



NOTICE OF PREPARATION

February 27, 2019

To: Agencies, Organization, and Interested Parties
Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Princessa Crossroads Development Project

Lead Agency:

Agency Name: City of Santa Clarita
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Contact: Ben Jarvis
Associate Planner

Consulting Firm:

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Contact: Alia Hokuki, AICP
Project Manager

The City of Santa Clarita will be the lead agency for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Princessa Crossroads Development Project, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and set forth in Public Resources Code Section 21065. Under CEQA, "The purpose of the Environmental Impact Report is to identify the significant effects of a project on the environment, to identify alternatives to the proposed project, and to indicate the manner in which significant environmental effects can be mitigated or avoided" (Public Resources Code, Section 21002.1(a)).

A description of the Project, as well as a listing of the environmental topics that are proposed to be analyzed in the EIR, is provided in this Notice of Preparation (NOP). We need to know your views as to the scope and content of the environmental information proposed to be included in the EIR to address the Project's potential environmental effects.

SCOPING MEETING: Pursuant to Section 21083.9 of the Public Resources Code, a Scoping Meeting will be held for the general public and responsible and trustee public agencies. The purpose of the Scoping Meeting is to learn about the proposed Project, review the anticipated scope of the EIR, and assist the City in identifying the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and potentially significant effects to be analyzed in depth in the EIR. Below, the date, time, and location of the Scoping Meeting are provided.

Scoping Meeting Date

Wednesday, March 20,
2019

Scoping Meeting Time

6:00 to 8:00 P.M.

Scoping Meeting Location

Century Room
Santa Clarita City Hall
23920 Valencia Boulevard
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD: A 30-day public review period for submitting comments on the scope of the EIR is:

Starting Date: Wednesday, February 27, 2019

Ending Date: Friday, March 29, 2019

All comments need to be mailed or submitted no later than 5 p.m. on March 29, 2019. Please send your response, including your name, address, and concerns, to:

Ben Jarvis, Associate Planner
City of Santa Clarita
Community Development Department, Planning Division
23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 140
Santa Clarita, CA 91355
Or via email to: bjarvis@santa-clarita.com

A copy of the NOP describing the Project and potential environmental effects is also available at the following locations:

- City of Santa Clarita Community Development Department, 23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 140, Santa Clarita, California 91355
- Valencia Branch of Santa Clarita Public Library, 23743 W. Valencia Boulevard, Santa Clarita, California 91355
- The City's website:
<http://www.santa-clarita.com/city-hall/departments/community-development/planning-division/>

PROJECT TITLE: Princessa Crossroads Development Project

PROJECT APPLICANT: National Technical Systems, 24007 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 200, Calabasas, California 91302

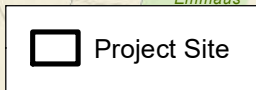
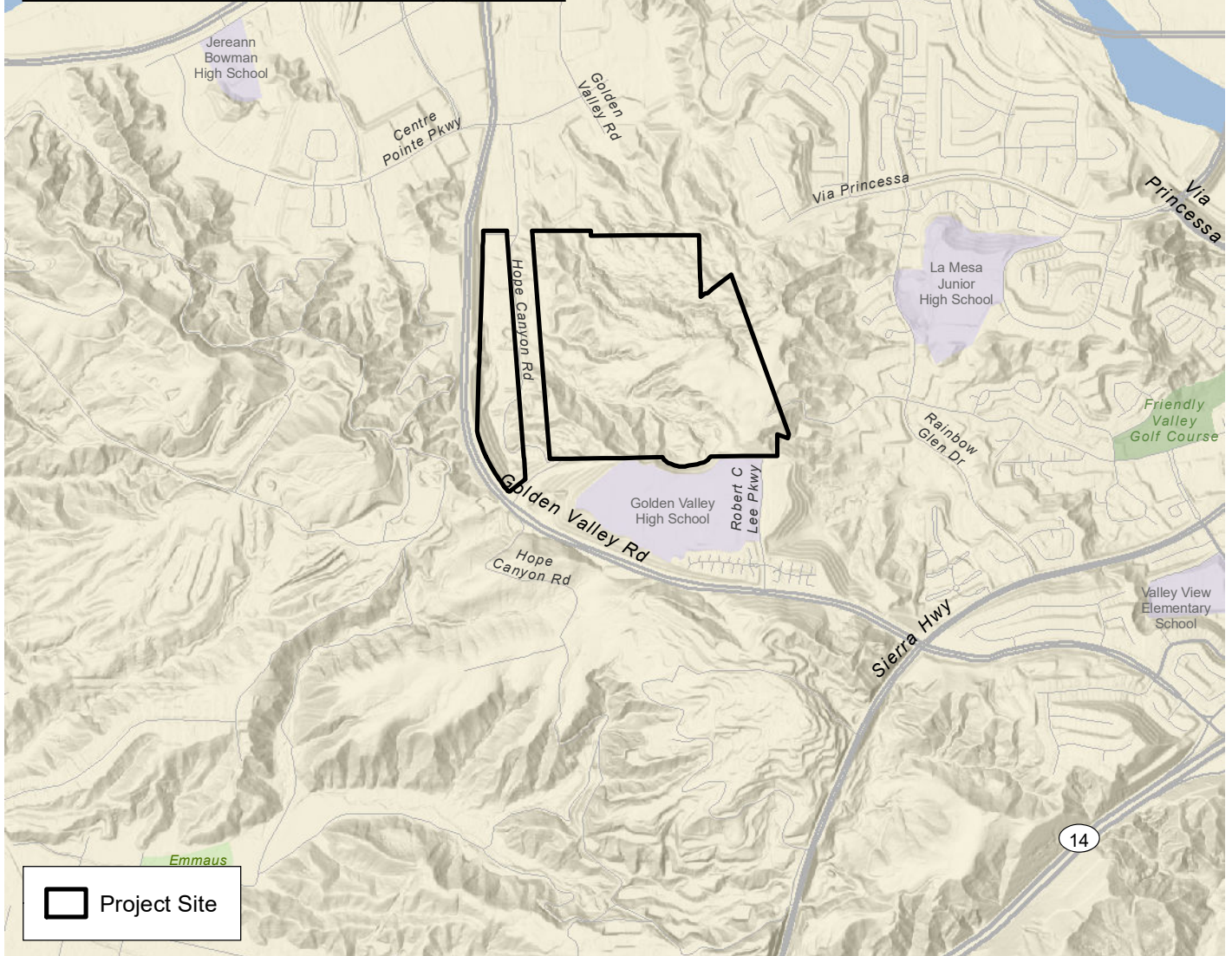
PROJECT LOCATION: Surrounded on the west by Golden Valley Road; on the north by the City of Santa Clarita Activities Center; to the east by vacant undeveloped land and residential uses; and to the south by Golden Valley High School and Robert C. Lee Parkway. Project location is depicted on Exhibit 1, Project Location and Vicinity.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Applicant is proposing a development consisting of 710 residential units and 680,000 square feet of business park/retail/office uses on 189.2-acre Project site. The mixed-use development would include five Planning Areas, two designated for single- and multi-family residential, and the remaining three for business park/retail/office uses. The Project Site Plan is depicted on Exhibit 2.

The proposed Project would include grading of approximately 167.5 acres (5,000,000 cubic yards of cut and fill), which would balance on-site. To accommodate implementation of the proposed development, additional remedial grading may be required. Additionally, the Project would include off-site grading and roadway development for Via Princessa on properties to the east and west of the Project site as well as grading of the adjacent City recreational property at the Santa Clarita Sports Complex.

The Project site would be primarily accessed from the extension of Via Princessa, easterly from Golden Valley Road. Access to the future residential and commercial development would be provided by proposed internal public and private streets.

It is anticipated that construction of the proposed Project would be initiated in late 2020. The Project would be phased based on market demands, but it is anticipated that development would be completed within approximately 3-5 years. Grading and construction of Via Princessa would occur with the initial phase of the Project. While grading of the entire site would be done as one phase, the timing of building construction would depend on market conditions at that time.



Local Vicinity

Princessa Crossroads Development Project



2,000 1,000 0 2,000 Feet

Exhibit 1



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Source: Alliance Land Planning & Engineering Inc. 2019

Site Plan

Princessa Crossroads Development Project



Exhibit 2



(02/25/2019 MMD) R:\Projects\SAN03\3SAN030100\Graphics\NOPlex_SitePlan.pdf

Table 1, below, provides a breakdown of the Project site and associated uses.

**TABLE 1
LAND USE SUMMARY**

| Planning Area | Residential (DU) | Business Park/Retail/Office (SF) |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Planning Area 1 | 259 | -- |
| Planning Area 2 | 451 | -- |
| Planning Area 3 | -- | 378,000 |
| Planning Area 4 | -- | 231,000 |
| Planning Area 5 | -- | 71,000 |
| TOTAL | 710 | 680,000 |
| DU: dwelling units; SF: square feet; (--): not applicable <i>Source: Alliance, 2018</i> | | |

In order to implement the Project, the following approvals would be required:

- Environmental Impact Report (17-001) - to analyze the potential impacts of the Project
- Specific Plan (18-001) - to establish zoning, development standards, and design guidelines for the Project
- General Plan Amendment (17-001) and Zone Change (17-002) - to create a Specific Plan designation and establish zoning and land use designations for the Project site
- Tentative Tract Map (75026) - to subdivide the property up to 40 lots for residential and business park/retail/office uses, streets, private drives, infrastructure, and open space lots
- Conditional Use Permit (17-003) - for grading in excess of 100,000 cubic yards of earth; development within the Planned Development Overlay Zone; and residential gating
- Development Review (17-008) - for design and layout of the Project for all new developments
- Hillside Development Review (17-002) – to develop land with average cross slopes of 10 percent or more
- Oak Tree Permit (number is pending) – required for any encroachment or removal of protected oak trees
- Ridgeline Alteration Permit (17-001) – for development near a designated significant ridgeline in the Ridgeline Preservation Overlay Zone

PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING: The 189.2-acre Princessa Crossroads Development Project site (area within tract map boundaries) is located directly east of Golden Valley Road along the proposed extension of Via Princessa. In addition to the on-site property within the tract map boundaries, the Project includes various off-site properties, including an easterly extension of Via Princessa and the adjacent approximately 34-acre City-owned property to the north, which would ultimately be developed with park improvements (see Exhibit 1, above).

Regional access to the City is provided by State Route 14 (SR-14), the southern portion of which is also known as the Antelope Valley Freeway. Local access is currently from Golden Valley Road and Robert C. Lee Parkway.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The site is surrounded on the west by Golden Valley Road and existing business park/industrial uses; on the north by the City of Santa Clarita Activities Center; to the east

by vacant undeveloped land and residential uses; and to the south by Golden Valley High School and residential uses across Robert C. Lee Parkway.

The Project site is characterized by hilly terrain with steep ravines and dense vegetation, with an approximate elevation ranging between 1,375 and 1,800 feet above mean sea level. Surface water drainage in the area is toward local gullies and washes that drain into existing storm drain facilities, ultimately discharging into the Santa Clara River, located approximately 1-mile northwest of the site.

The proposed Project site is currently undeveloped but highly disturbed due to utility construction; ongoing maintenance; and unauthorized access from surrounding neighborhoods. The undeveloped land is naturally vegetated with many unimproved dirt roads, interspersed with numerous natural and artificial drainage channels, and high voltage power transmission lines. Some asphalt-paved roads to the various structures are present, but most roads on the site are unimproved. Existing characteristics of the Project site are summarized in Table 2.

**TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF EXISTING SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

| Component | Relevant Information |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Property Owners | City of Santa Clarita Los Angeles Department of Water and Power William S. Hart Union High School District National Technical Systems/ETCR Sikand Family Foundation Jemstreet Properties |
| Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) | <div> APN 2836-013-277 (partial) APN 2836-014-066 </div> <div> APN 2836-013-910 (partial) APN 2836-014-067 (partial) </div> <div> APN 2836-013-914 (partial) APN 2836-014-270 (partial) </div> <div> APN 2836-013-917 (partial) APN 2836-014-271 (partial) </div> <div> APN 2836-013-920 (partial) APN 2836-014-276 </div> <div> APN 2836-014-050 (partial) APN 2836-014-901 </div> <div> APN 2836-014-057 APN 2836-014-902 (partial) </div> <div> APN 2836-014-058 APN 2836-018-901 </div> <div> APN 2836-014-061 (partial) APN 2836-018-902 </div> <div> APN 2836-014-062 APN 2836-018-903 </div> <div> APN 2836-014-063 APN 2836-018-904 </div> <div> APN 2836-014-064 (partial) </div> |
| Site Area | 189.2 acres (within present Tentative Tract Map boundaries) |
| Existing Land Use | Undeveloped and disturbed |
| Topography | The site generally slopes from the southeast to the north and northwest with flatter portions dispersed throughout. |
| General Plan and Zoning Designation | BP (Business Park), CN (Commercial Neighborhood), PI (Public Institution), and UR-5 (Urban Residential 5). Portions of the Project site are also located in the Homeless Shelter, Mineral Oil Conservation Area, and Ridgeline Preservation overlay zones. |

The Project site is currently zoned and designated by the City's General Plan as BP (Business Park), CN (Commercial Neighborhood), PI (Public Institution), and UR-5 (Urban Residential 5). The Project would affect adjacent City land (for grading purposes) zoned OS (Open Space). Portions of the Project site are also located in the Homeless Shelter, Mineral Oil Conservation Area, and Ridgeline Preservation overlay zones. Implementation of the proposed Project would require changing the Project zoning and land use designation within the tract map boundaries to SP (Specific Plan).

PROJECT APPROVALS: The proposed Project would require a public hearing and approval by the City of Santa Clarita Planning Commission and City Council. In addition to the City of Santa Clarita, which is the lead agency under CEQA, other discretionary approvals and permits would be required. Table 3, below, identifies these permits and approvals to the extent that they are known to the City of Santa Clarita at the time this NOP was prepared.

**TABLE 3
MAJOR PROJECT APPROVALS REQUIRED**

| Agency | Approvals |
|--|--|
| <i>Lead Agency</i> | |
| City of Santa Clarita | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIR Certification • Specific Plan Adoption • General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Zone Change (ZC) • Tentative Tract Map • Conditional Use Permit • Development Review • Hillside Development Review • Oak Tree Permit • Ridgeline Alteration Permit |
| <i>Responsible Agencies</i> | |
| California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Los Angeles Region (Region 4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for stormwater discharge • Clean Water Act Section 404 Certification, if required |
| US Army Corps of Engineers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits, as necessary |
| California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Region 5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits, as necessary |
| Los Angeles Department of Water and Power | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits, as necessary |
| South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits, as necessary |

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT: Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15060, the City conducted a preliminary review of the proposed Project and determined that the Project could potentially result in significant effects on the environment and that an EIR is required. This determination is based upon the criteria of the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15063 (Initial Study), 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), and 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance). The purpose of the EIR is to provide information about potential significant physical environmental effects of the proposed Project; to identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects; and to describe and analyze possible alternatives to the proposed Project. At this time, we anticipate that the following topics will be analyzed in the EIR:

- **Aesthetics:** The proposed Project, comprised of five Planning Areas, would alter the existing undeveloped land, albeit disturbed, and associated views of the site. The motorist traveling on future extension of Via Princessa, traversing through the future development, and the existing Golden Valley Road, along the western boundary of the site, would have views of the proposed Project although the existing development along Golden Valley Road may partially block the views of the Project. The EIR will discuss and analyze the potential impacts emanating from changes in the visual quality of the site and the new sources of light and glare.
- **Air Quality:** The proposed development would result in construction (e.g., site clearance, grading, hauling of materials, building construction, and more) and operation (e.g., increased vehicular trips, energy use, and more) emissions, which would be quantified at a regional and

location level and compared with the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) CEQA mass emissions thresholds. The EIR will assess potential conflicts with applicable State, regional, and City plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions, including the City's Climate Action Plan.

- **Biological Resources:** Project development could affect a variety of biological resources, including riparian vegetation and habitat that could support rare, threatened, or endangered plants and wildlife species. The EIR will analyze effects on endangered and protected species; wetland, riparian, and other sensitive habitats; the movement of native or migratory fish and wildlife; and waters under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) that could result from Project construction and long-term operation. Additionally, using the oak tree survey and report, the EIR will analyze the impacts on on-site oak trees.
- **Cultural Resources:** The proposed Project site is primarily undeveloped and would require grading prior to construction. The cultural resources analysis would include records searches to identify any existing resources within the site or the vicinity; determine the context; and the potential discovery of such resources during grading/excavation and construction. The EIR will additionally discuss the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) search of the Sacred Lands File to determine if cultural resources important to Native Americans have been recorded in the Project area. Per the 2019 Updated CEQA Guidelines, the discussion of paleontological resources will be included in the Geology and Soils section of the EIR.
- **Energy:** The Energy section of the EIR will include a quantified analysis of anticipated energy usage (i.e. electricity, gasoline, and natural gas) associated with construction and operation of the Project, and determine if the usage amounts are efficient, typical, or wasteful for the land use types. The Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions sections of the EIR will include construction and operational emissions and feasible mitigation measures, that will be applicable to the analysis.
- **Geology and Soils:** The analysis in the EIR will include information obtained from previous geotechnical studies. The EIR will also include a discussion of on-site soils and bedrock materials; groundwater conditions; location relative to flood hazard zones and fault zones; stability of existing slopes and erosion potential; and access roads. Location relative to known active earthquake faults; anticipated ground shaking from earthquakes; geologic conditions of the Project site and vicinity; liquefaction characteristics; and other secondary effects from earthquakes will be evaluated as well. Further, as indicated above, under the Cultural Resources discussion, the Geology and Soils section of the EIR will discuss and analyze the geologic structure of the Project site to determine if the proposed grading plan could disturb paleontological (i.e. fossil) resources.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Construction and operation of the proposed Project would result in short- and long-term GHG Emissions. The GHG Emissions section of the EIR will discuss and analyze the emissions from construction and material hauling equipment exhaust; increased vehicular trips; use of consumer products; landscaping maintenance of the new community; and energy and natural gas consumption within the development. The EIR will assess the potential conflicts with applicable State, regional, and City plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, including the City's Climate Action Plan, Green Santa Clarita.
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** The EIR analysis will include a discussion of potential hazards to the public through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or create a significant hazard through foreseeable upset or accident conditions through release of hazardous materials. The analysis will also evaluate potential Project hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of a school, indicate if the Project is included as a hazardous materials site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, evaluate the potential for safety and noise hazards associated with a public airport located within two miles from the Project site, and whether the Project would impact adopted response or emergency evacuation plans.

Additionally, the EIR will discuss and evaluate the potential hazards associated with wildfire, as the Project is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). This issue will be further discussed in the Wildfire section of the EIR, pursuant to the 2019 Updated CEQA Guidelines.

- **Hydrology and Water Quality:** The proposed Project will modify the existing undeveloped condition of the site by introducing impermeable surfaces associated with the proposed development. The landform modification would change the hydrological patterns and introduce new sources of pollutants in runoff due to short-term construction and long-term changes to the site. The analysis will include an assessment of the pre- and post-development conditions and the potential impacts related to storm drainage and changes to the groundwater supplies. The discussion of water quality will identify tributaries, impaired water bodies, and pollutants of concern. The analysis will also discuss compliance with City's Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation plan requirements, and in particular, the Los Angeles Hydrology Manual and the Los Angeles Low Impact Development Standards Manual.
- **Land Use and Planning:** Project implementation will require various land use entitlements (i.e. tentative tract map, conditional use permit, development review, general plan amendment, hillside development review, oak tree permit, ridgeline alteration permit, specific plan and zone change), which will be discussed in the EIR. Additionally, the EIR will include a consistency analysis with the City's land use plans, policies, and programs as well as regional plans, including the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) and the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS).
- **Noise:** The proposed Project would create new short- and long-term sources of noise and vibration in the vicinity during construction and operation of the Project. Sensitive receptors (e.g., residential uses and the Golden Valley High School) are located to the east and south of the site. The potential noise impacts on the existing and planned sensitive receptors, including noise from on-site stationary and mobile/vehicular sources, as well as noise increased due to Project-generated traffic on local roadways, will be discussed and analyzed. The assessment will take into account compliance with the standards in the City's Noise Element of the General Plan and municipal code.
- **Population and Housing:** The Project would result in increased population in the area and induce growth directly and indirectly. The EIR will include a discussion of the existing and projected population and housing supply in the City and analyze population growth and displacement of existing housing or population. The Project's consistency with regional growth projections will be discussed, as well as consistency with SCAG's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The analysis will be limited to those issues that could result in a direct change on the physical environment.
- **Public Services:** The proposed Project would result in an increase in demand for fire and protection services and schools given that the site is currently undeveloped. The EIR will address potential impacts associated with fire, police, and schools. The analysis will also include an evaluation of potential impacts to public library services. Potential impacts to parks will be discussed under the Recreation section of the EIR. The analysis will be based on coordination with service providers to determine whether the Project can be adequately served.
- **Recreation:** The proposed Project would include recreational amenities and parks within the development. The EIR will discuss and analyze the increased demand for parks and recreation; parkland requirements for the Project; and potential impacts on the existing parks and recreational facilities in the area including temporary closure during construction activities.
- **Transportation:** The proposed residential and non-residential uses would result in increased traffic and new trips in the area. The EIR will evaluate the existing traffic conditions in addition to future scenarios highlighted in the Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA). The EIR will discuss the volume and distribution of traffic; trip generation and circulation; and potential impacts on performance of streets and highways. The EIR will also evaluate potential effects associated with the extension of Via Princessa and City's transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

- **Tribal Cultural Resources:** The Project will comply with the agency-to-agency consultation requirements under Senate Bill (SB) 18 and AB 52. This includes consultation assistance to the City with the California Native American Tribes and identification of tribal cultural resources. The analysis will describe the consultation process, including correspondence and discussion with the appropriate tribes. The results of the consultation and a Sacred Lands File (SLF) conducted by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) will be compiled and summarized in the Tribal Cultural Resources Section of the EIR.
- **Utilities and Service Systems:** The proposed development would result in an increase in demand for wet (i.e., water and wastewater treatment) and dry (i.e., electricity and natural gas) utilities given that the site is currently undeveloped. The EIR will discuss and analyze the existing and proposed utility infrastructure and any off-site upgrades required by the Project. A discussion of the Water Supply Assessment (WSA) will also be included considering that the Project exceeds the 500-dwelling unit threshold for a WSA. The EIR will also evaluate the available landfill capacity and consistency with programs related to solid waste and hazardous waste management.
- **Wildfire:** The Project site is currently undeveloped, and like many other undeveloped lands in the Santa Clarita Valley, is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) due to a combination of hilly terrain, dry weather conditions, and the presence of flammable native vegetation. As a result, the proposed Project is required to develop a Fuel Modification Plan, which would be reviewed by Los Angeles County Fire Department and enforced through the City of Santa Clarita's building permit process. The EIR will discuss the exposure of future residents to pollutant concentrations from wildfire; the emergency response or evacuation plan; and the potential landslides and flooding due to runoff, post-fire slope instability; and drainage changes.

It is anticipated that no impacts associated with Agricultural and Forestry Resources would occur. As identified on Exhibit 3.5-1, Farmland Designations in the One Valley One Vision General Plan EIR, the Project site is not located in any of the designated areas of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land. Additionally, no part of the Project site or adjacent areas is zoned forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production, nor would the proposed Project result in the loss of forest land or conversion to non-forest use. A determination to that effect will be made in the EIR.

Furthermore, no impacts related to Mineral Resources are anticipated to occur as a result of the Project, as the site is not located in an area designated as containing mineral resources, based on Exhibit 3.10-1, Existing Mining Resources, of the One Valley One Vision General Plan EIR. A determination to that effect will be made in the EIR.

The EIR will additionally include discussions of Growth Inducing Effects; Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes; and Alternatives to the proposed Project.

EIR PROCESS: The Draft EIR will take into account input received at the Scoping Meeting and comments submitted on the NOP. The Draft EIR is intended to analyze and disclose the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project and identify mitigation measures and alternatives that would reduce or avoid significant impacts. The Draft EIR will be available for public review for a period of 45-days during which public agencies and members of the public may review and comment on the Draft EIR. Comments received on the Draft EIR will be reviewed and addressed within the Final EIR, which will consist of the Draft EIR; Responses to Comments and Errata or changes to the Draft EIR; and all additional technical reports or follow up documentation that is needed. The City of Santa Clarita Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the Final EIR and make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the Final EIR. The City Council will hold its own public hearing on the Final EIR and make its own determination on certification of the Final EIR for the proposed Princessa Crossroads Development Project and associated entitlements.