NOVEMBER 2023

CITY OF SANTA CLARITA
VIA PRINCESSA PROJECT
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

IMAGES SOURCE: PACIFIC COAST LAND DESIGN, INC., 2022 CONCEPTUAL FLY-THROUGH

PREPARED FOR

City of Santa Clarita

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
23920 VALENCIA BOULEVARD, SUITE 300
SANTA CLARITA, CA 91355

PREPARED BY

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3760 KILROY AIRPORT WAY, SUITE 270
LONG BEACH, CA 90806

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CITY OF SANTA CLARITA

VIA PRINCESSA PARK PROJECT

INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Prepared for:

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INITIAL STUDY
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA

Project title/master case number:	Via Princessa Park Project
Lead agency name and address:	City of Santa Clarita Public Works Department 23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 300 Santa Clarita, CA 91355
Contact person and phone number:	Dan Duncan; (661) 255-4348 Leslie Frazier; (661) 286-4172
Project location:	The proposed Project is located along Via Princessa (road) northeast of the intersection of Whites Canyon Road and Via Princessa. The Project site comprises an approximately 34-acre area of City-owned land consisting of 5 parcels (with assessor's parcel numbers 2836-002-907, 2836-002-922, 2836-003-923, 2864-003-920, and 2864-003-922) along the south bank of the Santa Clara River, in the Canyon Country community of the City of Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County, California. A portion of the Project site has been developed a parking lot and also contains a Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) Railroad Right of Way (ROW), which contains the Via Princessa Metrolink Station and railroad. Additionally, the Project would include offsite improvements to adjacent properties to the northeast and along Weyerhauser Way. **Figure 1** shows the regional location of the Project site. **Figure 2** shows the Project location within the City. **Figure 3** illustrates the Project boundaries and nearby uses.
Applicant's name and address:	City of Santa Clarita Public Works 23920 Valencia Boulevard Santa Clarita, CA 91355
General Plan Designation:	Business Park (BP) (see **Figure 4**)
Zoning:	Business Park (BP) (see **Figure 5**)

Description of Project and Setting: The following subsections describe the proposed Project and the Project setting.

Project Summary Description

The Project proposes to construct and operate Via Princessa Park on an approximately 34-acre area of primarily vacant City-owned land, which would include athletic fields with sports field lighting, pickleball courts (also with lighting), playground equipment and other recreational facilities, such as walking paths, shade structures, picnic areas, public art, and education and monumentation signage. Additionally, the Project would provide parking, park access, and other amenities and improvements, including alterations to the existing Via Princessa Metrolink Station parking lot, potential maintenance-level improvements to the Metrolink Station platform and facilities, construction of a pedestrian and vehicle (restricted access) railroad undercrossing (including removal of the existing at-grade pedestrian crossing), installation of an additional culvert under the railroad, replacement of an existing storm drain line with a culvert under the railroad, construction of a new restroom building with associated utilities, improvements to the existing restroom/office building located in the parking area, landscaping and irrigation improvements, and restoration of the existing Honby drainage channel. Additionally, a fourth lane may be added to Weyerhauser Way and modifications may be made to Via Princessa road to accommodate a double-left turn lane into and/or out of Weyerhauser Way. **Figure 6** depicts the preliminary Project site plan.

In addition to recreational improvements, the Project would include a regional stormwater infiltration facility. Other Project civil and geotechnical design features include, buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration, as well as removal of an agricultural well.

One purpose of the Project is to implement the City's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan Update (August 2008), which identified the proposed Via Princessa Park as a possible future park to provide needed recreational facilities to the community. Additionally, the Project has been identified by the Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency as an optimal location for off stream recharge, and the proposed infiltration basin would help the Agency meet their goals of sustainable basin management, in accordance with their 2020 Urban Water Management Plan.

Project Setting

As mentioned, the Project site is located in the Canyon Country community, which is in the eastern portion of the City of Santa Clarita. As described in the City's General Plan (2011), this area has the largest population of any community in the valley and contains a wide range of housing types. The Project site is located within a 2018 census tract identified by the State of California as a disadvantaged community, and the community (Cordova Estates) located adjacent to the Project site to the east, qualifies as a severely disadvantaged community.

The Project site was historically used for agricultural production and presently is primarily vacant, with existing improvements constructed on the southerly portion of the property that include the Via Princessa Metrolink Station and railroad operation, an existing restroom and office building, and an existing parking lot (approximately 400 spaces). The Project site is directly bordered by the Santa Clara River to the north; Whites Canyon Road, and undeveloped land to the west; Via

Princessa, residential uses, the Friendly Valley Golf Course, and open space uses to the south; and the Cordova Estates mobile home community to the east. Metrolink users may access the site from the Via Princessa Metrolink Station. Vehicular access to the Project site is from Via Princessa, which is a secondary highway, and Weyerhauser Way, which currently has three lanes (two outbound and one inbound) at the Project site.

The Project site is roughly divided in half by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA)/Metrolink railroad tracks and includes the Via Princessa Metrolink Station. Additionally, the area north of the railroad tracks, which is proposed for the Project recreational and infiltration facilities, is identified within the Santa Clara River Significant Ecological Area (SEA) Overlay Zone by the City. SEA Overlay Zone development requirements are provided under the City's Municipal Code Section 17.38.080 (SEA – Significant Ecological Area Overlay Zone).

A portion of the northeast area of the Project site was disturbed in summer of 2023 by the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District trunk sewer improvement project, for which impacts, including those affecting the Project site, were reviewed under the Soledad Canyon Relief Trunk Sewer Section 4 Project IS/MND (SCH 2021050473), prepared by the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (May 2021). The sewer improvement project includes installation of a temporary buried sewer trunk line on the Project site and under the Santa Clara River. The Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District work entailed excavation of a bore pit and use of associated staging areas on the Project site to install the sewer line. This work commenced in summer 2023 and is anticipated to be completed in 2024.

Project Characteristics

The proposed Project would be developed to provide recreational opportunities as well as water quality and water supply benefits to the surrounding communities. The Project would consist of the major components, described in further detail below: park facilities; regional stormwater infiltration facility; Honby Channel restoration and improvements; triple-box culvert extension; buried bank protection at the south bank of the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel; SCRRA/Metrolink grade-separated undercrossing (replacing the existing at-grade pedestrian crossing); parking lot improvements; and Weyerhauser Way site access improvements.

Park Facilities

The proposed parks and recreational components of the Project are diverse and include the following improvements:

- Four multipurpose fields measuring approximately 300 feet by 180 feet each, with sports field lighting (60 to 70 feet tall) for limited evening activities (typical operating hours no later than 10:00 p.m.)

- Networks of pedestrian paths within the site and 20-foot-wide multipurpose pathways along the perimeters of the multipurpose fields which would also provide access for emergency and maintenance vehicles

- Four pickleball courts and associated lighting, located at the eastern portion of the Project site, near the park entrance

- Nature-themed playground and a natural play area with rocks, boulders, logs, etc.
- Shaded gathering and picnic areas
- Restroom and maintenance storage building
- Entrance plaza with public art, monumentation signage, passive play areas integrated with stormwater low-impact development features, walking paths, and nature-focused educational components
- Accessory improvements including park facility lighting installation (in addition to lighting at fields and courts), drainage improvements, specifically installation of a new culvert at the east side of the park, and utility connections.

The park would also offer numerous seating areas on low walls, grassy berms, and benches. The park area would be landscaped with turf in the athletic fields and an assortment of drought-conscious trees and ground cover vegetation, and a landscaped buffer would be provided along the eastern border adjacent to Cordova Estates. The park area would include protective safety fencing to keep park patrons out of the railroad right-of-way.

Regional Stormwater Infiltration Facility

The Project would divert and infiltrate stormwater through the proposed regional stormwater infiltration facility, which was one identified in the Upper Santa Clara River Enhanced Watershed Management Plan (EWMP). The EWMP identified the Via Princessa Project site as “Site X.” The EWMP is a compliance strategy under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit (MS4 Permit) for the coastal watershed portions of Los Angeles County.

Honby Channel, the parking lot, as well as the park facility, would supply runoff to the infiltration facility, which is designed to capture up to the 85th percentile 24-hour storm volume. The runoff from Honby Channel would be diverted from the existing culvert to a pretreatment system. Runoff from the park site would also flow to the hydrodynamic separators, after being conveyed through bioswales and other treatment processes within the park site. The diverted treated water originating from both the park site and Honby Channel would then be collected in a subterranean infiltration gallery, where it would slowly percolate into the groundwater basin.

The diversion would allow the current volume of the dry weather flow in Honby Channel to bypass the diversion structure and continue downstream of the culvert to support proposed restored riparian vegetation and habitat in Honby Channel. The runoff diverted from Honby Channel would go through a pre-treatment process to remove trash, grit, floatables, fine sediment and silts. The stormwater would be uniformly distributed to 8-foot diameter perforated corrugated metal pipes (CMP). The infiltration BMP would be installed approximately 20 to 25 feet below the ground surface with approximately 6 to 10 feet of ground cover over it. The infiltration gallery would be located on the west side of Honby Channel and has an estimated footprint of 2 acres.

The Project infiltration facility would convey more water into the groundwater basin closer to existing production wells, thereby improving the groundwater supply. This creates a more resilient water supply for the community and reduces the costs associated with acquiring water from other sources.

Additionally, the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (SCV Water) may utilize the Project infiltration system to introduce available surplus water supplies to recharge the local groundwater basin. SCV Water would deliver available water outside of those times when the infiltration system is receiving stormwater runoff and in coordination with the City. SCV Water would use existing local infrastructure to deliver available water to the Project. The delivery system would include an air-gapped structure connection and control valve, and would be regularly monitored during operation.

Honby Channel Improvements

Honby Channel Sedimentation and Stabilization. Honby Channel receives runoff from its southern watershed through the existing triple 8-foot by 8-foot reinforced concrete box culvert, which crosses under Via Princessa road and the railroad. The channel and culvert have experienced an accumulation of sediment at the culvert outlet which has deposited over an approximately 200-foot section of the channel, including the 90-foot grouted rip rap outlet pad. This sediment accumulation has backed up into the existing culvert, to the point where the depth of the sediment at the culvert outlet is estimated to be 3–4 feet deep, thus significantly reducing the culvert's hydraulic capacity. Furthermore, dry weather flows, such as irrigation runoff, have encouraged trees and other plants, of which some are non-native and invasive, to grow in the deposited sediment. The Project proposes to remove the sediment and vegetation in the portion of Honby Channel that has experienced deposition. The removal of sediment with its vegetation would re-establish the originally designed channel grade and capacity. Upon completion of this work and re-grading, the existing buried grouted riprap culvert outlet structure would be removed and the proposed box culvert extension and adjacent exposed grouted riprap bank protection would be constructed, as described below. The earthen channel would be restored by replacing the existing non-native, invasive plant species with climate- and region-appropriate native vegetation in the disturbed areas, along with more natural stabilization features to protect the in-channel trees from erosion.

The east and west banks of Honby Channel would be protected from erosion up to the 100-year storm event by the buried soil cement bank protection described in the sections below. The proposed bank protection would extend approximately 700 feet, and would not be visible once constructed. A terrace would be incorporated into the backfill grading of the soil cement to allow vegetation to be installed at the surface, outside of the active flow channel.

Triple-Box Culvert Extension. Additionally, the Project proposes to construct an extension of the existing triple-box culvert. As mentioned previously, the existing triple-box culvert is approximately 500 feet long and is composed of three 8-foot-wide by 8-foot-high cast-in-place reinforced concrete boxes. The terminus of the box culvert is located within the SCRRA/Metrolink right-of-way, which limits its access and use. The Project proposes to extend the culvert an additional 70 feet, with a 30-foot transition structure, for a total length of up to 100 feet. The culvert extension would be reinforced over the top to facilitate a vehicle crossing over Honby Channel, outside of the SCRRA right-of-way, providing emergency and maintenance vehicle access to different areas of the Project site.

Restoration. Following the proposed work in Honby Channel, restoration efforts would take place in order to reestablish local native plants and replace habitat. The restoration work would include removal of accumulated sediment, stabilizing unvegetated soil, and replanting with local native species. The restoration effort would include propagating local native plant cuttings and managing

interim conditions during establishment, including temporary fencing, grazing wildlife, wildlife damage to the temporary irrigation system, and management of non-native species.

Buried Bank Protection Behind South Bank of the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel

The Project would protect the proposed Park site from flooding and erosion, up to the 100-year storm event, through the use of buried soil-cement bank protection. Soil cement is created with a mixture of suitable soils (89%) and cement (up to 11%) to create a hardened mixture. The majority of the material (i.e., soils) would be obtained on-site, thus, reducing the need to imported materials. Additionally, since the soil cement is buried, it does not introduce a hardened man-made surface to the landscape, which has aesthetic benefits and provides opportunity for wild and landscaped vegetation to grow. Soil cement bank protection has already been used in other locations along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries with success. The proposed buried bank protection would extend from the culvert extension in Honby Channel to the existing exposed riprap bank protection at Cordova Estates (northeast corner of Project site), for a total length of approximately 2,200 feet.

The proposed soil cement bank protection would extend down to the elevation of calculated scour depth in the river, in order to prevent the bank from becoming undermined over time. The proposed soil cement would be installed to a depth approximately 12 feet below the riverbed along the south bank of the Santa Clara River and a depth of approximately 10 feet along the east and west banks of Honby Channel. The soil cement would be installed in layers and approximately 8 feet wide. With the backfilled soil extending from the soil cement to the river/channel. The uppermost layer of soil cement would be 20 feet wide and would provide a uniform, stable surface on which to install the park's 20-foot wide trail. No portion of the soil cement would be visible after construction. A small portion of the soil cement would be covered in loose rock (rip rap), as opposed to soil, at the tie-in points with the existing Cordova Estates Levee and proposed Honby Channel culvert extension. The soil backfill would be contoured to reproduce the streambank and transition into the streambed. Following completion, Honby Channel would be planted and hydroseeded with local, native species.

SCRRA/Metrolink Grade-Separated Undercrossing to Replace At-Grade Pedestrian Crossing

The Project site is bifurcated by the existing, generally east–west trending SCRRA/Metrolink railroad, which serves the current Via Princessa Metrolink Station, included in the Project footprint area. The Via Princessa Station is one of four stops in Santa Clarita on the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line, connecting Lancaster to downtown Los Angeles. The Antelope Valley line operates seven days a week, with approximately 11 trains stopping at Via Princessa Station in each direction on weekdays, and six trains in each direction on Saturday and Sunday. The railroad separates the proposed park area from the parking lot, thus, requiring grade-separated access for pedestrians and restricted vehicle access. As a result, the Project proposes a combined pedestrian and vehicular undercrossing approximately 29 feet wide, with a 12-foot wide and 16-1/2 foot high access for vehicles and a 14 foot wide, 9 foot high access for pedestrians. The undercrossing activities also include relocation of a storm drain line adjacent to the undercrossing in the SCRRA ROW.

The current Via Princessa Metrolink Station platform loads the train from the north side of the tracks and requires the passengers to cross the tracks at-grade to gain access. The proposed undercrossing would provide access to the existing platform from the north side replacing the

existing at-grade pedestrian crossing. As mentioned, the Project may include maintenance-level improvements to the platform and facilities. Additionally, the Project would remove the pedestrian at-grade crossing, as shown on Figure 6.

Parking Lot Improvements

The existing parking lot, along with the Via Princessa Metrolink Station, were constructed following the Northridge Earthquake in 1994 when portions of the regional freeway bridges were damaged. Construction of the station was expedited and was in high demand from commuters since it provided an alternative means of transportation. The parking lot has the capacity for approximately 400 cars and includes lane striping to accommodate the efficient movements of buses entering, dropping off, and exiting the lot. As the original purpose was to accommodate commuter needs and was constructed under emergency conditions, the parking lot was developed with minimal amenities.

The proposed Project includes the following improvements to the existing parking facilities:

- Approximately 26 additional spaces would be added to the parking lot, for a total of approximately 424 total parking spaces.
- Eight electric vehicle capable spaces would be added, of which two spaces would be installed with EV charging stations at this time.
- Replacement bus shelter
- Pavement rehabilitation and re-striping
- A new landscaped area (trees and ground cover) would be added to the east end and trees would be added at the ends of each parking row.
- A trash container enclosure would be added along the south row of parking spaces.
- All parking lot lighting would be upgraded to high efficiency lighting, in addition the original wooden poles will be replaced by metal poles.

Weyerhauser Way Park/Site Access Improvements

Following construction of the park facilities, road upgrades may be made to improve access to the park. The upgrades would consist of adding fourth lane to Weyerhauser Way for incoming traffic, and/or adding a double-left turn lane on Via Princessa into and/or out of Weyerhauser Way.

Project Construction

Project construction is anticipated to begin by the summer of 2025 with construction completion planned for late 2028. Construction equipment used for the Project is expected to include common construction equipment such as scrapers, excavators, loaders, tractors, backhoes, hydraulic breakers, dump trucks, material delivery trucks, air compressors, generators, and handheld power tools. The Project would also require use of a temporary onsite soil-cement batch plant for the

buried bank protection. Additionally, the railroad undercrossing abutments would be designed with cast in steel shell (CISS) piles and would therefore not require driven pile foundations.

Construction staging would occur within the Project site. Monday through Friday daytime work hours will be typical, however, round the clock weekend work may occur at limited times for activities on or near the active rail line or as necessitated by the work activities themselves. However, work days would typically not include weekends and holidays. Construction equipment will be required to maintain their factory installed muffling systems.

The Project would involve approximately 208,000 cubic yards (cy) of cut and 219,000 cy of fill (primarily from installation of the infiltration gallery). Approximately 11,000 cy of soil is anticipated to be imported during construction.

Temporary Construction Disturbance Areas

Construction of the Project would require temporary construction and disturbance areas on the Project site as well as some areas off the Project site. These areas are described below and identified on **Figure 7**, Project Temporary Construction and Permanent Disturbance Areas.

Parking Lot Improvements. During the parking lot improvement work, two County-owned parcels (with APNs 2864-003-921 and 2864-003-924) located adjacent to the east side of the Project parking lot (Figure 7) would be temporarily disturbed. The two parcels may be subjected to construction fringe effects such as grading and may also be used for construction staging.

Railroad Undercrossing. During construction of the vehicle ramp to the railroad undercrossing, temporary grading would be required on two County-owned parcels (with APNs 2864-003-921 and 2864-003-924) located adjacent to the east side of the Project parking lot.

Buried Bank Protection Temporary Work Areas Along Santa Clara River. Excavation and installation of the buried bank protection along the Santa Clara River are anticipated to require disturbance outside of the Project site. The disturbance area includes the installation of buried bank protection on a Los Angeles County Flood Control District easement on privately-owned properties at the northeast portion of the site (Figure 7). The disturbance activities would include earthwork and back-cut for bank protection. Following the Project construction work along these locations, the disturbed areas would be restored to pre-project conditions through a restoration plan.

Triple-Box Culvert Extension. As mentioned, the terminus of the box culvert is located within the LACMTA ROW; therefore, during construction of the culvert extension, a portion of the Project construction work is anticipated to occur within the railroad ROW. As discussed, the culvert extension would be reinforced over the top to enable a vehicle crossing over Honby Channel, outside of the SCRRA right-of-way.

Honby Channel Temporary Channel Diversion and Construction Crossing. During the Honby Channel improvement work, a temporary diversion may be needed to convey the Honby Channel flows around or through the area where the triple-box culvert extension is being constructed. The diversion would be anticipated to begin at the Honby Channel upstream

opening of the box culvert approximately 100 feet south of Via Princessa road. Once the culvert improvements are completed, the flows would be redirected back to the culvert boxes.

In the event that the triple-box culvert extension in Honby Channel is not completed or is found to be unsuitable for heavy equipment crossing, a temporary equipment crossing may be constructed to cross Honby Channel. Installation of the temporary crossing would involve minor grading and installing corrugated metal pipes that allow water to flow through. Once the pipes are installed, the soil would be replaced over them and would allow use for equipment crossing. The temporary equipment crossing would be sited to avoid mature trees and minimize impacts to vegetation, and would include culverts or some other conveyance to allow drainage in the channel to pass.

Project Operations

The proposed Project would provide recreational opportunities to the local community and region and would operate from sunrise to 10:00 pm per the City's standard park hours. Anticipated activities include practices, scrimmages, and games, as well as tournaments (such as organized youth sports events) on a limited basis (a few times per year). Special, large event park uses may also occur on the site (such as a concert) and would require a City permit from the City's Parks and Recreation Department (involving fire department, police department, and planning department review) and would be scheduled on an application basis. The park uses and events would be subjected to the City's noise ordinance (Title 11, Chapter 11.44, Noise Limits).

Operation of the Project would require approximately between two to five employees to perform ongoing regular maintenance to clean and maintain park facilities, maintain the drainage and infiltration facilities, and manage non-native species in the landscaped and natural areas.

Required Approvals/Entitlements

The proposed Project involves the following approvals and permits:

- City of Santa Clarita Department of Public Works
- California Department of Fish and Game 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit
- Regional Water Quality Control Board Section Clean Water Act Section 401 Clean Water Certification
- California Public Utilities Commission General Order 88-B Authority to Construct Rail Crossing
- Los Angeles County Flood Control District approval of proposed bank protection connection
- Other ministerial permits, including grading and building permits, State Water Resources Control Board National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit

for Storm Water Discharges Associated with the Construction and Land Disturbance Activities

- SCRRA

California Native American Tribes Consultation Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1

The City initiated the tribal consultation process, as required under Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 and consistent with Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18. The City mailed consultation application and fee on December 8, 2022 to the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians. Under AB 52, Native American tribes have 30 days to respond and request further project information and formal consultation, and under SB 18 Native American tribes have 90 days to respond requesting consultation. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted on November 14, 2022, to request a search of the Sacred Lands File. The NAHC responded to the request in a letter dated December 8, 2022. The results of the Sacred Lands File search conducted by the NAHC indicated that no Native American cultural resources are known to be located within the Project area of potential effect. The Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (the Tribe) expressed interest in consulting with the City and asked for more information about the Project's impact on cultural resources. On July 13, 2023, the City provided the Cultural Resources Report prepared for this Project, available as Appendix D of this Initial Study. The City and the Tribe are in the process of bringing the consultation process to a finalization; thus, there may be minor revisions to the mitigation language prior to the adoption of the MND. However, the mitigation measure included in Section XVIII, Tribal Cultural Resources captures the substantive elements of the mitigation approach.

PN: 192626

Project Location

VIA PRINCESSA PARK PROJECT
SANTA CLARITA, CA

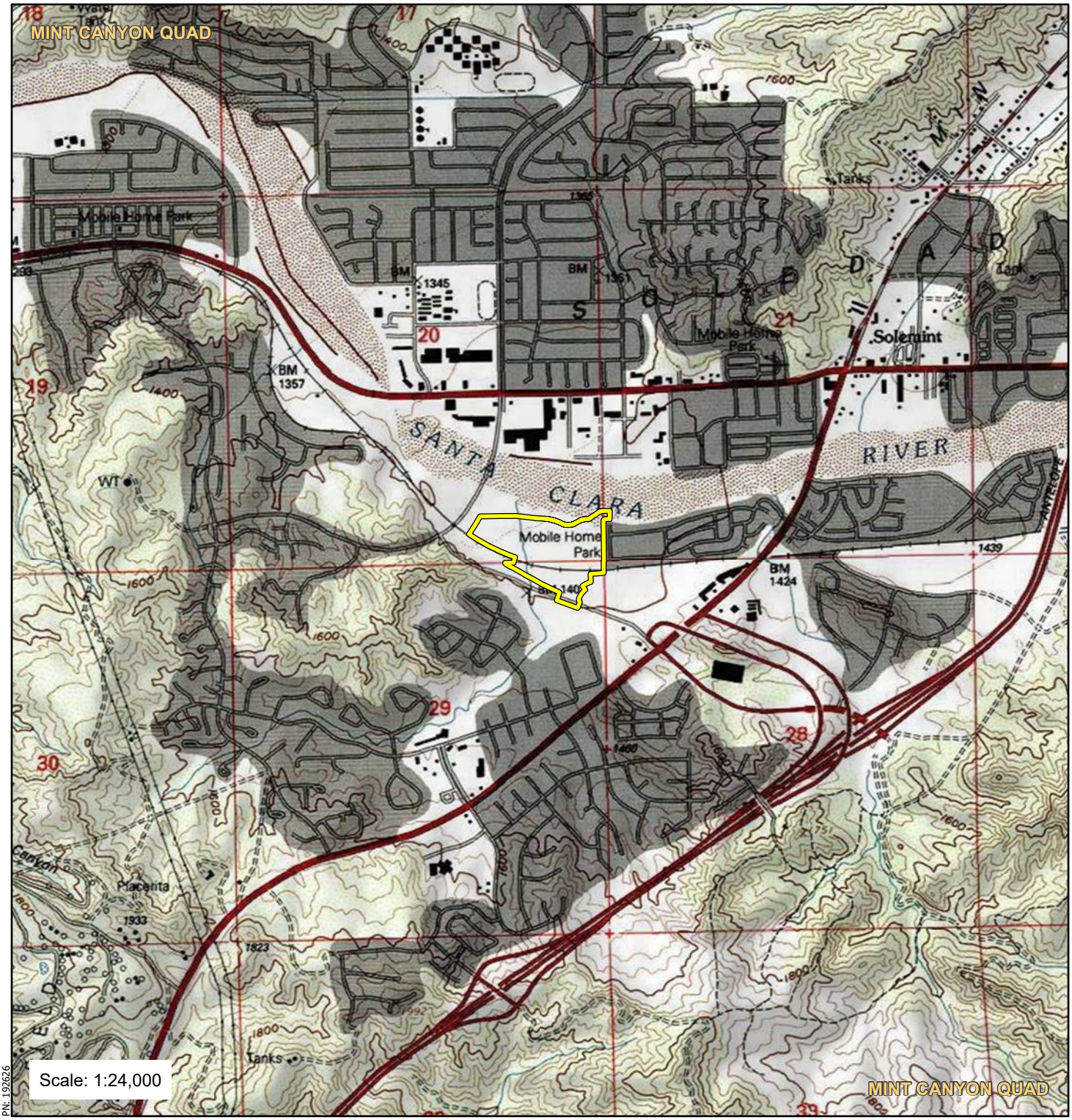
Regional Vicinity

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

0 5 10 Miles

Source: Esri, ArcGIS Online, National Geographic World Map: *Santa Clarita, California*

Figure 1



Project Site

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Source: Esri, ArcGIS Online, Mint Canyon USGS 7.5-Minute topographic quadrangle maps: *Santa Clarita, California*

VIA PRINCESSA PARK PROJECT
SANTA CLARITA, CA

Project Location

Figure 2

PN: 192626

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

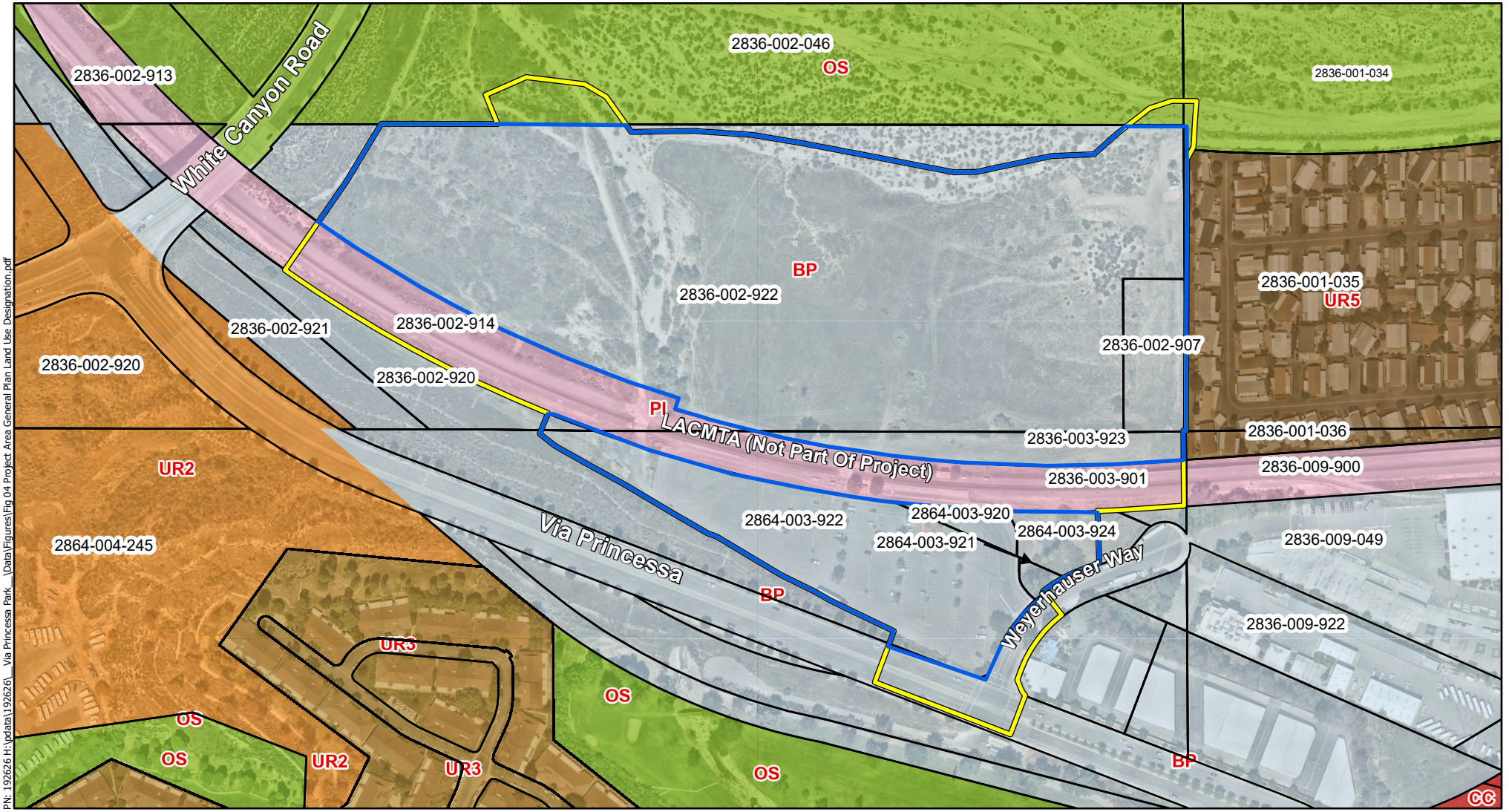
Not to Scale

Source: Helix Environmental Planning, October 2023.

VIA PRINCESSA PARK PROJECT
SANTA CLARITA, CA

Project Site

Figure 3



PN: 192626 H:\pdata\192626_Via Princessa Park_\Data\Figures\Fig 04 Project Area General Plan Land Use Designation.pdf

Temporary Disturbance Area
Project Facility Area
Parcel Boundary

General Plan

OS
CC
BP

UR2 = 5.0 du/a
UR3 = 11.0 du/a
UR5 = min. 19 du/a - max. 30.0 du/a
PI - Public/Institutional

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

N

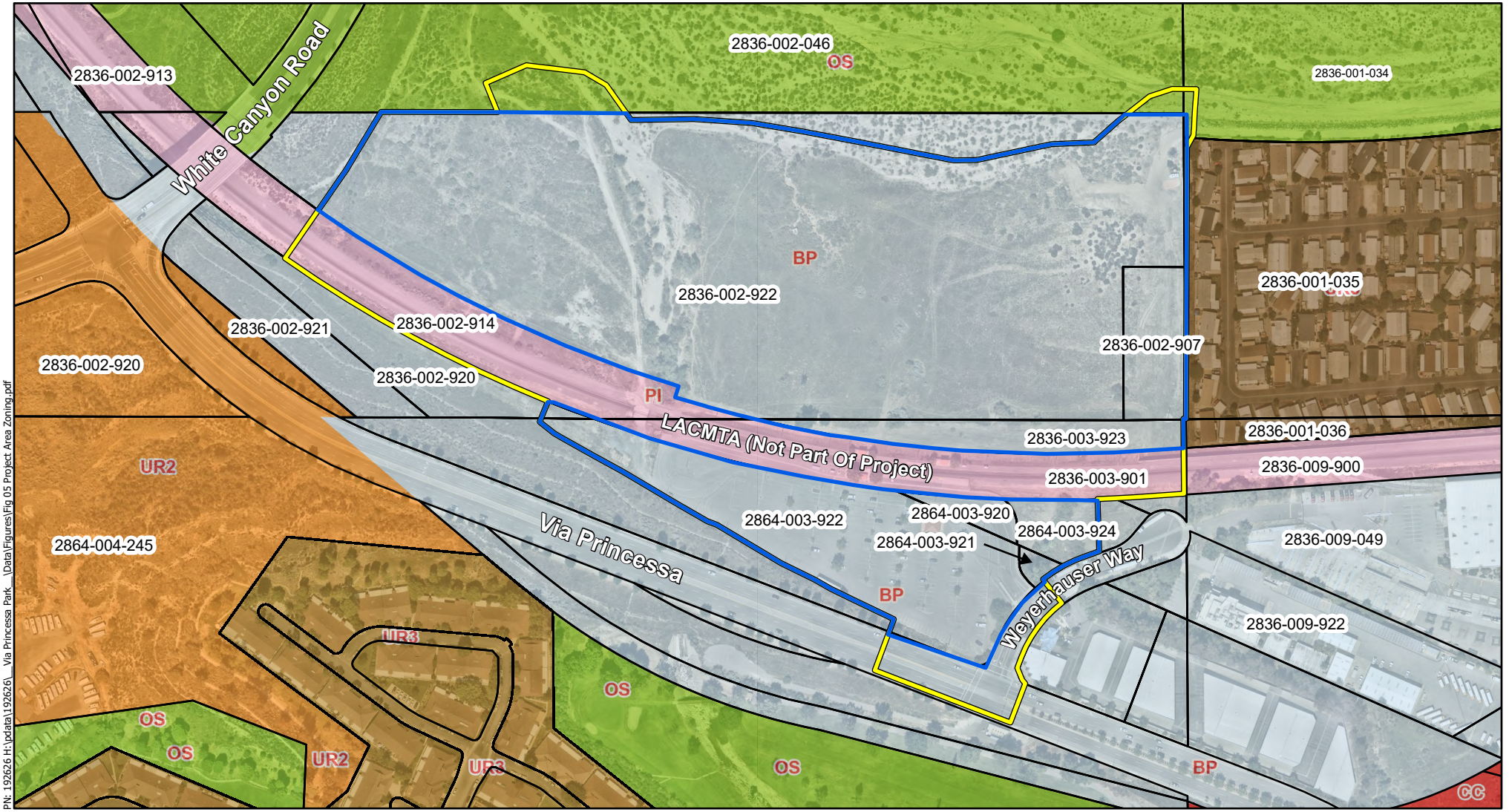
0 100 200 400 Feet

Source: Esri, ArcGIS Online, 2023 Nearmap Imagery: *Santa Clarita, California*

VIA PRINCESSA PARK PROJECT
SANTA CLARITA, CA

Project Area General Plan Land Use Designation

Figure 4



Temporary Disturbance Area
Project Facility Area
Parcel Boundary

Zoning
OS
CC
BP

UR2 = 5.0 du/a
UR3 = 11.0 du/a
UR5 = min. 18 du/a - max. 30.0 du/a
PI - Public/Institutional

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

N

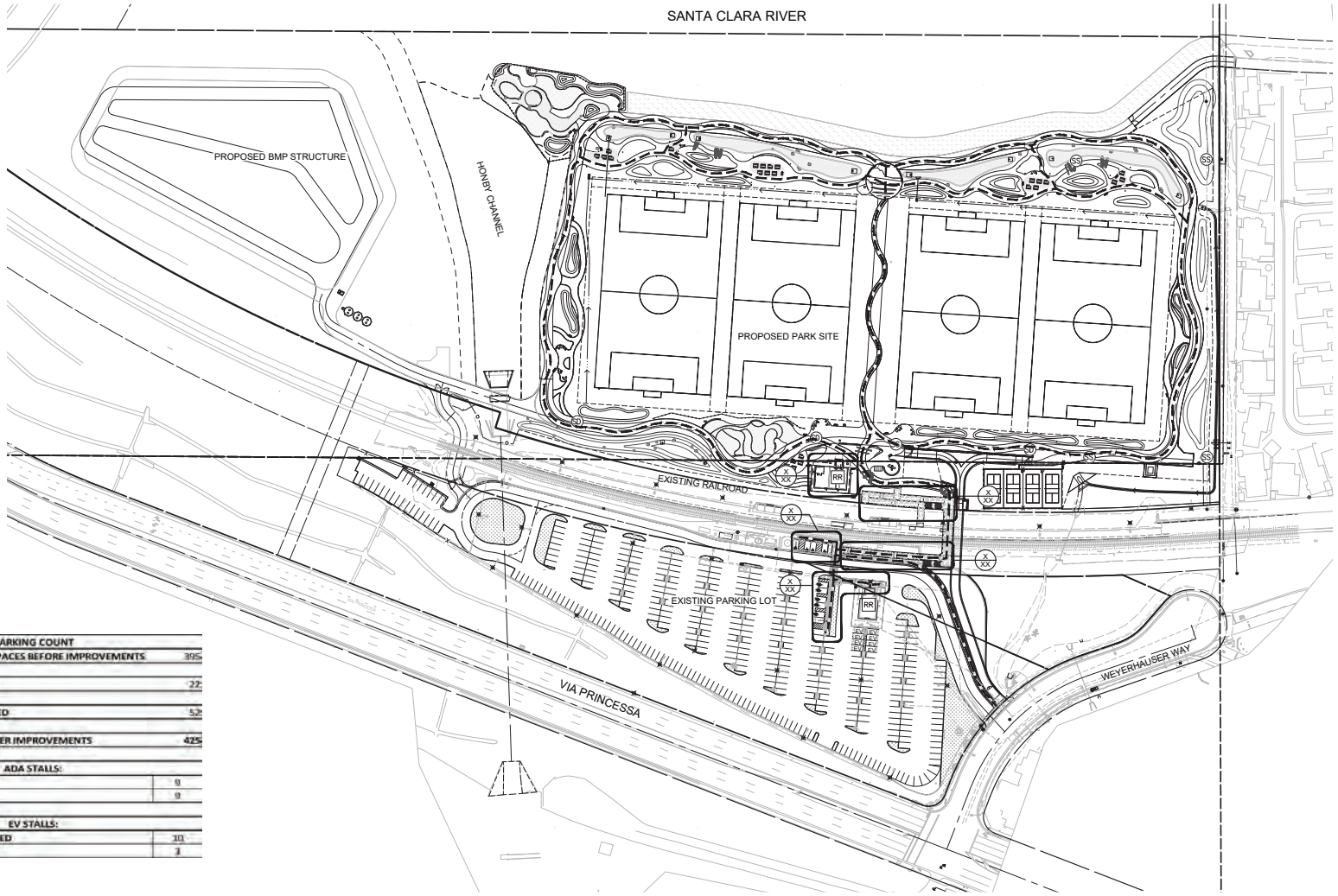
0 100 200 400 Feet

Source: Esri, ArcGIS Online, 2023 Nearmap Imagery: *Santa Clarita, California*

VIA PRINCESSA PARK PROJECT
SANTA CLARITA, CA

Project Area Zoning

Figure 5



PARKING COUNT	
TOTAL EXISTING PARKING SPACES BEFORE IMPROVEMENTS	395
PARKING STALLS REMOVED	22
NEW PARKING SPACES ADDED	52
TOTAL PARKING SPACES AFTER IMPROVEMENTS	425

ADA STALLS:	
REQUIRED STALLS	9
PROVIDED STALLS	9

EV STALLS:	
EV CAPABLE SPACES PROVIDED	10
EV CHARGERS INSTALLED	1

PN: 192626

LEGEND:

- GRASS - SEE LANDSCAPE DRAWINGS
- HARDSCAPE
- BIOSWALE
- PATH OF TRAVEL
- RR — ACCESSIBLE RESTROOM
- EV — ELECTRICAL VEHICLE CHARGING STATION

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

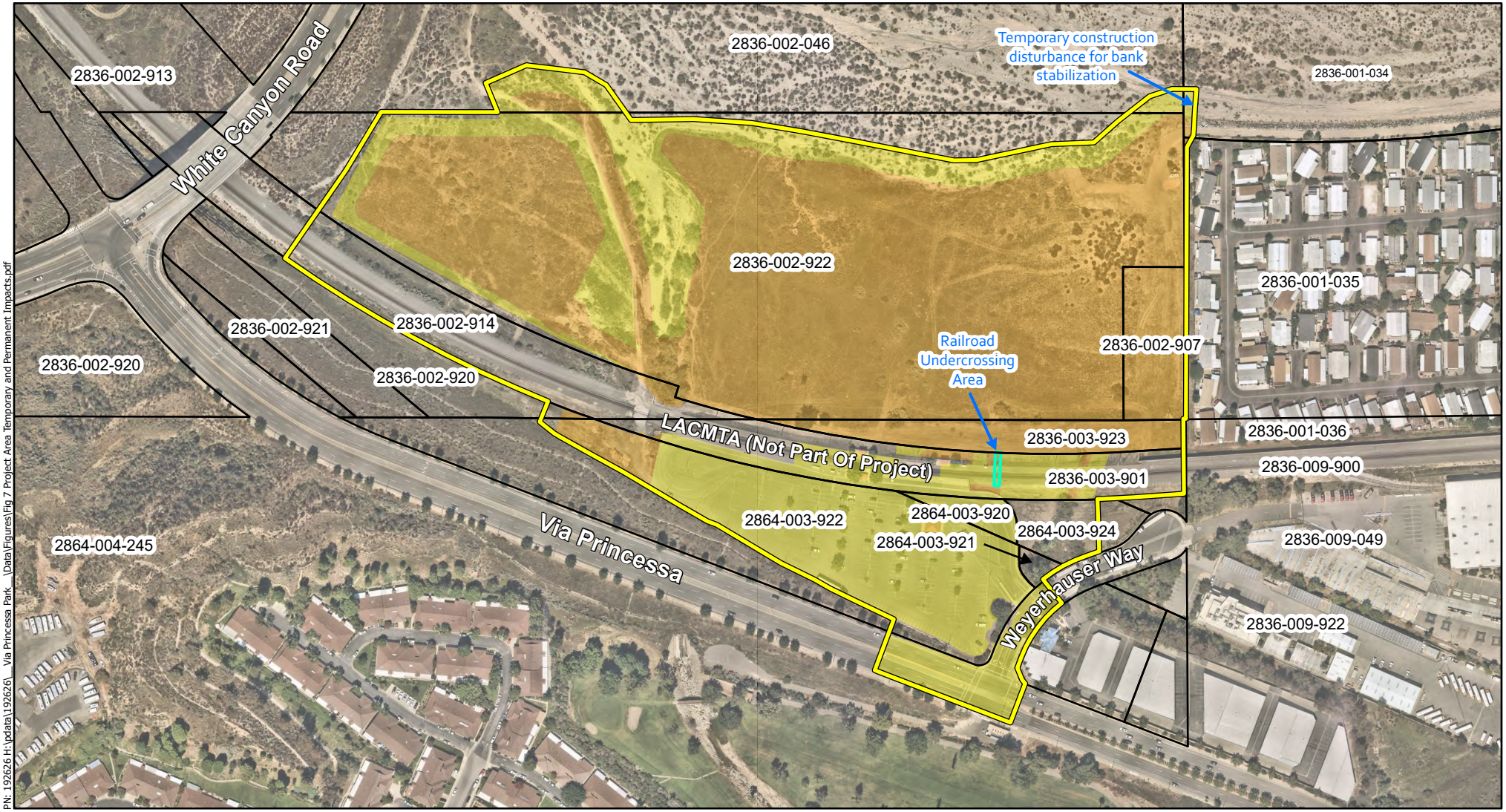
FEET
80 40 0 40 80 160
1 1/2 0 1/2 1 2
INCHES

Source: Psomas Engineering, 2023.

VIA PRINCESSA PARK PROJECT
SANTA CLARITA, CA

Preliminary Site Plan

Figure 6



PN: 192626 H:\pdata\192626_Via Princessa Park_\Data\Figures\Fig 7 Project Area Temporary and Permanent Impacts.pdf

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

N

0 100 200 400 Feet

Source: Esri, ArcGIS Online, 2023 Nearmap Imagery: *Santa Clarita, California*

VIA PRINCESSA PARK PROJECT
SANTA CLARITA, CA

Project Area Temporary and Permanent Impacts

Figure 7

INITIAL STUDY
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA

A. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a "**Potentially Significant Impact**" or "**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation**" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

B. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation: *Check one*

[ ] I find that the Proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

[X] I find that although the Proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project have been made by or agreed to by the Project Proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

[ ] I find that the Proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

[ ] I find that the Proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

[ ] I find that although the Proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the Proposed Project, nothing further is required.

Signature Date 11/09/2023

Name, Title ENVIRONMENTAL ADMINISTRATOR

C. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS - Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, primary/secondary ridgelines, 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 that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES – In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
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 nonagricultural 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]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland 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 nonagricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]

III. 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:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – Would the project:

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]	[ ]	[ ]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (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, including oak trees?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[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]
g) Affect a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) or Significant Natural Area (SNA) as identified on the City of Santa Clarita ESA Delineation Map?	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
VI. ENERGY – Would the project:				
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]	[ ]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS – Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
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 wind or water soil erosion or the loss of topsoil, either on- or off-site?	[ ]	[ ]	[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 Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial 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) Result in a change in topography or ground surface relief features?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
g) Result in earth movement (cut and/or fill) of 10,000 cubic yards or more?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
h) Involve development and/or grading on a slope greater than 10% natural grade?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
i) Result in the destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical feature?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
j) Directly or indirectly destroy or impact a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emission, 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]	[ ]
IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – Would the project:				
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 explosion or the release of hazardous materials into the environment (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, fuels, or radiation)?	[ ]	[ ]	[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 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
i) Expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards (e.g., electrical transmission lines, gas lines, oil pipelines)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY – Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	[ ]	[ ]	[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, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
e) 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?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
k) Result in changes in the rate of flow, currents, or the course and direction of surface water and/or groundwater?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
l) Other modification of a wash, channel creek, or river?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
m) Impact stormwater management in any of the following ways:	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
i) Potential impact of project construction and project post-construction activity on stormwater runoff?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
ii) Potential discharges from areas for materials storage, vehicle or equipment fueling, vehicle or equipment maintenance (including washing), waste handling, hazardous materials handling or storage, delivery areas or loading docks, or other outdoor work areas?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
iii) Significant environmentally harmful increase in the flow velocity or volume of stormwater runoff?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
iv) Significant and environmentally harmful increases in erosion of the Project Site or surrounding areas?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
v) Stormwater discharges that would significantly impair or contribute to the impairment of the beneficial uses of receiving waters or areas that provide water quality benefits (e.g., riparian corridors, wetlands, etc.)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
vi) Cause harm to the biological integrity of drainage systems, watersheds, and/or water bodies?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
vii) Does the Proposed Project include provisions for the separation, recycling, and reuse of materials both during construction and after project occupancy?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING – Would the project:				
a) Disrupt or physically divide an established community (including a low-income or minority 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]	[ ]
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, and/or policies by agencies with jurisdiction over the project?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
XII. MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES – Would the project:				
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]
c) Use nonrenewable resources in a wasteful and inefficient manner?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
XIII. NOISE – Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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]
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial 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 housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere (especially affordable housing)?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES – Would the project result in:				
a) 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]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. RECREATION – Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
XVII. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC – Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
: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]	[ ]	[ ]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
e) 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]	[ ]
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
XX. WILDFIRE – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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]
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:				
a) Does the project have the potential to 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, 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]	[ ]	[ ]
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]

D. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND/OR EARLIER ANALYSIS

Section I. Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
AESTHETICS: Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, primary/secondary ridgelines, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The City of Santa Clarita lies within Southern California's Santa Clarita Valley, which is bounded by the San Gabriel Mountains to the south and east, the Santa Susana Mountains to the southwest, the Sierra Pelona to the north, and the mountains of the Angeles National Forest to the northeast. The surrounding natural mountains and ridgelines provide a visual backdrop for the City. Other scenic resources within or visible from the City include the Santa Clara River corridor, forested/vegetated land, and a variety of canyons and natural drainages in portions of the City. There is no widely accepted definition of a scenic vista; however, a scenic vista is often defined as a publicly accessible, prominent vantage point that provides expansive views of highly valued landscapes or prominent visual elements. As stated in the General Plan, a scenic vista may include views of scenic resources such as mountains and canyons, woodlands, water bodies, and/or specific resources such as Vasquez Rocks County Park.[1]

[1] City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element, 2011.

The proposed park would be located in a vacant portion of the Project site. The proposed park site as well as the rest of the Project site is in an area that offers distant panoramic views of the mountains to the north and east. The foreground views from public vantage points on public roadways, such as Via Princessa and Weyerhauser Way, include streetlights, street trees, vegetation, signage, overhead power lines, and one- to two-story buildings consistent with an urban setting. Distant views of the mountains may be partially and momentarily obstructed by the structures constructed for the park, such as the single-story restroom and maintenance storage building and field lights, for motorists traveling along Via Princessa. However, views from multiple vantage points would remain unobstructed especially considering that Via Princessa is elevated above the Project site by approximately 20 feet near the intersection with Weyerhauser Way and by approximately 90 feet near the intersection with Whites Canyon Road. Other components constructed for the park, such as the nature-themed playground or entrance plaza, would be low-lying and would complement the setting. Additionally, the proposed park would be landscaped with an assortment of drought-conscious trees and ground cover vegetation, and a landscaped buffer would be provided along the eastern border adjacent to Cordova Estates, which would further complement the natural environment.

Other Project components, including the regional stormwater infiltration facility; Honby Channel restoration and improvements; buried bank protection at the south bank of the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel; and Weyerhauser Way site access improvements would not obstruct scenic views from surrounding roadways or neighborhoods as they would include components that are either partially or fully underground. The triple-box culvert extension would be visible, as it would include an 8-foot-high concrete box. However, as the proposed box culvert would be an extension of the existing triple-box culvert, it would not substantially obstruct scenic views from surrounding roadways or neighborhoods. Additionally, the existing at-grade pedestrian crossing for the Via Princessa Metrolink Station would be undergrounded. Thus, the proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) California State Scenic Highway System Map, the closest officially designated state scenic highway to the Project site is part of the Angeles Crest Scenic Byway, State Highway 2, from near La Cañada-Flintridge north to the San Bernardino County line.[2] This state scenic highway is located more than 18 miles southeast of the Project site. Due to the substantial distance and the mountainous terrain between this scenic highway and the Project site, the proposed Project would not be visible from a state scenic highway. Interstate 5, approximately 6 miles west of the Project site, is designated as an eligible state scenic highway.[3] However, due to the intervening development between the Project site and Interstate 5, the proposed Project would not be visible to motorists on Interstate 5. Additionally, the Project site is not located near the Newhall Pass along Lake Hughes Road, Route 126, Bouquet Canyon Road, Sierra Highway, and State Route 14, which are identified as scenic routes in the Conservation and Open Space

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[2] California Department of Transportation, 2018 California State Scenic Highway System Map, accessed July 26, 2023, https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa.

[3] Ibid.

Element of the City's General Plan.[4] As such, the proposed Project would not substantially damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway and any impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

c) Would the project, 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?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is located in the Canyon Country community, an urbanized area (per CEQA Guidelines Section 15387) which has the largest population of any community in the valley. The Project site is bordered by the Santa Clara River to the north; Whites Canyon Road and undeveloped land to the west; Via Princessa, residential uses, the Friendly Valley Golf Course, and open space uses to the south; and the Cordova Estates mobile home community to the east. The Project site's zoning designation is Business Park (BP) with a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) overlay, designated to protect the Santa Clara River, for the parcels north of the railroad tracks. The Santa Clara River overlay covers 37,774 acres from its headwaters to the point at which it exits Los Angeles County.[5] The scenic quality of the area is moderate, as it includes natural features, such as the mountains, street trees, and vegetation, among features typically seen in urban settings, such as light poles, signage, overhead power lines, and buildings.

According to the Santa Clarita Unified Development Code Section 17.34.040, the BP zoning designation provides for mixed employment districts in areas accessible to transportation and visible from freeways and major arterials and is intended to promote the development of master-planned environments with a high quality of design and construction. Section 17.45.010, Public and Semi-Public Use Types, of the Santa Clarita Unified Development Code allows park uses of 50 acres or less in the BP zone. As such, the proposed park would not conflict with the zoning regulations applicable to the Project site at the time of Project implementation. Additionally, consistent with the goals and objectives of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the City's General Plan to preserve scenic features in the Santa Clarita Valley, the proposed park would be designed to be context-sensitive through minimal vertical features, landscaping, nature themes, which would complement the natural features of the Project site and surrounding area.

The proposed Project would be consistent with the SEA overlay for the parcels to the north of the railroad tracks as the purpose of the overlay, as described in the Santa Clarita Unified Development Code Section 17.38.080, is to minimize the intrusion and impacts of development in these areas with sufficient controls to adequately protect the resources. Because the parcels to the north of the railroad tracks would be developed with the proposed park and regional stormwater infiltration facility, which would involve a small restroom/office building with large expanses of pervious surfaces in the form of soccer fields and landscaped areas as well as

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[4] City of Santa Clarita, 2011, One Valley One Vision General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element, accessed July 26, 2023, https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClarita/html/SantaClaritaGP/SantaClaritaGP.html.

[5] Los Angeles County, Biological Resources Assessment of the Proposed Santa Clara River Significant Ecological Area, November 2000, accessed August 8, 2023, https://planning.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sea_2000-BRA-SantaClaraRiver.pdf.

restoration of the Honby Channel drainage to reestablish native vegetation and replace habitat, the scenic quality of the area would be preserved.

For the parcels south of the railroad tracks, the proposed Project would implement improvements to the existing uses at the Project site. The Honby Channel improvements would be low-lying and would result in visual improvements to the Project area as the channel would be restored by replacing the existing non-native, invasive plant species with climate- and region-appropriate native vegetation in the disturbed areas, along with more natural stabilization features. The zoning would not change, and the improvements to the parcels south of the railroad tracks would not conflict with any regulations governing scenic quality.

Based on the preceding analysis, the Project would not conflict with the applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Light impacts are typically associated with the use of artificial light during the evening and nighttime hours. Glare may be a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light from highly polished surfaces, such as window glass and reflective cladding materials, and may interfere with the safe operation of a motor vehicle on adjacent streets. Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with mid- to high-rise buildings with exterior façades largely or entirely comprising highly reflective glass or mirror-like materials. Nighttime glare is primarily associated with bright point source lighting that contrasts with existing low ambient light conditions.

The proposed Project would include various sources of new lighting, specifically for the proposed park. For the proposed multipurpose fields, a total of twelve light poles that would range between 60 to 70 feet in height would be installed surrounding the fields. The lighting would be used for limited evening activities with typical operating hours no later than 10 p.m., and would be designed such that the fixtures aim away from the perimeter of the Project site to avoid light spillage. Illuminance is typically measured in footcandles, which is illuminance on a one square foot surface from a uniform source of light.[6] Based on the photometric study prepared for the proposed Project, available as **Appendix A**, the proposed field lights would result in 0.0 foot-candles at the Project site boundaries, meaning that there would be no off-site light spillage across the railroad tracks, into the Santa Clara River channel, or onto properties within Cordova Estates closest to the Project site (i.e., the westernmost properties in Cordova Estates). For comparison, an urban parking lot typically has an average of 1.5 foot-candles for safety purposes.[7] Residents of Cordova Estates, as well as other nearby uses, such as those to the south of Via Princessa, would be able to see the light and light poles, but the light would not spill over onto their properties. Thus, there would be more ambient light in the area, but residents would not experience any change in lighting within their properties.

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[6] Lighting Design Lab, Footcandle Light Guide, accessed July 27, 2023, https://www.lightingdesignlab.com/sites/default/files/pdf/Footcandle_Lighting%20Guide_Rev.072013.pdf.

[7] Ibid.

Other new sources of lighting for the proposed park include lighting at the proposed pickleball courts. Due to the distance of the pickleball courts to the nearest light-sensitive receptors (i.e., the westernmost properties in Cordova Estates), the new sources of lighting would not result in any light spillover. Pickleball court lighting would include four pole-mounted lights, all of which would be 40 feet tall and would be located on the four corners of the rectangular pickleball court area. The proposed lighting within the park would also include LED fixtures that line the pathway as well as bollards with lights in the play and picnic areas. The fixtures along the eastern boundary of the proposed park would be the closest source of new light to Cordova Estates, the nearest sensitive receptor to the Project site. The fixtures would be set back approximately 50 feet from the nearest structure within Cordova Estates (the fixtures would be set back approximately 30-feet from the Project site boundary); would be a maximum of 10 feet tall; and would be aimed toward the pathway (as opposed to toward off-site areas), or blocked with landscaping such that the proposed pathway lights would result in 0.0-foot candles at the properties in Cordova Estates closest to the Project site (i.e., the westernmost properties in Cordova Estates). No impacts from the bollard lights at the play and picnic areas would occur as they would only include low-level lighting and are typically only 3 feet tall. Therefore, the proposed lighting for the park would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Impacts in this regard are less than significant.

Other sources of light for the proposed Project include light poles in the parking lot. However, this would not be a new source of light as the proposed Project would replace the existing light poles in the parking lot. As such, lighting would be similar to existing conditions. Impacts would be less than significant.

Therefore, the proposed Project would not create new sources of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views. Impacts would be less than significant.

Section II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

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

No Impact: The Project site is not located within an area of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Local Importance, or Farmland of Local Potential as identified by the California Department of Conservation's California Important Farmland

Finder.[8] The Project site is classified as Other Land, which is described by the Department of Conservation as vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres; and Urban and Built-Up Land, which is land occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to 1.5 acres or approximately six structures on a 10-acre parcel. The Other Land and Urban and Built-Up Land designations do not constitute Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Further, no agricultural uses or operations currently occur on-site or in the vicinity of the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to a non-agricultural use and no impact would occur.

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

No Impact. The Project site is designated in the Santa Clarita General Plan Land Use Element and on the official Zoning Map as BP (Business Park), which provides for mixed employment districts in areas accessible to transportation and visible from freeways and major arterials and is intended to promote the development of master-planned environments with a high quality of design and construction. The City of Santa Clarita does not have any Williamson Act contract land.[9] As such, the Project would not conflict with zoning for agricultural use or any Williamson Act contracts, and no impact would occur.

c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?

No Impact. Forestlands, as defined by the California Public Resources Code, include lands that can support 10 percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allow for the management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. The Project site does not contain any tree stands that are extensive enough to constitute a forest or timber resource. Further, forestland and timberland areas in Santa Clarita would be zoned as Open Space-National Forest (OS-NF). As the Project site is currently zoned BP, the Project site is not located within an area zoned for timberland production. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland or timberland, and no impact would occur.

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

No Impact. As discussed above, the Project site does not contain any tree stands that are extensive enough to constitute a forest or timber resource, and the Project site is not located

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[8] California Department of Conservation, California Important Farmland Finder, accessed July 26, 2023, https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/.

[9] California Department of Conservation, 2017, Division of Land Resources Protection, State of California Williamson Act Contract Land.

within an OS-NF zone. Therefore, the Project would not result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use, and no impact would occur.

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

No Impact. As discussed above, the City of Santa Clarita does not have any Williamson Act contract land, and there are no agricultural operations currently being conducted on the Project site. In addition, the Project site does not contain any tree stands that are extensive enough to constitute a forest or timber resource. Therefore, the Project would have no impact involving the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forestland to non-forest use, and no impact would occur.

Section III. Air Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

This analysis included in this section is based, in part, on the Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results, available as **Appendix B** of this Initial Study. This section evaluates the Project's potential impacts on air quality. This section estimates the air pollutant emissions generated by construction and operation of the Project and evaluates whether the Project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the air pollution reduction strategies set forth by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Specifically, these air pollution reduction strategies focus on criteria pollutants, which are pollutants for which national and State criteria and standards have been promulgated and which are most relevant to current air quality planning and regulation by SCAQMD.

Criteria Pollutants

Carbon Monoxide (CO). CO is an odorless, colorless toxic gas that is emitted by mobile and stationary sources as a result of incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons or other carbon-based fuels. In cities, automobile exhaust can cause as much as 95 percent of all CO emissions. CO replaces oxygen in the body's red blood cells. Individuals with a deficient blood supply to the heart, patients with diseases involving heart and blood vessels, fetuses, and patients with chronic hypoxemia (oxygen deficiency) as seen in high altitudes are most susceptible to the adverse

effects of CO exposure. People with heart disease are also more susceptible to developing chest pains when exposed to low levels of carbon monoxide.

Ozone. Ozone occurs in two layers of the atmosphere. The first layer, surrounding the earth's surface, is the troposphere. The troposphere extends approximately 10 miles above ground level, where it meets the second layer, the stratosphere. The stratosphere (the "good" ozone layer) extends upward from about 10 to 30 miles and protects life on Earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. "Bad" ozone is a photochemical pollutant, and needs volatile organic compounds (VOCs), nitrogen oxides (NO_X), and sunlight to form; therefore, VOCs and NO_X are ozone precursors. To reduce ozone concentrations, it is necessary to control the emissions of these ozone precursors. Significant ozone formation generally requires an adequate number of precursors in the atmosphere and a period of several hours in a stable atmosphere with strong sunlight. High ozone concentrations can form over large regions when emissions from motor vehicles and stationary sources are carried hundreds of miles from their origins.

While ozone in the upper atmosphere (stratosphere) protects the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation, high concentrations of ground-level ozone (in the troposphere) can adversely affect the human respiratory system and other tissues. Ozone is a strong irritant that can constrict the airways, forcing the respiratory system to work hard to deliver oxygen. Individuals exercising outdoors, children, and people with preexisting lung disease such as asthma and chronic pulmonary lung disease are considered to be the most susceptible to the health effects of ozone. Short-term exposure (lasting for a few hours) to ozone at elevated levels can result in aggravated respiratory diseases such as emphysema, bronchitis and asthma, shortness of breath, increased susceptibility to infections, inflammation of the lung tissue, and increased fatigue, as well as chest pain, dry throat, headache, and nausea.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2). NO_X are a family of highly reactive gases that are a primary precursor to the formation of ground-level ozone and react in the atmosphere to form acid rain. NO_2 (often used interchangeably with NO_X) is a reddish-brown gas that can cause breathing difficulties at elevated levels. Peak readings of NO_2 occur in areas that have a high concentration of combustion sources (e.g., motor vehicle engines, power plants, refineries, and other industrial operations). NO_2 can irritate and damage the lungs and lower resistance to respiratory infections such as influenza. The health effects of short-term exposure are still unclear. However, continued or frequent exposure to NO_2 concentrations that are typically much higher than those normally found in the ambient air may increase acute respiratory illnesses in children and increase the incidence of chronic bronchitis and lung irritation. Chronic exposure to NO_2 may aggravate eyes and mucus membranes and cause pulmonary dysfunction.

Coarse Particulate Matter (PM_{10}). PM_{10} refers to suspended particulate matter, which is smaller than 10 microns or ten one-millionths of a meter. PM_{10} arises from sources such as road dust, diesel soot, combustion products, construction operations, and dust storms. PM_{10} scatters light and significantly reduces visibility. In addition, these particulates penetrate lungs and can potentially damage the respiratory tract. On June 19, 2003, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted amendments to the Statewide 24-hour particulate matter standards based upon requirements set forth in the Children's Environmental Health Protection Act (Senate Bill [SB] 25).

Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$). Due to increasing concerns over health impacts related to $PM_{2.5}$, both state and federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards have been created. Particulate matter impacts primarily affect infants, children, the elderly, and those with preexisting cardiopulmonary disease. In 1997,

the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced new $PM_{2.5}$ standards. Industry groups challenged the new standard in court and the implementation of the standard was blocked. However, upon appeal by the EPA, the United States Supreme Court reversed this decision and upheld the EPA's new standards. On January 5, 2005, the EPA published a Final Rule in the Federal Register that designates the South Coast Air Basin (Basin), where the project is located, as a nonattainment area for federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards. On June 20, 2002, CARB adopted amendments for statewide annual ambient particulate matter air quality standards. These standards were revised and established due to increasing concerns by CARB that previous standards were inadequate, as almost everyone in California is exposed to levels at or above the current state standards during some parts of the year, and the statewide potential for significant health impacts associated with particulate matter exposure was determined to be large and wide-ranging.

Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2). SO_2 is a colorless, irritating gas with a rotten egg smell; it is formed primarily by the combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels. SO_2 is often used interchangeably with sulfur oxides (SO_X). Exposure of a few minutes to low levels of SO_2 can result in airway constriction in some asthmatics.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC). VOCs are hydrocarbon compounds (any compound containing various combinations of hydrogen and carbon atoms) that exist in the ambient air. VOCs contribute to the formation of smog through atmospheric photochemical reactions and may be toxic. Compounds of carbon (also known as organic compounds) have different levels of reactivity; that is, they do not react at the same speed or do not form ozone to the same extent when exposed to photochemical processes. VOCs often have an odor, and some examples include gasoline, alcohol, and the solvents used in paints. Exceptions to the VOC designation include CO, carbon dioxide (CO_2), carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate. The SCAQMD uses the terms VOC and ROG interchangeably (see below).

Reactive Organic Gases (ROG). Similar to VOC, ROG are also precursors in forming ozone and consist of compounds containing methane, ethane, propane, butane, and longer chain hydrocarbons, which are typically the result of some type of combustion/decomposition process. Smog is formed when ROG and NO_X react in the presence of sunlight.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is located in the Basin, which is governed by the SCAQMD. To reduce emissions, the SCAQMD adopted the *2022 Air Quality Management Plan* (2022 AQMP) which establishes a program of rules and regulations directed at reducing air pollutant emissions and achieving state and federal air quality standards. The AQMP is a regional and multi-agency effort including the SCAQMD, CARB, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the EPA.

The 2022 AQMP pollutant control strategies are based on the latest scientific and technical information and planning assumptions, including the 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2020-2045 RTP/SCS), updated emission inventory methodologies for various source categories, and SCAG's latest growth forecasts. SCAG's latest growth forecasts were defined in consultation with local governments and with reference to local general plans. The SCAQMD considers projects that are consistent with the AQMP, which is

intended to bring the Basin into attainment for all criteria pollutants, to also have less-than-significant cumulative impacts. Criteria for determining consistency with the AQMP are defined by the following indicators:

Criterion 1: The proposed project will not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations, or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.

With respect to the first criterion, SCAQMD methodologies require that an air quality analysis for a project include forecasts of project emissions in relation to contributing to air quality violations and delay of attainment.

Criterion 1, Part a) Would the project result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations?

Since the consistency criteria identified under the first criterion pertains to pollutant concentrations rather than to total regional emissions, an analysis of the Project's pollutant emissions relative to localized pollutant concentrations is used as the basis for evaluating Project consistency. As discussed in Section III(b) and Section III(c) below, localized concentrations of CO, NO_2, and particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) would be less than significant during Project construction and operation. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations. Due to the role that ROGs play in ozone formation, it is classified as a precursor pollutant, and only a regional emissions threshold has been established. It is noted that the emission of ROGs as a result of the proposed Project would not exceed the regional emissions threshold; refer to Section III(b) and Section III(c) below. As such, the Project would not cause or contribute to localized air quality violations or delay the attainment of air quality standard or interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.

Criterion 1, Part b) Would the project cause or contribute to new air quality violations?

As discussed below in Responses 4.3 (b), (c), and (d), the proposed Project would result in emissions that would be below the SCAQMD's thresholds for regional and localized emissions. Therefore, the proposed Project would not have the potential to cause or affect a violation of the ambient air quality standards.

Criterion 1, Part c) Would the project delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP?

The proposed Project would result in less-than-significant impacts with regard to localized concentrations during Project construction and operations. As such, the proposed Project would not delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or 2022 AQMP emissions reductions.

Criterion 2: The proposed project will not exceed the assumptions utilized in preparing the AQMP.

With respect to the second criterion for determining consistency with SCAQMD and SCAG air quality policies, it is important to recognize that air quality planning within the Basin focuses on attainment of ambient air quality standards at the earliest feasible date. Projections for achieving

air quality goals are based on assumptions regarding population, housing, and growth trends. Thus, the SCAQMD's second criterion for determining project consistency focuses on whether a proposed project exceeds the assumptions utilized in preparing the forecasts presented in the 2022 AQMP. Determining whether a project exceeds the assumptions reflected in the 2022 AQMP involves the evaluation of the three criteria outlined below. The following discussion analyzes these criteria.

Criterion 2, Part a) Would the project be consistent with the population, housing, and employment growth projections utilized in the preparation of the AQMP?

Growth projections included in the 2022 AQMP form the basis for the projections of air pollutant emissions and are based on General Plan land use designations and SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS demographics forecasts. The population, housing, and employment forecasts in the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS are based on local general plans as well as input from local governments, such as the City. The SCAQMD has incorporated these same demographic growth forecasts for various socioeconomic categories (e.g., population, housing, employment) into the 2022 AQMP.

The Project site is designated and zoned as Business Park (BP) by the City's General Plan and Zoning Code, which provides areas for clean industry, offices related to industrial usage, research and development, limited retail commercial, the provision of employee recreation opportunities, and warehouse uses. The Project consists of several components, including the construction and operation of Via Princessa Park and associated park facilities, construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility, Honby Channel restoration and improvements, triple-box culvert extension, buried bank protection at the south bank of the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel, Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA)/Metrolink grade-separated undercrossing (replacing the existing at-grade pedestrian crossing), parking lot improvements, and Weyerhauser Way site access improvements. The construction of a park with its associated recreational facilities would encourage the provision of employee recreation opportunities and provide services for the local community. The construction of the proposed infiltration basin would help the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency meet its goals of sustainable basin management, in accordance with its 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. As such, the proposed infiltration facility, Honby Channel restoration and improvements, triple-box culvert extension, and the buried bank protection at the south bank of the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel would help attain the goals listed in the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. The construction of the SCRRA/Metrolink grade-separated undercrossing and Weyerhauser Way site access improvements would result in more pedestrian and vehicular access to the park, parking facility, and the Via Princessa Metrolink Station. Lastly, the existing parking facility was originally constructed with minimal amenities under emergency conditions; the Project would result in improvements to the parking facility. Overall, the Project would be consistent with the site's current land use designation and zoning and would not require a General Plan Amendment or Zone Change. In addition, the proposed Project does not include uses that have the potential to induce substantial unplanned population, housing, or employment growth exceeding existing local and/or regional conditions and projections. Therefore, the proposed Project would be consistent with the types, intensity, and patterns of land use envisioned for the site vicinity in the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS and 2022 AQMP.

Criterion 2, Part b) Would the project implement all feasible air quality mitigation measures?

The proposed Project would not require mitigation and would result in less-than-significant air quality impacts; refer to Responses 4.3 (b), (c), and (d). In addition, the Project would comply with all applicable SCAQMD rules and regulations, including Rule 403, which requires excessive fugitive dust emissions to be controlled by regular watering or other dust prevention measures, and Rule 1113, which regulates the VOC content of paint. As such, the proposed Project meets this AQMP consistency criterion.

Criterion 2, Part c) Would the project be consistent with the land use planning strategies set forth in the AQMP?

Land use planning strategies set forth in the 2022 AQMP are primarily based on the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. The Project site is currently served by an existing Santa Clarita Transit bus stop. The Via Princessa Metrolink Station is also located on the Project site. Additionally, the Project would expand the existing parking facility by installing eight electric vehicle (EV) capable stalls, two of which would have EV chargers installed. Thus, the Project would promote alternative transportation options and would not conflict with land use planning strategies set forth in the 2022 AQMP. As such the proposed Project would achieve this 2022 AQMP consistency criterion.

In conclusion, the determination of 2022 AQMP consistency is primarily concerned with the long-term influence of a project on air quality in the Basin. The proposed Project would not result in a long-term impact on the region's ability to meet state and federal air quality standards. The proposed Project's long-term influence on air quality in the Basin would also be consistent with the SCAQMD's and SCAG's goals and policies and therefore is considered consistent with the 2022 AQMP.

b) Would the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

c) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Response to b) and c):

Short-Term Construction

The Project involves construction activities associated with grading, building construction, paving, linear construction (underpass construction), and architectural coating. The Project would be constructed in a single phase, with construction activities lasting approximately 29 months. Exhaust emission factors for typical diesel-powered heavy equipment are based on the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) version 2022.1 program defaults. Variables factored into estimating the total construction emissions include the level of activity, length of construction period, number of pieces and types of equipment in use, site characteristics, weather conditions, number of construction personnel, and the amount of materials to be transported on- or off-site. The analysis of daily construction emissions has been prepared utilizing CalEEMod. Refer to

Appendix B for the CalEEMod outputs and results. **Table 1**, *Short-Term Construction Emissions*, presents the anticipated daily short-term construction emissions.

Table 1. Short-Term Construction Emissions

Construction Related Emissions	Pollutant (pounds/day)[1,2]					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Year 1	6.79	67.6	61.9	0.20	11.2	4.83
Year 2	1.41	9.70	14.0	0.03	0.63	0.43
Year 3	1.62	12.4	18.4	0.04	1.03	0.54
Year 4	1.57	11.8	17.9	0.04	0.99	0.50
Maximum Daily Emissions	6.79	67.6	61.9	0.20	11.2	4.83
SCAQMD Thresholds	75	100	550	150	150	55
Is Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes:

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod, version 2022.1. Higher emissions between summer and winter are presented as a conservative analysis.
2. The reduction/credits for construction emissions are based on adjustments to CalEEMod and are required by the SCAQMD Rules. The adjustments applied in CalEEMod include the following: properly maintain mobile and other construction equipment; replace the ground cover in disturbed areas quickly; water exposed surfaces three times daily; cover stockpiles with tarps; and limit speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.

Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

Fugitive Dust Emissions

Construction activities are a source of fugitive dust emissions that may have a substantial, temporary impact on local air quality. In addition, fugitive dust may be a nuisance to those living and working in the Project area. Fugitive dust emissions are associated with land clearing, ground excavation, cut-and-fill, and truck travel on unpaved roadways (including demolition as well as construction activities). Fugitive dust emissions vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity, specific operations, and weather conditions. Fugitive dust from construction is expected to be short-term and would cease upon Project completion. It should be noted that most of this material is inert silicates, rather than the complex organic particulates released from combustion sources, which are more harmful to health.

Dust (larger than 10 microns) generated by such activities usually becomes more of a local nuisance than a serious health problem. Of particular health concern is the amount of PM_{10} (particulate matter smaller than 10 microns) generated as a part of fugitive dust emissions. PM_{10} poses a serious health hazard alone or in combination with other pollutants. $PM_{2.5}$ is mostly produced by mechanical processes. These include automobile tire wear, industrial processes such as cutting and grinding, resuspension of particles from the ground or road surface by wind, and human activities such as construction or agriculture. $PM_{2.5}$ is mostly derived from combustion sources, such as automobiles, trucks, and other vehicle exhaust, as well as from stationary sources. These particles are either directly emitted or are formed in the atmosphere from the combustion of gases such as NO_X and SO_X combining with ammonia. $PM_{2.5}$ components from material in the earth's crust, such as dust, are also present, with the amount varying in different locations.

The Project would implement all required dust control techniques per SCAQMD Rule 403 (i.e., at least three times of watering exposed surfaces per day) to reduce PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations. Adherence to SCAQMD Rule 403 would greatly reduce PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations. It should be noted that these estimated reductions were applied in CalEEMod. As depicted in **Table 1**, total PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions per year would not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds during construction upon implementation of the SCAQMD Rules. Thus, construction-related air quality impacts would be less than significant.

Construction Equipment and Worker Vehicle Exhaust

Exhaust emissions (e.g., NO_x and CO) from construction activities include emissions associated with the transport of machinery and supplies to and from the site, emissions produced on-site as the equipment is used, and emissions from trucks transporting materials to/from the site. The Project would require the usage of a temporary soil-cement batch plant to create soil cement to be used for buried bank stabilization along the south bank of the Santa Clara River and east and west bank of the Honby River. The temporary soil-cement batch plant would be stationary and would include conveyors to transport soil from a hopper which would be filled by a loader, a transport system to deliver the portland cement from storage hoppers to be mixed with soil and water, and a rotating drum to blend the materials together. This system would use electric motors powered by a diesel-powered generator. Additionally, the Project would require 93 hauling trips to deliver the portland cement on-site. This Project-specific information regarding the soil-cement bath plant has been accounted for in CalEEMod.

As presented in **Table 1**, construction equipment and worker vehicle exhaust emissions would be below the established SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, air quality impacts from equipment and vehicle exhaust emission would be less than significant.

ROG Emissions

In addition to gaseous and particulate emissions, the application of asphalt and surface coatings creates ROG emissions, which are ozone precursors. In accordance with the methodology prescribed by the SCAQMD, ROG emissions associated with paving and architectural coatings have been quantified with the CalEEMod model. As required by SCAQMD Rule 1113, all architectural coatings used for the proposed Project would comply with specifications on painting practices as well as regulation on the ROG content of paint.[10] ROG emissions associated with the proposed Project would be below the established SCAQMD threshold; refer to **Table 1**. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Total Daily Construction Emissions

In accordance with the SCAQMD Guidelines, CalEEMod was utilized to model construction emissions for ROG, NO_X, CO, SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. As indicated in **Table 1**, criteria pollutant emissions during the construction of the proposed Project would not exceed the SCAQMD significance thresholds. Thus, total construction-related air emissions would be less than significant.

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[10] South Coast Air Quality Management District, *Rule 1113 Architectural Coatings*, accessed July 20, 2023, http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xi/r1113.pdf.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos

Asbestos is a term used for several types of naturally occurring fibrous minerals that are a human health hazard when airborne. The most common type of asbestos is chrysotile, but other types such as tremolite and actinolite are also found in California. Asbestos is classified as a known human carcinogen by state, federal, and international agencies and was identified as a toxic air contaminant by CARB in 1986. Asbestos can be released from serpentinite and ultramafic rocks when the rock is broken or crushed, such as when vehicular traffic travels on unpaved roads, during grading for development projects, and at quarry operations. According to the Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, *A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California – Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos Report*, serpentinite and ultramafic rocks are not known to occur within the Project area.[11] Thus, there would be no impact in this regard.

Long-Term (Operational) Emissions

Long-term operational air quality impacts consist of mobile source emissions generated from Project-related traffic and emissions from stationary area and energy sources. Emissions associated with each source are detailed in **Table 2**, *Long-Term Operational Air Emissions*, and discussed below.

Mobile Source Emissions

Mobile sources are emissions from motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions. Depending upon the pollutant being discussed, the potential air quality impact may be of either regional or local concern. For example, ROG, NO_X, SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ are all pollutants of regional concern (NO_X and ROG react with sunlight to form ozone [photochemical smog], and wind currents readily transport SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$); however, CO tends to be a localized pollutant, dispersing rapidly at the source. The mobile source emissions were calculated as a conservative estimate generated from the CalEEMod 2022.1 default. Based on the *Via Princessa Park Project Traffic Study Scoping Memorandum* prepared by Michael Baker International (dated June 15, 2023), the Project would generate approximately 279 average daily trips. **Table 2** presents the anticipated mobile source emissions; as shown, emissions generated by vehicle traffic associated with the Project would not exceed established SCAQMD thresholds. Impacts from mobile source emissions would be less than significant.

Area Source Emissions

Area source emissions include those generated by periodic use of architectural coatings, consumer products, and landscape maintenance equipment associated with maintaining the Project facilities during operations. As shown in **Table 2**, area source emissions during both summer and winter (worst-case scenarios for air quality) would not exceed established SCAQMD thresholds. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

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[11] California Department of Conservation, A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California – Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos Report, accessed July 20, 2023, https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5126473.pdf.

Energy Source Emissions

Energy source emissions would be generated as a result of electricity usage associated with the proposed Project. The primary use of electricity by the Project would be for ventilation, lighting, appliances, landscaping equipment, and electronics. Criteria air pollutant emissions from electricity use were not quantified in CalEEMod since criteria pollutants emissions occur at the site of the power plant, which is off-site. The Project would not consume any natural gas as the development would not utilize cooking appliances or require space heating. As shown in **Table 2**, the proposed Project would not generate energy source emissions. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Table 2. Long-Term Operational Emissions

Emissions Source	Pollutant (lbs/day)[1]					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_X	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Proposed Project Summer Emissions						
Area Source Emissions	0.64	0.01	1.08	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Energy Source Emissions	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mobile Source Emissions[2]	0.89	0.72	8.82	0.02	2.20	0.57
Total Emissions[3]	1.54	0.73	9.90	0.02	2.20	0.57
SCAQMD Threshold	55	55	550	150	150	55
Is Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No
Proposed Project Winter Emissions						
Area Source Emissions	0.47	-	-	-	-	-
Energy Source Emissions	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mobile Source Emissions[2]	0.88	0.79	8.02	0.02	2.20	0.57
Total Emissions[3]	1.35	0.79	8.02	0.02	2.20	0.57
SCAQMD Threshold	55	55	550	150	150	55
Is Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes:

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod, version 2022.1.
2. Mobile emissions are based on the Via Princessa Park Project Traffic Study Scoping Memorandum; refer to **Appendix I**.
3. The numbers may be slightly off due to rounding.

Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

Air Quality Health Impacts

Adverse health effects induced by criteria pollutant emissions are highly dependent on a multitude of interconnected variables (e.g., cumulative concentrations, local meteorology and atmospheric conditions, and the number and character of exposed individuals [e.g., age, gender]). In particular, ozone precursors VOCs and NO_x affect air quality on a regional scale. Health effects related to ozone are therefore the product of emissions generated by numerous sources throughout a region. Existing models have limited sensitivity to small changes in criteria pollutant

concentrations, and, as noted in the Brief of Amicus Curiae by the SCAQMD,[12] the SCAQMD acknowledged it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to quantify health impacts of criteria pollutants for various reasons, including modeling limitations as well as where in the atmosphere air pollutants interact and form. Further, as noted in the Brief of Amicus Curiae by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD),[13] the SJVAPCD has acknowledged that currently available modeling tools are not equipped to provide a meaningful analysis of the correlation between an individual development project's air emissions and specific human health impacts.

The SCAQMD acknowledges that health effects quantification from ozone, as an example, is correlated with the increases in the ambient level of ozone in the air (concentration) that an individual person breathes. The SCAQMD's Brief of Amicus Curiae states that it would take a large amount of additional emissions to cause a modeled increase in ambient ozone levels over the entire region. The SCAQMD states that based on its own modeling in the 2012 AQMP, a reduction of 432 tons (864,000 pounds) per day of NO_X and a reduction of 187 tons (374,000 pounds) per day of VOCs would reduce ozone levels at the highest monitored site by only nine parts per billion. As such, the SCAQMD concludes that it is not currently possible to accurately quantify ozone-related health impacts caused by NO_X or VOC emissions from relatively small projects (defined as projects with regional scope) due to photochemistry and regional model limitations. As such, for the purpose of this analysis, since the Project would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds for construction and operational air emissions, the Project would be assumed to have a less-than-significant impact on air quality health impacts as well.

Cumulative Conclusion

As indicated in **Table 1** and **Table 2**, the proposed Project would not result in significant short- or long-term air quality impacts, as emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD adopted construction or operational thresholds. Additionally, adherence to SCAQMD rules and regulations would alleviate potential impacts related to cumulative conditions on a project-by-project basis. Emission reduction technology, strategies, and plans are constantly being developed. As a result, the proposed Project would not contribute a cumulatively considerable net increase of any nonattainment criteria pollutant. Therefore, the Project's incremental operational impacts would be **less than cumulatively considerable** and impacts would be **less than significant**.

d) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less Than Significant Impact. Sensitive receptors are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples of these sensitive receptors are residences, schools, hospitals, and daycare centers. CARB has identified the following groups

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[12] South Coast Air Quality Management District, Application of the South Coast Air Quality Management District for Leave to File Brief of Amicus Curiae in Support of Neither Party and Brief of Amicus Curiae. In the Supreme Court of California. Sierra Club, Revive the San Joaquin, and League of Women Voters of Fresno v. County of Fresno, 2014.

[13] San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Application for Leave to File Brief of Amicus Curiae Brief of San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District in Support of Defendant and Respondent, County of Fresno and Real Party In Interest and Respondent, Friant Ranch, L.P. In the Supreme Court of California. Sierra Club, Revive the San Joaquin, and League of Women Voters of Fresno v. County of Fresno, 2014.

of individuals as the most likely to be affected by air pollution: the elderly over 65, children under 14, athletes, and persons with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis.

The nearest sensitive receptors are mobile homes (Cordova Estates) adjacent to the east of the Project site. In order to identify impacts to sensitive receptors, the SCAQMD recommends addressing localized significance thresholds (LSTs) for construction and operations impacts (area sources only). The CO hotspot analysis, following the LST analysis, addresses localized mobile source impacts.

Localized Significance Thresholds

LSTs were developed in response to SCAQMD Governing Boards' Environmental Justice Enhancement Initiative (I-4). The SCAQMD provided the *Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology* (dated June 2003 [revised 2008]) for guidance. The LST methodology assists lead agencies in analyzing localized air quality impacts. The SCAQMD provides the LST screening lookup tables for projects that disturb/grade one, two, or five acres per day emitting CO, NO_X, $PM_{2.5}$, or PM_{10}. The LST methodology and associated mass rates are not designed to evaluate localized impacts from mobile sources traveling over the roadways. For LST analysis purposes, the SCAQMD is divided into 38 Source Receptor Areas (SRAs), each of which contains specific localized air quality emission thresholds for CO, NO_X, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10} to determine local air quality impacts. The Project is located within SRA 13 (Santa Clarita Valley).

Construction

The SCAQMD guidance on applying CalEEMod to LSTs specifies the number of acres a particular piece of equipment would likely disturb per day.[14] The SCAQMD provides LST screening thresholds for one-, two, and five-acre site disturbance areas; the SCAQMD does not provide LST screening thresholds for projects over five acres. The Project would actively disturb approximately three acres per day during the grading phase of construction. Therefore, the LST screening thresholds for two acres were used for the construction LST analysis. Further, the nearest sensitive receptors are adjacent to the Project site. LST screening thresholds are provided for distances to sensitive receptors of 25, 50, 100, 200, and 500 meters. Therefore, the LST screening thresholds for 25 meters were used, per SCAQMD guidance.

Table 3, *Localized Significance of Construction Emissions*, shows the localized construction-related emissions. It is noted that the localized emissions presented in **Table 3** are less than those in **Table 1** because localized emissions include only on-site emissions (i.e., from construction equipment and fugitive dust) and do not include off-site emissions (i.e., from the worker, vendor, and hauling trips). As seen in **Table 3**, emissions would not exceed the LST screening thresholds for SRA 13 (Santa Clarita Valley). Construction LST impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

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[14] The number of acres represent the total acres traversed by grading equipment. To properly grade a piece of land, multiple passes with equipment may be required. The disturbance acreage is based on the equipment list and days of the grading phase according to the anticipated maximum number of acres that a given piece of equipment can pass over in an 8-hour workday.

Operations

According to SCAQMD LST methodology, LSTs would apply to the operational phase of a proposed project if the project includes stationary sources or attracts mobile sources that may spend extended periods queuing and idling at the site (e.g., warehouse or transfer facilities). The proposed Project does not include such uses. Thus, no long-term LST analysis is necessary. Operational LST impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3. Localized Significance of Construction Emissions

Maximum Emissions	Pollutant (pounds/day)[1]			
	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Maximum Daily Emissions[2,3]	34.7	35.4	5.27	2.81
LST Screening Threshold[4]	163	877	6	4
Thresholds Exceeded?	No	No	No	No

Note:

1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod, version 2022.1.
2. Highest levels of NOx, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions is during the year 1 (2025) grading phase.
3. The reduction/credits for construction emissions are based on adjustments to CalEEMod and are required by the SCAQMD Rules. The adjustments applied in CalEEMod include the following: properly maintain mobile and other construction equipment; replace the ground cover in disturbed areas quickly; water exposed surfaces three times daily; cover stockpiles with tarps; and limit speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.
4. The LST Screening Threshold was determined using Appendix C of the SCAQMD *Final Localized Significant Threshold Methodology* guidance document for pollutants NO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. The LST Screening Threshold was based on the anticipated daily acreage disturbance for construction (the thresholds for two acres were used), the LST screening thresholds of 25 meters based on the distance to sensitive receptors, and the source receptor area (Santa Clarita Valley).

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

CO emissions are a function of vehicle idling time, meteorological conditions, and traffic flow. Under certain extreme meteorological conditions, CO concentrations near a congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthful levels (e.g., adversely affecting residents, school children, hospital patients, and the elderly).

The Basin is designated as an attainment/maintenance area for the federal CO standards and an attainment area under state standards. There has been a decline in CO emissions even though vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on U.S. urban and rural roads have increased; estimated anthropogenic CO emissions have decreased 68 percent between 1990 and 2014. In 2014, mobile sources accounted for 82 percent of the nation's total anthropogenic CO emissions.[15] Three major control programs have contributed to the reduced per-vehicle CO emissions: exhaust standards, cleaner burning fuels, and motor vehicle inspection/maintenance programs.

According to the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, a potential CO hotspot may occur at any location where the background CO concentration already exceeds 9.0 parts per million (ppm), which is the 8-hour California ambient air quality standard. The closest monitoring station to the Project site that monitors CO concentration is Santa Clarita-Placerita station, which is located approximately 6.0 miles west of the Project site. The maximum CO concentration at Santa Clarita-

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[15] US Environmental Protection Agency, *Carbon Monoxide Emissions*, accessed July 20, 2023, https://cfpub.epa.gov/roe/indicator_pdf.cfm?i=10.

Placerita station was measured at 1.028 ppm in 2023.[16] Given that the background CO concentration does not currently exceed 9.0 ppm, a CO hotspot would not occur at the Project site. Therefore, CO hotspot impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

e) Would the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The proposed Project does not include any uses identified by the SCAQMD as being associated with odors.

Construction activities associated with the Project may generate detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust and architectural coatings. However, construction-related odors would be short term in nature and cease upon Project completion. In addition, the Project would be required to comply with the California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485, which would minimize the idling time of construction equipment either by requiring equipment to be shut off when not in use or limiting idling time to no more than five minutes. Compliance with these existing regulations would further reduce the detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust. The Project would also be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 1113, which would minimize odor impacts from ROG emissions during architectural coating. Any odor impacts to existing adjacent land uses would be short term and negligible. As such, the Project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

[16] California Air Resources Board, *Air Quality and Meteorological Information*, https://www.arb.ca.gov/aqmis2/aqdselect.php?tab=specialrpt, accessed July 20, 2023.

Section IV. Biological Resources

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

Discussion

This analysis included in this section is based on the Via Princessa Park Project Biological Technical Report, prepared by HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. on October 30, 2023, and available as **Appendix C** of this Initial Study.

The Biological Technical Report included a review of regional planning documents, Google Earth aerials, the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Web Soil Survey, and sensitive species database records, including the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) on-line Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) critical habitat maps for endangered and threatened species. A nine-quadrangle database search was conducted on the CNDDB and CNPS's databases, which included the following quadrangles: Agua Dulce, Green Valley, Mint Canyon, Newhall, Oat Mountain, San Fernando, Sleepy Valley, Sunland, and Warm Springs Mountain.

Various field surveys were conducted during November 2022 and between the period of April 2023 to July 2023 to document the existing condition of the Project site and surrounding area. A general biological survey and habitat assessment were conducted on the Project site to map existing vegetation communities and to determine habitat suitability for sensitive plant and animal species. A list of plant and animal species observed and/or detected during the field surveys are provided in **Appendix C**. Noted animal species were identified by direct observation, vocalizations, or the observance of scat, tracks, or other signs. In addition, protocol surveys for rare plant species, burrowing owl, and least bell's vireo, and focused surveys for Crotch's bumble bee were conducted. A jurisdictional delineation (provided in **Appendix C)** was conducted to determine the existing jurisdictional limits regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and CDFW. A tree survey (provided in **Appendix C)** was also performed in December 2022 to document the presence of oak trees protected under the City's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance.

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

Sensitive Plant Species

Rare plant species are uncommon or limited in that they: (1) are only found in the Santa Clarita region; (2) are a local representative of a species or association of species not otherwise found in the region; or (3) are severely depleted within their ranges or within the region. Rare plant species include those species listed by CNPS with a California Rare Plant Rank of 1, 2, or 3, or federally and state listed endangered and threatened species. Species with a rank of 4 may be considered rare if a population is locally uncommon, at the periphery of the species' range, sustained heavy losses, shows unusual morphology, or occurs on unusual substrates.

A total of 22 rare plant species were recorded within the nine-quadrangle database search conducted on the CNDDB and CNPS databases. Of the 22 rare plant species recorded within the vicinity of the Project site, 19 species were considered to have no potential to occur on the Project site based on elevation range and/or lack of suitable habitat on the Project site (refer to Section 2.5, Appendix C). The remaining three species were considered to have a potential to occur on the Project site, primarily based on the presence of riparian and alluvial scrub and sandy, gravely soils. These species include Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*), slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*), and white rabbit-tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum*). However, none of these species (Nevin's barberry, slender-horned spineflower, and white rabbit-

tobacco) were observed during the protocol rare plant surveys. Therefore, rare plant species are presumed to be absent from the Project site. As such, the Project would not result in substantial adverse effects to rare plant species, and impacts would be less than significant.

Sensitive Animal Species

Sensitive animal species include federally and state listed endangered and threatened species, candidate species for listing by USFWS or CDFW, and/or are species of special concern (SSC) pursuant to CDFW. A total of 39 sensitive animal species were recorded within the nine-quadrangle database search conducted on CNDDB. Of the 39 sensitive animal species recorded within the vicinity of the Project site, 25 species were considered to have no potential to occur on the Project site due to lack of suitable habitat and/or the inability to disperse into the Project site (refer to Section 2.5, Appendix C). Although unarmored stickleback is known to occur in the Santa Clara River, the portion of the Santa Clara River that occurs along the northern Project boundary is a dry gap no longer supports this species. The sensitive animal species with a low or moderate potential to occur are discussed below, along with the species presumed to be absent as a result of negative protocol surveys.

Species with Low Potential to Occur

Six species were determined to have a low potential to occur on the Project site based on the presence of low-quality habitat, limited acreage of habitat, and lack of recent observations within the immediate vicinity of the Project site. These species include California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), southern grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus ramona*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*; foraging only), western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*; foraging only), and western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*). California glossy snake, pallid bat, southern grasshopper mouse, western mastiff bat, and western yellow bat are State SSC. Swainson's hawk is a State threatened species.

There is some patchy, potentially suitable habitat present (i.e., friable soils within coastal scrub and chaparral habitats) for the California glossy snake and southern grasshopper mouse. However, the species records within the vicinity of the Project site are from between the 1930s and 1950s, indicating that regionally significant populations of these species are not present. Although the Project site supports potentially suitable foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk, this species is not known to nest in southern California, with the exception of populations in the Antelope Valley in the Mojave Desert. The Western mastiff bat may use the Project site for foraging habitat; however, there is no suitable roosting habitat (i.e., vertical cliff faces) on the Project site. A loss of potentially suitable foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk and western mastiff bat within the Project site would not result in a significant impact to these species since suitable foraging habitat would remain throughout the Santa Clara River adjacent to and within the vicinity of the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not result in substantial adverse effects to California glossy snake, southern grasshopper mouse, Swainson's hawk, or western mastiff bat. Impacts would be less than significant for these species.

The western yellow bat roosts in trees, particularly in palms and cottonwoods, which occur within the Honby Channel and Drainage A. Pallid bats commonly roost in bridges, buildings, tree bark, and tree cavities. The culvert crossing over Honby Channel within the central-southern portion of the Project site and the White Canyon Road bridge crossing over the Santa Clara River adjacent to the western Project site boundary support potentially suitable roosting habitat for pallid bats. In addition, the Project site provides potentially suitable foraging habitat for these bat species. In

order to reduce potentially significant impacts to the western yellow bat and pallid bat, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 is included, which requires pre-construction surveys to be conducted if Project construction activities occur during the maternity roosting season, and requires additional avoidance and minimization measures if maternity roosts are identified. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1 would reduce potential impacts to the western yellow bat and pallid bat to a less than significant level.

Upon completion of construction activities, the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel would be revegetated, as described in Project Design Feature-1 (PDF-1) below. The loss of potentially suitable foraging habitat within the Project site would not result in significant adverse effects to the western yellow bat and pallid bat because suitable foraging habitat is located throughout the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact on the western yellow bat and pallid bat with mitigation incorporated.

Species with Moderate Potential to Occur

Five species were determined to have a moderate potential to occur on the Project site based on presence of moderate-quality habitat or recent observations within the immediate vicinity, which include California legless lizard (*Anniella stebbinsi*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), and white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*). The California legless lizard, coast horned lizard, coastal whiptail, and loggerhead shrike are State SSC. The white-tailed kite is a State fully protected species.

The reptile species are highly mobile, and if present during Project activities, would be expected to disperse to areas outside of the Project footprint, such as the Santa Clara River. The displacement or loss of a few individuals, if present, would not be expected to reduce regional population numbers; therefore, no mitigation is warranted for these species.

However, the California legless lizard is a burrowing species, and would not easily disperse from the Project site during construction activities. In order to reduce potentially significant impacts to the California legless lizard, Mitigation Measure BIO-2 is included, which requires pre-construction surveys; if detected during the survey, a qualified biologist with an appropriate Scientific Collecting Permit would relocate individuals to suitable habitat outside of the Project footprint. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-2 would reduce potential impacts to the California legless lizard to a less than significant level.

The loggerhead shrike and white-tailed kite are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) regulations; refer to Threshold IV(d) below. As discussed therein, given that suitable habitat would remain throughout the Santa Clara River adjacent to and within the vicinity of the Project site for the loggerhead shrike and white-tailed kite, the Project's resulting loss of potentially suitable nesting and foraging habitat for these species would result in less than significant impacts. In addition, required compliance with the MBTA would prevent the take of any individual of these bird species.

Species Presumed to be Absent

Suitable habitat was identified during surveys for the Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), and least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*). Crotch's bumble bee is a State candidate endangered species, burrowing owls are a State species of concern,

and the least Bell's vireo is a federal and State endangered species. The least Bell's vireo was not detected during the 2023 focused surveys; therefore, least Bell's vireo is presumed absent from the Project site and the Project would result in less than significant impacts to the least Bell's vireo.

While focused surveys indicated that no colonies of Crotch's bumble bee are present onsite nor in a reasonable proximity (approximately 0.5 kilometer) of the site and it is likely that non-native Africanized honeybees may be excluding bumble bees from the Project site, due to the presence of suitable habitat onsite (refer to Appendix D of Appendix C), the site conservatively considered potentially capable of supporting bumble bees. To reduce potentially significant impacts to Crotch's bumble bee, the Project shall incorporate Mitigation Measure BIO-3, which requires a pre-construction survey for Crotch's bumble bee queens, gynes, and colonies to be completed by a qualified biologist if construction activities occur during the flight season, and provides further measures if the species is detected. Further, any impacts to the Crotch's bumble bee would require consultation with CDFW, and, if take of Crotch's bumble bee is expected, the Project would be required to obtain an Incidental Take Permit pursuant to CFG Code 2081(b). Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-3 and approval of an Incidental Take Permit, if required, would reduce potential impacts to the Crotch's bumble bee to a less than significant level.

With regard to the burrowing owl, the field surveys identified potentially suitable habitat including sparsely vegetated disturbed habitat and earthen burrows. However, the burrowing owl was not detected during the 2023 focused surveys. Therefore, the Project site does not currently support the burrowing owl. Regardless, because potentially suitable habitat exists within the Project site and to account for the potential for burrowing owl to begin to occupy the site prior to construction, Mitigation Measure BIO-4 is included, which requires avoidance surveys before construction activities to determine the presence of burrowing owls, and preparation of a BUOW Protection and Relocation Plan if species are detected. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-4 would reduce potential impacts to the burrowing owl to a less than significant level.

In summary, the Project would implement PDF-1 to restore and replace habitat impacted during construction activities in Honby Channel. To reduce impacts to sensitive species, the following mitigation measures are included: Mitigation Measure BIO-1 to avoid and minimize impacts to bat species; Mitigation Measure BIO 2, which requires preconstruction surveys for Southern California legless lizard; Mitigation Measure BIO-3 for preconstruction surveys and, if necessary, compensatory mitigation for Crotch's bumble bee; and Mitigation Measure BIO-4, which requires BUOW take avoidance surveys and protection and relocation plan. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact on sensitive biological resources with mitigation incorporated.

Project Design Feature PDF-1:

Following the proposed work in Honby Channel, temporary impacts to the drainage will be restored in accordance with a Restoration Plan. The restoration efforts will reestablish local native plants and replace habitat. The restoration work will include removal of accumulated sediment, stabilizing unvegetated soil, and replanting with local native species. The restoration effort will include propagating local native plant cuttings and managing interim conditions during establishment, including temporary fencing, grazing wildlife, wildlife damage to the temporary irrigation system, and management of non-native species. The Restoration Plan will include a plant layout, identifying the types, locations, patterns, and densities of suitable native vegetation

to be planted. The Plan will identify irrigation requirements and monitoring frequency for three years until vegetation establishment.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1:

Sensitive Bat Species. Due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat (i.e., bridge, culvert crossing, trees) for sensitive bat species, the following avoidance and minimization measures shall be implemented to avoid potential impacts to these species:

Pre-construction Survey: A qualified biologist experienced with bats shall conduct a pre-construction survey within all suitable habitat on the project site to determine whether occupied hibernacula, night roosts, and/or maternity roosts occur within the project site. The pre-construction survey shall be conducted within 30 days prior to commencing construction activities (i.e., earthwork, clearing, grubbing, and fuel modification [including off-site fuel modification on private property]) and shall consist of two separate surveys conducted no more than a week apart. The second and final survey shall be conducted no more than seven days prior to commencing construction activities. The pre-construction surveys shall be conducted using a detector for echolocation calls, such as an Anabat bat detector system. The results of the pre-construction survey shall be documented by the qualified biologist. If the qualified biologist determines that no sensitive bat maternity roosts are present, the activities shall be allowed to proceed without any further requirements.

If the qualified biologist determines that big free-tailed bat, pallid bat, and/or western yellow bat maternity roosts are present, the following avoidance and minimization measures shall be implemented:

Maternity Roosts: If occupied maternity roost(s) are identified during the pre-construction survey, no construction activities shall occur within 500 feet during the maternity roosting season (March 1 through September 30) or until a qualified bat biologist determines the roost is no longer active. A qualified biologist shall clearly delineate the 500-foot no work buffer(s), which shall be clearly marked with flags and/or fencing prior to the initiation of construction activities.

Night Roosts and Hibernacula: To the extent feasible, no construction activities shall occur within 500 feet of active night roosts and/or hibernacula. The 500-foot no work buffer shall be left in place until project construction is completed or until a qualified bat biologist determines the roost/hibernaculum is no longer active. No project construction shall occur between 1.5 hours before sunset and 1.5 hours after sunrise.

If avoidance of active night roosts and/or hibernacula is not feasible, the qualified biologist shall prepare a Bat Roost Relocation Plan to remove active night roosts/hibernacula and construct alternative bat roost outside of the work area. The Relocation Plan shall be submitted to CDFW for review prior to construction activities. The qualified biologist shall implement the Relocation Plan and new roost sites shall be constructed before the commencement of any project construction (i.e., earthwork, clearing, grubbing, and fuel modification [including off-site fuel modification on private property]). Removal of roosts will be guided by accepted exclusion and deterrent techniques.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2:

Southern California Legless Lizard. Due to the presence of suitable habitat for Southern California legless lizard, a pre-construction survey shall be conducted within suitable habitat (leaf litter with high soil moisture) no more than 14 days prior to soil disturbance. The survey shall be conducted when soil temperatures are between 60- and 70-degrees Fahrenheit, as feasible with timing of construction. A hand rake shall be used to gently search for individuals in loose litter and soil. If southern California legless lizards are encountered, a qualified biologist with an appropriate Scientific Collecting Permit shall relocate individuals to suitable habitat outside of the project footprint.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3:

Crotch's Bumble Bee. This mitigation measure shall only be required if Crotch's bumble bee remains as a candidate state endangered species or is listed as a state endangered species at the time of project construction. If Crotch's bumble bee is delisted, this mitigation measure shall not be required.

Due to the presence of suitable habitat for Crotch's bumble within the Project site, the following measures shall be implemented to reduce potential impacts to this species:

Pre-construction Survey: To the extent feasible, construction activities (i.e., demolition, earthwork, clearing, and grubbing) shall occur outside of the Crotch's bee flight season (February 1 through October 31). If construction activities must occur during the flight season, a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey for Crotch's bumble bee queens, gynes, and colonies. The survey shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to construction during optimal weather conditions (e.g., warm, sunny days between 65- and 90-degrees Fahrenheit). If the pre-construction survey is negative, no further assessment shall be required, and construction activities shall be allowed to proceed without any further requirements. If Crotch's bumble bee is detected during the pre-construction survey, the measures below shall be implemented.

CESA Compliance: Prior to issuance of a grading permit, it shall be demonstrated that CESA-required consultation with CDFW regarding the project's effects to Crotch's bumble bee has occurred, and, if take of Crotch's bumble bee is expected, that CDFW has authorized such take through an incidental take permit, as applicable. In addition, if an incidental take permit is issued for the project that covers Crotch's bumble bee, that document shall supersede any inconsistent measures provided in this report.

Compensatory Mitigation: Compensatory mitigation for permanent direct impacts to suitable Crotch's bumble bee habitat shall be offset through compensatory mitigation, which may include, but is not necessarily limited to, on-site or off-site habitat preservation, enhancement, restoration, and/or creation at a ratio of no less than 1:1. However, if an incidental take permit is issued for the project that covers Crotch's bumble bee, that document(s) shall supersede any measures and mitigation ratios provided in this report.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4:

Burrowing Owl. Due to the presence of potentially suitable burrows within the project site, the following measures shall be implemented to reduce potential impacts to this species:

Take Avoidance Surveys: Take avoidance surveys shall be conducted 14 days or more prior to construction activities, and repeated 24 hours prior to construction activities (i.e., demolition, earthwork, clearing, and grubbing) to determine presence of BUOW. If ground-disturbing activities occur, but the site is left undisturbed for more than 30 days, a pre-construction survey must be conducted again to confirm BUOW has not colonized the project site since it was last disturbed. If take avoidance surveys are negative and BUOW is confirmed absent, then ground-disturbing activities shall be allowed to commence, and no further measures shall be required.

Protection and Relocation Plan: If BUOW(s) is observed during the take avoidance surveys, CDFW will be immediately informed of the observation location(s) and status(es). Active burrows shall be avoided by the project in accordance with the CDFW's Staff Report (CDFG 2012). If avoidance of direct and/or indirect impacts to active burrows is not feasible, a BUOW Protection and Relocation Plan (Plan) shall be prepared by a qualified biologist. The Plan must be approved by CDFW prior to construction activities (i.e., demolition, earthwork, clearing, and grubbing). The Plan shall include measures to minimize indirect impacts to BUOWs during construction, and if direct impacts are unavoidable, the Plan shall provide measures to conserve all nesting, occupied, and satellite burrows and/or BUOW habitat such that the habitat acreage and number of burrows and BUOW individuals impacted are maintained and/or replaced. Further coordination with CDFW shall occur to mitigate for direct loss of habitat through the acquisition, conservation, and management of in-kind habitat. Lands conserved to mitigate for direct impacts shall include: (1) sufficiently large acreage with fossorial mammals present; (2) permanent protection through a conservation easement for the purpose of conserving BUOW habitat and prohibiting activities incompatible with BUOW use; (3) development and implementation of a Mitigation Land Management Plan to address long-term ecological sustainability and maintenance of the site for BUOWs; and (4) funding for the maintenance and management of mitigation land through the establishment of a long-term funding mechanism, such as an endowment.

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

Sensitive Vegetation Communities

Sensitive vegetation communities/habitats are considered either rare within the region or sensitive as classified by CDFW. Communities are given a Global and State (S) ranking on a scale of 1 to 5. Communities afforded a rank of 5 are most common while communities with a rank of 1 are considered highly threatened. The CDFW considers sensitive communities as those with a rank between S1 and S3. The sensitive natural community designation is generally reserved for high-quality habitats, such as those that lack invasive species, do not show signs of human-caused disturbance, and show signs of reproduction (i.e., sprouts and seedlings present).

The Project site supports two sensitive plant communities, Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland and scale broom scrub (including scale broom scrub/upland mustard fields). Approximately 0.46 acre of Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland, 1.52 acres of scale broom scrub, and 0.69 acre of scale broom scrub/upland mustard fields occur on the Project site. Implementation of the Project would result in temporary and permanent impacts to these sensitive plant communities (refer to Figure 8 of Appendix C). Temporary impacts are associated with construction activities, including potential over-excavation and equipment access throughout the

Project site, in addition to grading within Honby Channel to return the system to baseline conditions. Permanent impacts are associated with operational activities for the proposed park, regional storm water infiltration facility, buried bank protection along the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel, and culvert improvements.

Temporary Construction Impacts

Construction of the Project would result in temporary impacts to 0.20 acre of Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland, and 1.34 acres of scale broom scrub. As part of the Honby Channel restoration, temporary impacts to Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland would be returned to baseline topographic contours and revegetated once the Project has been completed (PDF-1). Temporary impacts to scale broom scrub would also be revegetated as appropriate once the Project has been completed (PDF-1). Given the Project's restoration plans, the Project would result in less than significant impacts to sensitive vegetation communities during construction activities.

Permanent Operational Impacts

The Project would result in permanent impacts to 0.18 acres of the existing 1.52-acre habitat of scale broom scrub. For permanent impacts to scale broom scrub that occur outside of CDFW jurisdiction (approximately 0.14 acre), Mitigation Measure BIO-5 is included, which requires compensatory mitigation at a ratio of no less than 1:1. For the approximately 0.04 acre of the scale broom scrub that falls within CDFW jurisdiction, the Project shall implement Mitigation Measure BIO-6, which outlines compensatory streambed mitigation required as part of the Section 1602 Stream Alteration Agreement. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-5 and BIO-6, impacts to the scale broom scrub would be reduced to less than significant.

The Project would result in permanent impacts to 0.26 acres of the existing 0.46-acre habitat of Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland. Because the Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland is consistent with CDFW jurisdiction, Mitigation Measure BIO-6 is included, which outlines compensatory mitigation for impacts to CDFW jurisdiction. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-6, impacts to Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland would be reduced to less than significant levels. In conclusion, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-5 and BIO-6, operation of the Project would result in less than significant impacts to sensitive vegetation communities.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife Riparian Habitat and Streambed

The Project site supports a portion of the Santa Clara River and two tributaries (Honby Channel and Tributary A) in addition to an unnamed drainage complex (Drainage A and Tributary A1). These drainages are considered jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat pursuant to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code, as regulated by CDFW. The Project would result in 2.47 acres of temporary impacts and 0.54 acre of permanent impacts to CDFW jurisdictional streambed and associated riparian habitat.

Temporary Construction Impacts

During construction, temporary impacts to the Santa Clara River and Tributary A include potential over-excavation and equipment access to install the buried bank protection. Temporary impacts to Honby Channel would occur to return the channel to baseline conditions. Honby Channel and the existing culvert have experienced an accumulation of sediment over an approximately 200-

foot section of the channel, which has backed up sediment into the existing culvert and reduced the culvert's hydraulic capacity. Temporary impacts to restore the channel to baseline conditions would include removal of accumulated sediment and vegetation and re-grading the channel. As part of the channel restoration, invasive plant species would be removed from Honby Channel, including giant reed, saltcedar, and tree-of-heaven. Temporary impacts to Drainage A include potential over-excavation and equipment access to install the new culvert under the Metrolink railroad. The Project will result temporary impacts to 1.843 acres of waters of the U.S. and 1.847 acres of waters of the State, as summarized in **Table 4**, below.

Due to temporary impacts, the Project would prepare and implement a Water Quality Management Plan and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP), which would include construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure the Project would not increase flow rates within the drainages. Further, temporary impacts to habitat within CDFW jurisdiction would be revegetated as appropriate upon the completion of construction activities (PDF-1). With implementation of the Water Quality Management Plan, SWPPP, associated BMPs, and Project Design Features, construction of the Project would result in less than significant impacts to CDFW-jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat.

Permanent Operational Impacts

Following construction, the Project would result in permanent impacts along the periphery of the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel due to the installation of the buried bank protection, which would protect the banks from erosion up to a 100-year flood event. Within the Honby Channel, a terrace would be incorporated into the backfill grading to allow vegetation to be installed at the surface, outside of the active flow channel. In addition, permanent impacts within Honby Channel are proposed to remove the existing grouted riprap culvert outlet structure and extend the culvert, which would provide emergency access to the eastern portion of the Project site. The majority of Tributary A would be permanently filled as part of the park construction and a small portion of Drainage A would be permanently impacted to install a new culvert underneath the Metrolink railroad (refer to Figure 6 of Appendix C). As presented in **Table 4**, below, the Project will result in permanent impacts to 0.243 acre of waters of the U.S. and 0.245 acre of waters of the State. Of these acres, 0.030 acre are considered wetlands waters of the U.S. and State.

Due to permanent impacts to riparian habitat within CDFW jurisdiction, Mitigation Measure BIO-6 is included, which outlines compensatory streambed mitigation. Further, the Water Quality Management Plan and SWPPP prepared for the Project would also include post-construction BMPs. With implementation of the Water Quality Management Plan, SWPPP, associated BMPs, and Mitigation Measure BIO-6, operation of the Project would result in less than significant impacts to CDFW-jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat.

Table 4. Project Temporary and Permanent Impacts to Federal and State Waters[1]

Drainage	USACE Waters of the U.S.			RWQCB Waters of the State		
	Existing (acres)[2]	Permanent Impacts (acres)[2]	Temporary Impacts (acres)[2]	Existing (acres)[2]	Permanent Impacts (acres)[2]	Temporary Impacts (acres)[2]
Santa Clara River	1.115	0.083	1.032	1.115	0.083	1.032
Honby Channel	0.956 (0.030)[3]	0.146 (0.030)[3]	0.810	0.956 (0.030)[3]	0.146 (0.030)[3]	0.810
Tributary A	0.015	0.014	0.001	0.015	0.014	0.001
Drainage A	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.049	0.002	0.004
Tributary A1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000
TOTAL	**2.086 (0.030)[3]**	**0.243 (0.030)[3]**	**1.843**	**2.139 (0.030)[3]**	**0.245 (0.030)[3]**	**1.847**

Notes:

1 Jurisdictional acreages overlap and are not additive (e.g., USACE acreages are included in the RWQCB acreages).

2 Acreages are rounded to the nearest thousandth of an acre.

3 Acreages in parentheses indicate jurisdictional acreages that were identified as a three-parameter wetland. Wetland acreages are a subset of the total acreage and are not additive.

In summary, as specified in PDF-1, the Project includes restoring and replacing habitat impacted during construction activities in Honby Channel. To further reduce impacts on riparian and sensitive natural communities, the Project would implement: Mitigation Measure BIO-5 to mitigate for permanent impacts to scale broom scrub; and Mitigation Measure BIO-6 to mitigate for permanent impacts to CDFW jurisdiction. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact on riparian and sensitive natural communities with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5:

Sensitive Vegetation Communities. Mitigation for permanent impacts to scale broom scrub that occur outside of CDFW jurisdiction shall occur at a ratio of no less than 1:1 through on-site or off-site habitat preservation, enhancement, restoration, and/or creation. Off-site habitat mitigation shall include either: (1) purchase of credits at a conservation bank; (2) acquisition of mitigation land; or (3) preservation, enhancement, restoration, and/or creation within existing City land. Temporary impacts to scale broom scrub shall be revegetated as appropriate once the project has been completed in accordance with Project Design Feature-1.

Mitigation Measure BIO-6:

CDFW Jurisdiction. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the City shall obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFW. Permanent impacts to CDFW jurisdiction shall be mitigated through on-site or off-site enhancement, restoration, and/or creation of CDFW jurisdictional streambed at ratio of no less than 2:1. Temporary impacts to CDFW jurisdiction shall be revegetated as appropriate once the project has been completed (PDF-1).

BMPs to minimize and avoid impacts to CDFW jurisdiction during and after construction shall be addressed as part in the Streambed Alteration Agreement. Minimization and avoidance measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Construction-related equipment shall be stored in developed/disturbed areas, outside of drainages. No equipment maintenance shall be done within or adjacent to the drainage.

- Mud, silt, spoil sites, raw cement, asphalt, or other pollutants from construction activities shall not be placed within or adjacent to the drainage.

- Open trenches or other excavated areas shall be properly secured at the end of the day to avoid entrapment of animals, or an escape ramp shall be provided.

- To avoid attracting predators during construction, the project shall be kept clean of debris to the extent possible. All food-related trash items shall be enclosed in sealed containers and regularly removed from site.

- Construction personnel shall strictly limit their activities, vehicles, equipment and construction material to the proposed project footprint, staging areas, and designated routes of travel.

- Exclusion fencing shall be installed to demarcate the limits of disturbance. The exclusion fencing should be maintained until the completion of construction activities.

- To the extent feasible, construction shall be conducted outside of the nesting bird season (see MM BIO-8 below).

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

Less Than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Incorporated. Based on the results of the jurisdictional delineation, the Project site supports a portion of the Santa Clara River and two tributaries (Honby Channel and Tributary A). The Project site also supports an unnamed drainage complex (Drainage A and Tributary A1). The Project site supports approximately 2.09 acres of USACE waters of the U.S., 2.14 acres of RWQCB waters of the State, and 3.27 acres of CDFW streambed and associated vegetation. A small area in the upstream portion of Honby Channel was identified as wetlands (0.03 acre).

The Project would result in temporary impacts to 1.84 acres of waters of the U.S. and 1.85 acres of waters of the State. In addition, the Project would result in permanent impacts to 0.24 acre of waters of the U.S. and 0.25 acre of waters of the State. Of these acres, 0.03 acre are considered wetlands waters of the U.S. and State. Temporary impacts to waters within USACE and RWQCB jurisdiction would be restored as appropriate upon completion of Project construction (PDF-1).

With regard to permanent impacts, Mitigation Measure BIO-7 is included, which requires obtaining a Section 404 Nationwide Permit for impacts to waters USACE jurisdiction, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification for impacts to waters within RWQCB jurisdiction, and Waste Discharge Requirements through the preparation and submittal of a California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Report of Waste Discharge for Project impacts to non-federal waters. Further, Mitigation Measure BIO-7 would require compensatory streambed mitigation for permanent impacts at a ratio of no less than 2:1. In addition, the Project would prepare a Water Quality Management Plan and SWPPP, including construction and post-construction BMPs. With

implementation of PDF-1, Mitigation Measure BIO-7, and the Water Quality Management Plan, SWPPP, and associated BMPs, the Project would result in less than significant impacts to state and federally protected wetlands and waters.

Mitigation Measure BIO-7:

USACE and RWQCB Jurisdiction. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the City shall obtain appropriate regulatory permits from USACE and RWQCB. Regulatory permits are anticipated to include a Section 404 Nationwide Permit through USACE and a Section 401 Water Quality Certification through RWQCB. Waste Discharge Requirements shall be obtained for impacts to non-federal waters through preparation and submittal of a SWRCB Report of Waste Discharge. Compensatory mitigation for permanent impacts to USACE and RWQCB jurisdiction shall be required as part of subsequent permitting requirements. Permanent impacts shall be mitigated through on-site or off-site enhancement, restoration, and/or creation of jurisdictional streambed at a ratio of no less than 2:1. Temporary impacts to USACE and RWQCB jurisdiction shall be returned to baseline topographic contours as appropriate once the project has been completed.

BMPs to minimize and avoid impacts to USACE and RWQCB jurisdiction during and after construction shall be addressed as part of the Nationwide Permit, Water Quality Certification, and Waste Discharge Requirements. Minimization and avoidance measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Construction-related equipment shall be stored in developed/disturbed areas, outside of the drainage. No equipment maintenance shall be done within or adjacent to the drainage.

- Source control and treatment control BMPs shall be implemented to minimize the potential contaminants that are generated during and after construction. Water quality BMPs shall be implemented throughout the project to capture and treat potential contaminants.

- Substances harmful to aquatic life shall not be discharged into the drainage. All hazardous substances shall be properly handled and stored.

- A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan shall be prepared to prevent sediment from entering the drainage during construction.

- To avoid attracting predators during construction, the project shall be kept clean of debris to the extent possible. All food-related trash items shall be enclosed in sealed containers and regularly removed from site.

- Construction personnel shall strictly limit their activities, vehicles, equipment and construction material to the proposed project footprint, staging areas, and designated routes of travel.

- Exclusion fencing shall be installed to demarcate the limits of disturbance. The exclusion fencing should be maintained until the completion of construction activities.

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

Wildlife Corridors

Wildlife corridors connect otherwise isolated pieces of habitat and allow movement or dispersal of plants and animals. Corridors can be local or regional in scale, and their functions may vary temporally and spatially based on conditions and species presence.

Regionally, the Project site is situated adjacent to the upper reaches of the Santa Clara River, approximately 4.7 miles upstream of Bouquet Canyon and 0.5 mile downstream of Mint Canyon. The Project site is located roughly 1.25 miles northwest of Golden Valley Ranch Open Space and 1.90 miles north of Angeles National Forest, although existing development separates the Project site from these open space areas. Locally, the Project site is surrounded by development except for its northern portion, which directly abuts the Santa Clara River. Native habitat within the Project site is patchy and is mostly associated with the Honby Channel and Santa Clara River.

The Project site does not directly connect two or more large blocks of habitat that would otherwise be fragmented or isolated from one another. The areas immediately adjacent to the Project site are urbanized, including mobile homes and a distribution center to the east, and residential homes to the west and south. Wildlife access to the Project site may occur from the south via Honby Channel. However, movement from the south is restricted by existing development that surrounds the upstream portion of Honby Channel, which mostly consists of a concrete-channel that meanders through a residential community and golf course. Access to the Project site from the south is also constrained due to an underground culvert that runs underneath Via Princessa for approximately 465 feet. Further, Whites Canyon Road restricts wildlife movement from the west and existing development restricts movement from the east of the Project Site. Due to the restricted access, the Project site would not be considered a regional corridor.

Although the Project site would not be considered a regional wildlife movement corridor, the Santa Clara River is a regional wildlife movement corridor, and wildlife access to the Project site may occur from the north via the Santa Clara River. The Project site may also provide adjacent habitat for wildlife moving through the Santa Clara River, and habitat for local wildlife that are moving shorter distances throughout the Project area. The Project site supports opportunities for local wildlife movement and provides adjacent habitat for regional wildlife movement through the Santa Clara River, but the Project site itself does not function as a wildlife corridor given that it does not directly connect to two or more blocks of large habitat.

Construction of the Project would not impede wildlife movement within the Santa Clara River given the Project only proposes bank stabilization along the southern bank. Although construction noise may result in temporary disturbance to wildlife movement, such disturbance would be limited and would cease upon completion of construction. Following Project construction, wildlife access to the Santa Clara River from Honby Channel would remain, and be improved. The proposed revegetation within Honby Channel would increase native cover within the drainage and remove non-native and invasive species, expanding the riparian habitat within the channel. The proposed sediment removal and culvert replacement within Honby Channel would provide a larger space for wildlife to move through the channel under Via Princessa Road. Therefore, implementation

the Project would not interfere substantially with established wildlife corridors, and impacts would be less than significant.

Migratory Bird Species

All migratory bird species that are native to the United States or its territories are protected under the federal MBTA, as amended under the Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2004. In common practice, the MBTA is used to place restrictions on the disturbance of active bird nests during the nesting season, which is generally defined as February 15 to August 31 for songbirds. In addition, the USFWS commonly places restrictions on disturbances allowed near active raptor nests, for which the nesting season is generally defined as January 1 to August 31.

Migratory bird species may fly over surrounding development to nest and/or forage within the Project site. The Project site has the potential to support songbird and raptor nests due to the presence of shrubs, ground cover, and trees. Project activities could disturb or destroy active migratory bird nests, including eggs and young. Therefore, the Project would implement Mitigation Measure BIO-8, which would require construction activities to occur outside of the general bird nesting season to the extent feasible and, when not feasible, pre-construction surveys for the presence of active nests and the protection of identified active nests. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-8, the Project would result in less than significant impacts.

Mitigation Measure BIO-8:

Nesting Birds. To the extent feasible, construction activities (i.e., earthwork, clearing, and grubbing) shall occur outside of the general bird nesting season for migratory birds, which is February 15 through August 31 for songbirds and January 1 to August 31 for raptors.

When construction activities (i.e., earthwork, clearing, and grubbing) occur during the general bird nesting season for migratory birds and raptors, a qualified biologist shall perform a pre-construction survey of potential nesting habitat to confirm the absence of active nests belonging to migratory birds and raptors afforded protection under the MBTA and CFG Code. The pre-construction survey shall be performed no more than seven days prior to the commencement of construction activities. The qualified biologist shall document the results of the pre-construction survey. If construction is inactive for more than seven days, an additional survey shall be conducted. If the qualified biologist determines that no active migratory bird or raptor nests occur, the activities shall be allowed to proceed without any further requirements.

If the qualified biologist determines that an active migratory bird or raptor nest is present, no construction activities within 300 feet (500 feet for raptors) of the active nest shall occur until the young have fledged the nest and the nest is confirmed to no longer be active, or as determined by the qualified biologist. The biological monitor may modify the buffer or propose other recommendations to minimize disturbance to nesting birds.

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

No Impact. The City of Santa Clarita's Oak Tree Preservation ordinance states that no person shall cut, prune, remove, relocate, endanger, damage, or encroach into the protected zone of any oak tree on any public or private property within the City. To remove any oak tree or to subject its protected zone to major encroachment, an Oak Tree Permit must be obtained.

The tree survey conducted for the Project identified five oak trees that meet the City's definition of a protected tree, including four coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and one interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*) within the existing Metrolink parking lot in the southeast portion of the Project site. The Project would not impact the existing five oak trees on-site. In addition, off-site improvements (i.e., bank-stabilization work areas and work in the railroad ROW) would not impact any existing off-site oak trees within the Project vicinity. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with the City's Oak Tree Preservation ordinance, and there would be no impact.

f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. The Project site is not located within any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. As such, implementation of the Project would not conflict with these plans and there would be no impact.

g) Would the project affect a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) or Significant Natural Area (SNA) as identified on the City of Santa Clarita ESA Delineation Map?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As mentioned, the Project site is located within the City's Santa Clara River SEA overlay zone intended to preserve the SEA for the public health, safety, and welfare for the long-term benefit of the community, maintenance of the unique visual characteristics, resources, and ridgeline integrity, and to achieve a higher quality of life for its residents. The Project is a proposed park that would provide a variety of recreational and exercise opportunities for the long-term health benefit of the community. The Project includes a regional infiltration basin to collect and conserve water supplies, which also provides for the long-term welfare and benefit of the community. The parcels onsite to the north of the railroad tracks would be developed with the proposed park and regional stormwater infiltration facility, which would involve a small restroom/office building with large expanses of pervious surfaces in the form of soccer fields and landscaped areas, as well as restoration of the Honby Channel drainage to reestablish native vegetation and replace habitat (PDF-1); as a result, the scenic quality of the area would be preserved. As discussed in the analyses above, the Project would implement PDF-1 and Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-8 to protect biological resources. In summary, the Project conforms to the SEA overlay zone, and impacts are less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Section V. Cultural Resources

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

Discussion

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

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

Response to a) and b): The analysis in this section is based on the *Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment for Via Princessa Park Project* prepared by Michael Baker International in April 2023 (**Appendix D**). The analysis summarizes the methods and results of a South Central Coastal Information Center records search, Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File search, historical map review, an archaeological field survey, buried site sensitivity analysis, and National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) evaluation to determine whether the Project would result in significant impacts to cultural resources, including historical and archaeological resources.

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The South Central Coastal Information Center records search conducted for the Project identified no previously recorded resources within the area of potential effects (APE), which includes the lateral and vertical extent of any areas where historic properties may be directly or indirectly affected by Project-related activities. Three previous cultural resources studies were identified within portions of the APE; however, none of the studies identified resource concerns within the APE. Four previously recorded resources were identified within a half-mile radius of the APE; however, none of the four resources intersect the current APE. Results of the Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File search indicated that no Native American cultural resources are known to be located within the APE.

A review of the Bureau of Land Management General Land Office Records indicated the APE was granted to F. M. Erwin in 1891. Historical topographic maps and aerial photographs dating to between 1900 and 1994 identify the APE as having been previously occupied by agricultural crop furrows between circa 1947 and 1959. By 1959, agricultural uses of the APE were no longer

apparent; however, pastureland remained, and it is uncertain whether it was used to graze livestock. Initial construction of the eastern-adjacent Cordova Mobile Estates manufactured home community was apparent by 1969. By 1992, a portion of the Southern Pacific Railroad was rerouted north, running along the southern edge of the Cordova Mobile Estates community and through the APE. The Via Princessa Metrolink station and parking lot were developed at the southern portion of the APE by 1994. The northern portion of the APE has remained vacant and undeveloped.

A field survey conducted by Michael Baker International in February 2023 identified one historic-period archaeological site (MBI-VP-MY-01H) consisting of five discrete features within the APE. The features are likely associated with the historic agricultural and pastoral activities of the Project area. The features include a metal drainage pipe, a rectangular concrete structure (likely a watering trough for livestock), a turbine well pump on a concrete base, a galvanized pipe and circular cement cistern/basin, and a concrete pad (likely associated with a former water conveyance system). Site MBI-VP-MY-01H was evaluated for listing in the NRHP and CRHR. Research conducted on this archaeological resource did not reveal any significant events or notable persons in national, state, regional, or local history associated with the site. Archival research indicates that the site parcel was first issued as a homestead land grant to F. M. Erwin in 1891; however, the features identified as part of MBI-VP-MY-01H postdate Erwin and cannot be directly associated with him. No additional records of land ownership were identified during archival research and the site cannot be directly tied to a specific individual, family, or group. Additionally, the site does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, nor does it represent the work of a master or possess high artistic values. Finally, the features appear to be limited to the surface with no associated artifacts, and the available archival information does not indicate that the site possesses any further potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the community, state, or nation. In conclusion, the site was recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP and is not a historic property as defined by 36 Code of Federal Regulations 800.16(I)(1). Further, MBI-VP-MY-01H is recommended ineligible for listing in the CRHR and is not a historical resource as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) or a unique archaeological resource as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g).

The archaeological sensitivity analysis included in the *Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment* indicated that the potential for unknown prehistoric archaeological sites within the APE is moderate due to the proximity to known resources. Specifically, a burial site was recorded 350 meters north of the APE in the 1930s, and the ethnohistoric village of *pi'irukung* was documented approximately 20 miles east-northeast of the APE. The APE is located at the southern edge of the Santa Clara River, which would have provided an important resource procurement locale for prehistoric inhabitants of the area. The APE is underlain by Quaternary alluvium, alluvial fan deposits, and younger playa deposits, which may conceal buried archaeological deposits; however, given the history of agriculture in the APE, the integrity of any buried resources may be compromised. As such, the sensitivity for potential undocumented prehistoric archaeological sites in the APE is considered moderate. Furthermore, the sensitivity for potential undocumented historic period buildings, structures, and historic period archaeological sites is considered moderate due to historic period homesteads established within or near the APE and the former agricultural use of the APE.

In order to reduce impacts to unanticipated historic and prehistoric archaeological resources within the APE, the Project shall incorporate Mitigation Measure CUL-1, which requires

implementation of cultural resources monitoring and preparation of an archaeological monitoring plan; Mitigation Measure CUL-2, which requires that construction activities cease in the event that an archaeological resource is unearthed during excavation; and Mitigation Measure CUL-3, which requires implementation of alternative treatment methods, in the event that avoidance and preservation-in-place are deemed infeasible. Implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3 would ensure that potential impacts to unknown archaeological resources discovered during earthwork activities would be reduced to less significant levels. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact on historical and archaeological resources with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1:

Cultural Resources Monitoring. Archaeological monitoring shall occur in the APE during all soil-disturbing and grubbing/grading/excavation/trenching activities, which could impact archaeological resources. The monitor will observe construction activities to determine if cultural resources are present below the surface. The Principal Investigator (PI) will submit a request to the City during construction requesting a modification to the monitoring program when field conditions occur that could reduce or increase the potential for resources to be present. Such field conditions may include modern disturbance post-dating the previous grading/trenching activities, presence of fossil formations, or when native soils are encountered. Ground-disturbing activities include, but are not limited to, geotechnical boring, boring, trenching, grading, excavating, and the demolition of building foundations. Monitoring shall be conducted by an archaeological monitor who is working under the guidance of a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology (48 Federal Register 44738). The archaeological monitor shall observe ground-disturbing activities in all areas with the potential to contain significant cultural deposits. The archaeological monitor shall maintain and submit monitoring logs at the conclusion of monitoring. If discoveries are made during ground-disturbing activities, additional work may be required in accordance with the terms specified in the cultural resources monitoring and discovery plan.

At the completion of grading, excavation, and ground-disturbing activities on the site, a monitoring report shall be submitted to the City that documents monitoring activities conducted by the Project archaeologist within 60 days of completion of monitoring. This report shall document the daily archaeological monitoring results; describe how each mitigation measure was fulfilled; document the type of cultural resources recovered and the disposition of such resources; and, in a confidential appendix, include the daily/weekly monitoring notes from the qualified archaeologist. Final monitoring reports will be submitted to the City and the South Central Coastal Information Center. If a federal agency (e.g., the US Army Corps of Engineers) is involved in the Project due to a federal nexus, monitoring reports may also be shared with that agency. Any unanticipated archaeological finds and subsequent evaluation or data recovery efforts will be documented in the report.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2:

Evaluation of Unanticipated Finds. In the event an archaeological resource is unearthed during excavation, all excavations shall be halted within 50 feet of the find. Work shall stop immediately, and the discovery shall be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology (48 Federal Register 44738), pursuant to the procedures set forth at CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 and 36 CFR Part 60.4.

Depending on the nature of the find, the determination of significance may require additional excavation, potentially including the preparation and execution of a Phase II archaeological testing plan. As the lead agency, the City shall make a determination of significance on the basis of the recommendations of the qualified archaeologist.

If the resource is determined not to be significant, then resource-specific work shall be completed, and construction may proceed. If the resource is determined to be significant and avoidance is not feasible, then a resource-specific archaeological resources treatment plan shall be prepared and executed in accordance with Mitigation Measure CUL-3 prior to recommencing ground-disturbing activities that may impact the resource.

Mitigation Measure CUL-3:

Treatment of Significant Resources. Avoidance and preservation-in-place are the preferred treatment for historical resources, but avoidance is not always feasible. In an event that a significant historical resource is discovered and disturbance to such a resource cannot be avoided, one of the following treatments shall be implemented: avoidance, site capping, creation of conservation easements, or archaeological data recovery.

If avoidance, site capping, or creation of a conservation easement is determined infeasible, then a Phase III data recovery excavation will be required, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 and Section 106 36 CFR 800.13, to document the resource's scientifically consequential information. The Phase III data recovery plan shall be prepared in consultation with the consulting tribe(s). The Phase III study shall consist of the recovery and analysis of a statistically significant sample of the site through archaeological excavation, radiocarbon dating of organic materials or other kinds of dating, cataloging, specialist analysis, and report writing designed to document the resource in perpetuity.

During the course of construction, all discovered resources shall be temporarily curated in a secure location on-site or at the offices of the qualified archaeologist. The removal of any artifacts from the APE for cataloging and analysis during evaluation and analysis will need to be thoroughly inventoried with tribal monitor oversight of the process. The landowner shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources, including sacred items, burial goods, and all archaeological artifacts and non-human remains, as part of the required mitigation for impacts to cultural resources. The applicant shall relinquish the artifacts through one or more of the following methods and provide the City with evidence of final disposition of the cultural material collection:

- Accommodate the process for on-site reburial of the discovered items with the consulting tribe(s). This shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts. Reburial shall not occur until all cataloguing and basic recordation have been completed.

- A curation agreement with an appropriate qualified repository in Los Angeles County that meets federal standards per 36 CFR Part 79, and therefore will be professionally curated and made available to other archaeologists/researchers for further study. The collections and associated records shall be transferred, including title, to an appropriate curation facility in Los Angeles County, to be accompanied by payment of the fees necessary for permanent curation.

- If more than one Native American tribe is involved with the Project and the tribes cannot come to a consensus as to the disposition of cultural materials, they shall be curated at an appropriate qualified repository determined by the City.

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

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation. No evidence of human remains was identified as part of the *Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment*; however, there is the potential to discover buried human remains during Project-related earth-moving activities. In order to reduce impacts to unanticipated human remains, the Project shall incorporate Mitigation Measure CUL-4, which requires conformance to California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 in the event that human remains are identified during earth-moving activities. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-4 would reduce Project impacts on human remains to less than significant levels. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact on human remains with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measure CUL-4

Treatment of Unanticipated Finds of Human Remains. If human skeletal remains are found during earth-moving activities, work shall be suspended and the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office shall be notified. Standard guidelines set by California law provide for the treatment of skeletal material of Native American origin (California Public Resources Code Sections 5097.98 et seq.; Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5). If the remains are found to be archaeological, then after the coroner releases the site, the qualified professional archaeologist, in consultation with the most likely descendant, shall prepare an archaeological treatment plan in accordance with Mitigation Measure CUL-2 that also incorporates the guidance in "A Professional Guide for the Preservation and Protection of Native American Remains and Associated Grave Goods," published by the California Native American Heritage Commission.

Section VI. Energy

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

Discussion

This analysis included in this section is based on the Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results, available as **Appendix B** of this Initial Study.

Regulatory Setting

State

California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24)

The 2022 California Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6), commonly referred to as "Title 24," became effective on January 1, 2023. In general, Title 24 requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2022 Title 24 standards encourage efficient electric heat pumps, establish electric-ready requirements for new homes, expand solar photovoltaic and battery storage standards, strengthen ventilation standards, and more.

California Green Building Standards (CALGreen)

The 2022 California Green Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11), commonly referred to as CALGreen, went into effect on January 1, 2023. CALGreen is the first-in-the-nation mandatory green buildings standards code. The California Building Standards Commission developed CALGreen to meet the state's landmark initiative Assembly Bill (AB) 32 goals, which established a comprehensive program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. CALGreen was developed to (1) reduce GHG emissions from buildings; (2) promote environmentally responsible, cost-effective, and healthier places to live and work; (3) reduce energy and water consumption; and (4) respond to the environmental directives of the administration. CALGreen requires that new buildings employ water efficiency and conservation, increase building system efficiencies (e.g., lighting, heating/ventilation and air conditioning [HVAC], and plumbing fixtures), divert construction waste from landfills, and incorporate EV charging infrastructure. There is growing recognition among developers and

retailers that sustainable construction is not prohibitively expensive, and that there is a significant cost-savings potential in green building practices and materials.[17]

California Public Utilities Commission Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan

The California Public Utilities Commission prepared an Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) in September 2008 with the goal of promoting energy efficiency and a reduction in GHGs emissions. In January 2011, a lighting chapter was adopted and added to the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is California's single roadmap to achieving maximum energy savings in the state between 2009 and 2020, and beyond 2020. The Strategic Plan contains the practical strategies and actions to attain significant statewide energy savings, as a result of a year-long collaboration by energy experts, utilities, businesses, consumer groups, and governmental organizations in California, throughout the West, nationally, and internationally.

California Energy Commission Integrated Energy Policy Report

In 2002, the California State Legislature adopted SB 1389, which requires the California Energy Commission (CEC) to develop an Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR) every two years. SB 1389 requires the CEC to conduct assessments and forecasts of all aspects of energy industry supply, production, transportation, delivery and distribution, demand, and prices, and use these assessments and forecasts to develop energy policies that conserve resources, protect the environment, ensure energy reliability, enhance the state's economy, and protect public health and safety.

The CEC adopted the 2021 IEPR, Volume I, Volume II, and Volume IV, on February 1, 2022, and Volume III on February 24, 2022. The 2021 IEPR provides information and policy recommendations on advancing a clean, reliable, and affordable energy system for all Californians. Volume I addresses actions needed to reduce the GHG emissions related to the buildings in which Californians live and work, with an emphasis on energy efficiency; Volume II examines actions needed to increase the reliability and resiliency of California's energy system; Volume III looks at the evolving role of gas in California's energy system; and Volume IV reports on California's energy demand outlook, including a forecast to 2035 and long-term energy demand scenarios of 2050. The 2021 IEPR builds on the goals and work in response to AB 758 (Energy: energy audit), SB 350 (Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act), AB 3232 (Zero-emissions buildings and sources of heat energy), and the 2019 IEPR to further a comprehensive approach toward decarbonizing buildings in a cost-effective and equitable manner. For the 2021 IEPR, the CEC extends the forecast time frame to 15 years to coincide with several state goals that are planned for 2035 and improves methodologies to better quantify and predict the likelihood, severity, and duration of future extreme heat events.

Executive Order N-79-20

Executive Order N-79-20, issued September 23, 2020, directs the state to require all new cars and passenger trucks sold in the state to be zero-emission vehicles by 2035. Executive Order N-79-20 further states that all medium- and heavy-duty vehicles sold in the state will be zero-emission by 2045.

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[17] US Green Building Council, *Green Building Costs and Savings*, accessed April 3, 2023, https://www.usgbc.org/articles/green-building-costs-and-savings.

City of Santa Clarita

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The City of Santa Clarita General Plan was adopted in June 2011. This General Plan has been prepared pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65300 et seq., which require that each city and county within the state "adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning." The General Plan includes the following elements: Land Use Element, Economic Development Element, Circulation Element, Noise Element, Conservation and Open Space Element, Safety Element, and Housing Element.

The following goals and policies related to energy efficiency and conservation are applicable to the proposed Project:

Land Use Element

Goal LU 7: Environmentally responsible development through site planning, building design, waste reduction, and responsible stewardship of resources.

Objective LU 7.1: Achieve greater energy efficiency in building and site design.

Policy LU 7.1.1: Require shade trees within parking lots and adjacent to buildings to reduce the heat island effect, in consideration of Fire Department fuel modification restrictions.

Conservation and Open Space Element

Goal CO 8: Development designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Objective CO 8.2: Reduce energy and materials consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in public uses and facilities.

Policy CO 8.2.6: Promote use of solar lighting in parks and along paseos and trails, where practical.

Policy CO 8.2.9: Reduce heat islands through installation of trees to shade parking lots and hardscapes, and use of light-colored reflective paving and roofing surfaces.

Policy CO 8.2.10: Support installation of energy-efficient traffic control devices, street lights, and parking lot lights.

City of Santa Clarita Climate Action Plan

The City of Santa Clarita Climate Action Plan (CAP) was adopted in August 2012. The purpose of the CAP is to measure the amount of GHG emissions generated within the City and to develop strategies to reduce the emissions in the future. The plan includes a set of strategies the City can use to reduce the amount of GHG emissions produced in the community. The CAP builds from the goals, objectives, and policies delineated in the General Plan and develops specific actions to be implemented and monitored to achieve GHG reduction goals. However, the City's CAP does not align with the statewide goals beyond 2020 and thus the CAP is not consistent with the criteria

within CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 for the post-2020 period. As the proposed Project would be constructed and operational post-2020, the 2012 CAP was not utilized for Project consistency.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. CEQA Guidelines Appendix F is an advisory document that assists in determining whether a project will result in the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy. The analysis in Section VI(a) relies upon Appendix F, which includes the following criteria to determine whether this threshold of significance is met:

- **Criterion 1:** The project's energy requirements and its energy use efficiencies by amount and fuel type for each stage of the project including construction, operation, maintenance and/or removal. If appropriate, the energy intensiveness of materials maybe discussed.

- **Criterion 2:** The effects of the project on local and regional energy supplies and on requirements for additional capacity.

- **Criterion 3:** The effects of the project on peak and base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy.

- **Criterion 4:** The degree to which the project complies with existing energy standards.

- **Criterion 5:** The effects of the project on energy resources.

- **Criterion 6:** The project's projected transportation energy use requirements and its overall use of efficient transportation alternatives.

Quantification of the Project's energy usage is presented in and addresses **Criterion 1**. The discussion on construction-related energy use below focuses on **Criteria 2, 4,** and **5**. The discussion on operational energy use is divided into transportation energy demand and building energy demand. The transportation energy demand analysis discusses **Criteria 2, 4,** and **6**, and the building energy demand analysis discusses **Criteria 2, 3, 4,** and **5**.

Project-Related Sources of Energy Consumption

This analysis focuses on three sources of energy that are relevant to the proposed Project: electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel for vehicle trips and off-road equipment associated with Project construction and operations. The analysis of operational electricity usage is based on CalEEMod version 2022.1 modeling results for the Project. The Project's estimated electricity usage is based primarily on CalEEMod's default settings for Los Angeles County, and consumption factors provided by the Southern California Edison (SCE), the electricity provider for the City, and the Project site. The Project would not consume natural gas during Project operation; therefore, natural gas consumption modeling is not included in the following analysis. The results of the CalEEMod modeling are included in **Appendix B**. The amount of operational fuel consumption was estimated using CARB's EMFAC2021 website platform which provides projections for typical daily fuel usage in the County, and the Project's annual VMT outputs from CalEEMod. The estimated construction fuel consumption is based on the Project's construction

equipment list, timing/phasing, and hours of duration for construction equipment, as well as vendor, hauling, and construction worker trips.

The Project's estimated energy consumption is summarized in **Table 5**, *Project and Countywide Energy Consumption*. As shown in **Table 5**, the Project's energy usage would result in nominal (less than 0.0001 percent) increase over Los Angeles County's typical annual electricity consumption and no increase in Los Angeles County's typical annual natural gas consumption. The Project's construction off-road, construction on-road (vehicle), and operational vehicle fuel consumption would increase the County's consumption by 0.2196 percent, 0.0006 percent, and 0.0016 percent, respectively (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 1**).

Table 5. Project and Countywide Energy Consumption

Energy Type	Project Annual Energy Consumption[1]	Los Angeles County Annual Energy Consumption[2]	Percentage Increase Countywide
Electricity Consumption[3]	21 MWh	65,374,721 MWh	<0.0001%
Natural Gas Consumption[3,4]	0 therms	2,880,994,891 therms	0%
Fuel Consumption			
Construction Off-Road Fuel Consumption	70,347 gallons	32,027,987 gallons	0.2196%
Construction On-Road Fuel Consumption	25,549 gallons	4,068,799,996 gallons	0.0006%
Operational Automotive Fuel Consumption	60,769 gallons	3,833,940,155 gallons	0.0016%

Notes:

1. As modeled in CalEEMod version 2022.1.
2. The Project's electricity and natural gas consumption are compared to the total consumption in Los Angeles County in 2021, the latest year consumption data is available. The Project's automotive fuel consumption is compared with the projected Countywide fuel consumption in 2025 (construction start year) and 2028 (operational year).
   Los Angeles County electricity consumption data source: California Energy Commission, *Electricity Consumption by County,* accessed July 20, 2023, http://www.ecdms. energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx.
   Los Angeles County natural gas consumption data source: California Energy Commission, *Gas Consumption by County,* accessed July 20, 2023. http://www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx.
3. Project fuel consumption calculated based on CalEEMod results. Countywide fuel consumption is from the CARB EMFAC2021 model.
4. The Project would not consume any natural gas as the development would not use cooking appliances or require space heating.

Refer to Appendix B for assumptions used in this analysis.

Construction

During construction, the Project would consume energy in two general forms: (1) the fuel energy consumed by construction vehicles and equipment; and (2) bound energy in construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass.

Fossil fuels used for construction vehicles and other energy-consuming equipment would be used during grading, roadway construction, building construction, paving, and architectural coatings. Fuel energy consumed during construction would be temporary and would not represent a significant demand on energy resources. In addition, some incidental energy conservation would occur during construction through compliance with state requirements that heavy-duty diesel

equipment not in use for more than five minutes be turned off. Project construction equipment would also be required to comply with the latest EPA and CARB engine emissions standards. These emissions standards require highly efficient combustion systems that maximize fuel efficiency and reduce unnecessary fuel consumption. Due to increasing transportation costs and fuel prices, contractors and owners have a strong financial incentive to avoid wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction (**CEQA Appendix F – Criterion 4**).

Substantial reductions in energy inputs for construction materials can be achieved by selecting green building materials composed of recycled materials that require less energy to produce than non-recycled materials.[18] The integration of green building materials can help reduce environmental impacts associated with the extraction, transport, processing, fabrication, installation, reuse, recycling, and disposal of these building industry source materials.[19] The Project-related incremental increase in the use of energy bound in construction materials such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes and manufactured or processed materials (e.g., lumber and gas) would not substantially increase demand for energy compared to overall local and regional demand for construction materials. As indicated in **Table 5**, the Project's fuel consumption from off-road construction equipment use would be approximately 70,347 gallons, which would increase fuel use in the County by 0.2196 percent. Also indicated in **Table 5**, the Project's fuel consumption from on-road construction vehicle use would be approximately 25,549 gallons, which would increase fuel use in the County by 0.0006 percent. As such, construction would have a nominal effect on the local and regional energy supplies (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 2**). It is noted that construction fuel use is temporary and would cease upon completion of construction activities. There are no unusual Project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in the region or state (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 5**). Therefore, construction fuel consumption would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than other similar development Projects of this nature. As such, a less-than-significant impact would occur in this regard.

Operations

Transportation Energy Demand

Pursuant to the federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration is responsible for establishing additional vehicle standards and for revising existing standards. Compliance with federal fuel economy standards is not determined for each individual vehicle model. Rather, compliance is determined based on each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the portion of their vehicles produced for sale in the United States. **Table 5** provides an estimate of the daily fuel consumed by vehicles traveling to and from the Project site. Based on the *Via Princessa Park Project Traffic Study Scoping Memorandum* prepared by Michael Baker International (June 2023), the proposed Project would generate up to 279 average daily trips. As indicated in **Table 5**, Project operational daily trips are estimated to consume approximately 60,769 gallons of fuel per year, which would increase the County's automotive fuel consumption by 0.0016 percent. The Project does not propose any

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[18] California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, *Green Building Materials*, accessed July 20, 2023, https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/greenbuilding/materials#Material.

[19] California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, *Green Building Materials*, accessed July 20, 2023, https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/greenbuilding/materials#Material.

unusual features that would result in excessive long-term operational fuel consumption (**CEQA Appendix F – Criterion 2**).

The key drivers of transportation-related fuel consumption are commuting for work, seasonal events, and many personal choices on when to drive to the park for various purposes. Those factors are outside of the scope of the design of the proposed Project. However, the Project would expand the existing parking facility, which would include the installation of eight EV capable parking spaces, two of which would have EV charging stations. Additionally, the Project site is located less than one mile west of existing public transit stops serviced by the City of Santa Clarita Transit. The Via Princessa Metrolink Station is also located within the Project site, providing another alternative mode of transportation. As such, this Project would encourage and support the use of EVs and alternative modes of transportation, thus reducing petroleum fuel consumption (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 4** and **Criterion 6**).

Therefore, fuel consumption associated with vehicle trips generated by the Project would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary in comparison to other similar developments in the region. A less-than-significant impact would occur in this regard.

Building Energy Demand

The CEC developed 2020–2035 forecasts for energy consumption and peak demand in support of the 2021 IEPR for each of the major electricity and natural gas planning areas and the state based on the economic and demographic growth projections. The CEC forecasts that the statewide annual average growth rates of energy demand between 2021 and 2030 would be 1.3 percent to 2.3 percent for electricity and less than 0.1 percent to 0.8 percent increase for natural gas. As shown in **Table 5**, operational energy consumption of the Project would represent less than a 0.0001 percent increase in electricity consumption and no increase in natural gas consumption over the current Countywide usage, which would be significantly below the CEC's forecasts and the current Countywide usage. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the CEC's energy consumption forecasts and would not require additional energy capacity or supplies (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 2**). The Project would also consume energy during the same time periods as other surrounding development. As a result, the Project would not result in unique or more intensive peak or base period electricity demand (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 3**).

The Project would be required to comply with the most current version of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (commonly known as Title 24), which provide minimum efficiency standards related to various building features, including appliances, building insulation and roofing, and lighting. The Project would install high efficiency lighting and EV charging stations. Compliance with the current 2022 Title 24 standards significantly reduces energy usage (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 4**).

Furthermore, the electricity provider, SCE, is subject to California's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). The RPS requires investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total procurement by 2020 and to 60 percent of total procurement by 2030. Renewable energy is generally defined as energy that comes from resources which are naturally replenished within a human timescale such as sunlight, wind, tides, waves, and geothermal heat. The increase in reliance of such energy resources further ensures that new development projects will not result in the waste of the finite energy resources. The Project would install high efficiency lighting within the park and replace the current parking facility lighting with

high efficiency lighting. As a result, the Project would ensure energy consumption to be kept to a minimum through high efficiency appliances and lighting (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 5**).

Therefore, the Project would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of building energy during Project operation, or preempt future energy development or future energy conservation. A less-than-significant impact would occur in this regard.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The City currently does not have a plan pertaining to renewable energy or energy efficiency. The applicable state plans and policies for renewable energy and energy efficiency include Title 24 standards, CALGreen Code, the California Public Utilities Commission's Strategic Plan, and the CEC's 2022 IEPR Update. The Project would be required to comply with the latest Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards pertaining to building energy efficiency. Compliance with 2022 Title 24, Parts 6 and 11, would ensure the Project incorporates energy-efficient insulation, lighting, ventilation systems for new structures proposed, and EV charging infrastructure. Adherence to 2022 Title 24 would also ensure consistency with the Strategic Plan strategies, the IEPR building energy efficiency recommendations, and General Plan Goal LU 7 and Goal CO 8. Additionally, per the RPS, the Project would utilize electricity provided by SCE that is composed of 36 percent renewable energy as of 2018 and would achieve at least 60 percent renewable energy by 2030. Because the Project's per capita energy consumption would be significantly less than the existing regional (County) level, the Project would be consistent with per capita energy reduction targets identified in statewide plans and programs, such as the Strategic Plan and the IEPR.

The City of Santa Clarita adopted its CAP in August 2012. The purpose of the CAP is to measure the amount of GHG emissions generated within the City and to develop strategies to reduce the emissions in the future. The CAP builds from the goals, objectives, and policies delineated in the General Plan and develops specific actions to be implemented and monitored to achieve GHG reduction goals. However, the City's CAP does not align with the statewide goals beyond 2020 and thus the CAP is not consistent with the criteria within CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 for the post-2020 period. As such, consistency with the City's General Plan would be analyzed instead.

Table 6, *Project Energy Use General Plan Consistency Analysis*, demonstrates the Project's consistency with the applicable General Plan energy efficiency goals and policies. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.

Table 6. Project Energy Use General Plan Consistency Analysis

General Plan Goals and Policies	Consistency Analysis
Goal LU 7: Environmentally responsible development through site planning, building design, waste reduction, and responsible stewardship of resources.	
Policy LU 7.1.1: Require shade trees within parking lots and adjacent to buildings to reduce the heat island effect, in consideration of Fire Department fuel modification restrictions.	**Consistent**. The Project proposes the planting of shade trees throughout the parking lot and adjacent to recreational structures on-site to reduce the heat island effect. As such, the Project is consistent with this policy.
Goal CO.8: Development designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.	
Policy CO 8.2.6: Promote use of solar lighting in parks and along paseos and trails, where practical.	**Consistent**. The Project proposes accessory improvements such as park facility lighting installation. The Project would coordinate with the City of Santa Clarita with the installation of solar lighting in the park if practical. As such, this Project would be consistent with this policy.
Policy CO 8.2.9: Reduce heat islands through installation of trees to shade parking lots and hardscapes, and use of light-colored reflective paving and roofing surfaces.	**Consistent**. The Project proposes the planting of shade trees throughout the parking lot and adjacent to recreational structures on-site to reduce the heat island effect; refer to response to Policy LU 7.1.1 above. Additionally, the Project would include approximately 800,000 square feet of landscaping (trees, shrubs, etc.) which would further reduce the heat island effect. As such, the Project is consistent with this policy.
Policy CO 8.2.10: Support installation of energy-efficient traffic control devices, street lights, and parking lot lights.	**Consistent**. The Project would construct high efficiency lighting throughout the park and its associated recreation facilities (sport fields, pickleball court, etc.). Additionally, the Project would replace the existing lighting in the parking lot with high efficiency lighting. As such, the Project is consistent with this policy.

Source: City of Santa Clarita, *City of Santa Clarita General Plan*, June 2011.

Section VII. Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
GEOLOGY AND SOILS: Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Result in a change in topography or ground surface relief features?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Result in earth movement (cut and/or fill) of 10,000 cubic yards or more?	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h) Involve development and/or grading on a slope greater than 10% natural grade?	☐	☐	☒	☐
i) Result in the destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical feature?	☐	☐	☒	☐
j) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion

The analysis in this section is based on the Geotechnical Evaluation prepared by Psomas and Ninyo and Moore, dated August 28, 2023, and available as **Appendix E** of this Initial Study, and the Paleontological Resources Identification Report for the Via Princessa Park Project (Paleontological Resources Report) by Michael Baker International, dated June 19, 2023, and available as **Appendix F** of this Initial Study.

a.i) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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.

Less Than Significant Impact. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazards of surface faulting and fault rupture by establishing regulatory zones around active faults. These zones extend from 200 feet to 500 feet on each side of the known fault and identify areas where a potential surface rupture could be hazardous for buildings used for human occupancy. According to the Geotechnical Evaluation prepared for the Project, no active faults are known to cross the Project site and the Project site is not located within a State of California Earthquake Fault Zone, formerly known as an Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone. Nonetheless, the Project would be required to comply with the 2022 California Building Code (CBC), which establishes regulations for structures to withstand impacts caused by localized earthquake activity. Further, the Project would not involve construction of structures designed for prolonged human habitation, such as residential or commercial land uses. Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, and impacts would be less than significant.

a.ii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is located in a seismically active area, as is the majority of Southern California, and there is high potential for strong seismic ground shaking in the Project area. However, the type and magnitude of seismic hazards that may affect the Project site are dependent on both the distance to causative faults and the intensity and duration of the

seismic event. Although the probability of primary surface rupture is considered relatively low, ground-shaking hazards posed by earthquakes occurring along regional active faults do exist and would be considered in the design and construction of the proposed Project. Regional active faults in the Project area include but are not limited to the Whitney Fault, Soledad Fault, Holser Fault, and Northridge Blind Thrust Fault.

The proposed Project would be required to adhere to the 2022 CBC, which provides procedures for earthquake-resistant structural design that include considerations for on-site soil conditions, occupancy, and structure configurations. The proposed Project would implement the Geotechnical Evaluation's design standards specific to the Project, including specifications such as those for earthwork activities, seismic design, and structural foundations. The Geotechnical Evaluation also recommends a construction monitoring program to be implemented as part of the proposed Project, consisting of preconstruction condition surveys to be performed on structures and improvements within approximately 50 feet of the proposed deeper excavations, particularly for the railroad track undercrossing. Furthermore, the Project would be subject to building inspection by the City during and after construction to ensure compliance with the 2022 CBC. Compliance with the 2022 CBC and implementation of the Geotechnical Evaluation's standards would ensure that the Project would not directly or indirectly cause potential adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death, related to strong seismic ground shaking. Moreover, the potential risk from seismic ground shaking is an existing condition that the Project would not exacerbate. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

a.iii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less Than Significant Impact. Liquefaction is the phenomenon in which loosely deposited granular soils and non-plastic fine-grained soils located below the water table undergo rapid loss of shear strength due to excess pore pressure generation when subjected to strong earthquake-induced ground shaking. Sufficient ground shaking duration results in the loss of grain-to-grain contact due to a rapid rise in pore water pressure. This causes the soil to behave as a fluid for a short period of time. Liquefaction is known generally to occur in saturated or near-saturated cohesionless soils at depths shallower than 50 feet below the ground surface.

According to the Geotechnical Evaluation, the Project site is located in a State of California Liquefaction Hazard Zone. Based on historic high groundwater levels and groundwater monitoring well data, groundwater levels in the Project vicinity have been recorded between 10 to 15 feet below the ground surface. Groundwater was measured in the exploratory borings as part of the Geotechnical Evaluation after drilling at depths ranging from approximately 55 to 68 feet below the ground surface. Additionally, the soil borings taken at the Project site determined that the Project site is underlain by pavement, fill soils, and alluvium generally consisting of various types of sand and silt, with varying amounts of gravel and sandy clay. Based on the unconsolidated nature of the underlying soil materials and the historically shallow groundwater levels in the Project site vicinity, the Project site is susceptible to liquefaction.

As discussed in VII(a)(ii), the Project would be required to adhere to the 2022 CBC, which includes considerations for on-site soil conditions. The proposed Project would also implement the Geotechnical Evaluation's design standards specific to the Project to reduce impacts related to liquefaction, including removal of existing fill and soft and/or loose soils, to be replaced with

competent native soils, scarification, moisture-conditioning of soils, and recompaction. Incorporation of the appropriate design techniques would be confirmed during the City's plan check process and the proper design techniques would be included in construction specifications prior to issuance of grading permits. With regard to CEQA, the potential risk from seismic-related ground failure/liquefaction is an existing condition that the Project would not exacerbate. Therefore, impacts related to seismic-related ground failure/liquefaction would be less than significant.

a.iv) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

Less Than Significant Impact. Landslides may be induced by strong vibratory motion produced by earthquakes. Research and historical data indicate that seismically induced landslides tend to occur in weak soil and rock on sloping terrain. The process for zoning earthquake-induced landslides incorporates expected future earthquake shaking, existing landslide features, slope gradient, and strength of earth materials on the slope.

According to the Geotechnical Evaluation, the Project area is not located in an area considered susceptible to seismically induced landslides. Rather, the Project area is underlain by Holocene-age young alluvium. Based on the Geotechnical Evaluation's review of historical aerial images and the on-site reconnaissance, there was no evidence of significant slope failures or debris flows on the slopes adjacent to the Project area, and the slopes are well-vegetated. Nonetheless, the Project would incorporate drainage improvements and routine drainage maintenance to accommodate surface runoff from the hillsides entering and exiting the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The existing Project site is predominantly vacant, apart from existing improvements (a parking lot, railroad, and the Metrolink train station) constructed on the southerly portion of the property. Construction of the proposed Project would include ground-disturbing activities, such as grading and excavation, which could result in the potential for erosion to occur at the Project site. To reduce wind and water erosion during earth-moving activities, the Project is required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 regarding fugitive dust, which, as described in Section III, Air Quality, would reduce the potential for wind-driven erosion/loss of topsoil. Similarly, as discussed further in Section X, Hydrology and Water Quality, water erosion during construction would be substantially reduced through required permits from the Los Angeles County Regional Water Quality Control Board, such as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System's (NPDES) Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit, mandatory for construction sites that disturb more than one acre of land, requires construction sites to implement stormwater controls and develop a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which controls the amount of sediment and other pollutants discharged from the construction site. The details of the Construction General Permit are discussed in further detail in Section X, Hydrology and Water Quality, of this Initial Study. Best management practices that are required to be included in the SWPPP include measures designed to prevent soil erosion during ground-disturbing activities, such as sediment traps, silt fencing, fiber rolls, sandbag barriers, and

biofilter bags. Thus, the potential to increase erosion during construction activities would be substantially reduced through required compliance with existing regulations.

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in both impervious surfaces from the proposed park facilities and parking lot improvements and pervious surfaces such as vegetation and landscaped areas. The new surfaces would stabilize underlying soils, providing protection from rain- or wind-driven loss of topsoil. The Project would also result in improvements to Honby Channel, including sedimentation and stabilization improvements, as well as buried soil-cement bank protection, which would protect the proposed park site from flooding and erosion. Specifically, removal of sediment within Honby Channel, along with the vegetation in the sediment, would reestablish the originally designed channel grade and capacity. Following removal of the sediment, the earthen channel would be restored by replacing the existing non-native, invasive plant species with climate- and region-appropriate native vegetation in the disturbed areas, which would help stabilize this channel and would serve to protect the in-channel trees from erosion. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Project would be expected to improve soil erosion conditions as compared to existing conditions. Therefore, because the developed Project site would reduce erosion potential compared to existing conditions and would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 and NPDES requirements, the Project would not result in substantial wind or water soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in VII(a)(iii) and (a)(iv) above, the Project site is located within an area susceptible to liquefaction. As the Project site is relatively flat, the Project site is not susceptible to landslides. Lateral spreading of the ground surface during an earthquake usually takes place along weak shear zones that have formed within a liquefiable soil layer. According to the Geotechnical Evaluation, the Project site is not susceptible to lateral spreading. Land subsidence is a gradual settling or sudden sinking of the ground surface. According to the United States Geological Survey's Areas of Land Subsidence in California Map, the City of Santa Clarita is not located within an area of subsidence.[20] However, the Project site is susceptible to ground settlement as discussed in the Project's Geotechnical Evaluation. As previously discussed, the Project would implement the design specifications from the Geotechnical Evaluation, including specifications for excavation, shoring, foundations, and dewatering, to reduce impacts related to unstable soils. With regard to CEQA, the potential risks from liquefaction and ground settlement are existing conditions that the Project would not exacerbate. As such, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

[20] United States Geological Survey, Areas of Land Subsidence in California Map, accessed July 30, 2023, https://ca.water.usgs.gov/land_subsidence/california-subsidence-areas.html.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Expansive soils are clay-based soils that tend to expand (increase in volume) as they absorb water and shrink (lessen in volume) as water is drawn away. If soils consist of expansive clays, foundation movement and/or damage can occur if wetting and drying of the clay does not occur uniformly across the entire area.

The Project site is underlain by relatively uniform and interbedded brown, and gray, moist to wet, medium dense to dense, silt, silty sand, clayey sand and sand and stiff to hard clay. While clay-based soils tend to expand as they absorb water and shrink when water is drawn away, the Project would implement soil specifications from the Geotechnical Evaluation, including backfilling with non-expansive soils (soils defined as having an expansion index of 20 or less per ASTM International Test Method D 4829), and if encountered, avoiding placement of expansive soils in the upper layers of the subgrade (e.g., ensuring that any expansive soils encountered during grading are not placed within the top 12 inches of the subgrade). As such, implementation of the Geotechnical Evaluation's specifications would ensure impacts related to expansive soils would be less than significant.

e) Would the project 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?

No Impact. As the Project site is in an urbanized area served by existing wastewater infrastructure, no septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are included as part of the proposed Project. Therefore, no impact associated with the use of such systems would occur.

f) Would the project result in a change in topography or ground surface relief features?

Less Than Significant Impact. While the proposed Project would transform the site as compared with existing conditions through grading and development of the proposed Project components, the Project would not alter the site's topography in a manner that would cause substantial stability, erosion, or drainage impacts. The Project would include a regional stormwater infiltration facility, buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration, all of which would serve as civil and geotechnical design features to reduce potential impacts related to Project site stability, erosion, and drainage patterns. Therefore, the Project would not result in a significant impact related to a change in topography or ground surface relief features, and impacts would be less than significant.

g) Would the project result in earth movement (cut and/or fill) of 10,000 cubic yards or more?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would involve approximately 208,000 cubic yards (cy) of cut, 219,000 cy of fill, primarily from installation of the infiltration gallery. Approximately 11,000 cy of soil is anticipated to be imported during construction, with no soil exported from the Project site. The Project would require grading/site preparation in order to comply with the recommendations in the Geotechnical Evaluation, such as removal of unstable soils and placement/compaction of engineered fill materials. While the Project does involve more than

10,000 cy of earthwork, there would be no substantial landform changes as a result of the proposed Project, as discussed in response to VII(f), above. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in any significant environmental impacts as a result of earth movement of more than 10,000 cubic yards and impacts would be less than significant.

h) Would the project involve development and/or grading on a slope greater than 10% natural grade?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the Geotechnical Evaluation, the Project site does not contain substantial slopes. Although there are stabilized slopes adjacent to the Project site to the south across Via Princessa, there is no evidence of significant slope failures or debris flows on these adjacent slopes and they are well vegetated. Therefore, impacts related to development and/or grading on a slope greater than 10 percent natural grade would be less than significant.

i) Would the project result in the destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical feature?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site does not contain any prominent ridgelines or other regionally notable topographic features that would be graded or affected by the proposed Project. Therefore, while the Project would develop a partially undeveloped site, the Project would not result in the destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical feature. As such, Project impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The Paleontological Resources Report prepared for the Project included a fossil locality search at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC), literature and geologic map review, and a paleontological resources sensitivity analysis. These efforts identified the paleontological sensitivity of the Project area and determined whether the Project could result in significant impacts to paleontological resources.

According to the Paleontological Resources Report, the records search identified seven known fossil localities in the NHMLAC's collection in the vicinity of the Project site; refer to Appendix F for the records search results. Within 2 miles of the Project site, Pleistocene-age alluvial deposits have yielded scientifically important fossils, including sea turtles, dugongs, packrats, squirrels, deer mice, kangaroo rats, birds, and invertebrates. Additionally, a supplemental investigation resulted in the identification of nine additional fossil localities; refer to Appendix F for the supplemental investigation results. Six additional localities from the Mint Canyon Formation, a rock unit named for a geographic feature less than 3 miles northeast of the Project site, have been recorded in the University of California Museum of Paleontology database. Furthermore, a review of published scientific literature yielded 21 additional reported occurrences of invertebrate fossils from Juncal Formation and Pico Formation deposits, located in the general Newhall area and approximately 4 to 5 miles away from the Project site.

The NHMLAC paleontological records search and fossil locality searches did not identify any paleontological resources within the Project site. However, several localities have been found within 3 miles of the Project site in similar rock formations to those underlying the Project site (i.e., Quaternary young alluvium, undivided and Holocene alluvial deposits). Therefore, due to the fossil

sensitivity of the rock formations present within the Project site, the Project has a high potential to disturb unknown paleontological resources within undisturbed sedimentary deposits and bedrock.

In order to reduce impacts to unknown paleontological resources underlying the Project site during earthwork activities, the Project shall incorporate Mitigation Measure PALEO-1, which requires a paleontological sensitivity training for all personnel involved in earthwork activities; Mitigation Measure PALEO-2, which requires paleontological monitoring; Mitigation Measure PALEO-3, which requires a data recovery plan for discovered significant fossils; and Mitigation Measure PALEO-4, which requires standard procedures to be taken in the case that paleontological resources are discovered. Implementation of Mitigation Measures PALEO-1 through PALEO-4 would ensure that potential impacts to unknown paleontological resources discovered during earthwork activities would be reduced to less significant levels. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact on paleontological resources with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measure PALEO-1:

The contractor must retain a Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualified paleontologist to provide or supervise a paleontological sensitivity training (i.e., Workers Environmental Awareness Program or WEAP training), prior to the beginning of ground-disturbing activities, for all personnel planned to be involved with earth-moving activities. The training session will focus on how to identify paleontological localities, such as fossils, that may be encountered and the procedures to follow if identified.

Mitigation Measure PALEO-2:

For the purposes of this mitigation measure, ground disturbance refers to activities that would impact subsurface geologic deposits, such as grading, excavation, and boring. Activities taking place in current topsoil or within previously disturbed fill sediments, e.g., clearing and grubbing, or at the current topsoil surface, e.g., building repairs, do not require paleontological monitoring. Prior to ground disturbing activities, such as grading or excavation in sedimentary deposits and/or sedimentary rock material other than topsoil, specifically the Middle to Early Holocene and Pleistocene alluvial deposits, the contractor shall retain an SVP-qualified paleontologist to monitor or oversee monitoring of these activities. The paleontological monitor shall be on site for grading activities associated with the railroad right-of-way undercrossing, creek bank stabilization, and structural infiltration facilities, as these areas are scheduled for excavation of between 20 and 25 feet. Spot-checking the areas of more shallow excavations will be sufficient. If fossils are discovered during grading at any depth, the on-site construction supervisor shall be notified and redirect work away from the location of the discovery. The recommendations of the paleontologist shall be implemented with respect to the evaluation and recovery of fossils, after which the on-site construction supervisor shall be notified and shall direct work to continue in the location of the fossil discovery.

Mitigation Measure PALEO-3:

If the fossils are determined to be significant per the SVP standards described in Mitigation Measure PALEO-4, then the SVP-qualified paleontologist shall prepare and implement a data recovery plan. The plan shall include the following measures at a minimum:

- The paleontologist shall ensure that all significant fossils collected are cleaned, identified, cataloged, and permanently curated with an appropriate institution with a research interest in the materials (which may be the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County);

- The paleontologist shall ensure that specialty studies are completed, as appropriate, for any significant fossil collected; and

- The paleontologist shall ensure that the curation of fossils is completed in consultation with the City. The curation institution's acceptance letter shall be submitted to the City.

Mitigation Measure PALEO-4:

If any paleontological resources are encountered during construction or the course of any ground-disturbance activities, all such activities shall halt immediately. For the purposes of this mitigation measure, ground disturbance refers to activities that would impact subsurface geologic deposits, such as grading, excavation, and boring. At this time, the City will consult with a qualified paleontologist to assess the significance of the find. The assessment will follow SVP standards as delineated in the *Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources* (2010). If any find is determined to be significant, appropriate avoidance measures recommended by the consultant and approved by the City must be followed unless avoidance is determined to be infeasible by the City. If there is a federal nexus for the Project, the involved federal agency (e.g., the US Army Corps of Engineers) shall also be consulted. If avoidance is infeasible, other appropriate measures (e.g., data recovery, excavation) shall be instituted. The recommendations of the qualified paleontologist shall be implemented with respect to the evaluation and recovery of fossils, after which the on-site construction supervisor shall be notified and shall direct work to continue in the location of the fossil discovery. Any fossils recovered during mitigation shall be cleaned, identified, cataloged, and permanently curated with an accredited and permanent scientific institution with a research interest in the materials.

If no fossils have been recovered after 50 percent of the excavation has been completed, full-time monitoring may be modified to weekly spot-check monitoring at the discretion of the qualified paleontologist. The qualified paleontologist may recommend to the client to reduce paleontological monitoring based on observations of specific site conditions during initial monitoring (e.g., if the geologic setting precludes the occurrence of fossils). The recommendation to reduce or discontinue paleontological monitoring in the Project area shall be based on the professional opinion of the qualified paleontologist regarding the potential for fossils to be present after a reasonable extent of the geology and stratigraphy has been evaluated.

A qualified professional paleontologist is a professional with a graduate degree in paleontology, geology, or related field, with demonstrated experience in the vertebrate, invertebrate, or botanical paleontology of California, as well as at least one year of full-time professional experience or equivalent specialized training in paleontological research (i.e., the identification of fossil deposits, application of paleontological field and laboratory procedures and techniques, and curation of fossil specimens), and at least four months of supervised field and analytic experience in general North American paleontology as defined by the SVP.

Section VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

Discussion

This analysis included in this section is based on the Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results, available as **Appendix B** of this Initial Study.

Global Climate Change

California is a substantial contributor of global greenhouse gases (GHGs), emitting over 418 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$) per year.[21] GHGs are global in their effect, which is to increase the earth's ability to absorb heat in the atmosphere. As primary GHGs have a long lifetime in the atmosphere, accumulate over time, and are generally well-mixed, their impact on the atmosphere is mostly independent of the point of emission. Every nation emits GHGs and as a result makes an incremental cumulative contribution to global climate change; therefore, global cooperation will be required to reduce the rate of GHG emissions enough to slow or stop the human-caused increase in average global temperatures and associated changes in climatic conditions.

The impact of human activities on global climate change is apparent in the observational record. Air trapped by ice has been extracted from core samples taken from polar ice sheets to determine the global atmospheric variation of CO_2, methane, and nitrous oxide (N_2O) from before the start of industrialization (approximately 1750) to over 650,000 years ago. For that period, it was found that CO_2 concentrations ranged from 180 to 300 parts per million (ppm). For the period from approximately 1750 to the present, global CO_2 concentrations increased from a pre-industrialization period concentration of 280 to 379 ppm in 2005, with the 2005 value far exceeding the upper end of the pre-industrial period range. As of July 2023, the highest monthly average concentration of CO_2 in the atmosphere was recorded at 420.09 ppm.[22]

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[21] California Air Resources Board, *California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2020,* accessed July 20, 2023, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/cc/inventory/2000-2020_ghg_inventory_trends.pdf.

[22] Scripps Institution of Oceanography, *Carbon Dioxide Concentration at Mauna Loa Observatory*, accessed July 20, 2023, https://scripps.ucsd.edu/programs/keelingcurve/.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) constructed several emission trajectories of GHGs needed to stabilize global temperatures and climate change impacts. It concluded that a stabilization of GHGs at 400 to 450 ppm carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) concentration is required to keep global mean warming below 2 degrees Celsius (^oC),[23] which in turn is assumed to be necessary to avoid dangerous climate change.

Regulatory Framework

State

Various statewide and local initiatives to reduce the state's contribution to GHG emissions have raised awareness that, even though the various contributors to and consequences of global climate change are not yet fully understood, global climate change is under way, and there is a real potential for severe adverse environmental, social, and economic effects in the long term.

Assembly Bill 32 (California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006). California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32; California Health and Safety Code Division 25.5, Sections 38500 - 38599). AB 32 establishes regulatory, reporting, and market mechanisms to achieve quantifiable reductions in GHG emissions and establishes a cap on Statewide GHG emissions. AB 32 requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. AB 32 specifies that regulations adopted in response to AB 1493 should be used to address GHG emissions from vehicles. However, AB 32 also includes language stating that if the AB 1493 regulations cannot be implemented, then CARB should develop new regulations to control vehicle GHG emissions under the authorization of AB 32.

Executive Order S-3-05. Executive Order S-3-05 set forth a series of target dates by which statewide emissions of GHGs would be progressively reduced, as follows:

- By 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels;
- By 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; and
- By 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

Senate Bill 32. Signed into law on September 2016, SB 32 codifies the 2030 GHG reduction target in Executive Order B-30-15 (40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030). The bill authorizes CARB to adopt an interim GHG emissions level target to be achieved by 2030.

CARB Scoping Plan. On December 11, 2008, CARB adopted the *Climate Change Scoping Plan* (Scoping Plan), which functions as a roadmap to achieve GHG reductions in California required by AB 32 through subsequently enacted regulations. The Scoping Plan contains the main strategies California will implement to reduce GHG emissions by 174 million metric tons (MT), or approximately 30 percent, from the state's projected 2020 emissions level of 596 million $MTCO_2e$

[23] Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO_2e) – A metric measure used to compare the emissions from various greenhouse gases based upon their global warming potential.

under a business as usual (BAU) scenario.[24] This is a reduction of 42 million $MTCO_2e$, or almost 10 percent, from 2002 to 2004 average emissions, but requires the reductions in the face of population and economic growth through 2020.

The Scoping Plan calculates 2020 BAU emissions as the emissions that would be expected to occur in the absence of any GHG reduction measures. The 2020 BAU emissions estimate was derived by projecting emissions from a past baseline year using growth factors specific to each of the different economic sectors (e.g., transportation, electrical power, commercial and residential, industrial). CARB used three-year average emissions, by sector, for 2002 to 2004 to forecast emissions to 2020. The measures described in the Scoping Plan are intended to reduce the projected 2020 BAU to 1990 levels, as required by AB 32.

AB 32 requires CARB to update the Scoping Plan at least once every five years. CARB adopted the first major update to the Scoping Plan on May 22, 2014. The updated Scoping Plan identifies the actions California has already taken to reduce GHG emissions and focuses on areas where further reductions could be achieved to help meet the 2020 target established by AB 32. The Scoping Plan update also looks beyond 2020 toward the 2050 goal, established in Executive Order S-3-05, and observes that "a mid-term statewide emission limit will ensure that the State stays on course to meet our long-term goal."

On January 20, 2017, CARB released the proposed Second Update to the Scoping Plan, which identifies the State's post-2020 reduction strategy. The Second Update was finalized in November 2017 and approved on December 14, 2017, and reflects the 2030 target of a 40 percent reduction below 1990 levels, set by Executive Order B-30-15 and codified by SB 32. The 2017 Scoping Plan Update establishes a new Statewide emissions limit of 260 million $MTCO_2e$ for the year 2030, which corresponds to a 40 percent decrease in 1990 levels by 2030.

On December 15, 2022, CARB released the *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan), which identifies the strategies achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier. The 2022 Scoping Plan contains the GHG reductions, technology, and clean energy mandated by statutes. The 2022 Scoping Plan was developed to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 through a substantial reduction in fossil fuel dependence, while at the same time increasing deployment of efficient non-combustion technologies and distribution of clean energy. The plan would also reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants and would include mechanical CO_2 capture and sequestration actions, as well as emissions and sequestration from natural and working lands and nature-based strategies. Under 2022 Scoping Plan, by 2045, California aims to cut GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels, reduce smog-forming air pollution by 71 percent, reduce the demand for liquid petroleum by 94 percent compared to current usage, improve health and welfare, and create millions of new jobs. This plan also builds upon current and previous environmental justice efforts to integrate environmental justice directly into the plan, to ensure that all communities can reap the benefits of this transformational plan.

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[24] "Business as Usual" refers to emissions that would be expected to occur in the absence of GHG reductions; refer to http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/bau.htm. Note that there is significant controversy as to what BAU means. In determining the GHG 2020 limit, CARB used the above as the "definition." It is broad enough to allow for design features to be counted as reductions.

Local

Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

On September 3, 2020, the SCAG Regional Council formally adopted the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. The SCS portion of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS highlights strategies for the region to reach the regional target of reducing GHGs from autos and light-duty trucks by 8 percent per capita by 2020, and 19 percent by 2035 (compared to 2005 levels). Specially, these strategies are to:

- Focus growth near destinations and mobility options;
- Promote diverse housing choices;
- Leverage technology innovations;
- Support implementation of sustainability policies; and
- Promote a green region.

Furthermore, the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS discusses a variety of land use tools to help achieve the State-mandated reductions in GHG emissions through reduced per capita VMT. Some of these tools include center focused placemaking, focusing on priority growth areas, job centers, and transit priority areas, as well as high quality transit areas and green regions.

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The City of Santa Clarita General Plan was adopted in June 2011. This General Plan has been prepared pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65300 et seq., which require that each city and county within the state "adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning." The General Plan includes the following elements: Land Use Element, Economic Development Element, Circulation Element, Noise Element, Conservation and Open Space Element, Safety Element, and Housing Element.

The following goals and policies related to GHG emissions are applicable to the proposed Project:

Conservation and Open Space Element

Goal CO 8: Development designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy and natural resource consumption, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Objective CO 8.2: Reduce energy and materials consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in public uses and facilities.

Policy CO 8.2.6: Promote use of solar lighting in parks and along paseos and trails, where practical.

Policy CO 8.2.9: Reduce heat islands through installation of trees to shade parking lots and hardscapes, and use of light-colored reflective paving and roofing surfaces.

Policy CO 8.2.11: Implement recycling in all public buildings, parks, and public facilities, including for special events.

Objective CO 8.3: Encourage the following green building and sustainable development practices on private development projects, to the extent reasonable and feasible.

Policy CO 8.3.7: Encourage the use of trees and landscaping to reduce heating and cooling energy loads, through shading of buildings and parking lots.

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

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

Response to a) and b): Less Than Significant Impact. The City has not adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing impacts related to GHG emissions. Similarly, the SCAQMD, CARB, or any other state or regional agency has not yet adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing GHG emissions that can apply to the Project. Therefore, the methodology for evaluating the Project's impacts related to GHG emissions focuses on its consistency with statewide, regional, and local plans adopted for the purpose of reducing and/or mitigating GHG emissions. This evaluation of consistency with such plans is the sole basis for determining the significance of the Project's GHG-related impacts on the environment.

Notwithstanding, for informational purposes, the analysis also calculates the amount of GHG emissions that would be attributable to the Project using recommended air quality models, as described below. The primary purpose of quantifying the Project's GHG emissions is to satisfy State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a), which calls for a good-faith effort to describe and calculate emissions. The estimated emissions inventory is also used to determine if there would be a reduction in the Project's incremental contribution of GHG emissions because of compliance with regulations and requirements adopted to implement plans for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. However, the significance of the Project's GHG emissions impacts is not based on the amount of GHG emissions resulting from the Project.

Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

Project-related GHG emissions would include emissions from construction activities, area sources, mobile sources, and refrigerants, while indirect sources include emission from energy consumption, water demand, and solid waste generation. The most recent version of CalEEMod (version 2022.1) was used to calculate Project-related GHG emissions. **Table 7**, *Estimated Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, presents the estimated GHG emissions of the proposed Project. CalEEMod outputs are contained within **Appendix B**.

Table 7. Estimated Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Source	CO_2	Methane	N_2O	Refrigerants	CO_2e[(2)]
	Metric Tons/year[1]				
Direct Emissions					
Construction (amortized over 30 years)	37.88	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	38.34
Area Source	0.50	<0.01	<0.01	-	0.50
Mobile Source	374.00	0.02	0.01	0.46	379.00
Refrigerants	-	-	-	0.00	0.00
Total Direct Emissions[2]	412.38	0.03	0.02	0.46	417.8
Indirect Emissions					
Energy	5.14	<0.01	<0.01	-	5.16
Solid Waste	0.01	<0.01	0.00	-	0.04
Water Demand	31.80	<0.01	<0.01	-	31.90
Total Indirect Emissions[2]	36.98	<0.01	<0.01	-	37.21
Total Project-Related Emissions[2]	454.94 $MTCO_2e$/year				

Notes:

1. Emissions calculated using California Emissions Estimator Model Version 2022.1 computer model.
2. Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) is calculated by multiplying each greenhouse gas with its respective global warming potential (GWP). $MTCO_2e$ = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.
3. Totals may be slightly off due to rounding.

Refer to **Appendix B** for assumptions used in this analysis.

Direct Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

Construction Emissions. Construction GHG emissions are typically summed and amortized over the lifetime of the Project (assumed to be 30 years), then added to the operational emissions.[25] As shown in **Table 7**, the proposed Project would result in 38.34 $MTCO_2e$ per year of construction emissions when amortized over 30 years (or a total of 1,150.33 $MTCO_2e$ in 30 years).

Area Source. Area source emissions were calculated using CalEEMod and Project-specific land use data. Project-related area sources include exhaust emissions from landscape maintenance equipment, such as lawnmowers, shedders/grinders, blowers, trimmers, chain saws, and hedge trimmers used to maintain the landscaping of the site. However, beginning in 2024, a new amendment to CARB's small off-road engine regulations will require most newly manufactured small off-road engines to (such as those found in leaf blowers, lawn mowers, and other equipment) be zero emission. Use of these zero emissions engines would be phased in over time and it may take years for all existing equipment to be replaced by new, zero emissions engines. As such, the prepared modeling assumes the use of internal combustion-powered landscaping equipment during Project operation. The Project would directly result in 0.50 $MTCO_2e$ per year from area source emissions; refer to **Table 7**.

[25] The project lifetime is based on the standard 30-year assumption of the South Coast Air Quality Management District, *Draft Guidance Document – Interim CEQA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Significance Threshold*, October 2008.

Mobile Source. The mobile source emissions were calculated as a conservative estimate generated from the CalEEMod 2022.1 default. Based on the Via Princessa Park Project Traffic Study Scoping Memorandum prepared by Michael Baker International (June 2023), the proposed Project would generate up to approximately 279 average daily trips. The Project would result in approximately 379.00 $MTCO_2e$ per year of mobile source generated GHG emissions; refer to **Table 7**.

Refrigerants. Refrigerants are substances used in equipment for air conditioning and refrigeration. Most of the refrigerants used today are hydrofluorocarbons or blends thereof, which can have high GWP values. All equipment that uses refrigerants has a charge size (i.e., quantity of refrigerant the equipment contains) and an operational refrigerant leak rate, and each refrigerant has a GWP that is specific to that refrigerant. CalEEMod quantifies refrigerant emissions from leaks during regular operation and routine servicing over the equipment lifetime, and then derives average annual emissions from the lifetime estimate. Project operation primarily includes operation of a park which would have minimal to no air conditioning and refrigeration on-site. As such, the Project would not release refrigerants-related emissions and result in nominal refrigerants GHG emissions; refer **Table 7**.

Indirect Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

Energy Consumption. Energy consumption emissions were calculated using CalEEMod and Project-specific land use data. SCE would provide electricity to the Project site. The Project would indirectly result in 5.16 $MTCO_2e$ per year due to energy consumption; refer to **Table 7**.

Solid Waste. Solid waste associated with operations of the proposed Project would result in 0.04 $MTCO_2e$ per year; refer to **Table 7**. This includes solid waste in the form of landscaping debris resulting from regular maintenance of the park's turf fields and landscaping.

Water Demand. The Project operations would result in a demand of approximately 24,855,115 gallons of water per year. Emissions from indirect energy impacts due to water demand would result in 31.90 $MTCO_2e$ per year; refer to **Table 7**.

Total Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

As shown in **Table 7**, the total amount of Project-related GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources combined would total 454.94 $MTCO_2e$ per year.

Consistency with Applicable GHG Plans, Policies, or Regulations

Consistency with the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan

The 2022 Scoping Plan identifies reduction measures necessary to achieve the goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier. Actions that reduce GHG emissions are identified for each AB 32 inventory sector. **Table 8**, *Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan: AB 32 GHG Inventory Sectors*, evaluates the applicable reduction actions/strategies by emissions source category to determine how the Project would be consistent with or exceed reduction actions/strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan.

Table 8. Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan: AB 32 Inventory Sectors

Actions and Strategies	Project Consistency Analysis
Smart Growth/Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT)	
Reduce VMT per capita to 25% below 2019 levels by 2030, and 30% below 2019 levels by 2045	**Consistent**. The Project would add eight EV capable parking spaces to the preexisting parking facility; two of these spaces would have EV charging stations installed. This addition to the parking facility would promote alternative modes of transportation to reduce VMT. Additionally, the Project is located near public transportation stops such as Via Princessa Metrolink Station and the City of Santa Clarita Transit bus stops. As such, the Project would be consistent with this action.
Construction Equipment	
Achieve 25% of energy demand electrified by 2030 and 75% electrified by 2045	**Consistent.** The City of Santa Clarita has not adopted an ordinance or program requiring electricity-powered construction equipment. However, if adopted, the Project would be required to comply with the applicable goals or policies requiring the use of electric construction equipment in the future. As such, the Project would not conflict with this action and would be consistent with any electrification ordinance passed by the City in the future. Additionally, as technologies advance and new State regulations are adopted related to electricity-powered construction equipment, the equipment would be integrated into the fleet of construction contractors. The Project would use construction equipment that complies with the latest regulations. As such, the Project would be consistent with this action.
Non-combustion Methane Emissions	
Divert 75% of organic waste from landfills by 2025	**Consistent**. Designed to reduce the amount of organic waste (such as food scraps and yard waste) entering landfills, SB 1383 establishes targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. The law establishes an additional target that not less than 20 percent of currently disposed edible food is recovered for human consumption by 2025. The Project would comply with local and regional regulations and recycle or compost 75 percent of waste by 2025 pursuant to SB 1383. As such, the Project would be consistent with this action.
Source: California Air Resources Board, *2022 Scoping Plan*, November 16, 2022.	

Consistency with the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

On September 3, 2020, the Regional Council of SCAG formally adopted the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS includes performance goals that were adopted to help focus future investments on the best-performing projects, as well as different strategies to preserve, maintain, and optimize the performance of the existing transportation system. The SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is forecast to help California reach its GHG reduction goals by reducing GHG emissions from passenger cars by 8 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and 19 percent by 2035 in accordance with the CARB targets adopted in March 2018. Five key SCS strategies are included in the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS to help the region meet its regional VMT and GHG reduction goals, as required by the state. **Table 9**, *Consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS*, shows the Project's consistency with these five strategies found in the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. As shown, the proposed

Project would be consistent with the GHG emission reduction strategies contained in the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS.

Table 9. Consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
Focus Growth Near Destinations and Mobility Options		
• Emphasize land use patterns that facilitate multimodal access to work, educational and other destinations • Focus on a regional jobs/housing balance to reduce commute times and distances and expand job opportunities near transit and along center-focused main streets • Plan for growth near transit investments and support implementation of first/last mile strategies • Promote the redevelopment of underperforming retail developments and other outmoded nonresidential uses • Prioritize infill and redevelopment of underutilized land to accommodate new growth, increase amenities and connectivity in existing neighborhoods • Encourage design and transportation options that reduce the reliance on and number of solo car trips (this could include mixed uses or locating and orienting close to existing destinations) • Identify ways to “right size” parking requirements and promote alternative parking strategies (e.g. shared parking or smart parking)	Center Focused Placemaking, Priority Growth Areas, Job Centers, High Quality Transit Areas, Transit Priority Areas, Neighborhood Mobility Areas, Livable Corridors, Spheres of Influence, Green Region, Urban Greening.	**Consistent.** The Project site is located within an area that is planned for mixed uses, with uses to the south and east presently developed with single-family residential uses and mobile homes. The Project site is currently vacant, and the development of a park and infiltration facility would utilize undeveloped land and provide recreational amenities to the Project vicinity and region. The Project would be required to incorporate pedestrian-oriented features, such as sidewalks, to promote other forms of transportation. The Project also proposes the replacement of the existing at-grade pedestrian crossing for a SCRRA/Metrolink grade-separated undercrossing to provide access to the park from the parking facility. The Project would also provide EV capable parking spaces, two of which would have EV chargers installed. Existing Santa Clarita Transit bus stops and the Via Princessa Metrolink Station are located within the Project site, which would further encourage park visitors to use public transportation rather than solo car trips to access the park. Therefore, construction of a park at the proposed Project site would facilitate multi-modal access to the proposed recreational community asset. Therefore, the Project would focus growth near destinations and mobility options.

Table 9, continued

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
Promote Diverse Housing Choices		
• Preserve and rehabilitate affordable housing and prevent displacement • Identify funding opportunities for new workforce and affordable housing development • Create incentives and reduce regulatory barriers for building context sensitive accessory dwelling units to increase housing supply • Provide support to local jurisdictions to streamline and lessen barriers to housing development that supports reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	Priority Growth Areas, Job Centers, High Quality Transit Areas, Neighborhood Mobility Areas, Transit Priority Areas, Livable Corridors, Green Region, Urban Greening.	**Consistent.** The Project would include development of a park and associated recreational facilities near existing public transportation stops and residential buildings. While the Project would not involve rehabilitation or construction of affordable housing, providing a regional recreational asset in close proximity to existing residential land uses and with convenient access to public transit would support reduction of GHG emissions by encouraging residential development in close proximity to public transportation that connects to the proposed park facility. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with this reduction strategy.
Leverage Technology Innovations		
• Promote low emission technologies such as neighborhood electric vehicles, shared rides hailing, car sharing, bike sharing and scooters by providing supportive and safe infrastructure such as dedicated lanes, charging and parking/drop-off space • Improve access to services through technology—such as telework and telemedicine as well as other incentives such as a "mobility wallet," an app-based system for storing transit and other multi-modal payments • Identify ways to incorporate "micro-power grids" in communities, for example solar energy, hydrogen fuel cell power storage and power generation	High Quality Transit Areas, Transit Priority Areas, Neighborhood Mobility Areas, Livable Corridors.	**Consistent.** The Project would promote low emissions technologies by adding eight EV capable parking spaces to the preexisting parking facility, two of which would have EV charging stations installed as part of the Project. This addition would promote alternative modes of transportation to reduce VMT.
Support Implementation of Sustainability Policies		
• Pursue funding opportunities to support local sustainable development implementation	Center Focused Placemaking, Priority Growth Areas, Job	**Not Applicable.** However, the proposed Project would be located close to bus stops and a Metrolink stop, which would encourage use of public transportation and

Table 9, continued

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions • Support statewide legislation that reduces barriers to new construction and that incentivizes development near transit corridors and stations • Support local jurisdictions in the establishment of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs), or other tax increment or value capture tools to finance sustainable infrastructure and development projects, including parks and open space • Work with local jurisdictions/communities to identify opportunities and assess barriers to implement sustainability strategies • Enhance partnerships with other planning organizations to promote resources and best practices in the SCAG region • Continue to support long range planning efforts by local jurisdictions • Provide educational opportunities to local decisions makers and staff on new tools, best practices and policies related to implementing the Sustainable Communities Strategy	Centers, High Quality Transit Areas, Transit Priority Areas, Neighborhood Mobility Areas, Livable Corridors, Spheres of Influence, Green Region, Urban Greening.	may incentivize development along these transit corridors.
Promote a Green Region		
• Support development of local climate adaptation and hazard mitigation plans, as well as project implementation that improves community resiliency to climate change and natural hazards • Support local policies for renewable energy production,	Green Region, Urban Greening, Greenbelts and Community Separators.	**Consistent.** The Project would not interfere with regional wildlife connectivity or convert agricultural land. The Project would improve hydrologic stability by installing buried bank protection along the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel and constructing the culvert extension. The Project's proposed regional stormwater infiltration facility would capture and

Table 9, continued

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
reduction of urban heat islands and carbon sequestration • Integrate local food production into the regional landscape • Promote more resource efficient development focused on conservation, recycling and reclamation • Preserve, enhance and restore regional wildlife connectivity • Reduce consumption of resource areas, including agricultural land • Identify ways to improve access to public park space		replenish groundwater supplies. The Project would also include restoration of Honby Channel, which would enhance the channel's habitat value. The proposed Project would improve access to public park space by developing a currently vacant parcel with park facilities that are accessible by public transportation. Thus, the Project would support efficient development that reduces energy consumption and GHG emissions. The Project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.

Source: Southern California Association of Governments, 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy – Connect SoCal, September 3, 2020.

Consistency with the City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element includes goals and policies that promote GHG reduction within the City. The Project's consistency with these goals and policies is discussed in Section VI, Energy, of this Initial Study. As depicted in **Table 6**, *Project Energy Use General Plan Consistency Analysis*, the proposed Project would be consistent with the General Plan.

Conclusion

In summary, the Project's characteristics render it consistent with statewide, regional, and local climate change mandates, plans, policies, and recommendations. More specifically, the GHG plan consistency analysis provided above demonstrates that the Project complies with the regulations and GHG reduction goals, policies, actions, and strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan, 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, and the City's General Plan. Consistency with these plans would reduce the Project's incremental contribution of GHG emissions. Accordingly, the Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, regulation, or recommendation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions and the Project's impacts related to GHG emissions would be less than significant.

Section IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☒	☐
i) Expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards (e.g., electrical transmission lines, gas lines, oil pipelines)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The following analysis is based in part on the information contained the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) prepared by JHA Environmental, Inc. in December 2018, which is provided as **Appendix G** of this IS/MND.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. Materials are generally considered hazardous if they are poisonous (toxicity), can be ignited by open flame (ignitability), corrode other materials (corrosivity), or react violently, explode, or generate vapors when mixed with water (reactivity). The term "hazardous material" is defined in the California Health and Safety Code as any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment.[26] The code additionally states that a hazardous material becomes a hazardous waste once it is abandoned, discarded, or recycled.

The transportation, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, as well as the potential release of hazardous materials to the environment, are closely regulated through state and federal laws. Such laws include those incorporated into the California Health and Safety Code, such as the California Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory law and the California Hazardous Waste Control law, as well as other regulations governing hazardous waste promulgated by state and federal agencies, such as the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the US Environmental Protection Agency.

The proposed Project would construct a park on approximately 34 acres of vacant City-owned land and improve the existing Via Princessa Metrolink Station (located on the north side of the SCRRA/Metrolink railroad) and the existing SCRRA/Metrolink railroad operations, which transect the southern portion of the Project site, separating the proposed park area from the existing parking lot. The Project would include the construction of athletic fields and courts, picnic areas, playground equipment, new restroom and storage facilities, a network of pedestrian pathways and other recreational facilities. In addition, the proposed Project would provide park access and parking, and would involve alterations to the existing Via Princessa Metrolink Station parking lot, improvements to an existing restroom/office building, routine maintenance and repair activities at the Via Princessa Metrolink Station, and construction of a pedestrian and vehicle (restricted access) railroad undercrossing to replace the existing at-grade Via Princessa Metrolink Station pedestrian crossing. The Project could also involve the addition of a fourth lane on Weyerhauser Way, and potential roadway modifications to Via Princessa to accommodate a double left-turn lane into and/or out of Weyerhauser Way. In addition to recreational improvements, the Project would include a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other civil and geotechnical design features, including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration, and removal of an agricultural well. These construction activities would require heavy equipment, such as scrapers, excavators, dozers, and rollers, as well as a soil cement batch plant

[26] California Health and Safety Code Section 25501(n)(1).

to manufacture soil-cement for use in the buried bank protection along the Santa Clara River and in portions of Honby Channel. Some hazardous materials would be required during construction, such as fuel for construction equipment; however, these hazardous materials are typical of any construction site and would be handled pursuant to construction best management practices.

Operation and maintenance of the park facilities and grounds by employees and contractors would likely involve the routine transport, use, and disposal of minor quantities of typical household hazardous materials, such as cleaning products, solvents, adhesives, paints, other chemicals used in building maintenance, automotive lubricants, small amounts of oil and fuel associated with internal combustion engines, pesticides and herbicides associated with exterior park maintenance activities, solid waste, and electrical waste (e.g., light bulbs). This level of hazardous materials use would be typical for park maintenance uses and has not been identified as a significant threat to the environment. Regulations, such as those mentioned above, strictly regulate the use, transportation, and disposal of hazardous waste; they include training for employees in how to properly handle and dispose of hazardous materials, as well as filing project plans with the Los Angeles County Fire Department that show locations of hazardous material storage.

Based on the type of land use proposed; the fact that the Project site is predominantly undeveloped and has not been used for anything other than row crop agriculture between approximately 1900 and 1969; the relatively minor anticipated level of use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials; and the requirement to comply with various state and federal laws regulating hazardous materials, the Project would not result in significant impacts involving the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. One of the means through which human exposure to hazardous substance could occur is through accidental release. Incidents that result in an accidental release of hazardous substance into the environment can cause contamination of soil, surface water, and groundwater, in addition to any toxic fumes that might be generated. Human exposure to contaminated soil, soil vapor, or water can result in potential health effects due to a variety of factors, including the nature of the contaminant and the degree of exposure.

According to the Phase I ESA, topographic maps indicate the Project site was mostly unimproved from at least 1900. Historical aerial photographs show the Project site was utilized for row crop agriculture during the early- and mid-1900s, during which chemicals such as pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers would likely have been used, although information regarding use, storage, and application rates is not available. Application of agricultural chemicals for their intended use is not considered to be a release; therefore, any residuals associated with agricultural chemical uses would not be considered a recognized environmental condition (REC). The Project site has not been utilized for agricultural uses and has remained vacant since at least 1969. Based on the site reconnaissance conducted as part of the Phase I ESA, there is no evidence of RECs on or adjacent to the Project site or from the public right-of-way. As discussed in the Phase I ESA, relatively recent improvements to the Via Princessa SCRRA/Metrolink railroad (e.g., railroad realignment), do not pose any environmental concerns to the Project as proposed. A drainage swale was observed extending north towards the Santa Clara River from the controlled

diversion immediately north of the railroad track in the south-central portion of the Project site. In addition, information from the Los Angeles Public Works Hydrologic Records Section indicates there are three groundwater wells (last monitored in 2012) located on the Project site. However, the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, the agency managing the three groundwater wells identified by Los Angeles Public Works, confirmed in correspondence with the City that the three wells identified above are incorrectly geolocated by the County.[27] These three wells are located approximately 850 feet north of the Project Site, across the Santa Clarita River. In short, no environmental concerns or RECs were observed and documented in the Phase I ESA.

Construction Impacts

During Project construction, there is a possibility of accidental release of hazardous substances such as petroleum-based fuels or hydraulic fluid used for construction equipment. The level of risk associated with the accidental release of hazardous substances is not considered significant due to the small volume and low concentration of hazardous materials utilized during construction. The construction contractor would be required to use standard construction controls and safety procedures that would avoid and minimize the potential for accidental release of such substances into the environment. Standard construction practices would be observed such that any materials released are appropriately contained and remediated as required by local, state, and federal law. Construction impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Operational Impacts

Project operation would not result in substantial use, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials, as described in response to the preceding threshold. Any such use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials would be strictly regulated by state and federal laws. Therefore, there would not be a significant hazard to the public involving the accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment during Project operation. As such, the proposed Project would not result in any reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is in close proximity to the Santa Clarita Christian School, located at 27249 Luther Drive, approximately 0.23 miles (approximately 1,199 feet) northeast of the Project site, across the Santa Clara River.[28] La Mesa Junior High School is located approximately 0.54 miles (approximately 2,880 feet) west of the Project site at 26623 May Way.[29] However, operation and maintenance of the proposed Project would not produce hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in impacts related to hazardous emissions or

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[27] E-mail correspondence between Ernesto Velazquez, Water Resources Planner Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency and Dan Duncan, Environmental Administrator, City of Santa Clarita. September 5 ,2023.

[28] US Environmental Protection Agency, NEPAssist Tool, distance to the Santa Clarita Christian School, accessed July 26, 2023, https://www.epa.gov/nepa/nepassist.

[29] US Environmental Protection Agency, NEPAssist Tool, distance to the La Mesa Junior High School, accessed July 26, 2023, https://www.epa.gov/nepa/nepassist.

handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

d) Would the project 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?

No Impact. In the State of California, Section 65962.5 of the Government Code requires that the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the California Department of Public Health, and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) compile lists of all hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action, sites included in the Abandoned Site Assessment Program, drinking water wells that contain detectable levels of organic contaminants, underground storage tanks with unauthorized releases, and solid waste disposal sites, cleanup sites, and the like. Locations of potential toxic substances and contamination in California are identified by the DTSC and the SWRCB. According to the DTSC and SWRCB databases, the Project site is not identified as a hazardous materials cleanup site, nor are there any hazardous materials cleanup sites located adjacent to the Project site.[30]

Additionally, based on the review of government databases conducted for the Phase I ESA, there are no hazardous material site listings for the Project site with the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Health Hazardous Materials Division active and inactive Certified Unified Program Agency program records, or Site Mitigation Unit case records. Further, there are no hazardous material site listings related to underground storage tanks (USTs), stormwater, or industrial waste for the Project site in the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works UST Program records.

As such, the Project would not be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and therefore would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. There would be no impact.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The Project is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest public airport is the Whiteman Airport in Pacoima, CA, which is located approximately 10.4 miles southeast of the Project site.[31] Accordingly, the Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the area, and there would be no impact.

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30 California Department of Toxic Substances Control, EnviroStor, accessed July 26, 2023, http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/; State Water Resources Control Board, GeoTracker, accessed July 26, 2023, https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/.

31 Google Maps, accessed August 7, 2023.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. There are no private airstrips in the vicinity of the Project site. As discussed in the preceding threshold question, the nearest airport to the Project site is approximately 10.4 miles southeast. As such, the Project is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip and would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the area, and there would be no impact.

g) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. Activities associated with the proposed Project would not impede existing emergency response plans for the Project site and/or other land uses in the Project vicinity. As stated in the City's General Plan Safety Element, the City has freeway access along three routes, Interstate 5 and State Route 14 going north and south, and State Route 126 going west, which would be used in the event of an emergency evacuation.[32] The City's Emergency Operations Center, in coordination with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Traffic Division, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, and Metrolink, developed traffic plans for alternate routes and added additional commuter trains to existing routes to alleviate traffic concerns.[33]

The Project is adjacent to the Via Princessa Metrolink Station (located on the north side of the SCRRA/Metrolink railroad) and the existing SCRRA/Metrolink railroad operations, which transect the southern portion of the Project site and separate the proposed park area from the existing surface parking lot, which currently has approximately 400 parking spaces. The Project would involve routine maintenance and repair activities at the Via Princessa Metrolink Station, the addition of 24 parking spaces to the parking lot, and the construction of a necessary pedestrian and vehicle (restricted access) railroad undercrossing to replace the existing at-grade pedestrian crossing. As such, the proposed Project would provide safety and access improvements to the Via Princessa Metrolink Station and the parking area that would not impede transportation circulation in the event of an emergency evacuation. Further, the Project would not include development of any new residential units or commercial uses on the Project site that would result in permanent residents or permanent employees on the site every day. In the case of a regional emergency, such as a wildfire, it is likely that sporting events at the park would be cancelled and, thus, few people would be using the proposed park improvements during those times.

The 2021 Santa Clarita Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) documents known hazards and identifies potential community actions that can be implemented over the short- and long-term to reduce hazard risks and loss in the City.[34] In addition, the LHMP provides a framework for communications, decisions, and actions by emergency response personnel for emergencies requiring evacuation. The command structure would assess local conditions in an ongoing manner, to identify locations and severity of threats to life and property. Based on those assessments, decisions would be made on where to focus hazard response efforts, how/when to

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[32] City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Safety Element, June 2011.

[33] Ibid.

[34] City of Santa Clarita, 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan, accessed July 26, 2023, https://www.santa-clarita.com/city-hall/departments/recreation-community-services-and-open-space/emergency-management/preparedness-information#Hazard.

initiate calls for backup assistance and assignment of additional resources, and when/where to implement emergency evacuations if no other options are deemed viable. This existing emergency response system would be sufficient to address emergency scenarios for hazard events affecting the Project site that require evacuation (e.g., if an emergency were to occur while a scheduled event was occurring at the Project site). Further, the Project's proposed emergency access would be evaluated as part of the development review process, ensuring the Project would have adequate driveway widths to accommodate access by fire trucks.

Impacts related to construction activities would be temporary and would not impair the implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No long-term impacts would result from operation of the proposed Project. Therefore, with compliance with the City's emergency access evaluation through the development review process, and the existing LHMP, the Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

h) Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is located within a suburbanized area of Los Angeles County. The Project site is not located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.[35] Further, because the Project would not involve construction of residential or commercial land uses that would result in permanent residents or employees of the Project site, the Project would not expose people to risk of loss. As such, there is no significant risk of loss, injury, or death to people or structures associated with wildland fires, and any impacts related to wildland fires would be less than significant.

i) Would the project expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards (e.g., electrical transmission lines, gas lines, oil pipelines)?

Less Than Significant Impact. Hazards associated with overhead transmission lines range from exposure to electrical magnetic fields to live wires and flashovers when a person or equipment gets too close to an overhead line. Surface or subsurface-level natural gas or other fuel lines can pose risks when improper contact is made, resulting in leaks, fire, and/or explosions.

While the Project site is currently predominantly undeveloped, it is located in a suburban area with major utilities (natural gas, electricity, and telecommunications infrastructure) running underneath nearby roads, such as Via Princessa and Weyerhauser Way. The Project site currently has no existing buildings north of the railroad tracks requiring electric power. However, there is existing electricity infrastructure on the Project site consisting of overhead electrical power lines running parallel to the SCRRA/Metrolink railroad track and within the approximate 25-foot easement on the north side of the railroad tracks. These electrical lines power the overhead, pole-mounted lights that are located along the north side of the railroad tracks and within the parking area. A second row of overhead electrical power lines, approximately 100 feet north of the

[35] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Los Angeles County State Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones map, accessed July 26, 2023, https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps-2022/.

overhead electrical power lines within the approximate 25-foot easement, also run parallel to SCRRA/Metrolink railroad tracks. Additionally, there are several overhead electrical power lines within and along the parking lot south of the SCRRA/Metrolink railroad tracks. As part of the Project, the electrical power lines located 100 feet north of the 25-foot easement, as well as the light fixtures illuminating the parking area, would be relocated underground.

As there are no existing structures on the Project site requiring natural gas service, there is no natural gas infrastructure located within the Project site. According to the US Department of Transportation's National Pipeline Mapping System, the nearest natural gas transmission line runs northwest under the Avenue of the Oaks road before crossing under the Sierra Highway at its closest point to the Project site, approximately 2,140 feet southeast of the Project site.[36] Further, the National Pipeline Mapping System shows that the nearest hazardous liquid pipeline to the Project site is located within Mad Road (southwest of the intersection of Sierra Highway and Golden Valley Road), which is approximately 9,430 feet southwest of the Project site and outside of the Project's area of ground disturbance.[37]

Given the absence of natural gas and hazardous liquid pipelines on the site and standard construction precautions, such as identifying the location of utility lines before any Project-related ground disturbance takes place, the Project would not expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards, and impacts would be less than significant.

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[36] US Dept of Transportation, National Pipeline Mapping System, accessed July 26, 2023, https://pvnpms.phmsa.dot.gov/PublicViewer/; US Environmental Protection Agency, NEPAssist Tool, accessed July 26, 2023, https://www.epa.gov/nepa/nepassist.

[37] Ibid.

Section X. Hydrology and Water Quality

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☒	☐
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
k) Result in changes in the rate of flow, currents, or the course and direction of surface water and/or groundwater?	☐	☐	☒	☐
l) Other modification of a wash, channel creek, or river?	☐	☐	☒	☐
m) Impact stormwater management in any of the following ways?				
i) Potential impact of project construction and project post-construction activity on stormwater runoff?	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Potential discharges from areas for materials storage, vehicle or equipment fueling, vehicle or equipment maintenance (including washing), waste handling, hazardous materials handling or storage, delivery areas or loading docks, or other outdoor work areas?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Significant environmentally harmful increase in the flow velocity or volume of stormwater runoff?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Significant and environmentally harmful increases in erosion of the Project Site or surrounding areas?	☐	☐	☒	☐
v) Stormwater discharges that would significantly impair or contribute to the impairment of the beneficial uses of receiving waters or areas that provide water quality benefits (e.g., riparian corridors, wetlands, etc.)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
vi) Cause harm to the biological integrity of drainage systems, watersheds, and/or water bodies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
vii) Does the Proposed Project include provisions for the separation, recycling, and reuse of materials both during construction and after project occupancy?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The following analysis is based on information contained in the Project Drainage Concept Report, prepared by PACE and approved by the City on June 10, 2022 (included as **Appendix H** of this Initial Study), the Geotechnical Evaluation Via Princessa Park, prepared by Ninyo & Moore, dated

June 16, 2023 (included as **Appendix E**), and the Project Phase I ESA prepared by JHA Environmental, dated December 2018 (included as **Appendix G**).

Regulatory Setting

Section 303 of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to develop water quality standards to protect the beneficial uses of receiving waters. In accordance with California's Porter/Cologne Act, the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) of the SWRCB are required to develop water quality objectives that ensure their region meets the requirements of Section 303.

Santa Clarita is within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles RWQCB. The Los Angeles RWQCB adopted water quality objectives in its Stormwater Quality Management Plan (SQMP). This SQMP is designed to ensure stormwater achieves compliance with receiving water limitations. Thus, stormwater generated by a development that complies with the SQMP does not exceed the limitations of receiving waters and thus does not exceed water quality standards.

Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, which is known as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, regulates point source and non-point source discharges to surface waters. Under this section, municipalities are required to obtain permits for the water pollution generated by stormwater in their jurisdiction. These permits are known as Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permits. Stormwater and non-stormwater flows enter and are conveyed through the MS4 and discharged to surface water bodies of the Los Angeles region. These discharges are regulated under countywide waste discharge requirements contained in Order No. R4-2021-0105 (NPDES Permit No. CAS004004, Waste Discharge Requirements and NPDES Permit for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System [MS4] Discharges Within the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties), which was adopted July 23, 2021. Chapter 17.90 of the City's Municipal Code prescribes the requirements of the NPDES compliance for all proposed grading activities.

The MS4 permit requires low-impact development (LID) practices to be implemented and requires submittal of a comprehensive LID plan and analysis to demonstrate compliance with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Administrative Manual GS 200.2, Guidelines for LID Storm Water Infiltration. Therefore, the applicant is required to prepare a LID plan for review and approval by the City that includes 1) feasibility of infiltration including a percolation report, 2) source control measures, 3) calculation of the Stormwater Quality Design Volume (SWQDv) which must be retained on-site, 4) discussion of the feasibility of stormwater runoff harvest and use, 5) stormwater quality control measures, and 6) proposed operation and maintenance plan.

Furthermore, the MS4 permit identifies Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) waste load allocations for several pollutant discharges including E. coli, nutrients, and chloride. The City is responsible for complying with the water quality-based effluent limitations and requirements of these established waste load allocations. The City is a part of the Upper Santa Clara River Watershed Management Program Group which also includes Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District. Together, this group developed the Enhanced Watershed Management Program (EWMP) to meet the state-issued permit requirements to protect the beneficial uses of the Upper Santa Clara River watershed receiving waters. The EWMP lists bacteria (a constituent of E. coli) and chloride as Priority 1 TMDLs, and trash, copper, mercury, and cyanide as Priority 2 TMDLs and establishes both structural BMPs and institutional BMPs as watershed control measures to improve the water quality of wet and dry weather flows before they

reach the Santa Clara River. The City has set a goal of instituting 285 acre-feet of structural BMPs by the year 2029.

a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is primarily vacant with existing improvements constructed on the southerly portion of the property that include the Via Princessa Metrolink Station and railroad operation, an existing restroom and office building, and an existing parking lot of approximately 400 spaces. The Project site is directly bordered by the Santa Clara River to the north. The site is generally level with elevations ranging from approximately 1,387 feet above mean sea level (msl) to about 1,370 feet msl trending north toward the river (Ninyo & Moore 2023). The Project site is underlain by approximately 100 feet of Holocene alluvial deposits consisting of poorly consolidated, weakly cemented gravels, sands, and silts. Surficial soils at the Project site are identified as Hydrologic Class B – Moderate infiltration rates, meaning these soils are moderately well-drained, coarse textures. (JHA Environmental 2018).

The Project site is located in the East Sub-basin of the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin, which contains two aquifer systems: 1) the alluvium generally underlying the Santa Clara River and tributaries, and 2) the Saugus Formation that underlies much of the entire Upper Santa Clara River Area (JHA Environmental 2018). General topography and relation to the Santa Clara River indicate that groundwater flows at the Project site flow to the west-northwest. The majority of the Project site is located within a 100-year flood zone, while the southeastern portion is located within a 500-year flood zone (JHA Environmental 2018). While the Project site is located at the fringe of the 100-year floodplain, existing flow velocities at the Project site are in excess of 10 feet per second, which have the potential to cause severe erosion along the northerly limit of the Project site (PACE 2022).

The proposed Project has been identified by the EWMP as a Tier A (highest priority) project that would contribute 30 acre-feet of storage to the 285 acre-feet structural BMP goal of the EWMP. In addition to recreational improvements, the Proposed Project would construct a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration, as well as removal of an agricultural well. The Project would also include the relocation of an existing storm drain line, landscaping and irrigation improvements which incorporate bio-swales, and restoration of the existing Honby drainage channel.

The proposed infiltration facility would capture the runoff associated with 85 percent of storms in a given year by diverting that flow away from the Honby Channel outlet into the gallery. The infiltration facility has an estimated footprint of 2 acres and would be installed approximately 20 to 25 feet below the ground surface and covered with approximately 6 to 10 feet of ground cover on the west side of Honby Channel. From the infiltration gallery, the captured water would infiltrate into the ground, undergoing further, natural filtration processes. The captured water would be removed from the existing flow path to the Santa Clara River, which would include nearly all of the bacteria, chloride, trash, copper, mercury, cyanide, and other pollutants associated with the 85th percentile runoff from Honby Channel. Hydrodynamic separators would be installed to provide pretreatment (i.e., removal of trash, floatables, oils, heavy metals, and sediment) to the captured water before it enters the infiltration chambers where it would slowly percolate into the ground. Sediment and other particles that are often transported by stormwater can cause the

infiltration zones to become clogged, requiring frequent maintenance and repair without the aid of pretreatment devices.

Additionally, bio-swales, a type of LID and structural BMP listed in the EWMP, would be incorporated within the park to convey on-site runoff to Honby Channel and naturally treat the conveyed water. Similarly, the new native vegetation planted within Honby Channel would provide further natural treatment to flows that bypass the diversion structure.

During construction, short-term impacts would occur when pollutants of the greatest concern are sediment, which may run off the Project Site during site grading or other site preparation activities, and hydrocarbon or fossil fuel remnants/spills from construction equipment and construction worker vehicles. In addition, on-site watering activities to reduce airborne dust could contribute to pollutant loading in surface runoff. The Proposed Project would be required to comply with all applicable City grading permit regulations to reduce sediment and erosion. Since the Project Site is greater than 1 acre in size, the Project would be required to obtain coverage under the NPDES Construction General Permit with the state and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) with erosion and sediment control measures to eliminate or control pollutants discharged from the Project Site. Implementation of the SWPPP and compliance with the City's permitting process would ensure that construction of the Project would not result in discharges from the Project Site that would impact water quality, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation of the Project would reduce pollutants reaching the Santa Clara River, improve the water supply in the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin, sustain nearby production wells, and meet the park/recreational needs of the surrounding community. The Project would achieve the pollutant reduction objective by diverting the 85th percentile storm runoff of Honby Channel away from the Santa Clara River and treating it through the pretreatment and infiltration processes. The Project would achieve the water supply objective by infiltrating the 85th percentile runoff volume from Honby Channel. The infiltration facility and park would provide recreational and health benefits to the surrounding community, as well as improved quality of life, educational opportunities, and improved water resource management. Furthermore, the proposed buried bank protection would implement varying levels of vegetation thickness to ensure that the top to toe of the bank would continue to protect the Via Princessa Park site from 100-year flows in the future. As such, the Project would improve water quality and provide water supply benefits to the surrounding communities ensuring that operation of the Project would not result in discharges from the Project Site that would negatively impact water quality. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

b) Would the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project Site is located within the Santa Clara River Valley Subbasin of the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin. Groundwater in the Santa Clara River Valley Subbasin is replenished by the Santa Clara River and its tributaries, and by stormwater percolation. Historic well records indicate a depth to groundwater ranges from 10 feet to 97 feet below ground surface, and the most recent groundwater well records from 2012 indicate that the depth to groundwater is 81 feet. No groundwater was encountered during the field

explorations conducted in 2022, which included obtaining four boring samples that ranged in depth from approximately 20 to 50 feet below ground surface. (PACE 2022) The Project site is underlain with mapped Quaternary alluvium, which results in alluvial aquifer conditions that are considered to be the most permeable unit within the greater Santa Clarita region. (Ninyo & Moore 2023) Because the Project Site is primarily undeveloped, stormwater on the Project Site either percolates into the soil or runs off the property into Honby Channel or Santa Clara River as sheet runoff.

The Project has been identified by the Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency as an optimal location for off stream recharge, and the proposed infiltration basin would help the Agency meet their goals of sustainable basin management, in accordance with their 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. The Project would construct a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features. This infiltration facility would convey more water into the groundwater basin located closer to existing production wells, thereby improving the groundwater supply. Additionally, SCV Water may utilize the Project infiltration system to introduce available surplus water supplies to recharge the local groundwater basin. In coordination with the City, SCV Water would deliver available water using existing local infrastructure outside of those times when the infiltration system is receiving stormwater runoff. As such, the Project would create a more resilient water supply for the community and reduce the costs associated with acquiring water from other sources. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, and impacts would be less than significant.

c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Less Than Significant Impact. Development projects that increase the volume or velocity of surface water can result in an increase in erosion and siltation by increasing both soil/water interaction time and the sediment load potential of water. The Project site is primarily vacant with existing improvements constructed on the southerly portion of the property that include the Via Princessa Metrolink Station and railroad operation. The Project site is directly bordered by the Santa Clara River to the north. The soil at the Project site has a high infiltration potential with overland slopes less than 10 percent to allow flows to be conveyed at slower velocities.

The Project would improve management of water resources by constructing a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration, as well as removal of an agricultural well. The Project would also include the relocation of an existing storm drain line, landscaping and irrigation improvements that incorporate bio-swales, and restoration of the existing Honby drainage channel. The proposed infiltration facility would capture all of the runoff associated with 85 percent of storms in a given year by diverting that flow away from the Honby Channel outlet into the infiltration gallery. From the infiltration gallery, the captured water would infiltrate into the ground, undergoing further, natural filtration processes. The captured water would be removed from the existing flow path to the Santa Clara River.

The Project Drainage Concept Report, prepared by PACE, analyzed the top and toe elevations for the proposed buried bank protection along the Santa Clara River. The Project Drainage Concept Report used the FEMA effective hydraulic model to perform a hydraulic analysis to

determine 100-year flood water surface elevations and extents of flooding. The hydraulic analysis concluded that the proposed improvements associated with the Via Princessa Park and soil cement bank protection would have minimal effects on the 100-year water surface elevation. Therefore, the Project would not require a revision of the flood insurance rate map. The hydraulic analysis also indicates that the proposed park site would be protected from the 100-year flood.

Although the Project site is located at the fringe of the 100-year floodplain, flow velocities along this reach of the Santa Clara River have the potential to cause severe erosion along the northerly limit of the Project site. As such, the Project design would install the soil cement bank stabilization from the existing rock slope lining along the Cordova Estates to the Honby Channel outlet to prevent loss of developable land from erosion. The soil cement bank stabilization would implement varying levels of vegetation thickness to ensure that the top to toe of the bank would continue to protect the Via Princessa Park site from 100-year flows in the future.

Further, the existing Honby Channel outlet has a triple box culvert configuration, with each cell measuring 8 foot high by 8 foot wide. Downstream of the Honby Channel outlet, water flows through a naturally incised flow path before converging with the Santa Clara River. This area would be altered to divert flow to the underground infiltration facility and to restore the hydraulic capacity of the channel. The restoration efforts would remove sediment that has built up over the years and abate invasive plant species. Bio-swales and newly planted native vegetation would be incorporated in the Honby Channel and within the park to convey runoff to Honby Channel and naturally treat flows that bypass the diversion structure.

Therefore, the Project would improve the drainage at the Project site with the construction of the regional stormwater infiltration facility and other civil and geotechnical design features, including the proposed buried bank protection, which are in compliance with NPDES requirements and City standards. As such, the Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Project Site or area in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, and impacts would be less than significant.

d) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site includes Honby Channel, a natural drainage path that conveys flows from south of Via Princessa Road to the main stem of the Santa Clara River. The proposed improvements along the south bank of the Santa Clara River consist of soil cement bank protection that would be constructed as a continuous section beginning at the existing bank protection on the north edge of the Cordova Estates and extending downstream before curving southward and following the east and west banks of Honby Channel.

The 100-yr flow rate from the latest FEMA Flood Insurance Study for the portion of the Santa Clara River approximately 4,600 feet downstream of Soledad Canyon Road (the portion of the river applicable to the hydraulic analysis) is 25,910 cubic feet per second. The northerly limits of the Project site are partially covered by the 100-year floodplain while the majority of the Project site is covered by the 500-year floodplain. The proposed bank protection would be designed to protect the Project site from the 100-year clearwater flow rate.

As discussed in Section X(c), the Project Drainage Concept Report used the FEMA effective hydraulic model as the baseline condition model for the hydraulic analysis on the Project site. The purpose of the hydraulic analysis was to provide design guidelines for the proposed bank protection and to evaluate potential changes to the water surface elevations or extents of flooding caused by implementation of the Project.

As provided in further detail in Appendix H, the results of the hydraulic analysis for the pre- and post-Project conditions modeling indicate that the change in water surface elevation would be zero feet between pre- and post-Project conditions along the Santa Clara River, which include flows from Honby Channel. This means that implementation of the Project would have minimal effects on the 100-year water surface elevation. As for the flow velocities, the results of the analysis show that the change in flow velocity between pre- and post-Project conditions would range from 0 to -0.6 feet per second along portions of the Santa Clara River. The flow velocities along the reach of the Santa Clara River located at the fringe of the 100-year floodplain are in excess of 10 feet per second. Implementation of the proposed soil cement bank stabilization would reduce the potential of these flows to cause severe erosion along the northerly limit of the Project site and along Honby Channel, and would protect the Project site from the 100-year flood. As such, the Project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site, and impacts would be less than significant.

e) Would the project 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?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(c) and X(d), implementation of the Proposed Project would result in minimal effects on the 100-year water surface elevation along the Santa Clara River. Installation of the proposed soil cement bank stabilization would reduce severe erosion impacts and protect the Project site from flooding caused by the areas along the fringe of the 100-year floodplain.

Further, the proposed infiltration facility would capture runoff associated with 85 percent of storms in a given year by diverting stormwater flows away from the Honby Channel outlet. The proposed infiltration facility would also restore the hydraulic capacity of the channel. The restoration efforts (as described in PDF-1 in Section IV. Biological Resources) would remove built up sediment and abate invasive plant species. Bio-swales and newly planted native vegetation would be incorporated in the Honby Channel and within the proposed park to convey runoff to Honby Channel and naturally treat flows that bypass the diversion structure. The captured water would be removed from the existing flow path to the Santa Clara River, which would include nearly all of the bacteria, chloride, trash, copper, mercury, cyanide, and other pollutants associated with the 85th percentile runoff from Honby Channel. As such, 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. Instead, the Project would improve the existing capacity and quality of flow and runoff. Impacts would be less than significant.

f) Would the project otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a), X(b), and X(c), the Proposed Project would improve the drainage at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features. Operation

of the Project would reduce pollutants reaching the Santa Clara River, improve the water supply in the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin, sustain nearby production wells, and meet the park/recreational needs of the surrounding community. The Project would comply with all applicable City grading permit regulations to reduce sediment and erosion during site grading or other site preparation activities. The Project would also implement a SWPPP to ensure that construction of the Project would not result in discharges from the Project Site that would impact water quality. As such, the Project would not substantially degrade water quality, and impacts would be less than significant.

g) Would the project place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

No Impact. The nearest housing to the Project site is the Cordova Estates located at the northeast corner of Project site. Portions of the Project site are within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year (Zone AE) and 500-year (Zone X) floodplains.[38] The northern portion of the Project Site, adjacent to the Santa Clara River and within the Honby Creek channel are within Special Flood Hazard Area Zone AE, which is defined as the base flood or 100-year flood area that would have a 1-percent annual chance of be inundated by the flood event. The western and eastern portions of the Project Site are within the Special Flood Hazard Area Zone X, which are moderate flood hazard areas between the limits of the base flood and the 0.2-percent annual change flood (i.e., 500-year).

The Project does not include the development of housing; however, above-ground improvements which include a new park and recreational facility would be located outside of and above the 100-year floodplain by elevating the site with the installation of buried soil-cement bank protection. The below-ground improvements include an infiltration facility, which will divert stormwater runoff from the nearby Honby Channel outlet.

As mentioned, the Project would protect the proposed park site from flooding and erosion, up to the 100-year storm event, through the installation of buried soil-cement bank protection which has already been used in other locations along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries. Soil cement is created with a mixture of suitable soils (90 percent) and cement (up to 10 percent) to create a hardened mixture. The majority of the material (i.e., soils) would be obtained on-site, thus, reducing the need to import materials. Additionally, since the soil cement is buried, it does not introduce a hardened man-made surface to the landscape. The proposed buried bank protection would extend from the culvert extension in Honby Channel to the existing exposed riprap bank protection at Cordova Estates (northeast corner of Project site), for a total length of approximately 2,000 feet.

The proposed soil cement bank protection would extend down to the elevation of calculated scour depth in the river, in order to prevent the bank from becoming undermined over time. The proposed soil cement would be installed to a depth approximately 12 feet below the riverbed along

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[38] Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). 2023. National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) Viewer. FIRMette: 06037C0840G, effective 6/2/2021. Available at: https://hazards-fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd, accessed July 2023.

the south bank of the Santa Clara River and a depth of approximately 10 feet along the east and west banks of Honby Channel. The soil cement would be installed in layers and approximately 8 feet wide. With the backfilled soil extending from the soil cement to the river/channel. The uppermost layer of soil cement would be 20 feet wide and would provide a uniform, stable surface on which to install the park's 20-foot wide trail. No portion of the soil cement would be visible after construction. A small portion of the soil cement would be covered in loose rock (rip rap), as opposed to soil, at the tie-in points with the existing Cordova Estates Levee and proposed Honby Channel culvert extension. The soil backfill would be contoured to reproduce the streambank and transition into the streambed. Following completion, Honby Channel would be planted and hydroseeded with native vegetation.

The Project would improve management of water resources at the Project site by constructing a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration. As such, the Proposed Project would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, and no impact would occur.

h) Would the project place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a), X(b), X(c), and X(g), the Proposed Project would improve the drainage at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration. Flood flows from the Honby Channel, parking lot, and park facility would be directed through the regional stormwater infiltration facility, which is designed to capture up to the 85th percentile 24-hour storm volume.

The runoff from Honby Channel would be diverted from the existing culvert to a pretreatment system. Runoff from the park site would also flow to the hydrodynamic separators, after being conveyed through bioswales and other treatment processes within the park site. The runoff diverted from Honby Channel would go through a pre-treatment process to remove trash, fine sediment and silts. The diverted treated water originating from both the park site and Honby Channel would then be collected in a subterranean infiltration gallery, where it would slowly percolate into the groundwater basin and provide up to 9.8 million gallons of water per storm event for local groundwater recharge. The diversion would also allow the current volume of the dry weather flow in Honby Channel to bypass the diversion structure and continue downstream of the culvert to support the restored riparian vegetation and habitat in Honby Channel. The stormwater would be uniformly distributed to 8-foot diameter perforated corrugated metal pipes, which allows percolation into the soil.

The Project would improve management of water resources at the Project site by constructing a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration. The proposed bathroom/office structure would not be located within a 100-year flood hazard area. As such, the Proposed Project would not place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area which would impede or redirect flood flows. Impacts would be less than significant.

i) Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(g) and X(h), the Proposed Project would improve the drainage at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration. Flood flows from the Honby Channel, parking lot, and park facility would be directed through the regional stormwater infiltration facility, which is designed to capture up to the 85th percentile 24-hour storm volume. Additionally, there are no levees or dam facilities in the vicinity of the Project site. As such, the Proposed Project would not expose people or structures to a risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, and impacts would be less than significant.

j) Would the project result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is not located downstream of any dams. Similarly, the Project site is located approximately 25 miles northeast of the Pacific Ocean. Due to the Project site's distance from large bodies of water and the coastline, the potential for inundation by seiche or tsunami is low. In addition, the Project site is not in an area prone to landslides and has no evidence of significant slope failures or debris flows on the slopes adjacent to the Project area. The Project would incorporate drainage improvements, native vegetation plants, and routine drainage maintenance to accommodate surface runoff from the hillsides entering and exiting the Project site, and thus, would not be inundated by mudflow. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

k) Would the project result in changes in the rate of flow, currents, or the course and direction of surface water and/or groundwater?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a), X(b), X(c), X(g), and X(h), the Project would result in changes in the rate of flow, and the course and direction of surface water. The Proposed Project would improve the drainage at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration. Flood flows from the Honby Channel, parking lot, and park facility would be directed through the regional stormwater infiltration facility, which is designed to capture up to the 85th percentile 24-hour storm volume. The captured water would be removed from the existing flow path to the Santa Clara River, be treated through the pretreatment and infiltration processes, then conveyed into the groundwater basin located closer to existing production wells, thereby recharging and increasing the groundwater supply. Additionally, bio-swales would be incorporated within the park to convey on-site runoff to Honby Channel and naturally treat the conveyed water. Similarly, the new native vegetation planted within Honby Channel would provide further natural treatment to flows that bypass the diversion structure. As such, the changes in the rate of flow and the course and direction of surface water resulting from the Project would improve the overall management of water resources, and impacts would be less than significant.

l) Would the project result in other modification of a wash, channel creek, or river?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a), X(b), X(c), X(g), and X(h), components of the Project would result in modifications of a channel creek and river. The Project components would include constructing a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration, as well as removal of an agricultural well. The Project would also include the replacement of an existing storm drain line, landscaping and irrigation improvements that incorporate bio-swales, and restoration of the existing Honby Channel. Although implementation of the Project would result in modifications to the river, the proposed Project modifications would improve existing conditions of the Santa Clara River and Honby Channel. As discussed in Section X(a), operation of the Project would reduce pollutants reaching the Santa Clara River, improve the water supply in the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin, sustain nearby production wells, and meet the park/recreational needs of the surrounding community. Furthermore, the proposed buried bank protection would protect the Via Princessa Park site from 100-year flows in the future. As such, these modifications resulting from the Project would improve the overall management of water resources, and impacts would be less than significant.

m.i) Would the project impact stormwater management as a result of project construction and project post-construction activity on stormwater runoff?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a), X(b), X(c), X(g), and X(h), during construction, the Project would comply with all applicable City grading permit regulations to reduce sediment and erosion during site grading or other site preparation activities. The Project would also implement a SWPPP to ensure that construction of the Project would not result in discharges from the Project Site that would impact stormwater management and water quality.

Implementation of the Proposed Project would improve the management of stormwater runoff at the Project site with the installation of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features. Post-construction, operation of the Project would reduce pollutants reaching the Santa Clara River, improve the water supply in the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin, sustain nearby production wells, and meet the park/recreational needs of the surrounding community. Operation of the Project would also implement post-construction measures, as required by the MS4 permit. The MS4 permit requires LID practices to be implemented and submittal of a comprehensive LID plan and analysis, which would include a proposed operation and maintenance plan. As such, with implementation of the SWPPP and adherence to the requirements of the MS4 permit, the Project would not impact stormwater management as a result of project construction and project post-construction activity, and impacts would be less than significant.

m.ii) Would the project impact stormwater management as a result of potential discharges from areas for materials storage, vehicle or equipment fueling, vehicle or equipment maintenance (including washing), waste handling, hazardous materials handling or storage, delivery areas or loading docks, or other outdoor work areas?

Less Than Significant Impact. Potential pollutants during Project operation would be typical of pollutants from urban land uses and would include runoff from impervious surfaces, which may contain sediment from pedestrian activity, vehicles using the Project site, debris from landscaped

areas, and oils/leakage from vehicles and maintenance equipment. Stormwater runoff from the Project Site could result in the discharge of these potential pollutants into the local storm drain system. However, the Project would implement the Project-specific SWPPP during construction and adhere to the requirements of the MS4 permit, which would include construction and post-construction BMPs. The Project would implement BMPs for the safe storage and management of hazardous materials, which are anticipated to be commercially-available products used for park maintenance, such as household cleaning solutions, paints, equipment fluids, etc., and for spill response and prevention, as appropriate. An example of such BMPs include storing all hazardous materials in areas that will not be subject to rain, flooding, or vandalism.

Additionally, the Project would improve the management of stormwater runoff at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other LID features. Flood flows from the Honby Channel, parking lot, and park facility would be directed through the regional stormwater infiltration facility, which is designed to capture up to the 85th percentile 24-hour storm volume. The captured water would be removed from the existing flow path to the Santa Clara River, be treated through the pretreatment and infiltration processes, then conveyed into the groundwater basin, thereby recharging and increasing the groundwater supply. Overall, the Project would reduce pollutants reaching the Santa Clara River, improve the water supply in the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin, sustain nearby production wells, and meet the park/recreational needs of the surrounding community. Therefore, the Project would not impact stormwater management as a result of potential discharges, and impacts would be less than significant.

m.iii) Would the project impact stormwater management as a result of significant environmentally harmful increase in the flow velocity or volume of stormwater runoff?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(d) and X(e), implementation of the Project would result in a change in flow velocity between pre- and post-Project conditions that would range from 0 to -0.6 feet per second along portions of the Santa Clara River. Although the flow velocities along the reach of the Santa Clara River located at the fringe of the 100-year floodplain would potentially result in erosion for part of the Project site, the installation of the proposed soil cement bank stabilization would reduce severe erosion impacts and protect the Project site from flooding. Further, the proposed infiltration facility would capture the runoff associated with 85 percent of storms in a given year by diverting that flow away from the Honby Channel outlet into the infiltration facility, and would also restore the hydraulic capacity of the channel. As such, the Project would not result in the harmful increase in the flow velocity or volume of stormwater runoff, and impacts would be less than significant.

m.iv) Would the project impact stormwater management as a result of significant and environmentally harmful increases in erosion of the Project Site or surrounding areas?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a) and X(c), the Project would improve the management of stormwater runoff at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration, landscaping and irrigation improvements, and restoration of the existing Honby drainage channel. Additionally, bio-swales and newly planted native vegetation would be incorporated in the Honby

Channel and within the park to convey runoff to Honby Channel and naturally treat flows that bypass the diversion structure. The existing Honby drainage earthen channel would be restored by replacing the existing non-native, invasive plant species with climate- and region-appropriate native vegetation in the disturbed areas, along with more natural stabilization features to protect the in-channel trees from erosion. As such, the Project would not result in harmful increases in erosion of the Project site or surrounding areas, and impacts would be less than significant.

m.v) Would the project impact stormwater management as a result of stormwater discharges that would significantly impair or contribute to the impairment of the beneficial uses of receiving waters or areas that provide water quality benefits (e.g., riparian corridors, wetlands, etc.)?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a), X(b), X(c), X(g), and X(h), the Project would improve the management of stormwater runoff at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features. Operation of the Project would reduce pollutants reaching the Santa Clara River, improve the water supply in the Santa Clara River Valley East Groundwater Basin, sustain nearby production wells, and meet the park/recreational needs of the surrounding community. The Project would achieve the water supply objective by infiltrating the 85th percentile runoff volume from Honby Channel and divert the 85th percentile storm runoff away from the Santa Clara River through pretreatment and infiltration processes. As such, the Project would not impair or contribute to the impairment of the beneficial uses of receiving waters or areas that provide water quality benefits, and impacts would be less than significant.

m.vi) Would the project impact stormwater management in a way that would cause harm to the biological integrity of drainage systems, watersheds, and/or water bodies?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a) and X(c), the Proposed Project would improve the drainage at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features including buried bank protection, a storm drain culvert extension, and channel restoration, as well as removal of an agricultural well. The Project would also include the relocation of an existing storm drain line, landscaping and irrigation improvements which incorporate bio-swales, and restoration of the existing Honby drainage channel. The proposed infiltration facility would capture all of the runoff associated with 85 percent of storms in a given year by diverting that flow away from the Honby Channel outlet. From the infiltration gallery, the captured water would infiltrate into the ground, undergoing further, natural filtration processes. The captured water would be removed from the existing flow path to the Santa Clara River. The area downstream of the Honby Channel outlet, where water flows through a naturally incised flow path before converging with the Santa Clara River, would be altered to divert flow to the underground gallery and to restore the hydraulic capacity of the channel. The restoration efforts would remove sediment that has built up over the years and abate invasive plant species. Bio-swales and newly planted native vegetation would be incorporated in the Honby channel and within the park to convey runoff to Honby Channel and naturally treat flows that bypass the diversion structure.

The Honby Channel and culvert have experienced an accumulation of sediment at the culvert outlet which has deposited over an approximately 200-foot section of the channel, including the 90-foot grouted rip rap outlet pad. This sediment accumulation has backed up into the existing culvert, to the point where the depth of the sediment at the culvert outlet is estimated to be 3 to 4

feet deep, reducing the culvert's hydraulic capacity. Furthermore, dry weather flows, such as irrigation runoff, have encouraged trees and other plants, of which some are non-native and invasive, to grow in the deposited sediment. The Project would remove the sediment and vegetation in the portion of Honby Channel that has experienced deposition to re-establish the originally designed channel grade and capacity. The earthen channel would be restored by replacing the existing non-native, invasive plant species with climate- and region-appropriate native vegetation in the disturbed areas, along with more natural stabilization features to protect the in-channel trees from erosion. The channel restoration would include removal of accumulated sediment, stabilizing unvegetated soil, and replanting with local native species to reestablish local native plants and replace habitat. The restoration effort would include propagating local native plant cuttings and managing interim conditions during establishment, including temporary fencing, grazing wildlife, wildlife damage to the temporary irrigation system, and management of non-native species. As such, the Project would not impact stormwater management in a way that would cause harm to the biological integrity of drainage systems, watersheds, and/or water bodies, and impacts would be less than significant.

m.vii) Would the project impact stormwater management as a result of the provisions for the separation, recycling, and reuse of materials both during construction and after project occupancy?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Sections X(a) and X(g), the Proposed Project would improve the drainage at the Project site with the construction of a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features. The Project would separate, recycle, and reuse materials during construction and operation, as applicable. As mentioned, the Project would protect the proposed park site from flooding and erosion, up to the 100-year storm event, through the installation of buried soil-cement bank protection. The majority of the soil cement mixture used to construct the buried soil-cement bank protection would reuse suitable soils obtained on-site, thus, reducing the need to import materials. Additionally, the infiltration facility would include hydrodynamic separators to pretreat the captured storm water (i.e., remove trash, floatable materials, oils, heavy metals, and sediment) before it enters the infiltration chambers where it would slowly percolate into the ground. As such, the Project would not impact stormwater management as a result of the provisions for the separation, recycling, and reuse of materials both during construction and after project occupancy, and impacts would be less than significant.

Section XI. Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, and/or policies by agencies with jurisdiction over the project	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The physical division of an established community is typically associated with construction of a linear feature, such as a major highway or railroad tracks, or removal of a means of access, such as a local road or bridge, which would impair mobility within an existing community or between a community and an outlying area.

The proposed Project consists of the construction and operation of Via Princessa Park on approximately 34 acres of vacant City-owned land and improvements to the existing Via Princessa Metrolink Station (located on the north side of the SCRRA/Metrolink railroad) and the existing SCRRA/Metrolink railroad operations, which transect the southern portion of the Project site, separating the proposed park area from an existing surface parking lot. The Project site is bounded by the Cordova Estates mobile home community to the east; Via Princessa, residential uses, the Friendly Valley Golf Course, and open space uses to the south; White Canyon Road and undeveloped land to the west; and the Santa Clara River and multifamily residential land uses to the north. The proposed Project would involve the construction of athletic fields and courts, picnic areas, playground equipment, construction of new restroom and storage facilities, an accessible network of pedestrian pathways, and other recreational facilities. The Project would also construct a regional stormwater infiltration facility on the Project site and drainage improvements to Honby Channel. In addition, the proposed Project would provide park access and parking, and would involve alterations to the existing Via Princessa Metrolink Station parking lot, improvements to an existing restroom/office building, and construction of a pedestrian and vehicle (restricted access) railroad undercrossing to replace the existing at-grade pedestrian crossing.

The Project could also potentially involve additional improvements to the Metrolink Station, including platform facility maintenance and repair activities, the addition of a fourth lane on Weyerhauser Way, and roadway modifications to Via Princessa to accommodate a double left-turn lane into and/or out of Weyerhauser Way.

None of the proposed Project components would constitute a barrier that would physically divide an established community. The Project would not result in the construction of a new linear feature or result in the removal of a means of access. Further, it would not otherwise result in a physical division of an established community or any physical alterations to land uses beyond the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not physically divide an established community and there would be no impact.

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

Less Than Significant Impact.

General Plan

The Project site has a General Plan land use designation of Industrial - Business Park (BP) and is not included within a specific plan area. As stated in the City's General Plan Land Use Element, Industrial - BP land use designations are intended to promote mixed employment districts in areas that are accessible to transportation and visible from freeways and major arterials, and intended to promote the development of master-planned environments with a high quality of design and construction.[39] Therefore, as a park project, the Project is consistent with the General Plan and impacts would be less than significant.

Zoning Code

The Project site has a zoning designation of Business Park (BP). Development within BP designated areas is expected to provide enhanced landscaping and outdoor amenities to create a campus-like setting. As discussed in the Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 17.45.010, *Public and Semi-Public Use Types*, an allowable public and semi-public use within this land use designation includes public and private parks of 50 acres or less.[40] In addition, uses provided by public or semi-public agencies which are necessary to support the community's health, safety, and welfare, such as community water facilities (e.g., storage, wells, and treatment facilities), are permitted within BP designated areas. Further, the Project has been reviewed by the City's Planning Division and would not conflict with the City's zoning ordinance. As such, the regional stormwater infiltration facility and the proposed park area are allowable uses within this zone. Further, the Project would be required to comply with the Property Development Standards for Commercial and Industrial land uses under Chapter 17.53 of the City of Santa Clarita Zoning Code. The proposed Project has been designed to meet the regulations of the BP zoning. As such, the Project would be consistent with the Zoning Code and impacts would be less than significant.

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[39] City of Santa Clarita General Plan, Land Use Element, June 2011.

[40] City of Santa Clarita, Municipal Code Section 17.45.010, Public and Semi-Public Use Types, accessed July 25, 2023, https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClarita/html/SantaClarita17/SantaClarita1745.html.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, and/or policies by agencies with jurisdiction over the project?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is not located within a habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved environmental resource conservation plan. However, the northern portion of the Project site (north of the existing SCRRA/Metrolink railroad tracks) is located within the City's Significant Ecological Area (SEA) overlay zone and would require compliance with Santa Clarita Unified Development Code Section 17.38.080. This overlay is intended to preserve the SEA for the public health, safety, and welfare for the long-term benefit of the community, maintenance of the unique visual characteristics, resources, and ridgeline integrity, and to achieve a higher quality of life for its residents. In general, the purpose of the overlay zone shall be to minimize the intrusion and impacts of development in these areas with sufficient controls to adequately protect the resources.[41] The Project is a proposed park that would provide a variety of recreational and exercise opportunities for the long-term health benefit of the community. The Project includes a regional infiltration basin to collect and conserve water supplies, which also provides for the long-term welfare and benefit of the community. As discussed in Section IV, Biological Resources and Section V, Cultural Resources, the Project would include a project design feature and mitigation measures to protect biological and cultural resources. As analyzed in Section I, Aesthetics, the Project is designed in a manner to preserve the scenic quality of the area. In summary, the Project conforms to the SEA overlay zone.

Additionally, the Project would not require the removal of any oak trees on the Project site, and would not conflict with the City's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Therefore, the Project would not conflict with any adopted environmental conservation plans, and impacts would be less than significant.

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[41] City of Santa Clarita, Municipal Code Section 17.38.080, SEA-Significant Ecological Area Overlay Zone, accessed July 25, 2023, https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClarita/html/SantaClarita17/SantaClarita1738.html#17.38.080.

Section XII. Mineral and Energy Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES: Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Use nonrenewable resources in a wasteful and inefficient manner?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

a) Would the project 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?

No Impact. The Project site is not located within an existing Mineral Extraction Area or a Mineral Resource Zone, as identified on the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element's Exhibit CO-2 (Mineral Resources). According to the City's General Plan, as well as the California Geologic Energy Management Division's Well Finder database, there are no producing, idle, or abandoned oil or natural gas wells, or any other types of mineral extraction activities within the Project site. The nearest oil and gas well to the Project site is located approximately 0.1 mile north; however, this well has been categorized as plugged.[42] Furthermore, the Project site is governed by the provisions of the BP zone, which does not permit mineral recovery uses. Therefore, the Project would not 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. No impact would occur.

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

No Impact. As discussed above, the Project site is not located within an existing Mineral Extraction Area or a Mineral Resource Zone. In addition, the Project site is governed by the provisions of the BP zone, which does not permit mineral recovery uses. Therefore, the Project would not 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. No impact would occur.

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[42] California Geologic Energy Management, Well Finder, https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/doggr/wellfinder/, accessed July 27, 2023.

c) Would the project use nonrenewable resources in a wasteful and inefficient manner?

Less Than Significant Impact. A discussion of Project-related impacts associated with consumption of energy resources during construction and operation is included in Section VI, Energy, of this Initial Study. The Project would utilize a variety of construction materials and energy resources during construction and would consume energy over the long-term operation of the Project. Many of the resources utilized for construction are nonrenewable, including sand, gravel, soils, metals, and hardscape materials, along with petroleum-based fuels to power construction machinery and vehicles. A highly competitive construction economy encourages the efficient use of materials and manpower during construction, to be cost effective, and meet financial goals. The Project would not require any unique construction methods or materials that would consume nonrenewable resources in an unusually intensive manner. Therefore, this Project is not expected to consume nonrenewable resources during construction in a wasteful or inefficient manner.

In addition, the proposed Project would commit energy and water resources as a result of the long-term operation and maintenance of the development, including landscaping, park facility lighting, and the proposed restroom and maintenance storage building. Water resources are considered to be renewable through the natural hydrological cycle, although in Southern California, fresh water can be a scarce resource during periodically prolonged drought conditions. The proposed infiltration basin would convey more water to the groundwater basin near existing production wells, thereby increasing groundwater supply in the Project area. As such, the Project would result in a more resilient water supply for the surrounding community and would reduce demands on water sources elsewhere. The Project's impact on water supplies is further discussed in Section XVIII, Utilities and Service Systems, of this Initial Study.

Portions of the electrical energy that would be utilized on-site would be generated through off-site combustion of nonrenewable fossil fuels at distant power generation facilities; however, renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, are being utilized more each year by energy providers. Accordingly, Southern California Edison, which provides electricity service to the Project site, sources approximately 30 percent of its supplied energy from renewable resources in its standard power mix, with options for end users to choose energy plans comprising approximately 66 percent renewable energy resources or 100 percent renewable energy resources.[43] Further, the share of renewable energy delivered by energy providers can be expected to increase as California moves toward a target of providing 100 percent renewable energy for all California electric retail sales by 2045, pursuant to California Senate Bill 100. Additionally, the Project would be required to comply with California Code of Regulations, Title 24, the California Building Standards Code, which includes the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards and the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code. Title 24, Part 6, the California Energy Code, also known as the California Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings, was created to reduce California's energy consumption. It addresses issues concerning design, construction, alteration, installation, or repair of building envelopes, space-conditioning systems, water-heating systems, indoor lighting systems of buildings, outdoor lighting and signage, and certain equipment designed to enhance building efficiency. Therefore, with mandatory compliance with energy efficiency measures, an increasing

[43] Southern California Edison, 2021 Power Content Label, https://www.sce.com/sites/default/files/custom-files/Web%20files/2021%20Power%20Content%20Label.pdf.

concentration of renewable energy sources used by electricity providers, and with general market conditions encouraging the efficient use of materials and energy for cost-savings purposes, the Project would not use nonrenewable resources in a wasteful and inefficient manner, and impacts would be less than significant.

Section XIII. Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
NOISE: Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The analysis in this section is based, in part, on the noise modeling prepared for the Project, as well as the Pickleball Court Noise Memorandum prepared by Michael Baker International for the Project, available as **Appendix I** of this Initial Study.

Sound is mechanical energy transmitted by pressure waves in a compressible medium such as air and is characterized by both its amplitude and frequency (or pitch). The human ear does not hear all frequencies equally. In particular, the ear de-emphasizes low and very high frequencies. To better approximate the sensitivity of human hearing, the A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) has been developed. On this scale, the human range of hearing extends from approximately 3 dBA to around 140 dBA.

Noise is generally defined as unwanted or excessive sound, which can vary in intensity by over one million times within the range of human hearing; therefore, a logarithmic scale, known as the decibel scale (dB), is used to quantify sound intensity. Noise can be generated by a number of sources, including mobile sources such as automobiles, trucks, and airplanes, and stationary

sources such as construction sites, machinery, and industrial operations. Noise generated by mobile sources typically attenuates (is reduced) at a rate between 3 dBA and 4.5 dBA per doubling of distance. The rate depends on the ground surface and the number or type of objects between the noise source and the receiver. Hard and flat surfaces, such as concrete or asphalt, have an attenuation rate of 3 dBA per doubling of distance. Soft surfaces, such as uneven or vegetated terrain, have an attenuation rate of about 4.5 dBA per doubling of distance. Noise generated by stationary sources typically attenuates at a rate between 6 dBA and about 7.5 dBA per doubling of distance.

There are a number of metrics used to characterize community noise exposure, which fluctuate constantly over time. One such metric, the equivalent sound level (L_{eq}), represents a constant sound that, over the specified period, has the same sound energy as the time-varying sound. Noise exposure over a longer period of time is often evaluated based on the Day-Night Sound Level (L_{dn}). This is a measure of 24-hour noise levels that incorporates a 10 dBA penalty for sounds occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. The penalty is intended to reflect the increased human sensitivity to noises occurring during nighttime hours, particularly at times when people are sleeping and there are lower ambient noise conditions. Typical L_{dn} noise levels for light and medium density residential areas range from 55 dBA to 65 dBA. Similarly, Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is a measure of 24-hour noise levels that incorporates a 5-dBA penalty for sounds occurring between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and a 10-dBA penalty for sounds occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. to account for noise sensitivity in the evening and nighttime, respectively.

Regulatory Framework

State of California

State Office of Planning and Research

The state Office of Planning and Research's *Noise Element Guidelines* include recommended exterior and interior noise level standards for local jurisdictions to identify and prevent the creation of incompatible land uses due to noise. The *Noise Element Guidelines* contain a land use compatibility table that describes the compatibility of various land uses with a range of environmental noise levels in terms of the CNEL. The guidelines also present adjustment factors that may be used to arrive at noise acceptability standards that reflect the noise control goals of the community, the particular community's sensitivity to noise, and the community's assessment of the relative importance of noise pollution.

Local

City of Santa Clarita

City of Santa Clarita General Plan

The City of Santa Clarita General Plan was adopted in June 2011. This General Plan has been prepared pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65300 et seq., which require that each city and county within the state "adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning." The General Plan includes the following elements: Land Use Element, Economic Development Element, Circulation Element, Noise Element, Conservation and Open Space Element, Safety Element, and Housing Element.

The following goals and policies from the General Plan Noise Element are applicable to the Project.

Goal N 1: A healthy and safe noise environment for Santa Clarita Valley residents, employees, and visitors.

Objective N 1.1: Protect the health and safety of the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley by the elimination, mitigation, and prevention of significant existing and future noise levels.

Policy N 1.1.1: Use the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines contained on Exhibit N-8 (**Table 10**, *Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines*), which are consistent with State guidelines, as a policy basis for decisions on land use and development proposals related to noise.

Policy N 1.1.2: Continue to implement the adopted Noise Ordinance and other applicable code provisions, consistent with state and federal standards, which establish noise impact thresholds for noise abatement and attenuation, in order to reduce potential health hazards associated with high noise levels.

Policy N 1.1.3: Include consideration of potential noise impacts in land use planning and development review decisions.

Policy N 1.1.4: Control noise sources adjacent to residential, recreational, and community facilities, and those land uses classified as noise sensitive.

Goal N 2: Protect residents and sensitive receptors from traffic-generated noise.

Objective N 2.1: Prevent and mitigate adverse effects of noise generated from traffic on arterial streets and highways through implementing noise reduction standards and programs.

Policy N 2.1.1: Encourage owners of existing noise-sensitive uses, and require owners of proposed noise sensitive land uses, to construct sound barriers to protect users from significant noise levels, where feasible and appropriate.

Policy N 2.1.2: Encourage the use of noise absorbing barriers, where appropriate.

Goal N 3: Protect residential neighborhoods from excessive noise.

Objective N 3.1: Prevent and mitigate significant noise levels in residential neighborhoods.

Policy N 3.1.4: Require that those responsible for construction activities develop techniques to mitigate or minimize the noise impacts on residences, and adopt standards that regulate noise from construction activities that occur in or near residential neighborhoods.

The State of California has adopted guidelines for acceptable noise levels in various land use categories. The City of Santa Clarita and the County of Los Angeles have adopted these guidelines in a modified form as a basis for planning decisions based on noise considerations. The modified guidelines are shown in **Table 10**, *Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines*. Modifications were made to eliminate overlap between categories in the table, in order to make

the guidelines easier for applicants and decision makers to interpret and apply to planning decisions.

Table 10. Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines

Land Use Category	Normally Acceptable[1] (dBA CNEL/L_{dn})	Conditionally Acceptable[2] (dBA CNEL/L_{dn})	Normally Unacceptable[3] (dBA CNEL/L_{dn})	Clearly Unacceptable[4] (dBA CNEL/L_{dn})
Residential, Low Density Single Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	Up to 60	61-70	71-75	76 and higher
Residential, multi-family	Up to 60	66-70	71 and higher	76 and higher
Transient Lodging – Motels, Hotels	Up to 60	66-70	71 and higher	81 and higher
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	Up to 60	66-70	71 and higher	81 and higher
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	--	Up to 65	--	66 and higher
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports	--	Up to 75	--	76 and higher
Playgrounds Neighborhood Parks	Up to 65	--	66-75	76 and higher
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	Up to 75	--	75 and higher	--
Office Buildings, Business Commercial and Professional	Up to 70	71-75	76 and higher	--
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agricultural	Up to 75	76-80	81 and higher	--

Notes:

1. Normally acceptable means that specified land uses are satisfactory based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without and special noise insulation requirements.
2. Conditionally acceptable means that new construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed Nosie insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.
3. Normally unacceptable means that new construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does procced a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Sound walls, window upgrades, and site design modifications may be needed in order to achieve City standards.
4. Clearly unacceptable means that the new construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

Source: City of Santa Clarita, City of Santa Clarita General Plan, Noise Element Exhibit N-8, June 2011.

Santa Clarita Municipal Code

The City of Santa Clarita Noise Ordinance is contained in Santa Clarita Municipal Code Chapter 11.44, Noise Limits. The Noise Ordinance contains performance standards for the purpose of prohibiting unnecessary, excessive, and annoying noises from all sources subject to its police

power. At certain levels, noises are detrimental to the health and welfare of the citizenry, and, in the public interests, such noise levels shall be systematically proscribed.

The following sections of the Municipal Code are applicable to the proposed Project.

11.44.040 — Noise Limits

A. It shall be unlawful for any person within the City to produce or cause or allow to be produced noise which is received on property occupied by another person within the designated region, in excess of the following levels, except as expressly provided otherwise herein (**Table 11a**, City of Santa Clarita Noise Limits):

Table 11a. City of Santa Clarita Noise Limits

Region	Time	Sound Level dB
Residential Zone	Day	65
Residential Zone	Night	55
Commercial and Manufacturing	Day	80
Commercial and Manufacturing	Night	70

At the boundary line between a residential property and a commercial and manufacturing property, the noise level of the quieter zone shall be used.

B. Corrections to Noise Limits. The numerical limits given in subsection (A) of this section shall be adjusted by the following corrections, where the following noise conditions exist (**Table 11b**, City of Santa Clarita Noise Corrections):

Table 11b. City of Santa Clarita Noise Corrections

Noise Condition	Correction (in dB)
(1) Repetitive Impulsive noise	-5
(2) Steady whine, screech or hum	-5
The following corrections apply to day only:	
(3) Noise occurring more than 5 but less than 15 minutes per hour	+5
(4) Noise occurring more than 1 but less than 5 minutes per hour	+10
(5) Noise occurring less than 1 minute per hour	+20

11.44.080 Special Noise Sources – Construction and Building.

No person shall engage in any construction work which requires a building permit from the City on sites within three hundred (300) feet of a residentially zoned property except between the hours of seven a.m. to seven p.m., Monday through Friday, and eight a.m. to six p.m. on Saturday. Further, no work shall be performed on the following public holidays: New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Memorial Day and Labor Day.

The Department of Community Development may issue a permit for work to be done "after hours"; provided, that containment of construction noises is provided.

11.44.090 Special Noise Sources – Amplified Sound

The noise limits described in Section 11.44.040(A) of this chapter shall apply to any use of sound-amplifying equipment (Ord. 89, 1/23/90)

Existing Conditions

The Project area is on currently largely vacant land. The site vicinity consists of residential uses to the east and south, the Santa Clara River bounding the Project site to the north, and industrial uses located to the southeast. The primary sources of stationary noise near the site vicinity are HVAC units associated with residential buildings to the east. The noise associated with these sources may represent a single-event or a continuous occurrence and occur intermittently during both daylight and nighttime hours.

Most of the existing mobile source noise in the Project area is generated from the trains traveling along Metrolink rail-line that transects the Project site; the activities associated with the use of the on-site Via Princessa Metrolink Station platform; vehicular traffic at the on-site parking lot; and vehicles traveling along Weyerhauser Way and Via Princessa, a secondary highway located south of the Project site.

Noise Measurements

To quantify existing ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project site, three noise measurements were taken on July 19, 2023; refer to **Table 12**, Noise Measurements. The noise measurement sites were representative of typical existing noise exposure within and immediately adjacent to the Project site. Ten-minute measurements were taken between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Short-term (L_{eq}) measurements are considered representative of the noise levels throughout the day.

Table 12. Noise Measurements

Site No.	Location	L_{eq} (dBA)	L_{min} (dBA)	L_{max} (dBA)	Time
1	In front of Building 199 of Cordova Estates	50.7	36.1	69.0	10:00 a.m.
2	On the sidewalk, in front of 18931 Circle of the Oaks	54.9	42.3	67.8	10:32 a.m.
3	On the sidewalk, in front of 26846 Oak Branch Circle	48.3	39.4	63.1	10:48 a.m.
Notes: dBA = A-weighted decibels, L_{eq} = Equivalent Sound Level; L_{min} = Minimum Sound Level; L_{max} = Maximum Sound Level					
Source: Michael Baker International, July 19, 2023.					

Meteorological conditions were clear sunny skies, warm temperatures, with light wind speeds (0 to 5 miles per hour), and low humidity. Noise monitoring equipment used for the ambient noise survey consisted of a Brüel & Kjær Hand-held Analyzer Type 2250 equipped with a Type 4189 pre-polarized microphone. The monitoring equipment complies with applicable requirements of the American National Standards Institute for sound level meters. The results of the field measurements are included in **Appendix I**.

It should be noted that during the noise measurement at site number one, a passenger train was passing through the Via Princessa Metrolink Station (approximately 500 feet to the south of the

measurement location). The passenger train did not create a significant increase to the ambient noise levels; refer to **Table 12**.

Noise Sensitive Receptors

Noise-sensitive land uses are generally considered to include those uses where noise exposure could result in health-related risks to individuals, as well as places where quiet is an essential element of their intended purpose. Residential dwellings are of primary concern because of the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to both interior and exterior noise levels. Additional land uses such as natural parks, historic sites, cemeteries, and recreation areas are considered sensitive to increases in exterior noise levels. Schools, churches, hotels, libraries, and other places where low interior noise levels are essential are also considered noise-sensitive land uses. The nearest sensitive receptors are mobile homes (Cordova Estates) adjacent to the east of the Project site. Additional nearby sensitive receptors include the multi-family residential structures (duplexes) located along Oak Branch Circle and Circle of the Oaks approximately 500 feet and 1,000 feet south of the SCRRA/Metrolink tracks, respectively.

a) Would the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. It is difficult to specify noise levels that are generally acceptable to everyone, as what is annoying to one person may be unnoticed by another. Standards may be based on documented complaints in response to documented noise levels or based on studies of the ability of people to sleep, talk, or work under various noise conditions. However, all such studies recognize that individual responses vary considerably. Standards usually address the needs of the majority of the general population.

The Project site is located in the City of Santa Clarita. Therefore, regulations controlling unnecessary, excessive, and annoying noise from the City of Santa Clarita's Municipal Code and General Plan are applicable to the Project.

Construction Noise Impacts

Construction activities generally are temporary and have a short duration, resulting in periodic increases in the ambient noise environment. Construction activities would occur over approximately 29 months and would include the following phases: demolition, grading, building construction, linear construction (underpass construction), and paving. Ground-borne noise and other types of construction-related noise impacts would typically occur during the grading phase. This phase of construction has the potential to create the highest levels of noise. In addition, the Project proposes the utilization of a soil cement batch plant which would be used to produce the soil-cement mixture for the buried bank stabilization. The soil cement plant operation would consist of a scraper, a generator set, and a loader to operate. The soil cement batch plant would be stationary and would have soils transported on a conveyor belt from hoppers filled by loaders to be mixed with portland cement in a rotating drum. The resulting materials would then be transported out in bottom dump trailers. The entirety of the batch plant would be powered by a generator set. Also, the soil cement batch plant would be temporary and would be operating for up to 4 weeks. Typical noise levels generated by construction equipment are shown in **Table 13**, *Maximum Noise Levels Generated by Typical Construction Equipment*.

Construction noise impacts generally happen when construction activities occur in areas immediately adjoining noise-sensitive land uses, during noise-sensitive times of the day, or when construction durations last over extended periods of time. The closest existing sensitive receptors are mobile homes adjacent to the east of the Project site. As indicated in **Table 13**, typical L_{max}, or highest construction noise levels occurring over a given time period, would range from approximately 85 to 100 dBA at 15 feet. It should be noted that the noise levels identified in **Table 13** are maximum sound levels (L_{max}), which are the highest individual sound occurring at an individual time period. Although L_{max} is important in evaluating an interference caused by a single noise event, L_{max} could not be totaled into a one-hour or a 24-hour cumulative measure of impact as CNEL or L_{dn} could. Operating cycles for these types of construction equipment may involve one or two minutes of full power operation followed by three to four minutes at lower power settings. Other primary sources of acoustical disturbance would be due to random incidents, which would last less than one minute (such as dropping large pieces of equipment or the hydraulic movement of machinery lifts). It should also be noted that construction noise levels also depend on the location of the active work area, which will shift across the site. Work near the sensitive receptors would be expected to occur intermittently over a few days, and once work activities move away from the sensitive receptors, the corresponding construction noise level would also decrease.

Table 13. Maximum Noise Levels Generated by Typical Construction Equipment

Type of Equipment	Acoustical Use Factor[1]	L_{max} at 50 Feet (dBA)	L_{max} at 15 Feet (dBA)
Auger Drill Rig	20	84	94
Backhoe	40	78	88
Concrete Mixer Truck	40	79	89
Concrete Saw	20	90	100
Crane	16	81	91
Dozer	40	82	92
Excavator	40	81	91
Forklift	20	75	85
Generator	50	81	91
Grader	40	85	95
Loader	40	79	89
Paver	50	77	87
Roller	20	80	90
Scraper	40	84	94
Tractor	40	84	94
Water Truck	40	75	85
General Industrial Equipment	50	85	95
Soil Cement Batch Plant	15	83	95

Note:
1. Acoustical Use Factor (percent): Estimates the fraction of time each piece of construction equipment is operating at full power (i.e., its loudest condition) during a construction operation.

Source: Federal Highway Administration, Roadway Construction Noise Model (*FHWA-HEP-05-054*), January 2006.

Although noise levels during construction would be higher than existing ambient noise levels of 54.9 dBA L_{eq} in the vicinity of the Project site (refer to **Table 12**, Noise Measurements), construction noise would be intermittent and temporary. In addition, the Project would adhere to

the City's Noise Ordinance governing hours of construction and noise levels generated by construction equipment. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 11.44.080, Special Noise Sources – Construction and Building, construction noise in the City is prohibited between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekdays, 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, and/or any time on Sunday or a federal holiday unless a permit is issued by the City's Department of Community Development and containment of construction noises is provided.

Nighttime construction would be required to install piles during the railroad undercrossing construction, typically occurring between the last train at night and the first train in the morning to avoid disturbance to train operations. Drill rigs are expected to be used during installation of the piles. As shown in **Table 13**, drill rigs could generate noise levels of 84 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet. Construction of the undercrossing would be approximately 400 feet from the nearest sensitive receptors to the east. At the distance of 400 feet, noise levels from drill rigs would be reduced to 66 dBA L_{max}. As noise levels during nighttime construction would be higher than existing ambient noise levels of 54.9 dBA L_{eq} in the vicinity of the Project site (refer to **Table 12**, Noise Measurements), Mitigation Measure NOI-1 shall be implemented to reduce the noise levels. Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would include the installation of mufflers and noise attenuating devices on construction equipment, the designation of a "Noise Disturbance Coordinator", and the orientation of stationary construction equipment away from nearby sensitive receivers. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure NOI-1**, construction noise impacts would be reduced to less than significant level.

Long-Term Operational Noise Impacts

Mobile Noise

Operation of the proposed Project would result in additional traffic on adjacent roadways, thereby increasing vehicular noise in the vicinity of existing and proposed land uses. Future development generated by the proposed Project would also result in some additional traffic on adjacent roadways, thereby potentially increasing vehicular noise in the vicinity of existing and proposed land uses. The most prominent source of mobile traffic noise in the Project vicinity is along Via Princessa, the secondary highway located to the south of the Project site, and along Sierra Highway located east of the Project site. Based on the City's General Plan Noise Element, Via Princessa is not considered a major roadway and thus, no noise contours were provided. Based on the Noise Appendix for the Santa Clarita General Plan, Sierra Highway is a major roadway and has sound levels ranging from 45 dBA to 75 dBA.

According to the Via Princessa Park Project Traffic Study Scoping Memorandum prepared by Michael Baker International (June 2023), the Project would generate approximately 279 average daily trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays; refer to Section III, Air Quality, of this Initial Study and **Appendix J**. According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), a doubling of traffic (100 percent increase) on a roadway would result in a perceptible increase in traffic noise levels (3 dBA).[44] As such, the estimated daily trips from the proposed Project would represent a nominal increase in daily traffic compared to existing traffic conditions on the surrounding roadways (e.g., Via Princessa, Sierra Highway, and Whites Canyon Road). For example, Via Princessa on the south side of the Project site, between Weyerhouser Way and

[44] California Department of Transportation, Technical Noise Supplement to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol, September 2013.

Whites Canyon Road has a combined east bound and west bound 24-hour traffic volume of 31,807 trips.[45] As such, the Project's 279 average daily trips would not have the potential to double traffic volume. Less-than-significant impacts would occur in this regard.

Stationary Noise Impacts

Stationary noise sources associated with the proposed Project would include slow-moving trucks, parking activities, pickleball courts, and outdoor gathering area. These noise sources are typically intermittent and short in duration. Noise has a decay rate due to distance attenuation, which is calculated based on the Inverse Square Law. Based upon the Inverse Square Law, sound levels decrease by 6 dBA for each doubling of distance from the source.[46] All stationary noise activities would be required to comply with the City's Noise Ordinance and the California Building Code requirements pertaining to noise attenuation.

Slow-Moving Trucks

The Project would include a trash enclosure with occasional trash pickup in the proposed parking lot. Typically, a medium 2-axle truck used to make deliveries can generate a maximum noise level of 79 dBA at a distance of 50 feet.[47] These are levels generated by a truck that is operated by an experienced "reasonable" driver with typically applied accelerations. Higher noise levels may be generated by the excessive application of power. Lower levels may be achieved but would not be considered representative of a normal truck operation. The Project is not anticipated to require a significant number of truck trips given the proposed uses. Further, garbage trucks currently service the surrounding area. As such, slow-moving trucks would not be considered a new source of noise. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Parking Areas

Traffic associated with parking activities is typically not of sufficient volume to exceed community noise standards, which are based on a time-averaged scale such as the CNEL scale. However, the instantaneous maximum sound levels generated by a car door slamming, engine starting up and car pass-bys may be an annoyance to adjacent noise-sensitive receptors. Estimates of the maximum noise levels associated with some parking lot activities are presented in **Table 14**, *Typical Noise Levels Generated by Parking Lots*.

Table 14. Typical Noise Levels Generated by Parking Lots

Noise Source	Maximum Noise Levels at 50 Feet from Source	Maximum Noise Levels at 360 Feet from Source
Car door slamming	61 dBA L_{eq}	44 dBA L_{eq}
Car starting	60 dBA L_{eq}	19 dBA L_{eq}
Car idling	53 dBA L_{eq}	36 dBA L_{eq}
Source: Kariel, H. G., Noise in Rural Recreational Environments, Canadian Acoustics 19(5), 3-10, 1991.		

[45] City of Santa Clarita, Average Daily Traffic Volume 18815-18859 Via Princessa, May 17, 2023.

[46] Cyril M. Harris, *Noise Control in Buildings*, 1994.

[47] Elliot H. Berger, Rick Neitzel, and Cynthia A. Kladden, *Noise Navigator Sound Level Database with Over 1700 Measurement Values*, July 6, 2010.

As shown, parking activities can result in noise levels up to 61 dBA at a distance of 50 feet. It is noted that parking lot noises are instantaneous noise levels compared to noise standards in the CNEL scale, which are averaged over time. As a result, actual noise levels over time resulting from parking lot activities would be far lower than what is identified in **Table 14**. The proposed Project would result in the improvement of the existing parking facilities located south of the Project site; as such, the proposed Project would result in intermittent parking activity noise due to the movement of vehicles. The nearest sensitive receptors to the proposed parking area would be residential uses approximately 360 feet south from the existing parking facilities on the southern portion of the Project site. At this distance, noise levels from parking activities would range from 19 to 44 dBA. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 11.44.040 (B), repetitive impulsive noise would result in a -5 dBA correction of the City's noise limits. As such, parking lot noise levels would not exceed the adjusted City's exterior daytime (i.e., 60 dBA) and nighttime (i.e., 50 dBA) noise standards for residential uses and would be lower than existing ambient noise levels near the site; refer to **Table 12**. Further, parking activity noise currently exists within the adjacent residential neighborhoods and would not represent a new source of noise. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Outdoor Gathering Area

The proposed Project includes the development of a park facility, four multipurpose fields for sports, and four pickleball courts. The recreational components of the Project have the potential to be accessed by groups of people. Noise generated by groups of people (i.e., crowds) is dependent on several factors including vocal effort, impulsiveness, and the random orientation of the crowd members. Crowd noise is estimated at 60 dBA at one meter (3.28 feet) away for raised normal speaking.[48] This noise level would have a +5 dBA adjustment for the impulsiveness of the noise source, and a -3 dBA adjustment for the random orientation of the crowd members.[49] Therefore, crowd noise would be approximately 62 dBA at one meter from the source (i.e., the outdoor gathering areas).

The nearest sensitive receptors would be the residential uses adjoining the Project site to the east, located approximately 120 feet from the proposed multipurpose fields. As discussed in Municipal Code Section 11.44.040 (B), repetitive impulsive noise would result in a -5 dBA correction of the City's noise limits for residential uses. Therefore, crowd noise at the nearest sensitive receptor would be 31 dBA, which would not exceed the adjusted City's noise standards for residential uses (i.e., 60 dBA for daytime and 50 dBA for nighttime) and would be lower than existing ambient noise levels near the site; refer to **Table 12**. As such, Project noise associated with outdoor gathering area would not introduce an intrusive noise source over the existing condition. Thus, a less-than-significant impact would occur in this regard.

Pickleball Court

The proposed Project includes the development of four pickleball courts. Pickleball is a paddle sport that requires the action of hitting a perforated hollow plastic ball which can result in excessive noise levels. The nearest sensitive receptors to the four pickleball courts are the residential uses, located approximately 290 feet east of the proposed pickleball courts. According to the Via Princessa Pickleball Court Project – Noise Technical Memorandum prepared by Michael Baker

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[48] M.J. Hayne, et al., "Prediction of Crowd Noise," *Acoustics*, November 2006.

[49] M.J. Hayne, et al., "Prediction of Crowd Noise," *Acoustics*, November 2006.

International (dated January 31, 2023), the noise levels of four pickleball games occurring simultaneously in the proposed pickleball courts would result in a maximum exterior noise level of approximately 44.8 dBA for the closest residential uses; refer to **Appendix I**, Noise Data and Pickleball Court Noise Memorandum. Pickleball activity noise could be considered as repetitive impulse noise; as mentioned, exterior noise level standards shall be adjusted with a correction of -5 dB. As such, noise levels generated at the proposed Project site because of pickleball activities would be below the City's allowable exterior noise thresholds of 60 dBA during daytime. Additionally, noise levels generated from the pickleball courts would be below the existing ambient noise near the site; refer to **Table 12**. Thus, a less-than-significant impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures:

NOI-1: To reduce noise levels during nighttime construction activities, the City shall comply with the following:

- Construction contracts must specify that all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, shall be equipped with properly operating and maintained mufflers and other state-required noise attenuation devices.

- A sign, legible at a distance of 50 feet, shall be posted at the Project construction site providing a contact name and a telephone number where residents can inquire about the construction process and register complaints. This sign shall indicate the dates and duration of nighttime construction activities. In conjunction with this required posting, a noise disturbance coordinator shall be identified to address construction noise concerns received. The coordinator shall be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. When a complaint is received, the disturbance coordinator shall notify the City within 24 hours of the complaint and determine the cause of the noise complaint (construction occurring outside of the posted dates, malfunctioning muffler, etc.) and shall implement reasonable measures to resolve the complaint, as deemed acceptable by the City. All signs posted at the construction site shall include the contact name and the telephone number for the noise disturbance coordinator.

- During construction, stationary construction equipment shall be placed such that emitted noise is directed away from sensitive noise receivers.

b) Would the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction can generate varying degrees of groundborne vibration, depending on the construction procedure and the construction equipment used. Operation of some heavy-duty construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in amplitude with distance from the source. The effect on buildings in the vicinity of the construction site often varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and construction characteristics of the receiver building(s). The results from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibration at moderate levels, to slight damage at the highest levels. Groundborne vibrations from construction activities rarely reach levels that damage structures.

The types of construction vibration impact include human annoyance and structure damage. Human annoyance occurs when construction vibration rises significantly above the threshold of human perception for extended periods of time. Building damage can be cosmetic or structural. Caltrans's *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual* identifies various vibration damage criteria for different structure types and building classes. Engineering structures, including underground utilities, have a higher vibration damage threshold than buildings. Therefore, as a conservative analysis this evaluation uses the Caltrans architectural damage threshold for continuous vibrations at older residential buildings of 0.3 inch-per-second PPV. As the nearest structures to Project construction areas are residential structures (mobile homes), this threshold is considered appropriate. The vibration produced by construction equipment is illustrated in **Table 15**, *Typical Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment.*

Table 15. Typical Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Reference peak particle velocity at 25 feet (inch-per-second)	Approximate peak particle velocity at 15 feet (inch-per-second)[1]	Approximate peak particle velocity at 60 feet (inch-per-second)[1]
Large bulldozer	0.089	0.156	-
Loaded trucks	0.076	0.133	-
Vibratory Rollers	0.210	-	0.080
Small bulldozer	0.003	0.005	-

Notes:

1. Calculated using the following formula:

$PPV_{equip} = PPV_{ref} \times (25/D)^{1.1}$

where: PPV (equip) = the peak particle velocity in inch-per-second of the equipment adjusted for the distance

PPV (ref) = the reference vibration level in inch-per-second at 25 feet from Table 18 of the Caltrans *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*

D (feet)= the distance from the equipment to the receiver

Source: California Department of Transportation, *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*, April 2020.

The nearest structures are the mobile home structures located approximately 15 feet east from the Project site. As shown above, at the distance of 15 feet, the maximum vibration velocities would be approximately 0.156 inch-per-second PPV generated by large bulldozers, which would not exceed the Caltrans significance threshold for older residential buildings (i.e., 0.3 inch-per-second PPV). Additionally, vibratory rollers would be used to compact and construct the soil-cement layers along the south bank of the Santa Clara River and along the east and west banks of the Honby Channel. The nearest residential structure to the proposed operation of vibratory rollers is adjacent to the Project site to the east and located 60 feet away from the south bank of the Santa Clara River. At the distance of 60 feet, the maximum vibration velocity of vibratory rollers would be approximately 0.080 inch-per-second PPV, which would not exceed the Caltrans significance threshold (i.e., 0.3 inch-per-second PPV). Therefore, groundborne vibration impacts during Project construction would be less than significant.

c) Would the project result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

d) Would the project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in the response to Section XIII(a) above, noise generated during Project construction and operation would be below applicable noise thresholds. Accordingly, the Project would not result in substantial temporary or permanent increases in ambient noise levels in the Project vicinity above levels existing without the Project. Therefore, the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts on noise.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The Project is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport, public use airport, or private airstrip. The closest airport is the Whiteman Airport in Pacoima, CA, located approximately 10.4 miles southeast of the Project site. Given the distance between this airport and the Project site, the Project would have no noise impact related to the exposure of people residing or working in such areas to excessive noise levels. Therefore, the Project would have no impact related to airport or airstrip noise.

Section XIV. Population and Housing

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

Discussion

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would construct and operate Via Princessa Park, which would include recreational facilities, parking, park access, other amenities and improvements (such as walking paths, railroad undercrossing, construction of a new restroom, etc.), and potential modifications to Weyerhauser Way and Via Princessa Road. In addition to recreational uses, the Project would include a regional stormwater infiltration facility and other civil and geotechnical design features.

Given the temporary nature of construction industry jobs, the relatively large regional construction industry, and the comparatively limited total number of construction workers needed during any construction phase, the labor force from within the region is expected to be sufficient to complete Project construction without an influx of new workers and their families. Therefore, construction of the proposed Project would not directly induce population growth, and there would be no impact.

The Project does not include the construction of new homes or businesses, or changes to the existing land use designation of the Project site. The proposed Via Princessa Park would serve the existing surrounding communities. The Project would include new construction, modifications, and improvements for pedestrian paths and roadways, and relocation of utilities on a site that is predominantly unimproved, except for the Via Princessa Metrolink Station. However, the vacant part of the site has been previously disturbed by agricultural production and the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District trunk sewer improvement project, and the Project site is located in an area developed with residences, a golf course, open space, and roadways. Therefore, although the Project would involve infrastructure improvements such as construction of the infiltration

basin, improvements to Honby Channel, and improvements to the parking area, the greater Project area is already developed and has infrastructure improvements.

The Project would require approximately two to five employees to perform ongoing regular maintenance. However, the employees would be expected to come from the existing regional workforce, and based on the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS population estimates for Santa Clarita, employment is anticipated to increase from 91,200 in 2016 to 105,200 in 2045.[50] Using this growth forecast, the proposed Project would account for approximately 0.103 percent of forecasted employment growth between 2016 and 2045 in the City, which would be a nominal percentage of employee growth. As such, operation of the proposed Project would not result in substantial unplanned population growth in the area, and impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere (especially affordable housing)?

No Impact. The existing Project site comprises vacant City-owned land, the Metro right-of-way, Via Princessa Metrolink Station, and parking lot. There is no existing housing located on the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not displace any housing and there would be no impacts.

c) Would the project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The existing Project site comprises vacant City-owned land, the Metro right-of-way, Via Princessa Metrolink Station, and parking lot. There is no existing housing or businesses located on the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not displace any people and there would be no impacts.

[50] Southern California Association of Governments, 2020, Connect SoCal Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report, page 36.

Section XV. Public Services

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

Discussion

a.i) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for fire protection?

Less Than Significant Impact. Fire protection services for the Project site and the surrounding area are provided by the Los Angeles County Fire Department. The nearest fire station to the Project site is Fire Station 107, which is located at 18239 Soledad Canyon Road, approximately 1.2 miles northeast of the Project site across the Santa Clara River.[51] Fire Station 107 provides emergency medical services, fire and rescue services and safe haven services for unincorporated Los Angeles County and for contracting cities.[52] The Project does not propose a unique land use or type of structure that cannot be adequately served by the fire department's existing resources. The Project would develop park and recreational uses on vacant land, which would expand the

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[51] US Environmental Protection Agency, NEPAssist Tool, distance to Fire Station 107, accessed July 26, 2023, https://www.epa.gov/nepa/nepassist.

[52] County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Station 107, accessed July 27, 2023, https://locator.lacounty.gov/fire/Location/3069578/los-angeles-county-fire-department---station-107.

current use of the site and would also generate maintenance employee needs on-site. However, the Project would not result in a level or type of use at the site that would warrant new or significantly altered fire facilities. Further, the Project would not include residential uses and would, therefore, not generate population growth that could affect service ratios. Additionally, the culvert extension provision, which would facilitate vehicle crossing over Honby Channel, would further improve emergency access and response to the site. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in the need for additional new or altered fire protection services and would not alter acceptable service ratios or response times. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

a.ii) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection?

Less Than Significant Impact. Police protection services for the Project site are provided by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Specifically, the Project site is primarily served by the Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff Station, which is located at 26201 Golden Valley Road, approximately 1.75 miles west of the Project site.[53] The SCV Sheriff Station provides correctional programs, disaster services, environmental services, holiday assistance, law enforcement services, substance abuse services and youth services for the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and contracting cities.[54] The Project would develop park and recreational uses on vacant land, which would expand the current use of the site and would also generate maintenance employee needs on-site. The Project does not propose any structures or uses that cannot be adequately served by the SCV Sheriff Station's existing resources. Further, the Project would not include residential uses and would, therefore, not generate population growth that could affect service ratios. As previously stated, the culvert extension provision would facilitate vehicle crossing over Honby Channel, which would further improve emergency access and response to the siteAs such, the Project would not result in the need for new or physically altered police facilities, the provision of which would result in substantial adverse physical impacts and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

a.iii) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for schools?

No Impact. The proposed Project would not have an adverse physical impact on the existing schools in the vicinity. The Project site is located within the Sulphur Springs Union School District and the William S. Hart Union High School District. However, the Project does not include

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[53] US Environmental Protection Agency, NEPAssist Tool, distance to SCV Sheriff Station, accessed July 26, 2023, https://www.epa.gov/nepa/nepassist.

[54] County of Los Angeles, Services Locator, Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff Station, accessed July 27, 2023, https://locator.lacounty.gov/lac/Location/3177215/santa-clarita-valley-sheriff-station.

residential uses, and would therefore not generate population growth that could result in the generation of new students within these districts. No impacts to schools would occur.

a.iv) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for parks?

No Impact. Residential development typically has the greatest potential to result in impacts to parks since these types of developments generate a permanent increase in residential population. As stated previously, the proposed Project does not include development of any residential uses and would not generate any new permanent residents that would increase the demand for local and regional park facilities. Rather, the Project would develop park and recreational uses on vacant land, which would include athletic fields with sports field lighting, pickleball courts, playground equipment, and other recreational facilities.

According to the City of Santa Clarita General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element, there is a citywide shortage of local parkland in the City, and the need for additional playfields for youth sports has been identified as a significant park planning objective. The City's General Plan states that the City offers approximately 1.5 to 2 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents through 20 City parks and has had to supplement park facilities with 12 school facilities for community recreational purposes through approval of joint use agreements.[55] As such, the proposed Project would alleviate the City's existing park and recreational facility demands by providing a new community park with passive and active recreational facilities, which is consistent with the City's General Plan objectives. Specifically, the Project would be consistent with Objective CO 9.1, which promotes new parkland developments throughout the Santa Clarita Valley and within areas not adequately served by a diversity of park types and functions, including passive and active areas, and in consideration of the recreational needs of residents to be served, and based on the guidelines provided in Policy CO 9.1.1 through Policy CO 9.1.15.[56] Therefore, no adverse impacts to parks would occur.

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

No Impact. As previously stated, the Project does not include residential uses, and would therefore not generate population growth that could result in an increased demand for other government facilities. No impacts to other government facilities would occur.

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55 City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element, June 2011.

56 Ibid.

Section XVI. Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
RECREATION:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion

a) Would the 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?

No Impact. The primary purpose of the Project is to implement the City's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan Update (August 2008), which identified the proposed Via Princessa Park as a possible future park to provide needed recreational facilities to the community. As such, the Project would provide new and additional park and recreational facilities to the community and would not increase the use of existing park and recreational facilities. Furthermore, as discussed in Section XIV, Population and Housing, the Project would not induce unplanned population growth. Therefore, there would be no impacts related to the substantial physical deterioration of existing park and recreational facilities.

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?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Implementation of the proposed Project consists of the development of the proposed Via Princessa Park. As such, while the proposed Project would involve the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that may have the potential to result in an adverse physical effect on the environment, the improvements as proposed have been evaluated in this Initial Study to determine whether physical impacts to the environment would occur, and mitigation measures have been identified, as appropriate, to reduce any such impacts to a less than significant level. Specifically, the Project involves mitigation measures associated with reducing impacts to the environment, as identified in: Section IV. Biological Resources; Section V. Cultural Resources; Section XIII. Noise; and Section XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources. Implementation of the mitigation measures proposed as part of this Initial Study would reduce any potential environmental impacts to less than significant levels.

Section XVII. Transportation/Traffic

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
TRANSPORTATION: Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The following analysis is based in part on the information contained in the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Assessment prepared by Michael Baker International on July 27, 2023. The VMT Assessment is provided as **Appendix J** of this IS/MND.

a) Would the project conflict with an applicable, plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

Less than Significant Impact.

Methodology

Recent changes to the CEQA Guidelines include the adoption of Section 15064.3, *Determining the Significance of Transportation Impacts*. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 establishes VMT as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. Generally, land use projects within 0.5 miles of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high quality transit

corridor should be presumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact.[57] Projects that decrease VMT in the project area compared to existing conditions should also be presumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact. A lead agency has discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology to evaluate VMT, including whether to express the change in absolute terms, per capita, per household, or in any other measure. A lead agency may also use models to estimate VMT and may revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence.

In response to Senate Bill (SB) 743, which changed the focus of transportation analysis from congestion to, among other things, reducing GHG emissions, promoting a diversity of land uses, and developing multimodal transportation networks, and in compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, the City adopted the Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita, which provides new transportation impact thresholds and guidance for preparing transportation assessments in the City. This guidance includes a set of VMT screening criteria for projects in the City. These VMT screening criteria are consistent with those identified in the Office of Planning and Research's Technical Advisory, which was developed specifically to aid lead agencies with SB 743 implementation. According to this guidance, a detailed CEQA transportation analysis would not be required if a project meets the City's screening criteria. The proposed Project meets the locally serving retail criteria related to a fitness center or health club or similar facilities.[58] As such, no detailed VMT analysis is required. Therefore, impacts related to VMT would be less than significant.

Proposed Project, Access, and Circulation

The Project would involve the development of 34 acres of vacant City-owned land and introduction of new uses on-site. The existing circulation network at the Project site includes vehicular access from Via Princessa to Weyerhauser Way, which currently has three lanes (two outbound and one inbound) and the Via Princessa Metrolink Station and commuter train service immediately south of the Project site. The Via Princessa Station is one of three stops in Santa Clarita on the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line, connecting Lancaster to downtown Los Angeles (a fourth station, the Vista Canyon station, is anticipated to open in October 2023). The Antelope Valley line operates seven days a week, with approximately 11 trains stopping at Via Princessa Station in each direction on weekdays, and six trains in each direction on Saturday and Sunday.

As previously stated, the Project would construct and operate the proposed Via Princessa Park, which would involve the construction of four athletic fields and courts, picnic areas, playground equipment, construction of new restroom and storage facilities, an accessible network of pedestrian pathways, and other recreational facilities, which would result in an increase in vehicle trips. In addition, the proposed Project would provide park access and parking, and would involve alterations to the existing Via Princessa Metrolink Station parking lot and improvements to an existing restroom/office building; further, since the existing SCRRA/Metrolink railroad tracks transect the southern portion of the Project site, which includes the Via Princessa Metrolink Station, and separate the proposed park area from the parking lot, the Project requires and would include the construction of grade-separated access (railroad undercrossing) for pedestrians and

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57 Public Resources Code Section 21064.3; Public Resources Code Section 21155.

58 City of Santa Clarita, Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita, May 19, 2020, accessed July 30, 2023, https://www.santa-clarita.com/city-hall/departments/public-works/traffic-transportation-planning.

restricted vehicle access. Existing pathways consist of paths or sidewalks along the north and south sides of the SCRRA/Metrolink railroad tracks. The Project could also involve additional improvements to the Metrolink Station, including platform facility maintenance and repair activities, the addition of a fourth lane on Weyerhauser Way, and roadway modifications to Via Princessa to accommodate a double left-turn lane into and/or out of Weyerhauser Way.

VMT Assessment and Project Trip Generation

The City's VMT guidelines and thresholds suggest that lead agencies may screen out VMT impacts using project-specific characteristics, such as project location, project size, transit availability, and provision of affordable housing. The proposed Project's land use is a recreational and fitness-oriented facility of 50,000 square feet or less, which meets the City's VMT screening criteria of locally serving retail.[59] According to the VMT Assessment, the Project's proposed recreational land use is consistent with the *Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual's* (11th Edition) land use code 488 (Soccer Complex), which is described as including numerous on-site amenities including those consistent with the Project such as park activity shelters, tennis courts, and a playground. As shown in **Table 16**, *Trip Generation Rates*, Project trip generation rates for a Soccer Complex, code 488, were taken from the ITE Trip Generation Manual to capture trips associated with the proposed Project.

Table 16. Trip Generation Rates

Land Use	ITE Code	Unit	Daily Trips Rate	PM Peak Hour		Saturday Peak Hour	
				Volume	In / Out	Volume	In / Out
Park with Soccer Fields	488 (Soccer Complex)	Fields	71.33	16.43	66% / 34%	37.48	48% / 52%
Source: ITE Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition.							

The proposed Project would operate from sunrise to 10:00 p.m. per the City's standard park hours under Chapter 14.06 of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code.[60] Based on the VMT Assessment prepared for the Project, anticipated weekday activities include practices, scrimmages, and games in the evenings (e.g., between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.). Weekend activities may include youth and adult programming and games between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and tournaments, such as organized youth sports events, are anticipated to occur on a limited basis (i.e., a few times per year). Special, large event park uses may also occur on the site (e.g., concerts), which would require a City permit from the City's Parks and Recreation Department. The typical daily activities are anticipated to be local in nature while the tournaments, concerts, etc. have the potential to be regional in nature. As shown in **Table 17**, *Estimated Site Trips*, the Project is anticipated to generate approximately 285 daily trips with 66 PM weekday peak hour trips and 150 Saturday peak hour trips without any trip credits or reductions.

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[59] The 50,000-square-foot criterion applies to projects that involve retail facilities and is not applicable to a public park use.

[60] City of Santa Clarita, Municipal Code Section 14.06.020, Hours of Operation, accessed July 30, 2023. https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClarita/#!/SantaClarita14/SantaClarita1406.html#14.06.020.

Table 17. Estimated Site Trips

Land Use	ITE Code	Unit	Daily	PM Peak Hour			Saturday Peak Hour		
				Volume	In	Out	Volume	In	Out
Park with Soccer Fields	488	4 Fields	285	66	44	22	150	72	78

The Project site includes the Via Princessa Metrolink Station, and is therefore located less than a quarter mile from a major transit stop. As previously stated, existing SCRRA/Metrolink railroad tracks transect the southern portion of the Project site, which includes the physical station, and separates the proposed park area from the parking lot, thus requiring grade-separated access for pedestrians and restricted vehicle access to replace an existing at-grade pedestrian crossing. The proposed grade-separated access would involve the construction of an undercrossing approximately 29 feet wide, with a 12-foot-wide and 16.5-foot-high access for vehicles and a 14-foot-wide, 9-foot-high access for pedestrians. Thus, due to the proximity of the Project site to Via Princessa Metrolink Station, a 2 percent trip reduction was applied. As shown in **Table 18**, *Estimated Site Trips With Transit Trip Reduction*, the Project is anticipated to generate approximately 279 daily trips with 65 PM peak hour trips and 147 Saturday peak hour trip with the applied 2 percent trip reduction.

Table 18. Estimated Site Trips With Transit Trip Reduction

Land Use	Transit Reduction	Daily	PM Peak Hour			Saturday Peak Hour		
			Volume	In	Out	Volume	In	Out
Park with Soccer Fields	2%	279	65	43	22	147	71	76

Based on the City's Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita, the proposed Project meets the City's VMT screening thresholds under the locally serving retail criteria for land use projects related to a fitness center or health club or similar facilities. As such, no detailed VMT analysis is required. Therefore, impacts related to VMT are less than significant.

In addition, the Project is consistent with the City's General Plan Circulation Element objectives and policies related to promoting multimodal circulation networks and achieving greater accessibility and mobility for users of all travel modes. Specifically, the Project is consistent with Objectives C 1.1 and C 1.2 relating to the establishment of a multimodal circulation network within the City, as well as Objective C 7.1, which relates to expanding alternative transportation options.

b) Would the project conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed above, in response to SB 743 and in compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, the City has adopted the Transportation Analysis Updates in Santa Clarita, which provide new transportation impact thresholds and guidance for preparing transportation assessments in the City. The City's VMT screening criteria are consistent with those identified in the Office of Planning and Research's Technical Advisory. As evaluated above in part XVII(a), the proposed Project meets the City's VMT screening critera for locally serving retail as a recreational and fitness-oriented facility of 50,000 square feet or less.

Therefore, the Project's impacts related to VMT are less than significant. As such, the Project would not conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b), and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed Project would not result in an increase of hazardous geometric design features. Vehicular access to the Project site would be provided from Via Princessa, which is a secondary highway, to Weyerhauser Way, which currently has three lanes (two outbound and one inbound). In addition to the construction of athletic fields and other recreational facilities, the proposed Project may include upgrades to improve access to the park by either adding a fourth lane to Weyerhauser Way for incoming traffic, and/or adding a double left-turn lane on Via Princessa into and/or out of Weyerhauser Way.

Metrolink users may access the site from the Via Princessa Metrolink Station, which is located south of the proposed park area. As stated above, the Via Princessa Metrolink Station (located on the north side of the SCRRA/Metrolink railroad) and the existing SCRRA/Metrolink railroad operations bisect the south end of the Project site, separating the proposed park area from the parking lot, thus requiring grade-separated access for pedestrians and restricted vehicle access to replace the existing at-grade pedestrian crossing. As such, the proposed Project would provide safety and access improvements to the Via Princessa Metrolink Station.

The Project would not generate incompatible uses of area roadways, such as large farm equipment, which could impair circulation or safety on area roads. Further, the Project site's internal circulation system and driveways would be required to meet the mandatory design standards of the City of Santa Clarita as they relate to width, intersection control, and sight distance. Therefore, the Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses, and impacts would be less than significant.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project proposes a triple-box culvert extension, which would facilitate vehicle crossing over Honby Channel and would further improve emergency access and response to the western portion of the Project site. The existing triple-box culvert is approximately 500 feet long and is composed of three 8-foot-wide by 8-foot-high cast-in-place reinforced concrete boxes. The Project proposes to extend the culvert by up to 100 feet, i.e., the culvert by 70 feet, with a 30-foot transition structure. The culvert extension would be reinforced over the top to facilitate a vehicle crossing over Honby Channel, outside of the SCRRA right-of-way, providing emergency and maintenance vehicle access to different areas of the Project site. On-site emergency access would be provided by the proposed 20-foot-wide multipurpose pathways along the perimeters of the multipurpose fields.

Emergency vehicle access to the proposed park improvements would be provided via the Project's primary entrance onto Weyerhauser Way, as well as the proposed railroad undercrossing, which would improve circulation on the Project site as compared with existing conditions by providing restricted vehicle access under the railroad tracks to the park area.

Thus, the proposed Project would not result in inadequate emergency access; rather, the Project would improve access to and within the Project site, which is consistent with Policy C 2.5.2 of the City's General Plan Circulation Element to ensure new development is provided with adequate emergency and/or secondary access for purposes of evacuation and emergency response.[61] Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

[61] City of Santa Clarita, General Plan, Circulation Element, June 2011; US Environmental Protection Agency, NEPAssist Tool, accessed July 26, 2023, https://www.epa.gov/nepa/nepassist.

Section XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

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

Discussion

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

a.ii) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section

5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Response to a.i) and a.ii): Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. The City initiated the tribal consultation process, as required under PRC Section 21080.3.1, consistent with Assembly Bill (AB) 52. The City, on December 8, 2022, contacted Native American tribes that have requested the City of Santa Clarita to notify them of projects subject to AB 52 or SB 18. The Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (the Tribe) expressed interest in consulting with the City and asked for more information about the Project's impact on cultural resources. On July 13, 2023, the City provided the Cultural Resources Report prepared for this Project, available as Appendix D of this Initial Study. As stated in the Cultural Resources Report, researchers did not discover tribal cultural resources during a field investigation of the Project site; however, the sensitivity for potential undocumented prehistoric archaeological sites in the APE is considered moderate due to proximity of known resources, natural perennial water source, and soil deposits known to bury archaeological deposits. The City and the Tribe are in the process of bringing the consultation process to a finalization; thus there may be minor revisions to the mitigation language prior to the adoption of the MND. However, the Mitigation Measure TCR-1 captures the substantive elements of the mitigation approach.

In order to reduce impacts to unanticipated tribal cultural resources within the Project area, the Project would incorporate Mitigation Measure TCR-1, which requires implementation of tribal cultural resources monitoring, as well as Mitigation Measures CUL-1 (Cultural Resources Monitoring), CUL-2 (Evaluation of Unanticipated Finds), CUL-3 (Treatment of Significant Resources), and CUL-4 (Treatment of Unanticipated Finds of Human Remains). Implementation of Mitigation Measure TCR-1, in concert with CUL-1 through CUL-4 would ensure that potential impacts to unknown tribal cultural resources discovered during earthwork activities would be reduced to less significant levels. As such, the Project would have a less than significant impact on tribal cultural resources with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measure TCR-1

The project applicant shall retain a professional Tribal Monitor procured by the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians to observe all ground-disturbing activities including, but not limited to, clearing, grubbing, excavating, removals associated with removal and recompaction activities, digging, trenching, plowing, drilling, tunneling, quarrying, grading, leveling, driving posts, auguring, stripping topsoil or similar activity. If Tribal Cultural Resources are not encountered after observing the initial pass (the first disturbance of soil to the maximum depth of which it will be disturbed) of all ground-disturbance, continued Tribal Monitoring is not required.

If tribal cultural resources are encountered during the initial pass, the Tribal Monitor and qualified archaeologist shall assess the discovery for its significance, as defined in CEQA (e.g., Section 21074), and in consultation with the City, establish a plan on how best to continue monitoring the above-described activities through their completion.

Each of the project's activities: Infiltration gallery and pretreatment system; Culvert extension including the diversion structure, and energy dissipator (rock apron); Bank protection (Santa Clara River and Honby channel) and transition/tie-in structures (Cordova levee and Honby box-culvert); Sports Field initial grading and utilities; Railroad Undercrossing; Foundation construction for

Sports field lights, Pickle Ball court lights, perimeter lights, parking lot lights; will be observed by one Tribal monitor whether they occur sequentially or simultaneously.

Tribal Monitoring Services will continue until confirmation is received from the project applicant, in writing, that all scheduled activities pertaining to Tribal Monitoring are completed. When Tribal monitoring is not needed, the monitor will be notified as soon as the situation is understood. Every effort will be made to notify the Tribal Monitor and or Tribe at least five days before they are needed, however, there may be short-term delays where the notification may only come the day before. Notifications will be made by email, unless other arrangements are made.

If tribal cultural resources are encountered, the Tribal Monitor will have the authority to request that ground-disturbing activities cease within 50 feet of discovery and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards retained by the project applicant as well as the Tribal Monitor shall assess the find.

Section XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The following analysis is based, in part, on information contained in the *Safe, Clean Water Program Feasibility Study Report*, prepared for the proposed Project by Heather Merenda of the City of Santa Clarita Environmental Services Division, dated July 28, 2022. This report, herein referred to as the Feasibility Study Report, is included as **Appendix K** of this Initial Study.

a) Would the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Section XVIII(b) and XVIII(e) for a full discussion on wastewater treatment processes and capacity.

The Project would provide recreational opportunities as well as water quality and water supply benefits to the surrounding communities. Additionally, the Project would not generate atypical wastewater sources such as industrial or agricultural effluent. Wastewater generated by the Project is expected to be similar to sewage generated by a typical municipal park, resulting primarily from the proposed restroom building and the existing office/restroom building located in the surface parking lot on the south side of the Project site that is associated with the Via Princessa Metrolink rail station. Wastewater generated by the Project would be collected and transported through proposed sewer connections on the Project site to existing local sewers. These sewer connections are described further in Section XVIII(b), below. Wastewater treatment facilities are designed to treat sewage generated by typical suburban land uses, such as residential, commercial, and institutional/recreational land uses; thus, sewage generated by a municipal park would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements.

Furthrermore, the Project site is within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles RWQCB. As such, the Project would be required to comply with the Countywide waste discharge requirements contained in the MS4 Permit and Chapter 17.90 of the City's Municipal Code, which prescribes the requirements of the NPDES compliance for all proposed grading activities. The MS4 permit identifies total maximum daily load (TMDL) waste load allocations for several pollutant discharges including *E. coli*, nutrients, and chloride. The City is responsible for complying with the water quality-based effluent limitations and requirements of these established waste load allocations. Therefore, with the required compliance with the MS4 Permit, the Project would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the Los Angeles RWQCB and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Water

Refer to Section XVIII(d) for a discussion on the water supply impacts of the Project. The following discussion analyzes the impacts of the Project's proposed water infrastructure improvements.

Santa Clarita Valley Water (SCV Water) is the water purveyor that supplies water to the Project site. SCV Water comprises three divisions, namely the Santa Clarita Water Division, Newhall Water Division, and Valencia Water Division, which have separate but interconnected distribution systems. These three divisions encompass nearly the entire City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County. The Project site is located within the Santa Clarita Water Division distribution system. SCV Water's current service area includes a mix of residential and commercial, and light industrial land uses, mostly comprising single-family homes, apartments, condominiums, and several local shopping centers and neighborhood commercial developments. According to SCV Water's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), SCV Water's existing water resources include imported supplies, local groundwater, recycled water, and water from existing groundwater banking programs. Planned supplies include new groundwater production and additional banking programs.[62] Imported water supplies consist

[62] Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, June 2021, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan.

primarily of State Water Project (SWP) supplies and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The sole source of local groundwater in the Santa Clarita Valley is the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin's East Subbasin, which is composed of two aquifer systems, the Alluvium and the Saugus Formation.

An existing 14-inch diameter water line, managed by SCV Water, runs along the the western boundary of the Cordova Estates mobile home community, east of the Project site. The Project would construct a 3-inch water line, 6-inch water pipe, and water valves connecting to this existing 14-inch diameter water line. The Project would also construct irrigation bubblers/drip emitters, valves, and pipes. The proposed water infrastructure would be designed and implemented in accordance with SCV Water's guidelines and standards. The Project would also construct a 6-inch fire water line and fire hydrant, which would be designed and implemented in accordance with Los Angeles County Fire Department guidelines and standards. The proposed fire water line would extend along the proposed pathway at the southern perimeter of the multipurpose fields, and the fire hydrant would be located just north of the proposed park restroom location of the Project site. With compliance with these standards and codes, the Project would not result in the construction or relocation of water facilities which would cause significant environmental effects. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Wastewater

Refer to Section XVIII(e) for a full discussion on the local wastewater treatment system's capacity and impacts associated with the Project. The following discussion analyzes the impacts of the Project's proposed wastewater infrastructure improvements.

The City's Public Works Department manages the sanitary sewer collection system, which serves a population of approximately 213,000 residents and consists of about 450 miles of gravity sewer lines and a total of 3 pump stations.[63] The City contracts with the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District, managed by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, for the maintenance of its sanitary sewer system and field operations.[64] The City's local sewers discharge into the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD) facilities for conveyance, treatment, and disposal.

The existing sewer network in the Project vicinity contains several City-owned sewer lines of varying sizes, located along the western and southern boundaries of the Cordova Estates mobile home community, east of the Project site. The sewer lines continue south, under Weyerhaeuser Way, across Via Princessa Road, and continue into the residential uses and the Friendly Valley Golf Course to the south of Via Princessa Road.[65] Additionally, the LACSD is constructing a new trunk sewer line in summer 2023 (the Soledad Canyon Relief Trunk Sewer) that begins north of the Project site at the intersection of Soledad Canyon Road and Hidaway Avenue and runs south, under the Santa Clara River into the Project site, before turning east toward the western edge of

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63 City of Santa Clarita, 2020, Sewer System Management Plan.

64 Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, About Us, accessed August 7, 2023, https://pw.lacounty.gov/SMD/SMD/Page_08.cfm.

65 City of Santa Clarita, Mapping Your City, accessed August 7, 2023, https://maps.santa-clarita.com/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4b3cfb271314475db6518999b4747876.

the Cordova Estates mobile home park (east of the Project site) where it connects to the existing sewer network along the western boundary of Cordova Estates.[66]

The Project would construct a new sewer pipeline that would connect to the existing sewer lines managed by LACSD. The proposed 8-inch diameter sewer pipeline would be located along the proposed pathway at the southern perimeter of the multipurpose fields and would connect to the existing 24-inch diameter sewer pipeline that runs along the eastern boundary of the Project site. The Project would be subject to a development impact fee, further reducing the Project's impact on the local and regional waterwater treatment and conveyance system. With compliance with these standards and codes, the Project would not result in the construction or relocation of wastewater facilities which would cause significant environmental effects, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Electricity

SCE provides electric service to the City of Santa Clarita. SCE provides electric power to 15 million people in 50,000 square miles across Central, coastal, and Southern California, including 180 incorporated cities and 15 counties. SCE monitors and maintains a vast electricity system that contains 12,635 miles of transmission lines, 91,375 miles of distribution lines, 720,800 distribution transformers, and 2,959 substation transformers.[67]

The nearest electrical infrastructure to the Project site are two overhead electrical lines that run along the southern border of the proposed park site, and two electrical transmission lines that run along Soledad Canyon Road and Sierra Highway.[68] The Project would require electricity primarily for the various sources of new lighting, including twelve 90-foot light poles for the multipurpose fields, lighting at the pickleball courts, LED fixtures for pathways, bollard lights for the play and picnic areas, and parking lot lighting. Electric power would also be required for maintenance and operation of the existing Metrolink Station platform facilities, new restroom building with associated utilities, and improvements to the existing restroom/office building in the parking lot on the south side of the Project site. An electrical room containing power panels and lighting panels would feed into a main switchboard, supplied with electricity from a 500 kilovolt-ampere electrical line supplied by SCE.

The Project site is already served by SCE's electric service to power the existing Metrolink Station and associated office/restroom building and parking lot security lighting. The Project would be required to coordinate with SCE regarding the extension of its electrical infrastructure to the Project site and comply with site-specific requirements set forth by SCE. The Project contractors would notify and coordinate with SCE to identify the locations and depth of power lines and avoid disruption of electric service to other properties. Furthermore, the Project would implement any necessary connections and upgrades required by SCE to ensure that SCE would be able to adequately serve the Project. As such, the Project would not result in the construction or relocation

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66 Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, Soledad Canyon Relief Trunk Sewer Section 4 project, May 2021.

67 Southern California Edison, Who We Are, accessed August 7, 2023, https://www.sce.com/about-us/who-we-are.

68 California Energy Commission, California Electric Infrastructure App, accessed August 7, 2023, https://cecgis-caenergy.opendata.arcgis.com/apps/ad8323410d9b47c1b1a9f751d62fe495/explore.

of electrical facilities which would cause significant environmental effects, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

Natural Gas

SoCalGas provides natural gas services to the City of Santa Clarita. SoCalGas provides natural gas to 21.8 million consumers with a service area of approximately 24,000 square miles throughout Central and Southern California.[69]

The nearest natural gas infrastructure to the Project site contains pipelines that run in a southwest to northeast direction south of the Project site, roughly along parts of Sierra Highway, Avenue of the Oaks, and Lost Canyon Road.[70] The Project would not require new connections to the existing gas infrastructure, as the Project would not use natural gas. Thus, the Project would not result in the construction or relocation of natural gas facilities which would cause significant environmental effects, and **no impacts** would occur.

Telecommmunications

Internet services in the City are provided by AT&T, Exede, Frontier Communications, and Spectrum. AT&T is also the local provider of telephone services although other companies offer service in the area, including HughesNet, Exede, and Spectrum. The Project area is already served by existing telecommunications facilities, and the Project would not require the expansion of existing internet, telephone, or cable service infrastructure, other than to construct connection points to serve the Project. Thus, the Project would not result in the construction or relocation of telecommunications facilities which would cause significant environmental effects, and impacts would be **less than significant**.

c) Would the project require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Section X(a), the Project would construct a new stormwater infiltration facility that proposes to improve existing stormwater drainage conditions at the Project site.

The City is a part of the Upper Santa Clara River Watershed Management Program Group, which also includes Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District. Together, this group developed the Upper Santa Clara River Enhanced Watershed Management Program (EWMP) to meet the state-issued permit requirements to protect the beneficial uses of the Upper Santa Clara River watershed receiving waters. The EWMP lists bacteria (a constituent of *E. coli*) and chloride as Priority 1 TMDLs and trash, copper, mercury, and cyanide as Priority 2 TMDLs, and establishes both structural best management practices (BMP) and institutional BMPs as watershed control measures to improve the water quality of wet and dry weather flows before they reach the Santa Clara River. The City has set a goal of instituting 285 acre-feet of structural BMPs by the year 2029. The Project has also been identified by the EWMP as a Tier A (highest priority)

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69 SoCalGas, Company Profile, accessed August 7, 2023, https://www.socalgas.com/about-us/company-profile.

70 SoCalGas, Gas Transmission Pipeline Map, accessed August 7, 2023, https://socalgas.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c85ced1227af4c8aae9b19d677969335.

project that would contribute 30 acre-feet of storage to the 285 acre-feet structural BMP goal of the EWMP to meet the state-issued permit requirements to protect the beneficial uses of the Upper Santa Clara River watershed receiving waters.

The proposed infiltration facility would capture all of the runoff associated with 85 percent of storms in a given year by diverting that flow away from the Honby Channel outlet into the facility. From the infiltration gallery, the captured water would infiltrate the ground, undergoing further, natural filtration processes. The captured water would be removed from the existing flow path to the Santa Clara River, which would include nearly all of the bacteria, chloride, trash, copper, mercury, cyanide, and other pollutants associated with the 85th percentile runoff from Honby Channel.

Further, the Project would primarily involve construction of recreational facilities, such as soccer fields and playgrounds. While the Project would also involve construction of a restroom facility, walking paths, and the pickleball courts, the majority of the surface area of the completed Project site would be pervious. As such, the Project would not result in the addition of vast expanses of impervious surfaces that could result in a substantial increase in stormwater generation that would necessitate construction of new stormwater drainage facilities. Rather, the construction of the proposed infiltration gallery would provide beneficial impacts to existing stormwater conditions by capturing stormwater and allowing the water to filter into the ground. Therefore, impacts related to the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities would be less than significant.

d) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the Feasibility Study Report, the City of Santa Clarita relies on groundwater for approximately half the community's domestic water supply. The Eastern Subbasin, composed of the Alluvium and the Saugus Formation aquifer systems, is the sole source of local groundwater for urban water supply in the Santa Clarita Valley. The Alluvium generally underlies the Santa Clara River and adjacent areas, including its several tributaries, and the Saugus Formation underlies most of the Upper Santa Clara River area.

As discussed in Section X(b), the Project site is located within the Santa Clara River Valley Subbasin of the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin. Groundwater in the Santa Clara River Valley Subbasin is replenished by the Santa Clara River and its tributaries and by stormwater percolation. Because the Project site is primarily undeveloped, existing stormwater flows on the Project site either percolate into the soil or run off the property into Honby Channel as sheet runoff.

Additionally, as shown in Tables 18 and 19, below, water supply in the SCV Water service area would exceed demand during normal/average and multiple-dry year planning scenarios through the UWMP’s 2050 planning horizon.

Construction

During the Project’s construction activities, water would be required primarily for dust control, cleaning of equipment, and other related activities. However, such water demand would be temporary and intermittent. Water for construction-related purposes could be provided by water trucks and/or through connections to existing water distribution lines.

Operation

Following Project implementation, the Project would require water usage for irrigation, landscaping, water refill stations, and the proposed restroom building. The estimated water demand associated with Project operation was calculated using CalEEMod and was determined to be approximately 68,096 gallons per day or 76.3 acre-feet of water per year. However, as discussed below, the Project's proposed infiltration basin would contribute to the regional water supply by allowing captured water to percolate into the groundwater. The SCV Water's 2020 UWMP evaluated the long-term water demand within its service area against existing and potential water supplies. Demand projections are based on applicable population projections and County and City land use plans, and account for conservation as well as climate change impacts and other relevant factors. The 2020 UWMP indicated that the total projected water supplies available to the SCV Water service area over the 30-year projection during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry year (5-year drought) periods are sufficient to meet the total projected water demands throughout the Valley, provided that SCV Water continues to utilize available SWP Table A Amounts,[71] and will continue to incorporate coordinated use of surface water and groundwater, water conservation, water transfers, recycled water, and water banking as part of the total water supply portfolio and management approach to long-term water supply planning and strategy.[72] **Table 19** summarizes the existing and planned supplies and projected demand in the service area (including agricultural, manufacturing, and industrial uses) during average/normal years, and **Table 20** shows multiple-dry years. As such, SCV Water would be expected to have sufficient water supply for Project operation.

Table 19. Existing and Planned Water Supplies and Demands During Average/Normal Years (Acre-Feet)[A]

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Existing Supplies						
Groundwater	23,340	15,290	14,410	14,410	14,410	14,410
Recycled Water	450	450	450	450	450	450
Imported Water	67,220	64,310	64,017	62,107	62,107	62,107
Banking/Exchange Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Existing Supply	91,010	80,050	78,877	76,967	76,967	76,967
Planned Supplies (addition/subtraction to Existing Supplies)						
Groundwater	15,540	22,660	26,280	26,280	26,280	26,280
Recycled	1,849	3,696	5,091	6,498	7,499	8,511
Banking Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Planned Supply	17,389	26,356	31,371	32,778	33,779	34,791
Total Existing and Planned Supplies	108,399	106,406	110,248	109,745	110,746	111,758
Total Projected Demand[a,b]	76,400	81,700	88,700	93,600	97,500	101,000

Notes:
a LA County Waterworks District #36, serving unincorporated Los Angeles County land, is included for purposes of providing regional completeness.
b Demands include savings from plumbing code/standards and active conservation. Demands account for estimated increases from climate change.

Source: Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, June 2021, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, Table 7-2.

[71] Table A is a schedule of annual water amounts as set forth in long-term SWP delivery contracts. Table A defines the annual volume of water that can be requested by an SWP contractor in a given year under regular contract provisions without consideration of surplus SWP Water deliveries or other supplies available to an SWP contractor.

[72] Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, June 2021, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan.

Table 20. Projected Water Demand within Service Area in Multiple-Dry Years (acre-feet)[73]

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Existing Supplies						
Groundwater	25,180	24,330	23,500	23,200	23,200	23,200
Recycled Water	450	450	450	450	450	450
Imported Water	40,620	39,770	40,774	41,467	41,467	41,347
Banking/Exchange Programs	15,550	15,550	17,970	19,950	19,879	16,809
Total Existing Supply	81,800	80,100	82,694	85,067	84,996	81,806
Planned Supplies						
Groundwater	17,680	24,330	27,820	28,520	28,520	28,520
Recycled	1,823	3,603	5,045	6,498	7,499	8,389
Banking Programs	0	6,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Planned Supply	19,503	33,933	42,865	45,018	46,019	46,909
Total Existing and Planned Supplies	101,303	113,033	125,559	130,085	131,015	128,715
Total Projected Demand[b,c,d]	77,830	83,620	90,570	95,780	99,670	102,870

Notes:

a LA County Waterworks District #36, serving unincorporated Los Angeles County land, is included for purposes of providing regional completeness.

b Demands include savings from plumbing code/standards and active conservation. Demands account for estimated increases from climate change.

Source: Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, June 2021, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, Table 7-4.

In addition, as discussed in Section X(b) of this Initial Study, the Project has been identified by the Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency as an optimal location for off-stream recharge, and the proposed infiltration basin would help the agency meet its goals of sustainable basin management, in accordance with its 2020 UWMP. The proposed infiltration facility would capture all of the runoff associated with 85 percent of storms in a given year by diverting that flow away from the Honby Channel outlet into the facility, and pretreating the water and pollutants before it enters the infiltration chambers where it would slowly percolate into the ground.

The groundwater modeling that was performed as part of the Feasibility Study Report studied the effects of the proposed infiltration facility on water capture and infiltration. The modeling concluded that the proposed infiltration facility would convey more water into the groundwater basin located closer to existing production wells, thereby improving the groundwater supply. Furthermore, in combination with other stormwater infiltration projects, such as the Canyon Country Community Center located across the Santa Clara river to the northeast, the Project is designed to benefit water supplies in the Eastern Subbasin.

Additionally, SCV Water plans to utilize the Project's infiltration system to introduce available surplus water supplies to recharge the local groundwater basin. In coordination with the City, SCV Water would deliver available water using existing local infrastructure outside of those times when

[73] For planning purposes, the water supplies and demands over the 30-year planning period were analyzed in the event that a five-year dry period occurs, similar to the drought that occurred in 1988-1992. SCV Water assumes that demand during dry years increases by 6 percent.

the infiltration system is receiving stormwater runoff. As such, the Project would create a more resilient water supply for the community and reduce the costs associated with acquiring water from other sources.

Furthermore, the Feasibility Study Report prepared a monitoring plan for the Project, which would evaluate the effectiveness of the infiltration facility after the Project is completed and guide City staff in performing the required observations, measurements, and sample collection. Upon Project implementation, monitoring would occur both upstream and downstream of the diversion, in order to evaluate the reduction in pollutant loading affected by the Project. Implementation of the monitoring plan would ensure that the infiltration facility is performing as expected to improve water supply and water quality. Therefore, the Project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project from existing entitlements and resources, and new or expanded entitlements would not be necessary. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

e) Would the project 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?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Section XVIII(b), the City's Public Works Department manages the sanitary sewer collection system, and sewer lines of varying sizes, located along the western and southern boundaries of the Cordova Estates mobile home community, east of the Project site. The City's local sewers discharge into the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts facilities for conveyance, treatment, and disposal.

The City's sewer system conveys wastewater and wastewater solids from the local sewer lines, which are owned by either the City of Santa Clarita or Los Angeles County, to the Saugus and Valencia Water Reclamation Plants (WRP).[74] The Saugus WRP is located at 26200 Springbrook Avenue in the City of Santa Clarita and provides primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment for 6.5 million gallons per day (mgd) of wastewater. The Valencia WRP is located at 28185 The Old Road in the community of Valencia, in Los Angeles County unincorporated area, and provides primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment for 21.6 mgd of wastewater. The Valencia WRP also has solids processing facilities and processes all wastewater solids generated in the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District. These facilities have the combined capacity to treat 28.1 mgd of wastewater at the primary, secondary, and tertiary level.[75,76]

The Project would result in additional wastewater generation as compared to existing conditions primarily for the proposed park, as the park site is currently undeveloped land. The regional stormwater infiltration facility and other Project civil and geotechnical design features would not result in wastewater generation because of their uses, and the existing Metrolink uses would be expected to result in similar wastewater generation as compared with existing conditions.

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74 LACSD, Wastewater Collection Systems, accessed August 7, 2023, https://www.lacsd.org/services/wastewater-sewage/facilities/wastewater-collection-systems.

75 LACSD, Saugus Water Reclamation Plant, accessed August 7, 2023, https://www.lacsd.org/services/wastewater-sewage/facilities/saugus-water-reclamation-plant.

76 LACSD, Valencia Water Reclamation Plant, accessed August 7, 2023, https://www.lacsd.org/services/wastewater-sewage/facilities/valencia-water-reclamation-plant.

According to the LACSD's wastewater generation factors, the proposed park component of the Project, which has an approximate area of 650,000 square feet, would be expected to generate approximately 65,000 gallons of additional wastewater per day (or approximately 0.065 mgd), compared to existing conditions.[77] This estimate is based on wastewater generation factors for golf courses and parks, which may represent a conservative estimate given that most golf courses include larger structures than the bathroom structure that is proposed as part of the Project, such as club houses with dining uses. Regardless, the Project's generated wastewater would represent 0.23 percent of the 28.1 mgd capacity of the WRPs. Accordingly, LACSD would have adequate capacity to serve the Project in addition to existing commitments, and impacts would be less than significant.

f) Would the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

Less Than Significant Impact. The City of Santa Clarita is served primarily by three landfills:

- Chiquita Canyon Landfill: A 639-acre landfill located at 29201 Henry Mayo Drive in the unincorporated community of Castaic. The Chiquita Canyon Landfill has a maximum permitted throughput of 12,000 tons per day, with a remaining capacity of 60,408,000 cubic yards as of August 24, 2018.[78]

- Antelope Valley Landfill: A 185-acre landfill located at 1200 West City Ranch Road in the City of Palmdale. The Antelope Valley Landfill has a maximum permitted throughput of 5,548 tons per day, with a remaining capacity of 17,911,225 cubic yards as of October 31, 2017.[79]

- Sunshine Canyon Landfill: A 1,036-acre landfill located at 14747 San Fernando Road in the City of Los Angeles. The Sunshine Canyon Landfill has a maximum permitted throughput of 12,100 tons per day, with a remaining capacity of 77,900,000 cubic yards as of May 31, 2018.[80]

Construction

Construction activities associated with the Project would generate waste (e.g., concrete rubble, asphalt rubble, wood) that would result in an increased demand for solid waste collection and disposal capacity. Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 15.46.300 requires completion and submittal of a Construction and Demolition Materials Management Plan (C&DMMP) to the City for approval prior to issuance of building permits for the Project. The C&DMMP would identify the

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77 LACSD estimates a wastewater generation flow of 100 gallons per day per 1,000 square feet of Golf Course, Camp, and Park uses. 650,000 square feet * 100 gallons per day / 1,000 square feet== 65,000 gallons per day; 65,000/1,000,000 = 0.065 million gallons per day; Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, *Table 1 Loadings for Each Class of Land Use*.

78 CalRecycle, Chiquita Canyon Sanitary Landfill, accessed August 8, 2023, https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/3574?siteID=1037.

79 CalRecycle, Antelope Valley Public Landfill, accessed August 8, 2023, https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/3458?siteID=1364.

80 CalRecycle, Sunshine Canyon City/County Landfill, accessed August 8, 2023, https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/259?siteID=4702.

type of materials that would be used and estimate the weight of materials to be recycled during construction, as well as indicate the vendor or facility that has been commissioned to collect, divert, reuse, or receive the construction and demolition materials. With implementation of a Project-specific C&DMMP, the Project would not generate solid waste in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

The Project would generate solid waste typically associated with operation of a park facility. Operation of the Project would require approximately two to five employees to perform ongoing regular maintenance to clean and maintain park facilities, maintain the drainage and infiltration facilities, and manage non-native species in the landscaped and natural areas.

The estimated solid waste generation for the operation of the proposed park was calculated using CalEEMod and was determined to be 0.49 tons of solid waste per year. The closest landfill to the Project site is the Sunshine Canyon Landfill, which has a maximum permitted throughput of 12,100 tons per day. As such, the Sunshine Canyon Landfill would be able to accommodate the Project's solid waste generation of 0.49 tons per year. In addition, the Chaquita Canyon and Antelope Valley Landfills provide additional capacity. Therefore, the Project would be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the Project's solid waste disposal needs, and impacts would be less than significant.

g) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less Than Significant Impact. All non-hazardous solid waste generated from the Project site (e.g., plastic and glass bottles and jars, paper, newspaper, metal containers, cardboard) would be recycled per local and state regulations, with a diversion goal of 75 percent, in compliance with the Integrated Waste Management Act. Remaining non-hazardous solid waste would be disposed of at one of the nearby landfills (hazardous waste is managed and disposed of in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and is discussed in greater detail in Section IX). The City would review building plans and ensure that adequate space is set aside to allow for the collection and storage of recyclable materials on the Project site prior to issuance of building permits. Therefore, the Project would be required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statues and regulations related to solid waste. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Section XX. Wildfire

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

Discussion

a) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. According to current California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection maps, the Project site is not located within a fire hazard severity zone.[81] The nearest very high fire hazard severity zone is located approximately 0.6 miles to the west and south of the Project site. Therefore, the Project site is not located in or near a State Responsibility Area (SRA) or lands classified as very high fire hazard seversity zones (VHFHSZ), and no impact would occur.

b) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No Impact. As stated above, the Project site is not located in or near an SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ. Therefore, the Project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, would not

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[81] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, FHSZ Viewer, accessed July 27, 2023, https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/.

exacerbate wildfire risks or expose Project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire within such areas. No impact would occur.

c) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No Impact. The Project site is not located in or near an SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ. The Project would not 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. No impact would occur.

d) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No Impact. The Project site is not located in or near an SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ. The Project would not 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. No impact would occur.

Section XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Discussion

a) Does the 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?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed in Section IV, the Project has the potential to impact: sensitive species that have the potential to occur onsite, including bats, Southern Califonia legless lizard, Crotch's bumble bee, and burrowing owl; sensitive habitats, including Fremont cottonwood forest and woodland and scale broom scrub, and riparian habitat and streambed areas; state and federally protected wetlands; and nesting birds. However, with implementation of PDF-1 and Mitigation Measures MM BIO-1 through BIO-8, impacts related to biological resources, including special status and wildlife species, habitats, communities, and species ranges, would be less than significant.

As discussed in Section V, the Project site contains one historic-period agricultural irrigation-related structure, which was evaluated and found to be ineligible as a historic resource. The Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource,

and no related impacts would occur. No archaeological resources were identified on-site during the archaeological investigations. Because the potential for unanticipated buried historic and prehistoric archaeological resources cannot be ruled out, in the event an unknown archaeological resource is unearthed during excavation, Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3 have been identified, which provide archaeological monitoring and procedures to evaluate, preserve, and recover the resource. With implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3, Project impacts related to archaeological resources would be less than significant.

As discussed in Section VII, no paleontological resources were identified on the Project site during site investigations; however, since several resources have been found within 3 miles of the Project site in similar rock formations as those underlying the Project site, Mitigation Measures PALEO-1 through PALEO-4 have been identified to provide training, monitoring, evaluation, recovery, and preservation of any unknown resources unearthed during excavation activities. With implementation of Mitigation Measures MM PALEO-1 through PALEO-4, impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant.

In summary, with implementation of identified mitigation measures, the Project's potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of wildlife species, cause a 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 would be less than significant. The Project would not result in a mandatory finding of significance in this regard.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. A significant cumulative impact may occur if a project, in conjunction with related projects, would result in impacts that are less than significant when viewed individually but would be cumulatively significant when viewed together. Presently, there are six large-scale projects in development within an approximately 2-mile radius of the Project site, and one small sewer line project, currently under construction, that overlaps on the Project site. The large-scale projects are the MetroWalk Specific Plan, River Walk Mixed Use, and Sand Canyon Plaza, which have received entitlement approvals, and Mancara, Park Vista, and Princess Crossroads projects, which are currently under entitlement reviews. All of these projects include residential development and most also include commercial development, for a total of up to 2,215 residential units and over 830,000 square feet of commercial development. The sewer line project, Soledad Canyon Relief Trunk Sewer Section 4 project, entails the construction of a sewer main that would include constructing a segment along the northeast portion of the proposed Project site. Construction activities are currently underway and are expected to be completed prior to the construction of the proposed Project. Unlike the major projects identified in the Project vicinity, the Project does not involve or contribute residential or commercial development and is not expected to induce any growth in the region and the associated impacts. The proposed Project would provide new short-term construction jobs in the area during construction; during operations, the Project would provide recreational opportunities to the public in the Project area and region, in addition to potentially providing several employment positions to maintain the Project facilities.

As analyzed in the preceding sections, the proposed Project would not result in any significant and unmitigable impacts in any environmental categories. The Project would be consistent with regional plans and programs that address environmental factors, such as air quality, energy, GHG emissions, hydrology and water quality, transportation, utilities, and other applicable regulations that have been adopted by public agencies. Additionally, in many cases, including aesthetics, agriculture, biological resources, cultural resources, geology, hazards, land use, mineral resources, noise, public services and recreation, tribal cultural resources, and wildfire, the impacts associated with the Project are either localized to the Project site or are of such a negligible degree that they would not result in a considerable contribution to any significant cumulative impacts. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be less than significant (not cumulatively considerable) and the Project would not result in a mandatory finding of significance in this regard.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As evaluated in the impact analysis presented in Sections I through XX of this document, the potential for adverse direct or indirect impacts to human beings was considered in the response to certain questions in the following sections: aesthetics; air quality; geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; noise; population and housing; transportation; and wildfire. As a result of this evaluation, no potential environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, were identified. Impacts would be less than significant. The Project has been determined to have no impacts, less-than-significant impacts, and impacts that are less than significant with mitigation. Therefore, the Project would not have environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, and the impacts would be less than significant. The Project would not result in a mandatory finding of significance in this regard.

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