or locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

13. NOISE

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

Discussion:

a. Noise level (or volume) is generally measured in decibels (dB) using the A-weighted sound pressure level (dBA). Quiet suburban areas typically have noise levels in the range of 40 to 50 dBA, while areas adjacent to arterial streets are typically in the 50 to 60+ dBA range. Normal conversational noise levels are usually in the 60 to 65 dBA range, and ambient noise levels greater than 65 dBA can interrupt conversations. In addition to the instantaneous measurement of sound levels, the duration of sound is important because sounds that occur over a long period are more likely to be an annoyance or cause direct physical damage or environmental stress. One of the most frequently used noise metrics that considers both duration and sound power level is the equivalent noise level (L_{eq}). The L_{eq} is defined as the single steady A-weighted level that is equivalent to the same amount of energy as that contained in the actual fluctuating levels over a period of time (essentially, the average noise level). Typically, L_{eq} is summed over a 1-hour period. The time at which noise occurs is also important since nighttime noise tends to disturb people more than daytime noise. Community noise is usually measured using Day-Night Average Level (L_{dn}), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a 10 dBA penalty for noise occurring during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.), or Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a 5 dBA penalty for noise occurring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and a 10 dBA penalty for noise occurring from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Noise levels described by L_{dn} and CNEL typically do not differ by more than 1 dBA. In practice, CNEL and L_{dn} are often used interchangeably.

An Acoustical Analysis was prepared by WJV Acoustics for the project in October 2023 (Appendix E). As part of the Acoustical Analysis, a 24-hour ambient noise measurement was conducted at the southern border of the project site on April 29, 2022. Measured hourly noise levels ranged from a low of 54 dBA L_{eq} between 3:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. to a high of 66.4 dBA between 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. Hourly maximum noise levels at the project site ranged from 72.1 dBA L_{max} to 93.2 dBA L_{max}. The measured 24-hour CNEL value was 66.7 dB CNEL (Appendix E).

The Acoustical Analysis also conducted noise level measurements and traffic counts to assess existing ambient traffic noise. The measurements and traffic counts were taken approximately 75-feet north of the centerline of East Main Street at the southern edge of the project site. The existing ambient noise from traffic exposure was determined to be approximately 63 dB CNEL (Appendix E).

Section 5-5.04 of the City's Municipal Code states a noise violation shall exist when the noise level exceeds the ambient noise level (measured) or ambient base noise level (established in the Municipal Code), whichever is higher, as follows:

- By any amount 30 minutes for any given hour, measured cumulatively;
- (2) By five dB(A), 15 minutes for any given hour;
- (3) By 10 dB(A), five minutes for any given hour;
- (4) By 20 dB(A) at any time.

The nearest sensitive receivers in the project vicinity are residences that abut the project site to the east, north, and west. In addition, the recreational fields of Pioneer High School abut the northeastern border of the project site. Construction activity would result in temporary noise in the project site vicinity, exposing surrounding nearby receivers to temporary increases in noise levels and potentially exceeding City exterior noise thresholds. However, construction would take place 6 days per week, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, consistent with the allowable construction hours within Section 5-5.06 of the City's Municipal Code. In addition, the construction contractor would adhere to the following BMPs:

- **Mufflers.** During excavation and grading construction phases, all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, shall be operated with closed engine doors and shall be equipped with properly operating and maintained mufflers consistent with manufacturers' standards.
- **Stationary Equipment.** All stationary construction equipment shall be placed so that the emitted noise is directed away from the nearest sensitive receivers.

- **Equipment Staging Areas.** Equipment staging shall be located in areas that will create the greatest distance feasible between construction-related noise sources and noise-sensitive receivers.

- **Smart Back-up Alarms.** Mobile construction equipment shall have smart back-up alarms that automatically adjust the sound level of the alarm in response to ambient noise levels. Alternatively, back-up alarms shall be disabled and replaced with human spotters to ensure safety when mobile construction equipment is moving in the reverse direction in compliance with applicable safety laws and regulations.

- **Electrically Powered Tools and Facilities.** Electrical power shall be used to run air compressors and similar power tools and to power any temporary structures, such as construction trailers or caretaker facilities, where feasible.

- **Noise Disturbance Coordinator**. The project applicant shall designate a "noise disturbance coordinator" responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator shall determine the cause of any noise complaint and shall require that reasonable measures be implemented to correct the problem. A telephone number for the disturbance coordinator and the City shall be posted at the construction site.

With adherence to City construction work hours and implementation of noise control BMPs, impacts associated with unnecessary temporary increased noise levels would be *less than significant*.

Following construction, the project would not include substantial noise-generating land uses or other components, such as loudspeakers, which could result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels. The clubhouse would be located approximately 330 feet from existing residences to the west. It would be shielded by the project's residences, ensuring that it would not produce substantial noise at the existing residences. The pet-friendly pocket park would be located between residential buildings which would shield noise generated at the park. Noise generated at the park would be minimized at residences to the north because the project would include a wall between these residences and the project site. Operational noise generated at the project site would be similar to existing ambient noise in surrounding residences. Therefore, operation of the project would not generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project. This impact would be *less than significant*.

b. Construction of the project would not involve pile driving or other high impacts activities that would generate substantial groundborne noise or groundborne vibration during construction. Standard construction equipment would generate groundborne noise and vibration during ground-disturbing activities. These activities would be limited in duration and consistent with other standard construction activities. In addition, any groundborne noise or vibration generated by short-term construction activities would be limited to the immediate work area. However, grading and paving activities would occur within 25 feet of existing residential development to the north, east, and west of the project site. At 25

feet, use of a vibratory roller would result in a vibration of 0.21 inch per section peak particle velocity which exceeds the Federal Transit Administration's construction vibration damage criteria threshold of 0.2 inch per section peak particle velocity for non-engineered timber and masonry buildings (Federal Transit Administration 2018). Due to the proximity of grading and paving activities to surrounding residences, there is potential that groundborne vibration from construction equipment could cause structural damage to rollers and other heavy construction equipment. This impact is *potentially significant,* and mitigation is required.

The project would not include new features that could generate substantial operational groundborne noise. Therefore, impacts related to exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne noise or vibration levels would be *less than significant*.

c. The closest airport to the project site is the Santa Maria Airport, located approximately 4.4-miles southwest of the project site. The project site is located outside of the noise contour for the Santa Maria Airport (SBCAG 2023). Therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. *No impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

NOI-1 Groundborne Vibration Reduction. To reduce vibration levels generated at nearby sensitive receptors near the project area, the following measures shall be included as notes on all construction plans:

- Construction activities that use large grading and earthmoving equipment shall be conducted with off-road equipment that is limited to 100 horsepower (hp) or less.

- Construction activities that use a roller shall be conducted with a static or pneumatic roller in lieu of a vibratory roller.

Plan Requirements and Timing. These measures shall be shown within the construction contract for the project and reviewed by the construction contractor prior to the start of construction. The construction contractor shall implement these requirements during demolition and construction activities.

Monitoring. The City Community Development Department staff will verify that the construction contractor has implemented these requirements once prior to the start of grading activities and once prior to the start of paving activities by confirming the construction equipment meets the above requirements.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measure: With implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1, groundborne vibration would be reduced during grading and paving activities and impacts related to groundborne vibration during construction would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING

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

Discussion:

a. The project would include 142 single-family residences, comprised of 100 percent senior citizen housing. Senior citizen housing typically accommodates one to two people per household, and the project's 142 residences proposed would accommodate up to 284 additional residents in Santa Maria. The 2011 Land Use Element stated that the City's existing infrastructure planned to sustain a projected 3.1 percent annual population growth rate until 2021, the equivalent of 139,461 residents based on a 2011 population of 99,680. However, according to the DOF, the City's population in 2021 was 107,445 residents, which is 32,016 less than the City's existing infrastructure is planned to accommodate. Therefore, while the project would result in growth within the city, the anticipated population generated by the project would be accommodated by the City's existing infrastructure and anticipated by the General Plan. Additionally, the DOF recorded a population of 109,477 in January 2023 for Santa Maria (DOF 2023). The project would represent a net increase of approximately 0.01 percent to the population under the assumption that it would introduce a maximum of 284 residents to the project site. Therefore, the project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth and *no impact* would occur.

b. The project involves the demolition of one existing single-family residence and associated structures. While demolition of the residence would occur, this would not displace substantial numbers of people such that additional housing must be constructed elsewhere. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES

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

Discussion:

i-ii. Fire protection is provided to the project site by the SMFD. The SMFD provides all risk emergency services, as well as public education programs, fire prevention, and life safety measures to the City's residents. The fire station closest to the project site is Fire Station 5, located at 1670 East Donovan Road, approximately 0.8-mile north of the project site (City of Santa Maria 2024b). Senior citizen housing typically accommodates one to two people per household. As a result, the 142 senior citizen housing units proposed for the project would accommodate up to 284 people on the site. While the SMFD could receive a slight increase in calls for fire and emergency medical services as a result of the project, the project would have a minimal impact on these services as the project site is located within the incorporated boundaries of the city, and therefore within the service area of the SMFD.

The Santa Maria Police Department (SMPD) would provide police protection services to the project site. The nearest station to the project site is located at 1111 Betteravia Road, approximately 3.4-miles southwest of the project site (City of Santa Maria 2024c). The project site is within the SMPD's service area and is currently serviced by the SMPD. The project would not create excessive demand for police services or introduce development to areas outside of normal service range that would necessitate new or substantially altered police protection facilities, as the project would incorporate security features, such as gated access to minimize the need for police services.

The increase in the city's population as a result of the project would result in an incremental increase in demand for City fire and police protection services. However, the changes in demand would not require any changes to fire services and facilities that serve the property. Impacts associated with the provision of fire and police protection and facilities would be *less than significant*.

iii. The proposed residential units would be available to senior residents 62 years and older. Therefore, the project would not typically generate school-aged children or otherwise result in any effects to local public school facilities or services. *No impact* would occur.

iv-v. The increase in the City's population as a result of the project would result in an incremental increase use of nearby City parks or other recreational facilities. However, the project would include a community clubhouse with a pool, spa, and cabanas; an outdoor living and activity lawn; and a pet-friendly pocket park with a covered gazebo and outdoor seating, which would offer a variety of passive and active activities for residents. Therefore, the increase in use of City parks and recreational facilities would be minimal, and the project would not result in the need for new or altered City park facilities. Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Additionally, the project would be required to pay growth mitigation fees, pursuant to Title 8, Chapter 15 of the City's Municipal Code. As part of the growth mitigation fees, the Municipal Code requires project applicants to pay recreation and parks mitigation fees and library mitigation fees to offset potential impacts on park and library facilities. Project compliance with the City's Municipal Code and growth mitigation fees would further reduce potential project-related impacts to parks and other public services.

The City maintains a standard of three to five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (City of Santa Maria 2001). As discussed in Environmental Checklist Section 16, *RECREATION*, more than 234 acres of City-maintained parkland and 1,774 acres of regional parkland at Los Flores Ranch Park are available to the City's 109,477 residents, which results in a ratio of approximately 18.34 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The added population of 284 residents would not substantially impact the parkland ratio. Therefore, existing park facilities exceed the minimum standard ratio, and impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

16. RECREATION

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

Discussion:

a-b. The Santa Maria Recreation and Parks Department operates 234 acres of developed parkland in 31 neighborhood and community parks, part of the 1,774-acre Los Flores Ranch Park property, Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center, Hagerman Softball Complex, Paul Nelson Aquatics Center, Elwin Mussell Senior Center, Veterans' Memorial Center and other community centers. The department also provides programs in aquatics, youth and adult sports, therapeutics and senior services, Special Olympics, community classes and events, youth and teen programs, and the Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety (City of Santa Maria 2024d).

The project would increase Santa Maria's population by up to 284 people, incrementally increasing demand for local parks and recreational facilities. The proposed senior housing complex would provide active and passive recreational opportunities on the project site by providing a community clubhouse with a pool, spa, and cabanas; an outdoor living and activity lawn; and a 7,737-square-foot pet-friendly pocket park. The on-site facilities would alleviate the incremental increase in demand for local parks and recreational facilities. Therefore, the project would result in *no impacts* associated with the physical deterioration of existing neighborhood and regional parks or the need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities in the city.

As discussed in Environmental Checklist Section 15, *PUBLIC SERVICES*, the City maintains a standard of 3 to 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is exceeded by existing parks and open space within the city. Additionally, pursuant to Title 8, Chapter 15 of the City's Municipal Code, the project would be required to pay growth mitigation fees to fund the acquisition, design, and construction of public facilities and related equipment to serve new development within Santa Maria. A parks and recreation mitigation fee is included as part of these growth mitigation fees to finance additional park space, maintenance or equipment in the vicinity, and offset potential impacts on parks and other recreational facilities. The addition of population and the additional park

space exceed the minimum standard ratio and would not adversely impact the current park to population ratio. With compliance with the City's Municipal Code and growth mitigation fees, the project would not result in the deterioration of existing neighborhood or regional parks and would not result in the need for new recreational facilities, the development of which could cause an adverse physical impact on the environment. Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

17. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?			X	
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (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	

Discussion:

a. The following is based on the *Traffic and Circulation Study* prepared for the project by Associated Transportation Engineers in December 2023 (Appendix F). During construction of the project, construction staging and construction worker parking would occur on the project site and would not require road closures or other otherwise impede existing roadway, bicycle, transit, or pedestrian facilities. The project would be consistent with the City's Circulation Element policies, as described in Appendix F. Based on the results of the *Traffic and Circulation Study*, the project would meet the City's operating standards, and therefore would be consistent with the City's Circulation Element (Appendix F). Therefore, the project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system. This impact would be *less than significant*.

b. The following is based on the *VMT Analysis Memorandum* prepared for the project by Associated Transportation Engineers in December 2023 (Appendix A). The City's adopted VMT threshold is 85 percent of the existing countywide baseline VMT per capita for residential uses. Based on the City's VMT screening map, the baseline VMT per capita for a residential development at the project site would be 14.52 VMT per capita (Appendix A). Accordingly, the threshold for the project would be 12.34 VMT per capita (85 percent of 14.52). The City's VMT calculator indicates the project would generate up to 17.60 VMT per capita; however, because the project is senior residential development, a VMT adjustment of 35 to 45 percent could be made because senior detached housing results in approximately 54 percent less average daily traffic compared to single-family housing (Appendix A). A 35 percent reduction in 17.60 VMT per capita would result in a VMT per capita of 11.44, which is below the 12.34 VMT per capita threshold. Therefore, the project would not exceed the City threshold for VMT, and therefore would not conflict or be inconsistent with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.3, subdivision (b). This impact would be *less than significant*.

c. The project would be developed on an existing parcel and would not alter or affect existing street and intersection networks. The project would be required to comply with City design standards and California Fire Code standards for vehicular access and circulation, including, but not limited to, design requirements for road and driveway lengths, sight distances at driveways, turning radiuses. Compliance with these standards would prevent hazardous design features and would ensure adequate and safe site access and circulation. The project would not introduce incompatible uses, including vehicles or equipment, to the site or the surrounding area. This impact would be *less than significant*.

d. Access to the project site would be provided via a driveway~~s~~ along East Main Street from ~~the south and Spruce Drive from the north~~. Spruce Drive would provide an exit-only connection to Rowland Drive as well as emergency access to the project site for first responders. The project's internal streets would be designed to accommodate travel for 40-foot fire engines and 35-foot garbage trucks. The project design would be required to comply with all building, fire, and safety codes and development plans, including safety features, would be subject to review and approval by the City. The project would be reviewed by the SMFD to ensure the project's circulation patterns are adequately sized to accommodate emergency vehicles and the turning radii of emergency vehicles in accordance with the California Fire Code, adopted by right in Chapter 9-28 of the City's Municipal Code. Implementation of design features to accommodate emergency vehicles would ensure first responders could adequately access the project site. Required reviews by the SMFD would verify project design would accommodate emergency first responders. Therefore, the project would have a *less-than-significant* impact on emergency access.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

Discussion:

Pursuant to AB 52, tribal cultural resources are defined as either of the following:

1) Sites, features, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:

   a) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or

   b) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1 (k).

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 Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c). In applying these criteria for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

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

SB 18 requires cities and counties to consult with Native American Tribes to help protect traditional tribal cultural places as part of a general plan adoption or amendment. Unlike AB 52, SB 18 is not an amendment to, or otherwise associated with, CEQA. Instead, SB 18 requires that, prior to the adoption or amendment of a city or county's general plan, the city or county must conduct consultations with California Native American Tribes for the purpose of preserving specified places, features, and objects that are located within the city or county's jurisdiction. Under SB 18, cities and counties must notify the appropriate Native American Tribe(s) of intended adoption or amendments to general plans and offer the opportunity for the Tribe(s) to consult regarding traditional tribal cultural places within the proposed plan area.

In compliance with the requirements of AB 52 and SB 18, the City mailed letters to the following Tribes on May 20, 2024. In addition to these letters, Tribal contacts for these Tribes provided by the NAHC were also notified of the project via e-mail:

- Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians
- Chumash Council of Bakersfield
- Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation
- Northern Chumash Tribal Council
- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
- yak tityu tityu yak tiłhini – Northern Chumash Tribe

No Tribes have requested further consultation.

i-ii. As part of the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared for the project, Rincon contacted the NAHC on April 18, 2024 to request a search of the Sacred Lands File (SLF), which identifies Native American sacred and cultural sites on public and private lands in California. On April 18, 2024, the NAHC responded to Rincon's SLF request, stating that the results of the SLF search were negative. This means tribal cultural resources are not known to be present within the SLF search area. Additionally, no tribal

cultural resources were identified as a result of the AB 52 and SB 18 consultation processes, as no Tribe requested consultation nor identified resources of concern. Therefore, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource. These impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

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

Discussion:

a. The project site is in an urban area with existing utility infrastructure in place. The project would include connections to City water, sewer, and stormwater collection services. Electricity would be procured from 3CE and provided to the project site through PG&E electric lines. SoCalGas would provide natural gas services to the project site. The project would not require substantial increases in utility infrastructure. Rather, the utility infrastructure required for the project would include minor connections to existing utility infrastructure surrounding the project site.

   The existing facilities for water, stormwater, electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications services have adequate capacity to support the project. The City's 2012 Utilities Capacity Study, completed in 2015, identifies one sewer segment adjacent to the project site (Rowland Drive Segment) that could potentially require upgrades due to lack of capacity (City of Santa Maria 2015). A Sewer Impact Analysis Technical Memorandum was prepared for the proposed project by Waster Systems Consulting, Inc. in July 2024 (Appendix G). As described therein, wastewater from the project would

be collected through existing sewer lines at Rowland Drive with flows going east towards North Suey Road and then west along East Fesler Street via a 10-inch pipeline underlying Fesler Street. The project's anticipated wastewater generation would not exceed the existing capacity of the City's sewer system at Fesler Street (Appendix G). Therefore, the project would not require or necessitate additional substantial sewer infrastructure. Therefore, no additional facilities would be required as a result of project implementation and this impact would be *less than significant*.

b. According to the City's UWMP, the City's water supply would meet projected water demands through 2045 (City of Santa Maria 2021). The City's UWMP includes population projections through 2045 and estimates a service population of 135,411 in 2045 (City of Santa Maria 2021). As described in Environmental Checklist Section 14, *POPULATION AND HOUSING*, the current population of Santa Maria is approximately 109,477 people. The project would add up to 284 additional residents to Santa Maria, resulting in a population of 109,761. This is well within the growth projections of the City's UWMP. Since the project's population would be within the City's UWMP growth projections, there would be sufficient water supply to meet projected water demands of the project. Therefore, this impact would be *less than significant*.

c. The City's Utilities Department owns and operates the wastewater system for Santa Maria. The City's Wastewater Treatment Plant has a current capacity of 13.5 million gallons per day, allowing the City to serve a population of up to 120,000 people (City of Santa Maria 2024e). As stated in Threshold 19(b), Santa Maria has a current population of approximately 109,477 which would be increased to 109,761 with the project. Based on the projected population in Santa Maria, the City has determined that the existing Wastewater Treatment Plant would continue to be adequate for future wastewater demands, including those of the project. Therefore, the project would not generate wastewater generation in excess of the City's existing treatment capacity, and this impact would be *less than significant*.

d-e. The City currently disposes of solid waste at the Santa Maria Regional Landfill, located at 2065 East Main Street in Santa Maria. The Santa Maria Regional Landfill has a remaining capacity of approximately 1.4 million cubic yards of waste and an estimated closure date of 2028 (California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery [CalRecycle] 2024). The City has also initiated processing of a new landfill, the Santa Maria Integrated Waste Management Facility (IWMF; Facility No. 42-AA-0076), located in the Solomon Hills approximately 8-miles southwest of the city and 0.5-mile east of U.S. 101 in an unincorporated portion of Santa Barbara County. The new facility would have a design capacity of approximately 118.6 million cubic yards of waste with an estimate closure date of 2152.

Demolition activities would result in approximately 2,500 square feet of demolition debris. In accordance with the requirements of California Green Building Standards Code, a minimum of 65 percent of demolition waste would be diverted from landfills, which would reduce the amount of solid waste entering local landfills. This demolition waste would not exceed the remaining capacity of the Santa Maria Regional Landfill. Based on CalRecycle estimated solid waste generation rates, single-family dwelling units

generated approximately 11.4 pounds of solid waste per dwelling unit per day (CalRecycle 2024b). Accordingly, the project would generate approximately 1,619 pounds of solid waste per day, or approximately 295 tons of solid waste per year. This waste represents approximately 0.02 percent of the remaining capacity of the Santa Maria Regional Landfill and less than 0.01 percent of the capacity of the Los Flores IWMF. The project-generated waste would be sufficiently served by the existing capacity of the Santa Maria Regional Landfill until the Los Flores IWMF becomes operational. Furthermore, solid waste would be diverted from landfills during operation in accordance with applicable regulations such as SB 1383, which requires mandatory organic waste collection for composting. Therefore, the project would have a *less-than-significant* impact related to solid waste.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

20. WILDFIRE

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

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

Discussion:

a. The project site is not located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone or state responsibility area. The nearest Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone is located approximately 1-mile east of the project site, east of the Santa Maria River (CAL FIRE 2023). As described in Environmental Checklist Section 9, *HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS*, project construction would occur entirely within the project site, and no street closures would be required. Temporary construction trips would not induce substantial traffic in the area such that evacuation on roadways surrounding the project site could be hindered. The project would not involve the development of structures within roadways that could potentially impair implementation of or physically interfere with the procedures outlined within the 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plan. The project's internal streets would be designed to accommodate travel for 40-foot fire engines which would allow for emergency response at the project site. The project would be reviewed by the SMFD to ensure the project's circulation patterns are adequately sized to accommodate emergency vehicles and the turning radii of emergency vehicles in accordance with the California Fire Code, adopted by right in Chapter 9-28 of the City's Municipal Code. Emergency access would be provided via Spruce Drive. SMFD has reviewed the project's proposed emergency access route on Spruce Drive. Required reviews of project design features to ensure compliance would confirm that first

responders could adequately access the project site to carry out emergency response procedures outlined within 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plan as necessary. As such, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. This impact would be *less than significant*.

b. The project site is flat and therefore would not exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope. The project site is not located in an area subject to substantial winds, such as Santa Ana winds. Existing residential development to the north, east, and west of the project site shields the project site from substantial winds. To minimize fire risk, construction personnel would adhere to California Public Resources Code Section 4442, which requires earth-moving and portable construction equipment with internal combustion engines to use spark arrestors when operating on any forest-covered, brush-covered, or grass-covered land. In addition, California Public Resources Code Section 4428 requires construction contractors to maintain fire suppression equipment during the highest fire danger period (April 1 to December 1) when operating on or near any forest-covered, brush-covered, or grass-covered land. The project would be required to be designed to meet standards for fire prevention within the California Fire Code which would minimize the potential for a fire to occur and project occupants to be exposed to pollutants associated with wildfire. This impact would be *less than significant*.

c. The project would include the installation of new utility connections to existing City infrastructure and an internal circulation system on the project site. Most of the utility installations would occur underground and therefore would not exacerbate fire risk. All underground and aboveground utility infrastructure would be installed in compliance with the California Fire Code to minimize fire risk. As described above, construction personnel would adhere to California Public Resources Code Section 4442 and California Public Resources Code Section 4428 which would minimize fire risk during installation of the project's internal roadways and utility connections. Compliance with fire prevention regulations would ensure the project would have a *less-than-significant* impact related to infrastructure installation.

d. The project site is flat, and the project would not substantially increase slope gradients on- or off-site. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to landslide risks. As described in Environmental Checklist Section 10, *HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY*, the project site and surrounding areas are not within a flood hazard zone (FEMA 2024), and the project's proposed stormwater control features would reduce on-site flood flows. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to flooding. *No impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

No mitigation measures are required.

CONSULTATION AND DATA SOURCES

CONSULTATION SOURCES

City Departments Consulted

	Administrative Services
	Attorney
X	Fire
	Library
	City Manager
X	Police
X	Public Works
X	Utilities
X	Recreation and Parks

County Agencies/Departments Consulted

	Air Pollution Control District
	Association of Governments
	Flood Control District
	Environmental Health
	Fire (Hazardous Materials)
	LAFCO
	Public Works
	Planning and Development
	Other (list)

Special Districts Consulted

	Santa Maria Public Airport
	Airport Land Use Commission
	Cemetery
	Santa-Maria Bonita School District
	Santa Maria Joint Union High School
	Laguna County Sanitation District
	Cal Cities Water Company

State/Federal Agencies Consulted

	Army Corps of Engineers
	Caltrans
	CA Fish and Game
	Federal Fish and Wildlife
	FAA
	Regional Water Quality Control Bd.
	Integrated Waste Management Bd.

DATA SOURCES

General Plan

X	Land Use Element
X	Circulation Element
X	Safety Element
X	Noise Element
	Housing Element
X	Resources Management Element

Other

	Agricultural Preserve Maps
X	Archaeological Maps/Reports
X	Architectural Elevations
	Biology Reports
	CA Oil and Gas Maps
X	FEMA Maps (Flood)
	Grading Plans
X	Site Plan
	Topographic Maps
X	Aerial Photos
	Traffic Studies
X	Trip Generation Manual (ITE)
X	URBEMIS Air Quality Model
X	Zoning Maps

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		X		
2. 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		
3. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

Discussion:

1. As discussed in Environmental Checklist Section 4, *BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES*, the project contains substantial habitat suitable for nesting birds. However, the project is limited to activities that would occur at the project site; therefore, the project does not occur over a widespread area such that it encompasses the entire habitat of a species and would not impact the total habitat area of a fish or wildlife species. Furthermore, the project does not include large-scale activities that would pose a substantial threat to fish or wildlife species or their mapped habitats. In addition, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require nesting bird surveys to be conducted prior to construction and avoidance measures to be implemented if nesting birds are present. Due to the lack of suitable habitat and local scale of the project, the project would not substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. This impact would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

   As discussed in Environmental Checklist Section 5, *CULTURAL RESOURCES*, there are no historical resources located at the project site, and the project would not cause a

substantial change in the significance of a historical resource. There is a low potential to encounter archaeological resources at the project site, and the proposed project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure CUL-1, which includes procedures for evaluation, consultation, avoidance, and data recovery of unanticipated archaeological resources, if discovered during construction. Because no important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory are known to be present at the project site, the proposed project would not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

2. Cumulative impacts consider the cumulative effects of reasonably foreseeable projects within Santa Maria. Cumulatively considerable impacts could occur if the construction or operation of other projects coincides with the proposed project in the same vicinity of the project site, such that similar impacts of multiple projects combine to expose a resource to greater levels of impacts than what would occur as a result of the project. As described in Environmental Checklist Sections 1 through 20, with respect to all environmental issues, the project would either have no impact, a less-than-significant impact, or impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of required mitigation. The project would have no impact on agriculture and forestry resources, and energy, and therefore would not contribute to cumulative impacts to these environmental issue areas. Certain environmental issue areas (e.g., cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, and tribal cultural resources) are by their nature specific to a project location such that impacts at one location do not add impacts at other locations and therefore would not result in cumulative impacts. In addition, other issue areas (e.g., air quality, GHG emissions), address cumulative impacts. Therefore, the discussion of cumulative impacts is limited to the following issue areas:

    - **Aesthetics.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative impacts to aesthetics is Santa Maria. Projects within Santa Maria have the potential to result in cumulative changes to the city's visual environment by introducing development that blocks scenic views, is visually inconsistent with its surroundings, or introduces substantial light and glare. However, these projects would be subject to the City's applicable regulations related to scenic quality, height limitations, and minimum setback requirements established within the City's General Plan and Municipal Code. These projects would implement City lighting standards to shield lighting from adjacent sites. With adherence to City regulations related to aesthetics, cumulative development would have a less-than-significant impact related to aesthetics. The project would be consistent with surrounding development at the project site and would introduce lighting in accordance with City requirements such that lighting would not considerably contribute to cumulative impacts associated with substantial increases in lighting.

    - **Biological Resources.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative impacts to biological resources is Santa Maria. Cumulative development could result in impacts to biological resources, including nesting birds. Cumulative development would be subject to similar regulatory requirements as the project, including the federal Endangered Species Act, California Endangered Species Act, and Migratory Bird

Treaty Act. However, existing regulatory requirements alone cannot guarantee species loss, habitat loss, or other impact to biological resources due to cumulative development. As such, cumulative biological resources impacts would be potentially significant. The project would incorporate Mitigation Measure BIO-1 to reduce project-level impacts to less than significant. As a result, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative biological resources impacts.

- **Hydrology and Water Quality.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative impacts to surface water is Santa Maria. The geographic areas used to assess cumulative impacts to groundwater is land overlying the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin. A cumulative impact could occur if projects in Santa Maria discharge pollutants to the City's stormwater drainage system and violate water quality standards, or if these projects would result in substantially decreased groundwater supplies. Cumulative projects would be required to comply with federal, state, and City water quality requirements, such as the Construction Stormwater General Permit, CCRWQCB Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements, and Section 8-12A.04 of the City's Municipal Code. These regulations would require implementation of BMPs to treat stormwater flows. Cumulative impacts to hydrology and surface water quality would be minimized with adherence to these regulations. Therefore, cumulative impacts to surface water would be less than significant. Cumulative development could result in increased water demand from the Santa Maria River Valley Groundwater Basin supplied by the City. However, the City is subject to adjudication regulations that would ensure the City does not increase groundwater extraction beyond their permitted allocation. As a result, cumulative development would not receive groundwater in excess of the City's permitted allocation. Cumulative impacts related to sustainable groundwater management would be less than significant.

- **Mineral Resources.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative impacts to surface water is Santa Maria. A cumulative impact could occur if cumulative projects would result cumulative losses of a known mineral resource or locally important mineral resource recovery site. According to the City's major development list, cumulative projects are located in developed areas of Santa Maria which are not used for mineral extraction (City of Santa Maria 2024f). Accordingly, cumulative development would not have the potential to result in the cumulative loss of substantial mineral deposits or mineral resource extraction areas. No cumulative impacts to mineral resources would occur.

- **Noise.** Construction and operational noise and vibration are localized and rapidly attenuate. Cumulative construction impacts could occur if cumulative development in Santa Maria is located proximate to the project site such that overlapping construction schedules or operational noise- or vibration-generating sources could result in increased noise and vibration at the same sensitive receptors. The closest cumulative development to the project site is the Starbucks at Home Motors development, located approximately 0.3-mile west of the project site (City of Santa Maria 2024f). Residential development and roadways separate the project site from

this development. Due to the distance between the two projects, cumulative noise and vibration impacts would not occur.

- **Population and Housing, Public Services, and Recreation.** Cumulative residential projects in Santa Maria would increase the total population in Santa Maria, currently at 109,477, which could result in cumulative growth. However, the City has planned for approximately 139,461 residents in the General Plan. There are 17 cumulative residential projects in Santa Maria, consisting of 2,804 proposed units. These units are a mix of senior-restricted housing, apartments, and single-family residential (City of Santa Maria 2024f). Using the DOF estimate of 3.61 persons per household in Santa Maria, the additional 2,804 units would generate approximately 10,122 new residents and would not increase the city's population to 139,461. Therefore, cumulative population and housing impacts would be less than significant. Furthermore, because cumulative development would not exceed the City's planning projections, the City has planned for public services and recreational needs from cumulative development. Therefore, cumulative impacts to public services and recreation would be less than significant.

- **Transportation.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative transportation impacts is Santa Maria. Cumulative development could result in a greater number of vehicle trips in Santa Maria compared to existing conditions and therefore increase citywide VMT, which would be a significant cumulative impact. The project would not exceed the City's VMT per capita threshold and therefore would not contribute considerably to cumulative transportation impacts.

- **Utilities and Service Systems.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative transportation impacts is Santa Maria. Cumulative development could result in increased water demand in excess of existing supplies, wastewater generation and solid waste generation in excess of existing facilities' capacity, and increased electric and natural gas demand requiring substantial infrastructure. The City's UWMP estimates a service population of 135,411 in 2045. As described above, cumulative development is anticipated to increase the population of Santa Maria by 10,122 people to 119,599 people and does not exceed UWMP projections. According to the City's UWMP, the City's water supply would meet projected water demands through 2045 (City of Santa Maria 2021). Therefore, cumulative impacts related to water demand would be less than significant.

  The City's Wastewater Treatment Plant has a current capacity of 13.5 million gallons per day, allowing the City to serve a population of up to 120,000 people. Because population growth anticipated from cumulative development would increase Santa Maria's population to 119,599 people, cumulative development would be able to be served by the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant.

  According to the Sewer Impact Analysis Technical Memorandum prepared for the project by Water Systems Consulting (2024; Appendix G), the project would involve a sewer connection to the 10-in pipe on Rowland Drive, with flows going east towards North Suey Road and then west along East Fesler Street. The Sewer Impact Analysis

determined that the 10-inch sewer pipeline along East Fesler Street would have capacity to support the project's wastewater flows plus approximately 118 additional dwelling units. Wastewater flows from cumulative residential development proximate to the project site, including the Heritage View residential project (119 units), could exceed the existing capacity of sewer systems, requiring additional or upgraded sewer infrastructure in the future. However, the project would not generate wastewater flows exceeding the capacity of existing sewer infrastructure and, therefore, would not contribute considerably to cumulative sewer impacts.

Cumulative development would increase solid waste generation in Santa Maria; however, the Santa Maria Regional Landfill would be able to receive solid waste through 2028 and the Santa Maria IWMF would be able to receive solid waste from the city beyond 2028 through 2152. Therefore, cumulative solid waste impacts would be less than significant. Cumulative development would receive power from 3CE via PG&E infrastructure and natural gas from SoCalGas. Existing electric and natural gas infrastructure is present throughout Santa Maria and cumulative development would only require minor connections to existing natural gas and electric infrastructure. Therefore, cumulative impacts to electric and natural gas infrastructure would be less than significant.

- **Wildfire.** The geographic area used to assess cumulative wildfire impacts is Santa Maria. Cumulative development in Santa Maria could result in wildfire hazards that could potentially expose residents and employees within Santa Maria to wildfire or pollutants associated with wildfire smoke. Cumulative development, similar to the project, would be required to adhere to applicable regulations to minimize fire risk, including the California Fire Code, California Public Resources Code Regulations, and SMFD regulations. These regulations would ensure cumulative development would minimize the potential for wildfire to occur within Santa Maria. Therefore, cumulative wildfire impacts would be less than significant.

Based on the above, the project would not have impacts that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.

3. Adverse effects on human beings are typically associated with air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, and wildfire impacts. These impacts are discussed in detail in Environmental Checklist Section 3, *AIR QUALITY*, Environmental Checklist Section 9, *HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS*, Environmental Checklist Section 13, *NOISE*, and Environmental Checklist Section 20, *WILDFIRE*. As discussed in detail in these sections, the project would not result in substantial adverse impacts related to hazardous materials and wildfire. Impacts related to short-term air quality emissions would be reduced with implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1. Impacts related to short-term vibration would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1. Therefore, the project would have a less-than-significant impact on human beings with mitigation.

Mitigation Measure(s) incorporated into the project:

Mitigation Measures AQ-1, BIO-1, CUL-1, and NOI-1

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

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

DETERMINATION

On the basis of the Initial Study, the staff of the Community Development Department:

____ Finds that the proposed project is a Class ___ **CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION** and no further environmental review is required.

____ Finds that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will 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 revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

____ Finds that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

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

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

Carol Ziesenhenne
Carol Ziesenhenne, Environmental Analyst

10/23/2024
Date

Dana Eady
Dana Eady, Environmental Officer

10/23/24
Date

City of Santa Maria
Community Development Department
110 South Pine Street, Suite #101
Santa Maria, CA 93458
805-925-0951

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Responses to Comments on the Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration

This section includes comments received during the circulation of the Draft Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND) prepared for the Bellecrest Residences Project (project).

The Draft IS-MND was circulated for a 30-day public review period that began on September 3, 2024 and ended on October 2, 2024. The City of Santa Maria received four comment letters on the Draft IS-MND. The commenters and the page number on which each commenter's letter appear are listed below.

Letter No.	and Commenter	Page No.
1	Brian Schwartz, AICP, Urban Planning Concepts, Inc.	2
2	Tamara Purvis, Associated Environmental Planner, Department of Toxic Substances Control	8
3	Trey Powell, Northern District Deputy, California Department of Conservation Geologic Energy Management Division	14
4	Emily Waddington, Air Quality Specialist, Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District	21

The comment letters and responses follow. The comment letters have been numbered sequentially and each separate issue raised by the commenter, if more than one, has been assigned a number. The responses to each comment identify first the number of the comment letter, and then the number assigned to each issue (Response 1.1, for example, indicates that the response is for the first issue raised in comment Letter 1).

Any changes made to the text of the IS-MND, other than minor typographical corrections, are shown in the Final IS-MND in <u>underline</u> for text additions and ~~strikethrough~~ for text deletions. CEQA Guidelines 15073.5(c)(4) states recirculation is not required when new information is added to the negative declaration which merely clarifies, amplifies, or makes insignificant modifications to the negative declaration. The changes made to the Final IS-MND in response to these comments merely clarify and/or amplify existing information within the Final IS-MND and therefore recirculation of the Draft IS-MND is not required as a result of the changes made to the Draft IS-MND.

Letter 1

URBAN PLANNING CONCEPTS, INC.
URBAN DESIGN ● LAND PLANNING ● ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

September 5, 2024

Carol Ziesenhenne Senior Planner
City of Santa Maria
110 S. Pine St., Suite 101
Santa Maria CA 93458

Re: Bellacrest mitigated negative declaration (GPZ2022-0003/TR2022-0007/PD2022-0008)

Dear Ms. Ziesenhenne,

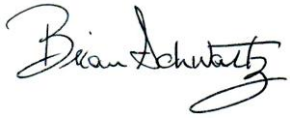
Please find below our comments on the mitigated negative declaration for the Bellacrest project.

Page # / Section	Comment	
Page 2 / Residential Units and Amenities	The title sheet has a lot size summary of: (54) LOT TYPE A: 40' X 51' (48) LOT TYPE B: 50' X 51' (36) LOT TYPE C: 40' X 74' (4) LOT TYPE D: 40' X 77' site plan (Figure 4, Sheet A3) also shows 4 lots of 3,080 SF. Please revise accordingly.	1.1
Page 3 - Access, Circulation, and Parking	Per plan sheet A3, EXIT ONLY W/ BOLLARDS (EMERGENCY ACCESS) on Spruce Drive, not full access.	1.2
Page 3 - Access, Circulation, and Parking	Plans show 26' two way traffic (two lanes) with rolled curbs, not one-lane streets. The posted speed limit will be 15mph.	1.3
Page 4 – Demolition and Construction	This section should acknowledge the majority of the trees are avocado trees or other agricultural trees, not Oaks or native trees.	1.4
Page 15 – Section d.	This section does not take into account the 6' perimeter wall along main street that would shield any vehicle headlights	1.5
Page 28 – Section e.	Although a tree survey was not performed, the document should generally characterize what types of trees are onsite.	1.6
Page 30 – Section b.	It should be noted that this area of the City of Santa Maria had undergone periodic flooding for the Santa Maria River so any resources would have been lost down stream.	1.7
Page 38 – Section f.	This paragraph misrepresents the conclusion ...there is no potential significant impact for GEO. This areas has been historically flooded for eons no resources have been found by any other development in the region. Please change this statement.	1.8
Page 52- Section a.	This section should state the project is 100% deed restricted to seniors.	1.9

Page 57 – Section b.	Please review the last two paragraphs regarding ground-bourne vibration impacts. The sentences are confusing and contradictory.	1.10
Page 64 – Section d. and Page 71 – Section a.	One way out and emergency access only entrance from Spruce Drive. See page C-2 Fire Truck Exhibit of plans. The Fire Department already reviewed this plan to assure compliance for first responders. Please revise.	1.11

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (805)934-5760.

Sincerely,



Brian Schwartz, AICP

Letter 1

COMMENTER: Brian Schwartz, AICP, Urban Planning Concepts, Inc.

DATE: September 5, 2024

Response 1.1

The commenter states that the lot size summary on Page 2 of the Draft IS-MND is incorrect and requests these lot sizes are revised.

It should be noted that the commenter is the development firm representing the applicant and, as such, has a high degree of familiarity with the project. To address the revised lot sizes, Section 7, *Brief Description of Project*, on Page 2 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> The proposed project would include 142 single-family residential lots comprised of ~~52~~ 54 2,040-square-foot lots; ~~50~~ 48 2,550-square-foot lots, ~~and 40~~ 36 2,960-square-foot lots, and 4 3,080 square-foot lots.

Response 1.2

The commenter states that Spruce Drive is an exit only route with bollards but would allow for emergency vehicles to access the project site.

It should be noted that the commenter is the development firm representing the applicant and, as such, has a high degree of familiarity with the project. To address this comment, Section 7, *Brief Description of Project*, on Page 3 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> Access to the project site would be provided from the south via a driveway connecting to East Main Street. ~~and from the north via a connection to~~ Spruce Drive would provide an exit-only connection to Rowland Drive as well as emergency access to the project site for first responders.

In addition, the discussion of Threshold 17(d) on Page 64 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> Access to the project site would be provided via a driveway~~s~~ along East Main Street from the south ~~and Spruce Drive from the north~~. Spruce Drive would provide an exit-only connection to Rowland Drive as well as emergency access to the project site for first responders.

Finally, the discussion of Threshold 20(a) on Page 71 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> The project would be reviewed by the SMFD to ensure the project's circulation patterns are adequately sized to accommodate emergency vehicles and the turning radii of emergency vehicles in accordance with the California Fire Code, adopted by right in Chapter 9-28 of the City's Municipal Code. Emergency access would be provided via Spruce Drive. SMFD has reviewed the project's proposed emergency access route on Spruce Drive.

Response 1.3

The commenter states that streets within the project site would be two-lane streets with a posted speed limit of 15 miles per hour.

It should be noted that the commenter is the development firm representing the applicant and, as such, has a high degree of familiarity with the project. To clarify the street layout, Section 7, *Brief Description of Project*, on Page 3 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> The circulation layout would consist of internal ~~one-lane~~ two-lane streets which connect in a grid-like pattern. The posted speed limit would be 15 miles per hour.

Response 1.4

The commenter requests that Page 4 of the Draft IS-MND be revised to acknowledge that the majority of trees on-site are avocado trees or other agricultural trees, not oak trees or other native trees.

It should be noted that the commenter is the development firm representing the applicant and, as such, has a high degree of familiarity with the project. To address this comment, Section 7, *Brief Description of Project*, on Page 4 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> During construction, 311 trees would be removed. These trees consist of a mix of avocado trees and other non-native orchard-type trees. Construction is anticipated to start in January 2025 and be completed approximately December 2028.

Response 1.5

The commenter opines that the discussion of Threshold 1(d) on Page 15 of the Draft IS-MND does not consider the six-foot perimeter wall along Main Street that would shield headlights from vehicles.

It should be noted that the commenter is the development firm representing the applicant and ,as such, has a high degree of familiarity with the project. To address this comment, Section 7, *Brief Description of Project,* on page 3 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> The 7,737- square-foot, pet-friendly pocket park and pavilion would be located on the northern portion of the project site. In addition, a six-foot wall would be installed parallel to Main Street to shield vehicle headlights of residents or visitors within the project site.

In addition, Section 1, *Aesthetics/Visual Resources*, on Page 15 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> Project lighting would be shielded downward and directed away from surrounding residences in accordance with Section 12-32.20 of the City's Municipal Code. Furthermore, the proposed six-foot wall that would run parallel to Main Street would shield vehicle headlights of residents or visitors within the project site. Pursuant to Section 12-7.15 of the City's Municipal Code, shiny and reflective materials would not be used for roofing or sliding materials, which would minimize glare

Response 1.6

The commenter requests that Page 28 of the Draft IS-MND characterize what types of trees are on-site.

It should be noted that the commenter is the development firm representing the applicant and, as such, has a high degree of familiarity with the project. To address this comment, Section 4, *Biological Resources*, on Page 28 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

Project construction would require the removal of 311 trees from the project site. These trees consist of a mix of avocado trees and other non-native orchard trees.

Response 1.7

The commenter requests that Page 30 of the Draft IS-MND note that Santa Maria had undergone periodic flooding for the Santa Maria River and any resources would be lost downstream.

The commenter states an opinion that periodic flooding at the Santa Maria River would reduce the likelihood of archaeological resources on-site. The project site is located approximately one mile west of the Santa Maria River and thus is not subject to consistent water flows which could cause erosion. As archaeological resources are located below the ground surface, periodic flooding of the Santa Maria River would have no bearing on the archaeological sensitivity of the project site. No changes to the Draft IS-MND are required as a result of this comment.

Response 1.8

The commenter disagrees with the paleontological resources discussion in the Draft IS-MND, stating the opinion that there is no potential for a significant impact due to historical flooding. The commenter requests the discussion be revised accordingly.

The commenter states an opinion that periodic flooding at the Santa Maria River would reduce the likelihood of paleontological resources on-site. The project site is located approximately one mile west of the Santa Maria River and thus is not subject to consistent water flows which could cause erosion. As paleontological resources are located below the ground surface, periodic flooding of the Santa Maria River would have no bearing on the paleontological sensitivity of the project site. No changes to the Draft IS-MND are required as a result of this comment.

Response 1.9

The commenter requests that the discussion of Threshold 11(a) on Page 52 of the Draft IS-MND note that the project is 100 percent deed-restricted to seniors.

It should be noted that the commenter is the development firm representing the applicant and, as such, has a high degree of familiarity with the project. To address this comment, Threshold 11(a) on Page 52 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> The project is a proposed residential development consistent with the surrounding residential development to the north, east, and west of the project site. The project would be 100 percent deed restricted to seniors. The project does not include elements, such as the construction of highways, that would physically divide surrounding established communities.

Response 1.10

The commenter expresses the opinion that the last two paragraphs of the groundborne vibration discussion on Page 57 of the Draft IS-MND are confusing and contradictory, and requests they be revised.

The analysis of the project's impact related to groundborne vibration presented in Threshold 13(b) on Pages 56 and 57 of the Draft IS-MND is based on a comparison of the project's potential to result in groundborne vibration to vibration thresholds established by the Federal Transit Administration. The analysis evaluates the project's potential vibration at the nearest sensitive receptors, residential

development surrounding the project site, and concludes unmitigated vibration would exceed the Federal Transit Administration threshold and therefore mitigation is required. The analysis does not use contradictory thresholds or otherwise present the material in a manner which is contradictory or confusing. No changes to the Draft IS-MND are required as a result of this comment.

Response 1.11

The commenter states that Spruce Drive is exit only but would be used for emergency access at the project site. The commenter notes that the Santa Maria Fire Department has reviewed this plan to assure compliance with emergency response efforts.

Refer to Response 1.2.

Letter 2

Department of Toxic Substances Control

Yana Garcia
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

Meredith Williams, Ph.D.
Director
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento, California 95826-3200

Gavin Newsom
Governor

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

September 12, 2024

Carol Ziesenhenne
Senior Planner
City of Santa Maria
110 South Pine Street Suite 101
Santa Maria, CA 93458
cziesenhenne@cityofsantamaria.org

RE: MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE BELLECREST RESIDENCES PROJECT DATED SEPTEMBER 3, 2024, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER 2024090050

Dear Carol Ziesenhenne,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) received a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Bellecrest Residences Project (Project). The proposed Project involves the demolition of the existing single-family residence and associated structures and the development of a gated, senior age-restricted residential community. The residential community would include a subdivision to create 142 single-family residential lots; a community clubhouse with a pool, spa, and cabanas; an outdoor living and activity lawn; and a pet-friendly pocket park with a covered gazebo and outdoor seating. The proposed Project includes a General Plan Land Use Amendment and Zone Change and Tract Map to facilitate development of the proposed residential community. This would change the Project site's land use classification from Lower-Density Residential to Medium Density Residential and zoning from Single Family Residential with a Planned Development overlay to Medium Density Residential with a Planned

2.1

Development overlay. After reviewing the Project, DTSC recommends and requests consideration of the following comments: 2.1 cont.

1. When agricultural crops and/or land uses are proposed or rezoned for residential use, a number of contaminants of concern (COCs) can be present. The Lead Agency shall identify the amounts of Pesticides and Organochlorine Pesticides (OCPs) historically used on the property. If present, OCPs requiring further analysis are dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane, toxaphene, and dieldrin. Additionally, any level of arsenic present would require further analysis and sampling and must meet HHRA NOTE NUMBER 3, DTSC-SLs approved thresholds. If they are not, remedial action must take place to mitigate them below those thresholds. 2.2
2. Additional COCs may be found in mixing/loading/storage areas, drainage ditches, farmhouses, or any other outbuildings and should be sampled and analyzed. If smudge pots had been routinely utilized, additional sampling for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons and/or Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons may be required. 2.3
3. DTSC recommends that all imported soil and fill material should be tested to assess any contaminants of concern meet screening levels as outlined in DTSC's Preliminary Endangerment Assessment (PEA) Guidance Manual. Additionally, DTSC advises referencing the DTSC Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material Fact Sheet if importing fill is necessary. To minimize the possibility of introducing contaminated soil and fill material there should be documentation of the origins of the soil or fill material and, if applicable, sampling be conducted to ensure that the imported soil and fill material are suitable for the intended land use. The soil sampling should include analysis based on the source of the fill and knowledge of the prior land use. Additional information can be found by visiting DTSC's Human and Ecological Risk Office (HERO) webpage. 2,4
4. If buildings or other structures are to be demolished on any Project sites included in the proposed Project, surveys should be conducted for the 2.5

presence of lead-based paints or products, mercury, asbestos containing materials, and polychlorinated biphenyl caulk. Removal, demolition, and disposal of any of the above-mentioned chemicals should be conducted in compliance with California environmental regulations and policies. In addition, sampling near current and/or former buildings should be conducted in accordance with DTSC's PEA Guidance Manual.

2.5 cont.

DTSC appreciates the opportunity to comment on the MND for The Bellecrest Residences Project. Thank you for your assistance in protecting California's people and environment from the harmful effects of toxic substances. If you have any questions or would like clarification on DTSC's comments, please respond to this letter or via email for additional guidance.

2.6

Sincerely,

Tamara Purvis

Tamara Purvis
Associate Environmental Planner
HWMP - Permitting Division – CEQA Unit
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Tamara.Purvis@dtsc.ca.gov

cc: (via email)

Governor's Office of Planning and
Research State Clearinghouse
State.Clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

Cam Boyd
Chief Executive Officer
Costal Community Builders
cboyd@ccb1.net

Dave Kereazis
Associate Environmental Planner
HWMP-Permitting Division – CEQA Unit
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Dave.Kereazis@dtsc.ca.gov

Scott Wiley
Associate Governmental Program Analyst
HWMP - Permitting Division – CEQA Unit
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Scott.Wiley@dtsc.ca.gov

Letter 2

COMMENTER: Tamara Purvis, Associated Environmental Planner, Department of Toxic Substances Control

DATE: September 12, 2024

Response 2.1

This comment is introductory and summarizes the project. This comment does not pertain to the analysis within the Draft IS-MND. No response is required.

Response 2.2

The commenter notes that when agricultural land is converted to residential use, contaminants such as pesticides and organochlorine pesticides (OCP) historically used on agricultural properties can be a concern. The commenter requests that the City identify the amounts of these chemicals historically used on the property and further analyze specific OCP materials and arsenic.

The project site was historically used for agriculture dating back to the 1950s. According to the Cultural Resources Assessment prepared for the project, the project site was then vacant in the mid-1960s and developed with its current residential use starting in 1974. Therefore, the project site is not currently used for intensive agriculture. To address the potential for the release of pesticides, Section 9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, on Page 45 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> However, demolition and construction activities would be required to adhere to California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) regulations for PCBs risks. In addition, due to historical agricultural practices on the property, the potential exists for the presence of residual quantities of agricultural chemicals and other hazardous materials, including undocumented residual quantities of pesticides and organochlorine pesticides. Ground disturbing activities during construction could expose construction workers to residual agricultural chemicals via direct contact with or inhalation of soil dust particles. However, the project would be required to follow all applicable testing, handling and disposal procedures required by the Santa Barbara County Department of Environmental Health Services Hazardous Materials Division and DTSC. With adherence to applicable regulatory requirements, project construction would not result in substantial hazards due routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or risk upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials.

Response 2.3

The commenter states that additional contaminants may be found in mixing/loading/storage areas, drainage ditches, farmhouses, or other outbuildings and should be sampled and analyzed. The commenter notes that if smudge pots had been routinely utilized, additional sampling for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons and/or Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons may be required.

The project site does not contain industrial uses, mixing/loading/storage areas, drainage ditches, farmhouses, or other outbuildings that could pose a risk of contaminants. The City has no records indicating the routine use of smudge pots on the site. No changes to the Draft IS-MND are necessary as a result of this comment.

Response 2.4

The commenter recommends all imported soil and fill material to be tested to assess any potential contamination in accordance with the procedures of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

As stated in Section 7, *Brief Description of Project, of the Draft IS-MND,* approximately 31,550 cubic yards of materials would be imported for the project. The City, applicant, and construction contractor would be required to comply with the applicable DTSC regulations to ensure no contaminated fill would be used at the project site, including testing noted by the commenter. This is an existing regulatory requirement, and no potentially significant impact has been identified related to imported fill material. As such, no changes to the Draft IS-MND are necessary as a result of this comment.

Response 2.5

The commenter states that if demolition is required, surveys should be conducted for the presence of lead-based paints or products, mercury, asbestos containing materials, and polychlorinated biphenyl caulk. The commenter states that these materials should be conducted in compliance with State regulations and sampling should be carried out in accordance with DTSC guidance.

As stated in the discussion of Threshold 9(a-b) on Pages 44 and 45 of the Draft IS-MND, due to the age of the on-site structures proposed to be demolished, it is unlikely that asbestos containing materials are present. However, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) may be present and could result in health hazard impacts to workers if not remediated prior to construction activities. The IS-MND acknowledges that demolition and construction activities would be required to adhere to California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration and DTSC regulations related to the handling of hazardous materials. To address the inclusion of lead-based paints and mercury, Threshold 9(a-b) on Page 45 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

> Therefore, the project site is unlikely to contain asbestos containing materials. In addition, due to the 2006 ban on mercury-added products and previous ground-disturbance at the project site, mercury is not considered to be a hazard at the project site. Because the foundations on the project site could have potentially been constructed before the federal ban on the manufacture of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) and lead-based paint in 1978, it is possible that the concrete slabs contain PCBs and the structures contain lead-based paint. Demolition ~~of the on-site concrete foundations~~ could result in health hazard impacts to workers if not remediated prior to construction activities. However, demolition and construction activities would be required to adhere to California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Department of Toxic Substances Control regulations which are the regulatory agencies that oversee ~~and PCBs~~ risks related to hazardous materials.

Response 2.6

This comment concludes the letter. This comment does not pertain to the analysis within the Draft IS-MND. No response is required.

California
Department of Conservation
Geologic Energy Management Division

Gavin Newsom, Governor
David Shabazian, Director
715 P Street, MS 1803
Sacramento, CA. 95814
T: (916) 445-5986

09/19/2024

Letter 3

City: Santa Maria - Community Development
Carol Ziesenhenne
110 South Pine Street, Santa Maria, CA 93458, USA
cziesenhenne@cityofsantamaria.org

Construction Site Well Review (CSWR) ID: 1013084

Assessor Parcel Number(s): 128052014, 128052023

Property Owner(s): Coastal Community Builders

Project Location Address: 1571 E Main Street Santa Maria, California 93454

Project Title: 1571 East Main Street Bellecrest Residences

Public Resources Code (PRC) § 3208.1 establishes well reabandonment responsibility when a previously plugged and abandoned well will be impacted by planned property development or construction activities. Local permitting agencies, property owners, and/or developers should be aware of, and fully understand, that significant and potentially dangerous issues may be associated with development near oil, gas, and geothermal wells. 3.1

The California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) has received and reviewed the above referenced project dated 9/19/2024. To assist local permitting agencies, property owners, and developers in making wise land use decisions regarding potential development near oil, gas, or geothermal wells, the Division provides the following well evaluation.

The project is located in Santa Barbara County, within the boundaries of the following fields:

N/A 3.2

There are hundreds of oil and gas wells located throughout the Santa Maria Valley. These wells have the potential to be impacted by development activities. The approximate locations and records for these

wells can be viewed at: https://www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Pages/WellFinder.aspx
CalGEM recommends that any wells in close proximity to the property be researched to verify the location and ensure that any construction does not impede access. If any well locations are found to differ from CalGEM records an updated plot plan identifying the well locations relative to the proposed structure(s) is expected to be provided, prior to conducting construction.

Our records indicate there are no known oil or gas wells located within the project boundary as identified in the application.

- Number of wells Not Abandoned to Current Division Requirements as Prescribed by Law and Projected to Be Built Over or Have Future Access Impeded by this project: 0

3.2 cont.

- Number of wells Not Abandoned to Current Division Requirements as Prescribed by Law and Not Projected to Be Built Over or Have Future Access Impeded by this project: 0

- Number of wells Abandoned to Current Division Requirements as Prescribed by Law and Projected to Be Built Over or Have Future Access Impeded by this project: 0

- Number of wells Abandoned to Current Division Requirements as Prescribed by Law and Not Projected to Be Built Over or Have Future Access Impeded by this project: 0

The Division categorically advises against building over, or in any way impeding access to, oil, gas, or geothermal wells. Impeding access to a well could result in the need to remove any structure or obstacle that prevents or impedes access including, but not limited to, buildings, housing, fencing, landscaping, trees, pools, patios, sidewalks, roadways, and decking. Maintaining sufficient access is considered the ability for a well servicing unit and associated necessary equipment to reach a well from a public street or access way, solely over the parcel on which the well is located. A well servicing unit, and any necessary equipment, should be able to pass unimpeded along and over the route, and should be able to access the well without disturbing the integrity of surrounding infrastructure.

3.3

There are no guarantees a well abandoned in compliance with current Division requirements as prescribed by law will not start leaking in the future. It always remains a possibility that any well may start to leak oil, gas, and/or water after abandonment, no matter how thoroughly the well was plugged and abandoned. The Division acknowledges wells plugged and abandoned to the most current Division requirements as prescribed by law have a lower probability of leaking in the future, however there is no guarantees that such abandonments will not leak.

The Division advises that all wells identified on the development parcel prior to, or during, development activities be tested for liquid and gas leakage. Surveyed locations should be provided to the Division in Latitude and Longitude, NAD 83 decimal format. The Division expects any wells found leaking to be

reported to it immediately.

Failure to plug and reabandon the well may result in enforcement action, including an order to perform reabandonment well work, pursuant to PRC § 3208.1, and 3224. 3.3 cont.

PRC § 3208.1 give the Division the authority to order or permit the re-abandonment of any well where it has reason to question the integrity of the previous abandonment, or if the well is not accessible or visible. Responsibility for re-abandonment costs may be affected by the choices made by the local permitting agency, property owner, and/or developer in considering the general advice set forth in this letter. The PRC continues to define the person or entity responsible for reabandonment as:

1. The property owner - If the well was plugged and abandoned in conformance with Division requirements at the time of abandonment, and in its current condition does not pose an immediate danger to life, health, and property, but requires additional work solely because the owner of the property on which the well is located proposes construction on the property that would prevent or impede access to the well for purposes of remedying a currently perceived future problem, then the owner of the property on which the well is located shall obtain all rights necessary to reabandon the well and be responsible for the reabandonment. 3.4

2. The person or entity causing construction over or near the well - If the well was plugged and abandoned in conformance with Division requirements at the time of plugging and abandonment, and the property owner, developer, or local agency permitting the construction failed either to obtain an opinion from the supervisor or district deputy as to whether the previously abandoned well is required to be reabandoned, or to follow the advice of the supervisor or district deputy not to undertake the construction, then the person or entity causing the construction over or near the well shall obtain all rights necessary to reabandon the well and be responsible for the reabandonment.

3. The party or parties responsible for disturbing the integrity of the abandonment - If the well was plugged and abandoned in conformance with Division requirements at the time of plugging and abandonment, and after that time someone other than the operator or an affiliate of the operator disturbed the integrity of the abandonment in the course of developing the property, then the party or parties responsible for disturbing the integrity of the abandonment shall be responsible for the reabandonment.

No well work may be performed on any oil, gas, or geothermal well without written approval from the Division. Well work requiring approval includes, but is not limited to, mitigating leaking gas or other fluids from abandoned wells, modifications to well casings, and/or any other re-abandonment work. The Division also regulates the top of a plugged and abandoned well's minimum and maximum depth below final grade. CCR §1723.5 states well casings shall be cut off at least 5 feet but no more than 10 feet 3.5

below grade. If any well needs to be lowered or raised (i.e. casing cut down or casing riser added) to meet this regulation, a permit from the Division is required before work can start.

The Division makes the following additional recommendations to the local permitting agency, property owner, and developer:

1. To ensure that present and future property owners are aware of (a) the existence of all wells located on the property, and (b) potentially significant issues associated with any improvements near oil or gas wells, the Division recommends that information regarding the above identified well(s), and any other pertinent information obtained after the issuance of this letter, be communicated to the appropriate county recorder for inclusion in the title information of the subject real property.

2. The Division recommends that any soil containing hydrocarbons be disposed of in accordance with local, state, and federal laws. Please notify the appropriate authorities if soil containing significant amounts of hydrocarbons is discovered during development.

3.5 cont

As indicated in PRC § 3106, the Division has statutory authority over the drilling, operation, maintenance, and abandonment of oil, gas, and geothermal wells, and attendant facilities, to prevent, as far as possible, damage to life, health, property, and natural resources; damage to underground oil, gas, and geothermal deposits; and damage to underground and surface waters suitable for irrigation or domestic purposes. In addition to the Division's authority to order work on wells pursuant to PRC §§ 3208.1 and 3224, it has authority to issue civil and criminal penalties under PRC §§ 3236, 3236.5, and 3359 for violations within the Division's jurisdictional authority. The Division does not regulate grading, excavations, or other land use issues.

3.6

If during development activities, any wells are encountered that were not part of this review, the property owner is expected to immediately notify the Division's construction site well review engineer in the Northern district office, and file for Division review an amended site plan with well casing diagrams. The District office will send a follow-up well evaluation letter to the property owner and local permitting agency.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (805) 937-7246 or via email at Trey.Powell@conservation.ca.gov.

3.7

Sincerely,

Trey Powell
Northern District Deputy

cc: Carol Ziesenhenne - Plan Checker

Letter 3

COMMENTER: Trey Powell, Northern District Deputy, California Department of Conservation Geologic Energy Management Division

DATE: September 19, 2024

Response 3.1

This comment is introductory and describes the California Department of Conservation Geologic Energy Management Division's (CalGEM) authority over regulating development near oil, gas, and geothermal wells. This comment does not pertain to the analysis within the Draft IS-MND. No response is required.

Response 3.2

The commenter notes the presence of oil and gas wells throughout the Santa Maria Valley and acknowledges that there are no known oil or gas wells within the project boundary.

The commenter's statement is accurate; no oil, gas, or geothermal wells were identified on the project site. No changes to the Draft IS-MND are required as a result of this comment.

Response 3.3

The commenter advises against building over or impeding access to oil, gas, or geothermal wells. The commenter notes there are no guarantees an abandoned well will not start leaking in the future. The commenter advises all wells identified on the parcel be tested for liquid and gas leakage.

No oil, gas, or geothermal wells were identified on the project site. No changes to the Draft IS-MND are required as a result of this comment.

Response 3.4

The commenter summarizes the provisions of California Public Resources Code Section 3208.1. This comment does not pertain to the analysis within the Draft IS-MND. No response is required.

Response 3.5

The commenter states that well work is prohibited without written approval from CalGEM. The commenter states that CalGEM recommends information regarding identified wells are communicated to the County recorder and soil containing hydrocarbons are disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.

No oil, gas, or geothermal wells were identified on the project site. No changes to the Draft IS-MND are required as a result of this comment.

Response 3.6

The commenter summarizes the provisions of California Public Resources Code Section 3106 and notes CalGEM has the authority to issue penalties for violations of CalGEM regulations. The

commenter states that if wells are encountered during development that were not part of CalGEM review, the property owner must immediately notify the CalGEM Northern District office.

No oil, gas, or geothermal wells were identified on the project site. The project applicant and City would comply with applicable CalGEM requirements, including required notifications. No changes to the Draft IS-MND are required as a result of this comment

Response 3.7

This comment concludes the letter. This comment does not pertain to the analysis within the Draft IS-MND. No response is required.

apcd air pollution control district
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Letter 4

September 24, 2024

Carol Ziesenhenne
City of Santa Maria
Community Development Department
110 South Pine Street, #101
Santa Maria, California 93458

Sent Via Email: cziesenhenne@cityofsantamaria.org

Re: Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District Comments on the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Bellecrest Residences Project, GPZ2022-0003, TR2022-0007, PD2022-0008

Dear Carol Ziesenhenne:

The Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (District) has reviewed the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the referenced project, which consists of the development of a gated senior residential community of 142 single-family residential units, a community clubhouse, and other amenities. The residential lots will range in size from 2,040 square feet (SF) to 2,960 SF and will accommodate approximately 284 residents. An existing single-family residence and associated structures would be demolished. The proposed project would be built in three phases with construction expecting to start in January 2025 and end in December 2028. Excavation requires approximately 4,500 cubic yards (CY) of cut to be used as fill onsite. An additional 31,550 CY of fill material would be imported. The project's zoning would change from Single Family Residential with a Planned Development Overlay (PD/R-1) to Medium Density Residential with a Planned Development Overlay (PD/R-2). The subject property, two parcels totaling 14.43 acres and identified in the Assessor Parcel Map Book as APNs 128-052-014 and -023, is located at 1571 East Main Street in the City of Santa Maria. 4.1

The District has the following comment on the Draft MND and project:

1. The air quality analysis assumes the use of Tier 4 engine standards for construction equipment, which are the most stringent emission standards for diesel construction equipment. The City should ensure that these engine standards are made a condition of approval or otherwise made enforceable throughout the construction phase of the project. 4.2

If you or the project applicant have any questions regarding this comment, please feel free to contact me at (805) 979-8334 or via email at WaddingtonE@sbcapcd.org. 4.3

Sincerely,

Emily Waddington,
Air Quality Specialist
Planning Division

cc: Planning Chron File

Letter 4

COMMENTER: Emily Waddington, Air Quality Specialist, Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District

DATE: September 24, 2024

Response 4.1

This comment is introductory and summarizes the project. This comment does not pertain to the analysis within the Draft IS-MND. No response is required.

Response 4.2

The commenter states that the City should ensure that Tier 4 engine standards for construction equipment are made a condition of approval or otherwise made enforceable throughout the construction phase of the project.

As indicated in Section 3, *Air Quality*, of the Draft IS-MND, construction equipment would utilize Tier 4 engine standards for construction equipment. To address the enforcement of the use of Tier 4 engine standards, Section 8, *Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required,* on Page 4 of the Draft IS-MND is revised as follows:

Agency	Permits/Other Approvals
City of Santa Maria Community Development Department	Planned Development Permit (PD2022-0008), ~~and~~ General Plan Land Use Amendment and Zone Change approval (GPZ2022-0003), and Condition of Approval for the use of Tier 4 engine standards during construction

Response 4.3

This comment concludes the letter. This comment does not pertain to the analysis within the Draft IS-MND. No response is required.