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PROOF DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

NORTH STREET SUBDIVISION

State Clearinghouse # 2014121066

PREPARED FOR

City of Hollister Development Services

March 10, 2016

EMC PLANNING GROUP INC.
A LAND USE PLANNING & DESIGN FIRM

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SUMMARY

CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15123 requires an EIR to contain a brief summary of the proposed project and its consequences. The summary identifies each significant effect and the proposed mitigation measures and alternatives to reduce or avoid that effect; areas of controversy known to the lead agency; and issues to be resolved, including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigate the significant effects.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The full description of the location, environmental setting, and project description are included in Section 2.0 Project Description.

Location and Setting

The approximately 81-acre project site is located at the northwestern intersection of North Street and the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way partially within the City of Hollister (hereinafter "city") and partially within the unincorporated portion of San Benito County (hereinafter "county").

Project Description

The proposed project includes a Sphere of Influence (SOI) amendment, a General Plan Amendment (GPA), prezone for the properties outside of the current city limits, annexation of the portion of the project site currently located outside of the city limits, and vesting tentative map approval.

The proposed project includes subdivision of approximately 81 acres of land. The project proposes a planned unit development (PUD), pursuant to Hollister Municipal Code section 16.16.030; with land use designation of Medium Density Residential (MDR) (8-12 du/ac) across the project site. Future development of the project site consistent with the residential land use densities proposed by the vesting tentative map could result in development of up to 343 residential units (283 single-family units and up to 60 multi-family units), an on-site water quality/retention basin, approximately 24 acres of open space, and several new roads providing access to the development.

Planning Designations

The project site is located partially in the City of Hollister and partially in unincorporated San Benito County. As such, there are two applications of land use designations and zoning code districts that apply to different portions of the project site. The city general plan land use designation, city zoning, county zoning, and county general plan designation (*San Benito County 2035 General Plan, adopted June 2015*), as applicable, for each land area within the project site are as follows:

23.0± Acres in the City of Hollister City Limits

- City general plan land use designation: High Density Residential (HDR) (12-35 du/ac)
- City zoning: High Density Residential Performance Overlay Zone (R4 H/PZ)

27.0± Acres in Unincorporated San Benito County, but Within the City of Hollister Sphere of Influence

- City general plan land use designation: High Density Residential (HDR) (12-35 du/ac)
- County general plan land use designation: Residential Mixed (RM) (1-20 du/ac) (San Benito County 2035 General Plan Figure 3-2, Land Use Diagram North County Detail)
- County zoning: Residential Multiple (RM)

31.0± Acres in Unincorporated San Benito County and Outside of the City of Hollister Sphere of Influence

- City general plan land use designation: High Density Residential (HDR) (12-35 du/ac)

- County general plan land use designation: Residential Mixed (RM) (1-20 du/ac) (*San Benito County 2035 General Plan* Figure 3-2, Land Use Diagram North County Detail)
- County zoning: Residential Multiple (RM)

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This draft EIR identifies significant or potentially significant environmental impacts in several areas as identified below. The impacts and mitigation measures are presented in a summarized format in Table S-1. The full text of the environmental setting, regulatory setting, project analysis, impacts, and mitigation measures can be found in Section 3.0 Environmental Effects.

Significant Project Impacts

Project-level significant impacts are anticipated in the following areas:

Aesthetics

Agricultural Resources

Air Quality

Biological Resources

Cultural Resources

Geology and Soils

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Hydrology and Water Quality

Noise

Transportation and Traffic

Table S-1 Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measure Summary

Area of Concern	Significant Impact	Mitigation Number	Mitigation Measure Summary	Residual Impact
Aesthetics (Also Cumulative)	Substantially degrade visual character of the site and surroundings when viewed from Vista Hill Park	AES-1	Design improvements and landscaping to enhance visual integration into existing environs Shield construction operations from public view.	Significant and Unavoidable
Agriculture (Also Cumulative)	Loss of Prime Farmland		None Feasible	Significant and Unavoidable
Agriculture	Conflict between Agriculture and Urban Uses	AG-1	Notification (deeds) of pesticides/herbicides application hazards and other cultivation practice nuisances Notify buyers of County's "Right-to-Farm" Ordinance	Less than Significant
Air Quality	Operational Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants	AQ-1	Prohibition of wood-burning fire places Require low VOC-emitting paints and coatings	Less than Significant
Air Quality	Construction Emissions of Criteria Air Pollutants	AQ-2 AQ-3	Dust control measures Qualified site monitor to ensure that the dust control plan is implemented	Less than Significant

Area of Concern	Significant Impact	Mitigation Number	Mitigation Measure Summary	Residual Impact
Air Quality	Exposure to Toxic Air Emissions During Construction	AQ-4 AQ-5 AQ-6	Prepare and implement emissions reduction plan Off-road construction vehicles shall comply with detailed specifications of AQ-4 Minimize use and placement of combustion powered equipment	Less than Significant
Air Quality	Exposure to Dust and Toxic Air Emissions During Construction	AQ-2 – AQ-5	Implement Measures AQ-2 – AQ-5	Less than Significant
Air Quality (Cumulative)	Emissions of ROG and PM_{10} that would Contribute to Cumulative Air Quality Nonattainment Conditions	AQ-2 – AQ-6	Implement Measures AQ-2 – AQ-6	Less than Significant
Biology (Also Cumulative)	Loss of Habitat for Special Status Species: Burrowing Owl, American Badger, San Joaquin Whipsnake, Special-Status Bats, and Nesting Birds.	BIO-1 BIO-2 BIO-3 BIO-4 BIO-5	Special status species surveys and protective measures for burrowing owl, American badger, and San Joaquin whipsnake Remove mature trees in two stages to provide opportunity for bats to relocate Nesting birds survey and protective measures	Less than Significant

Area of Concern	Significant Impact	Mitigation Number	Mitigation Measure Summary	Residual Impact
Biology	Tree Removal(s) on City-Regulated Street	BIO-6	Obtain City approval to remove the tree(s) along North Street	Less than Significant
Cultural Resources (Also Cumulative)	Potential Damage to Archaeological Resources	CR-1	Archaeological resources protection measures	Less than Significant
Cultural Resources (Also Cumulative)	Potential Damage to Paleontological Resources	CR-2	Paleontological resources protection measures	Less than Significant
Cultural Resources	Potential Disturbance of Human Remains	CR-3	Protections for potentially occurring unknown human remains	Less than Significant
Geology and Soils	Seismically-induced Ground Rupture	GEO-1	Measures to protect structures from ground rupture	Less than Significant
Geology and Soils	Seismically-induced Ground Shaking	GEO-1	Implement Measure GEO-1 measures to protect structures from the effects of ground shaking	Less than Significant
Geology and Soils	Seismically-induced Liquefaction	GEO-1	Implement Measure GEO-1 measures to protect structures from the effects of liquefaction	Less than Significant
Geology and Soils	Seismically-induced Subsidence	GEO-1 GEO-2	Implement Measure GEO-1 Prepare and implement design-level geotechnical investigation additional design and construction criteria to protect structures from the effects of subsidence	Less than Significant

Area of Concern	Significant Impact	Mitigation Number	Mitigation Measure Summary	Residual Impact
Geology and Soils	Seismically-induced Differential Soil Settlement	GEO-1 – GEO-2	Implement Measures GEO-1 and GEO-2	Less than Significant
Geology and Soils	Seismically-induced Landslides or Other Shallow Slope Failures	GEO-1	Implementation of Measure GEO-1 and measures to protect structures from the effects of landslides or shallow slope failures	Less than Significant
Geology and Soils	Slope Failure in Former Quarry Areas	GEO-1 GEO-3	Implementation of Measure GEO-1 and measures to reduce the risks of landslides in the abandoned quarry areas	Less than Significant
Geology and Soils	Loss of Topsoil and Erosion	AQ-2, GEO-1 – GEO-3 GEO-4	Implementation of Measures AQ-2, GEO-1, GEO-2, and GEO-3 Protection measures to mitigate erosion and the loss of topsoil	Less than Significant
Geology and Soils	Expansive Soils	GEO-1 – GEO-3	Implement Measures GEO-1, GEO-2, and GEO-3	Less than Significant
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Potential Release of Hazardous Materials	HAZ-1	Protection measures and procedures for unidentified hazardous material contamination and/or features	Less than Significant
Hydrology and Water Quality (Also Cumulative)	Significantly Adverse Impact on Water Quality Standards, or Substantially Degrade Water Quality	HYD-1	Drainage plan to include water quality protection strategies and methods for substantially detaining storm water runoff on the project site	Less than Significant

Area of Concern	Significant Impact	Mitigation Number	Mitigation Measure Summary	Residual Impact
Hydrology and Water Quality (Also Cumulative)	Runoff that Exceeds Capacity or Polluted Runoff as Result of Additional Impervious Surface Areas from Project	HYD-1 HYD-2 HYD-3	Implement Measure HYD-1 Obtain all applicable permits associated with site grading activity Grading and design plans to comply with City's Best Management Practices and incorporate Low Impact Development strategies	Less than Significant
Noise	Exposure to High Noise Levels During Construction Activity	N-1	Construction noise control measures	Less than Significant
Transportation/Traffic (Also Cumulative)	Unacceptable LOS at State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road Intersection	T-1	Payment of Hollister/San Benito County Regional Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) fee	Significant Unavoidable and Cumulative
Transportation/Traffic (Also Cumulative)	Contribute to Unacceptable Traffic Volumes on Segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156	T-1 T-2	Payment of the applicable TIF	Significant Unavoidable and Cumulative
Transportation/Traffic (Also Cumulative)	Unacceptable LOS at U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 Interchange		No feasible mitigation available	Significant Unavoidable and Cumulative

Area of Concern	Significant Impact	Mitigation Number	Mitigation Measure Summary	Residual Impact
Transportation/Traffic	Limited Sight Distance at Proposed "A" Street Intersection with North Street	T-3	Performance of sight distance analysis	Less than Significant
Transportation/Traffic	Design Hazard Due to Inadequate On-site Circulation	T-4	Compliance with City's roadway design standards	Less than Significant
Transportation/Traffic	Design Hazard Due to Increased Pedestrian and Bicycle Traffic in a School Zone	T-5	Plan for new sidewalk and bike lane improvements	Less than Significant
Transportation/Traffic	Inadequate Access for Emergency Vehicles	T-4	Implement Measure T-4	Less than Significant
Transportation/Traffic	Additional Bicycle Facilities Demand Conflicts with County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan	T-5 T-6	Implement Measure T-5 Provide fiscal contribution to planned bicycle facilities along Buena Vista Road/North Street	Less than Significant
Transportation/Traffic	Increase in Non-Vehicular Travel Conflicts with the City Adopted Safe Routes to Schools	T-5	Implement Measure T-5	Less than Significant

Area of Concern	Significant Impact	Mitigation Number	Mitigation Measure Summary	Residual Impact
Transportation/Traffic (Cumulative)	Unacceptable LOS: San Benito and Fourth Street	-	No Feasible Mitigation	Significant Unavoidable and Cumulative
Transportation/Traffic (Cumulative)	Unacceptable LOS at State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road Intersection	T-1	Payment of TIF	Significant Unavoidable and Cumulative
Transportation/Traffic (Cumulative)	Unacceptable LOS at State Route 25 and Hillcrest Intersection	T-7	Payment of TIF	Significant Unavoidable and Cumulative

Source: EMC Planning Group Inc. 2015

Text of Mitigation Measures

AES-1: The project developer shall comply with all city development standards and design guidelines. To mitigate the visual impact of new residential development introduced into undeveloped landscape, the project developer shall locate and design the future residential structures in a manner that enhances their visual integration into existing environs, when feasible. Design elements may include but shall not be limited to use of natural, unobtrusive materials and paint color to blend with surrounding land uses, sensitivity to transition of scale and compatibility with the area neighborhoods, use of the natural topography in building placement and design to shield development from public views, or implementing appropriate landscaping and design to minimize visual impacts. During construction, the project developer shall ensure that construction equipment, construction staging areas, and construction sites are sufficiently shielded, when feasible, to the extent that they do not substantially alter scenic views.

AG-1. Developers shall inform potential buyers of homes near agricultural areas of the possible hazards associated with the application of pesticides/herbicides and nuisances from other cultivation practices. In those cases where the County of San Benito's "Right-to-Farm" Ordinance applied to the city review of projects, homeowners shall also be informed of this ordinance by developers. This information shall be included on all deeds for future development on the project site, prior to occupancy. Implementation of this mitigation measure will be the responsibility of project developers.

AQ-1. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall include the following air emissions reduction features on the project plans:

a. Solid fuel heating appliances (i.e., wood-burning fireplaces; wood stoves; etc.) shall be prohibited. Restrictions on solid fuel heating appliances shall be included on deeds for individual parcels.

b. Low VOC-emitting paints and coatings shall be used in all new construction.

AQ-2. Prior to issuance of grading, or building permits, the applicant or developers of the project site shall prepare a grading plan subject to review and approval by the city. In the event ground disturbance exceeds 2.2 acres per day for initial site preparation activities that involve extensive earth moving activities (grubbing, excavation, rough grading), and 8.1 acres per day for activities that involve minimal earth moving (e.g. finish grading) these limits, the required grading plans shall include the following measures:

a. Water all active construction sites continuously. Frequency should be based on the type of operation, soil, and wind exposure;

b. Prohibit all grading activities during periods of high wind (over 15 mph);

c. Apply chemical soil stabilizers on inactive construction areas (disturbed lands within construction projects that are unused for at least four consecutive days);

d. Apply non-toxic binders (e.g., latex acrylic copolymer) to exposed areas after cut and fill operations and hydroseed area;

e. Haul trucks shall maintain at least 1'-0" of freeboard;

f. Plant tree windbreaks on the windward perimeter of construction projects of adjacent to open land;

g. Cover inactive storage piles;

h. Sweep streets if visible soil material is carried out from the construction site;

i. Post a publicly-visible sign written in English and Spanish with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The phone number of the air district shall also be visible to ensure compliance with rule 402 (nuisance); and

j. Limit the area under construction at any one time.

AQ-3. Prior to commencement of construction activities, the contractor shall appoint a qualified site monitor to ensure that the dust control plan is implemented. Evidence of implementation shall be submitted to the City of Hollister Planning Department within three days of commencement of grading, and monthly thereafter as long as grading occurs.

AQ-4. The developer shall reduce nitrogen oxides exhaust and particulate matter emissions by implementing one of the following measures prior to the start of construction:

- Provide a plan, acceptable to the air district, demonstrating that the heavy-duty (> 50 horsepower) off-road vehicles and equipment to be used in the construction project, including owned, leased and subcontractor vehicles, will achieve a project wide fleet-average 20 percent nitrogen oxides reduction and 45 percent particulate matter reduction compared to the most recent CARB fleet average for the time of construction; or

- Provide a plan, acceptable to the air district, that all off-road construction vehicles/equipment greater than 50 horsepower that will be used on site for more than one week shall: 1) be manufactured during or after 1996, 2) shall meet the nitrogen oxides emissions standard of 6.9 grams per brake horsepower hour, and 3) shall be equipped with diesel particulate matter filters.

AQ-5. Prior to the onset of site preparation, grading and construction activities, the project applicant(s) or developer(s) shall require in construction contracts that all off-road construction vehicles comply with the detailed specifications required in Mitigation Measure AQ-4 and shall submit evidence demonstrating compliance with this measure to the City of Hollister Planning Department for review and approval.

AQ-6. The developer shall reduce NOx and particulate matter exhaust emissions by implementing the following measures prior to the start of construction:

- Contractors shall install temporary electrical service whenever possible to avoid the need for independently-powered equipment (e.g. compressors);
- Signs at the construction site shall be clearly visible to advise that that diesel equipment standing idle for more than five minutes shall be turned off. This would include trucks waiting to deliver or receive soil, aggregate, or other bulk materials. Rotating drum concrete trucks may keep their engines running continuously if on-site and staged away from residential areas;
- Properly tune and maintain equipment for low emissions; and
- Stage large diesel powered equipment at least 200 feet from any active land uses (e.g., residences).

BIO-1. Burrowing Owl. To avoid/minimize potential impacts to burrowing owls, the project developer will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a two-visit (i.e. morning and evening) presence/absence survey at areas of suitable habitat on and adjacent to the project site no less than 14 days prior to the start of construction. Surveys shall be conducted according to methods described in the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (CDFW 2012). If these pre-construction "take avoidance" surveys performed during the breeding season (February through August) or the non-breeding season (September through January) for the species locate occupied burrows in or near the construction area, then consultation with the CDFW would be required to interpret survey results and develop a project-specific avoidance and minimization approach.

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-2. American Badger. Prior to the start of construction, a qualified wildlife biologist shall conduct surveys of the grassland and burrow habitat on the site to identify American badger burrows/dens. These surveys shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to the start of construction. If an American badger burrow/den is found during the surveys, coordination with the CDFW shall be undertaken in order to develop a suitable strategy to avoid impacts to the burrow/den. Impacts to active badger dens shall be avoided by

establishing exclusion zones around all active badger dens, within which construction related activities shall be prohibited until denning activities are complete or the den is abandoned. A qualified biologist shall monitor each den once per week in order to track the status of the den and to determine when a den area has been cleared for construction.

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-3. San Joaquin Whipsnake. Prior to the start of construction, a qualified wildlife biologist shall conduct surveys of the grassland and burrow habitat found on the site to identify San Joaquin whipsnakes or nests. If San Joaquin whipsnakes are found during pre-construction surveys of the project site, they shall be moved to suitable habitat at least 500 feet outside of the construction impact area. If a whipsnake nest is found during pre-construction surveys, a 100-foot buffer shall be established to prevent construction disturbance until the eggs have hatched and the whipsnakes have dispersed or are relocated to suitable habitat at least 500 feet outside of the construction impact area.

Pre-construction surveys for San Joaquin whipsnake can be conducted in coordination with pre-construction surveys for other species. The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-4. Special-Status Bats. Mature trees removed due to project implementation shall be removed in two stages: stage one will include removal of tree limbs, and stage two will include removal of the main trunk on a subsequent day. This will allow any potentially present, day-roosting bats the opportunity to relocate. If bat roosts are encountered during tree removal, a bat specialist shall be hired to assist in any relocation efforts.

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-5. Nesting Birds. If construction activities begin during the bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31), or if construction activities are suspended for at least two weeks and recommence during the bird nesting season, then the developer will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey for nesting birds. The survey shall be performed within suitable nesting habitat areas in and adjacent to the site to ensure that no active nests would be disturbed during project implementation. This survey will be conducted no more than two weeks prior to the initiation of construction activities. A report documenting survey results and plan for active bird nest avoidance (if needed) will be completed by the qualified biologist and submitted to the City of Hollister for review and approval prior to construction activities.

If no active bird nests are detected during the survey, then project activities can proceed as scheduled. However, if an active bird nest of a protected species is detected during the survey, then a plan for active bird nest avoidance shall determine and clearly delineate an

appropriately sized, temporary protective buffer area around each active nest, depending on the nesting bird species, existing site conditions, and type of proposed construction activities. The protective buffer area around an active bird nest is typically 75-250 feet, determined at the discretion of the qualified biologist.

To ensure that no inadvertent impacts to an active bird nest will occur, no construction activities will occur within the protective buffer area(s) until the juvenile birds have fledged (left the nest), and there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting, as determined by the qualified biologist.

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-6. Prior to removal of any city-regulated street tree(s) along North Street, the project developer shall obtain written authority from the city director to remove the tree(s).

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

CR-1. The project developer shall include the following language on all bid and construction documents:

In the event that cultural resources are discovered, work within a 50-meter radius (165 feet) of the find shall be stopped, the Planning Department notified, and a qualified archaeologist (who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in archaeology and/or history) shall be retained to examine the find and make appropriate recommendations. Such measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, or other appropriate measures consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21083.2. The project developer shall be required to implement the identified measures for the protection of cultural resources.

CR-2. The project developer shall include the following language on all construction and bid documents:

In the event that any previously undiscovered paleontological resources are discovered, all work within a 50-meter radius (165 feet) of the finding shall be stopped, the County Planning Department notified, and a qualified paleontologist retained to examine the find and make appropriate recommendations, including, if necessary, feasible mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The project developer shall be required to implement the identified mitigation measures for the protection of paleontological resources.

CR-3. In the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains on the project site, the City of Hollister will ensure that this language is included in all construction documents in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(e):

"If human remains are found during construction there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the coroner of San Benito County is contacted to determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descendent from the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent may then make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The landowner or their authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance if: a) the Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a most likely descendent or the most likely descendent failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission; b) the descendent identified fails to make a recommendation; or c) the landowner or their authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendent, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner."

GEO-1. Development of the project site shall comply with the then most recent California Building Code design standards and performance thresholds for construction within seismic zones to avoid or minimize potential damage from fault rupture. All recommendations of the ESP (2007) geotechnical and (2008) fault investigation report, the T. Makdissy 2013 fault investigation (2013a), the T. Makdissy geotechnical update (2013b), the 2015 geotechnical assessments prepared by T. Makdissy, and the structural design requirements as prescribed by the most current version of the California Building Code, will be incorporated into a final geotechnical report and the project plans.

Future uses within the Building Exclusion Zone shall be limited to non-habitable improvements (e.g., roadway improvements, parks, open space, buffers, trails, etc.).

All plan sets shall include Building Exclusion Zones and/or setbacks as identified in the 2013 and 2015 geotechnical assessments (T Makdissy Consultants 2013a; 2013b; 2015), or as refined in the approved final geotechnical report, subject to the review and approval by the city's engineer or engineering consultant.

The final geotechnical report and project plans shall be prepared in consultation with the geotechnical consultant, subject to the review and approval of the city's engineer or engineering consultant.

GEO-2. As part of the required design-level geotechnical report required in mitigation measure GEO-1, the applicants shall conduct cone penetrometer test explorations within the flat-lying eastern portion of the site to guide the development of project-specific design and construction criteria. The tests shall be conducted prior to submission of improvement plans to the City, and their results shall be included in the design-level geotechnical report for review and approval by the city engineer and/or his or her designate.

GEO-3. Prior to the issuance of grading permits, grading and site preparation measures to reduce the risks of landslides in the abandoned quarry shall be developed and incorporated into the required design-level geotechnical study. The report and related improvement plans are subject to review and approval by the city engineer or his/her designate. Developers of the project shall comply with the grading and site preparation recommendations (pertaining to the abandoned quarry) set forth in the approved design level geotechnical report.

GEO-4. The project developer shall incorporate all recommendations of the design-level geotechnical report required by mitigation measure GEO-1 into all required grading plans. Development of the project shall comply with site preparation, grading, slope protection, erosion control and drainage recommendations set forth in the design level geotechnical report required under Impact GEO-1. All grading, drainage and erosion control plans shall be subject to review and approval by the city engineer or his or her designate prior to issuance of a grading permit.

HAZ-1. The project developer shall include the following language on all bid and construction documents:

> In the event that unidentified contamination (including stained soils) or features (such as an unaccounted for underground storage tank) are observed during construction, work within a 50-meter radius (165 feet) of the find shall be stopped, the Planning Department notified, and a qualified environmental professional shall be retained by the project developer to examine the find and make appropriate recommendations. Any underground storage tank shall be removed and properly disposed of in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Any observed stained soils may require testing. Results of the sampling (if necessary) shall indicate the level or remediation efforts that may be required. In the event that subsequent testing indicates the presence of any hazardous materials beyond acceptable thresholds, a work plan shall be prepared subject to review and approval

by the San Benito County Environmental Health Department and the City of Hollister in order to remediate the soil in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations prior to resuming construction work in the affected area.

HYD-1. Prior to approval of final site plans, the applicant shall obtain city approval of a final drainage plan for the project that complies with the City of Hollister Best Management Practices and standards established for compliance with non-point discharge emissions for storm water and that substantially detain storm water runoff on the project site with any of the following methods including the on-site retention and siltation basin, reduction of impervious surfaces, vegetated swales, permeable paving, landscaping, and other strategies.

The drainage plan shall include measures conforming to the requirements of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Coast Region, Resolution No. R3-2013-0032, entitled "Post-Construction Storm Water Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast Region," dated July 12, 2013 (PCRs), as applicable.

HYD-2. Prior to any approval of any storm water permit, grading permit or improvement plans the applicant shall obtain all applicable permits directly associated with the grading activity, including, but not limited to the State Water Board's CGP, State Water Board 401 Water Quality Certification, U.S. Army Corps 404 permit, and California Department of Fish and Game 1600 Agreement. Further, the applicant shall provide evidence to the City Engineer that the required permits have been obtained.

HYD-3. Prior to any site development or grading, the applicant shall submit for review and approval by the Engineering Department a grading plan that complies with Chapter 15.14 Grading and Best Management Practice Control of the Hollister Municipal Code. Low Impact Development (LID) strategies shall be considered and incorporated as part of site planning and design as appropriately feasible.

N-1. During all project construction activities, the following mitigation measures shall be incorporated into construction documents and shall be implemented by the project developer:

a. Properly maintain all construction equipment and equip all internal combustion engine driven machinery with intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition and recommended by the vehicle manufacturer;

b. Stationary equipment, such as compressor and generators shall be housed in acoustical enclosures and placed as far from sensitive receptors as feasible;

c. Use wheeled earth moving equipment rather than track equipment;

d. Provide a noise disturbance coordinator with a phone number and email address so that the nearby residents have a contact person is case of a noise problem;

e. Keep vehicles routes clean and smooth both on site and off site to minimize noise and vibration from vehicles rolling over rough surfaces;

f. Nail guns should be used where possible as they are less noisy than manual hammering;

g. Stationary equipment, such as compressor and generators shall be housed in acoustical enclosures and placed as far from sensitive receptors as feasible; and

h. Restrict noise-generating activities at the construction site or in areas adjacent to the construction site to the hours of 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday through Friday and 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Saturday, consistent with the City of Hollister Municipal Code. Construction-related noise-generating activities shall be prohibited on Sundays.

T-1. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall pay the applicable TIF fee for the signalization of the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection.

T-2. At the issuance of building permit, if the identified widening improvements to State Route 25 and State Route 156 are expressly covered in the then-current or future TIF program, then the developer's payment of the applicable TIF shall constitute a fair share contribution toward improvements along the highway segments.

T-3. Prior to approval of the improvement plans, consistent with sight distance analysis submitted by the project applicant, the City shall verify that an adequate sight distance is provided for both the traffic traveling along North Street and traffic entering/exiting "A" Street. Final development plans submitted for city review shall identify that project plans meet or exceed city roadway and site design standards.

T-4. At the time of improvement plan submittal, the applicant shall identify that project plans meet or exceed city roadway and site design standards. Specifically, development plans will be evaluated for conformance with city roadway and site design standards including but not limited to standards for site circulation, roadway width, and turning-radii.

T-5. Prior to approval of final improvement plans, the project applicant shall ensure that the following features are identified and incorporated:

a. The project applicant shall build a sidewalk on the north side of Buena Vista Road/North Street and south side frontage improvements including curb, gutter, and sidewalk, to connect to adjacent pedestrian facilities. This would provide a continuous sidewalk connection from every proposed residential unit within the project site to existing and planned pedestrian facilities within the study area such as the nearby Calaveras Elementary School;

b. The project applicant shall design project frontage improvements on Buena Vista Road/North Street to City of Hollister and San Benito County roadway design standards and guidelines. Project frontage improvements shall be designed to accommodate the future installation of a Class II bike lane along Buena Vista Road/North Street; and

c. The project applicant shall adhere to city roadway design standards and guidelines when designing roadway widths and turn radii.

The developer shall be reimbursed for all costs associated with these improvements and all improvements made to the North Street extension project required to be made by the developer beyond its fair share contribution (including costs for design, permitting and construction). Such reimbursement shall be made either through credit against TIF credit or reimbursement from TIF, or some other method of reimbursement.

T-6. Prior to the approval of final improvement plans, the project applicant shall contribute to the completion of planned bicycle facilities along Buena Vista Road/North Street, if a funding mechanism has been established for these improvements. The contribution shall be determined by the City of Hollister/San Benito County and it shall be based on the project's contribution to the total projected growth in the study area. The developer shall be reimbursed for all costs associated with these improvements and all improvements made to the North Street extension project required to be made by the developer beyond its fair share contribution (including costs for design, permitting and construction). Such reimbursement shall be made either through credit against TIF credit or reimbursement from TIF, or some other method of reimbursement.

T-7. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant and/or project site developers shall pay the project's applicable fair-share TIF fee toward improvement costs at the intersection of State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road, which is under Caltrans jurisdiction. Improvements could consist of an additional through-lane and second left-turn lanes in the northbound and southbound legs of the intersection.

Project Alternatives Summary

Environmental Topic	Proposed Project Impact	No Project A Alternative	No Project B Alternative
Aesthetics	SU,M	better	worse
Agricultural Resources	SU,M	better	better
Air Quality	M	better	worse
Biological Resources	M	better	better
Cultural Resources	M	better	better
Fire Services	LTS	better	similar
Geology and Soils	M	better	worse
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LTS	better	worse
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	M	better	similar
Hydrology and Water Quality	M	better	similar
Noise	M	better	similar
Parks and Recreation	LTS	better	worse
Police Services	LTS	better	similar
Schools	LTS	better	worse
Solid Waste	LTS	better	similar
Transportation and Traffic	SU,M	better	worse
Wastewater Services	LTS	better	similar
Water Supplies and Facilities	LTS	better	similar
Primary Project Objectives	-	Not Consistent	Partially Consistent

Source: EMC Planning Group, 2015

Note: The table compares each alternative to the proposed project. M = Mitigated, SU =Significant and Unavoidable, LTS = Less than Significant

As described in this section and summarized in the above table, Project Alternatives Summary, the No Project (B) alternative would eliminate project-related significant and unavoidable impacts to agriculture by avoiding the conversion of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses. However, the No Project (B) alternative would result in greater individual contributions to cumulative impacts to aesthetics, regional air and water quality, GHG emissions, and traffic.

Environmentally Superior Alternative

As displayed above in the Project Alternatives Summary Table, the No Project (A) alternative would have no adverse environmental impacts compared to the proposed project and No Project (B) alternative, but would not meet any of the project objectives. The No Project (B) alternative would result in similar, but greater magnitude of potential adverse environmental impacts due to the larger project population when compared with the impacts of the proposed project. The No Project (B) alternative would be partially consistent with the objectives of the proposed project.

Although the environmentally superior alternative would be the No Project (B) alternative when compared to the No Project (A) alternative, this alternative would result in greater impacts than the proposed project, with the exception of agriculture.

Significant Cumulative Effects

Significant cumulative impacts are anticipated in the following areas:

Aesthetics

Agriculture

Transportation and Traffic

Significant Unavoidable Impacts

Significant and unavoidable individual and cumulative impacts are anticipated in the following areas:

Aesthetics

Agriculture

Transportation and Traffic

Summary of Alternatives

Project alternatives are presented, discussed, analyzed and compared in Section 3.4, Alternatives.

The following project alternatives were analyzed:

- No Project (A) Alternative (No-build);
- No Project (B) Alternative (Future Development Consistent with General Plan)

A summary of the alternatives compared with the proposed project is presented in the following table.

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1.0
INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This draft environmental impact report (EIR) is organized into the following sections:

S.0 Summary

The summary, presented earlier, provides a brief summary of the proposed actions, significant environmental effects with proposed mitigation measures and alternatives, areas of controversy known to the lead agency, and issues to be resolved including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigated significant effects.

1.0 Introduction

The introduction presents the organization of this draft EIR, purpose of preparing the report, standards used in the environmental analysis, the notice of preparation, and terminology used in the draft EIR.

2.0 Project Description

The project description presents the location of the project site, a statement of objectives sought by the project applicant, a general description of the project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics, and a description of the intended uses of the EIR.

3.0 Environmental Effects

Environmental effects presents the local and regional setting as applicable to each environmental topic area addressed, analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed project, identification of significant impacts, and mitigation measures to avoid or reduce environmental effects. A brief discussion of possible environmental areas of the project were determined to be less than significant can be found in Section 3.22 of this EIR.

4.0 Cumulative Impacts

This section presents the cumulative projects scenario and evaluates whether the proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts is considerable.

5.0 Alternatives

The alternatives section presents the environmental effects of variations of the proposed project, alternatives to the proposed project, or alternative locations to the proposed project.

6.0 Organizations and Persons Consulted

This section provides a list of organizations and people contacted.

7.0 Report Preparers

This section provides a list of report preparers.

8.0 Document and Web Sources

This section provides the sources referenced in the EIR.

1.2 PURPOSE AND STANDARDS

Authorization and Purpose

EIRs are authorized by Public Resources Code Section 21000 et sec., which establishes the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA was passed by the California legislature in 1970 to establish protocols for environmental review of proposed projects, and has been

amended numerous times since. The Office of Planning and Research developed the CEQA Guidelines to assist in implementing CEQA. The City of Hollister ("city") is the lead agency for this EIR.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15050, if a project is to be carried out or approved by more than one public agency, one public agency shall be responsible for preparing an EIR, and is referred to as the lead agency. The lead agency is typically the agency that will carry out the project or that has the greatest responsibility for supervising or approving the project.

Preparation Standards and Methods

An EIR is an informational document that will inform public agency decision makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project.

This EIR has been prepared by EMC Planning Group (hereinafter "consultant") under contract to the City of Hollister in accordance with CEQA and its implementing guidelines, as those were in effect at the time the EIR was released for public review. This EIR has been prepared using available information from private and public sources noted herein, as well as information generated by the consultant through field investigation. This EIR will be used to inform public decision-makers and their constituents of the environmental impacts of the proposed project.

This EIR describes and evaluates the existing environmental setting of the project site and surrounding areas, discusses the characteristics of the proposed project, identifies environmental impacts associated with the proposed project, and provides feasible mitigation measures that can be implemented to reduce or avoid identified adverse environmental impacts. This EIR also evaluates reasonable alternatives to the proposed project.

If an EIR identifies a significant adverse impact, the lead agency may approve the project only if it finds that mitigation measures have been required to reduce the impact's significance, or that such mitigation is infeasible for specified social, economic, and/or other reasons (Public Resources Code section 21081). The lead agency may not omit from the project conditions a mitigation measure associated with a project impact identified in the EIR as significant, unless it makes specific findings regarding the omission.

This EIR is an objective public disclosure document that takes no position on the merits of the proposed project. Therefore, the findings of this EIR do not advocate a position "for" or "against" the proposed project. Instead, this EIR provides information on which decisions about the proposed project can be based. The EIR has been prepared according to the professional standards and practices of the EIR participants' individual disciplines and in conformance with the legal requirements and informational expectations of CEQA and its implementing guidelines.

1.3 NOTICE OF PREPARATION

CEQA Guidelines section 15375 requires the lead agency to prepare a notice of preparation (NOP) to solicit agencies' input on the scope of the EIR. An NOP is described as:

> …a brief notice sent by the lead agency to notify the responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and involved federal agencies that the lead agency plans to prepare an EIR for the project. The purpose of the notice is to solicit guidance from those agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR.

The City of Hollister, acting as the lead agency, has determined that the proposed North Street Subdivision project (hereinafter "proposed project") may result in significant adverse environmental effects, as defined by CEQA Guidelines section 15064. Therefore, the city has had this EIR prepared to evaluate the potentially significant adverse environmental impacts of the proposed project.

Based upon the decision to prepare an EIR, the city prepared and distributed an NOP for a 30-day comment period from December 22, 2014 to January 21, 2015 in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15082. At the time the NOP was published the County of San Benito was updating its general plan. The County adopted the San Benito County 2035 General Plan on July 21, 2015. Because the 2035 General Plan is the governing general plan for unincorporated areas of San Benito County, the 2035 General Plan is referenced in this EIR.

The NOP and responses to the NOP received from responsible agencies are contained in Appendix A.

1.4 TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE EIR

Characterization of Impacts

This EIR uses the following terminology to denote the significance of environmental impacts:

- "No impact" means that no change from existing conditions is expected to occur;
- A "less-than-significant impact" is an adverse impact, but would not cause a substantial adverse change in the physical environment, and no mitigation is required;
- A "significant impact" or "potentially significant impact" would, or would potentially, cause a substantial adverse change in the physical environment, and mitigation is required;

- A "less-than-significant impact with implementation of mitigation measures" means that the impact would cause no substantial adverse change in the physical environment if identified mitigation measures are implemented;
- A "significant and unavoidable impact" would cause a substantial change in the physical environment and cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; mitigation may be recommended, but will not reduce the impact to less-than-significant levels; and
- A "beneficial impact" is an impact that would result in a decrease in existing adverse conditions in the physical environment if the project is implemented.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AB	Assembly Bill
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
AFY	Acre Feet per Year
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
BPM	Best Management Practices
C_2F_6	Hexafluoroethane
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CalFire	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CF_4	Tetrafluoromethane
CFC	Chlorofluorocarbon
CH_4	Methane

CIP	Capital Improvement Plan
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CO_2e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
CWA	Clean Water Act
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
GWP	Global Warming Potential
HFC	Hydrofluorocarbon
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FIRM	FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GPA	General Plan Amendment
LAFCo	Local Agency Formation Commission
LOS	Level of Service
MM	Mitigation Measure
MMT	One Teragram
MBUAPCD	Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
NO	Nitrogen Dioxide
N_2O	Nitrous Oxide
NOC	Notice of Completion

NOP	Notice of Preparation
NRHP	National Register of Historical Places
O_3	Ozone
PFC	Perfluorocarbon
PG&E	Pacific Gas & Electric
$PM_{2.5}$	Fine Particulate Matter 2.5 micrometers or less
PM_{IO}	Particulate Matter 10 microns or less
ppm	Parts per Million
PUD	Planned Unit Development
ROG	Reactive Organic Gases
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SF_6	Sulfur hexafluoride
SO_2	Sulfur Dioxide
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	Toxic Air Contaminant
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geologic Survey

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2.0
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

Location

The approximately 81-acre project site is located at the northwestern intersection of North Street and the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way partially within the City of Hollister (hereinafter "city") and partially within the unincorporated portion of San Benito County (hereinafter "county").

Regional access to the project area is provided by State Route 25 and State Route 156 while local access to the project area is currently provided by North Street (to the east) and Buena Vista Road (to the west) on the southern portion of the site. Figure 1, Project Location, presents the location of the site within the context of the region and the city.

The project site is comprised of four parcels: Assessor's parcel numbers: 053-370-037, 053-370-038, 019-130-026 and 019-130-027 (Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2015a).

Existing Conditions

The project site is located within an area locally identified as Park Hill, and the site and some surrounding properties provide the only high ground in an otherwise flat landscape in the vicinity. Elevations on the project site average about 320 feet with the exception of a portion along the eastern property line parallel to the Southern Pacific Railroad, which is flat at about 270 feet (Zander Associates 2012). The site is within the Alquist Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.

The site consists of agricultural dry farm hay and undeveloped land, and contains no permanent structures; however, from time to time homeless people have set up temporary camps on

portions of the project site. As identified in a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment prepared for the site (AEI Consultants 2012) other features on the project site include an irrigation well (which has not been in operation for over fifty years), a Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) pipeline easement located on the northern property boundary, and two aggregate mine pit rock quarries (reportedly active from at least 1939 to 1955) located in the northwestern slopes of the project site. Agricultural operations (hay cropping, row crops and/or orchards) have been conducted on portions of the project site from at least 1921 to the present. Due to the historic practice of agricultural operations at the project site, the site appears to have been regularly disked over the years. Since 2007, the site has only been used to grow organic hay without the use of irrigation or pesticides.

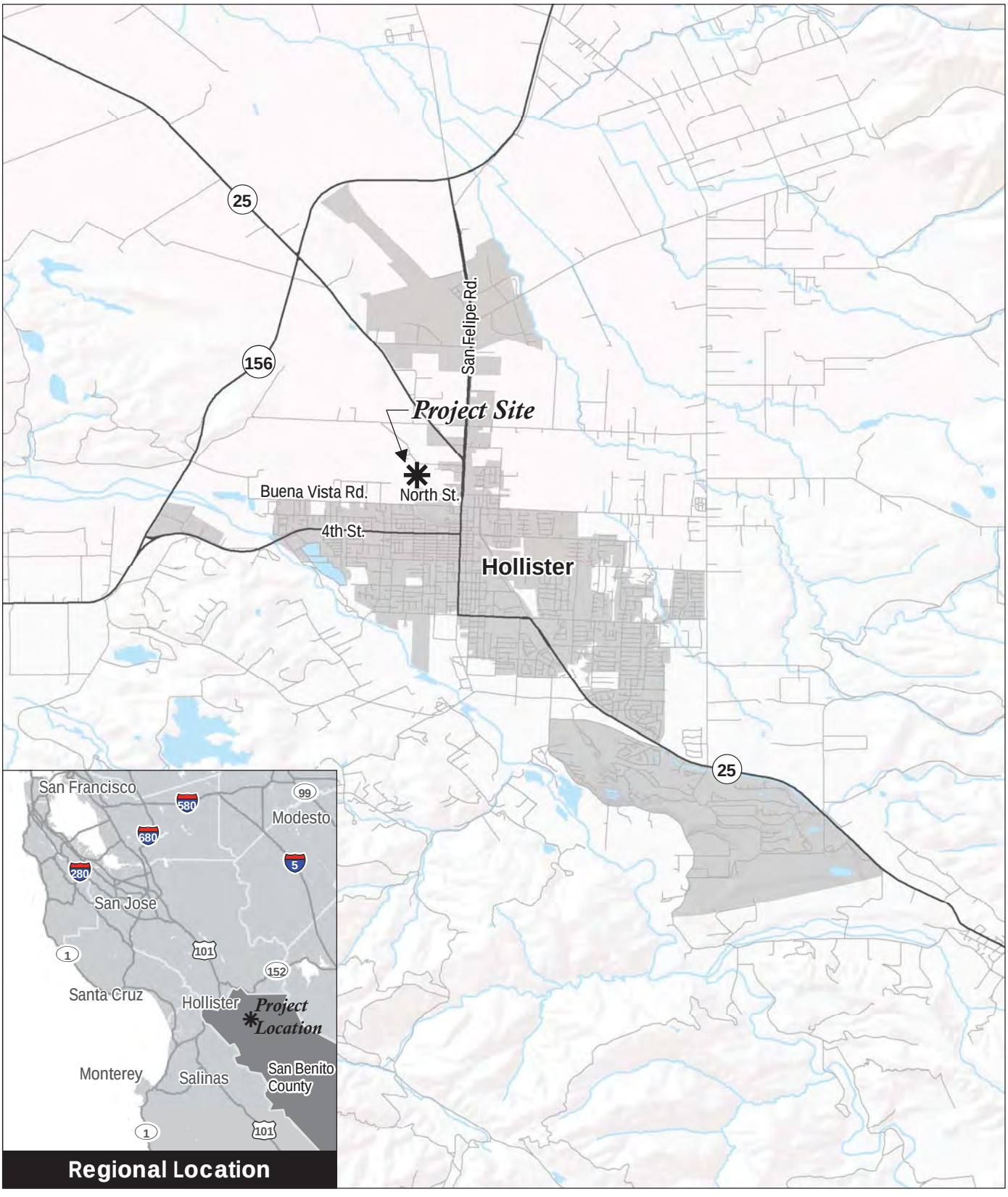
A variety of land uses surround the project site, including: agricultural operations and residential uses to the north; agricultural operations and the public Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) Cemetery to the west; Vista Hill Park to the south; and the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way, the PG&E substation, commercial, and light industrial uses to the east. A residential neighborhood is located southwest of the site and two residences are adjacent to the site's southern border. The southwestern portion of the property overlaps onto a reportedly unfilled area within the west-southwestern adjacent former Hart's Landfill site (AEI Consultants 2012).

Figure 2, Existing Site and Vicinity Conditions, presents an aerial view of the existing conditions of the project site and the immediate surroundings and Figures 3 and 4, Site Photographs A and B, presents photographs of the existing conditions on, and adjacent to, the site.

Project Site and Vicinity Planning Designations

The project site is located partially in the City of Hollister and partially in unincorporated San Benito County, including areas both inside and outside of the city's sphere of influence. However the entire project site is within the city's Planning Area, as shown on Map 1, Hollister Planning Area of the *City of Hollister General Plan* (City of Hollister 2005a, p. 2.3) (general plan). The site is located west of lands identified as "Gateway District Retail" on Map 4, Retail Development Strategy of the general plan (Hollister 2005a, p 2.15).

The southern half of the project site, which is located within the city's sphere of influence, is identified as priority infill area on Map 5, Infill Development Strategy (City of Hollister 2005a, p.2.19) and as "vacant High Density Residential land" in the Vacant Land Inventory of the general plan (City of Hollister 2005a, Appendix B). The northern half of the project site is identified as a "Phase 1 addition to the sphere of influence" on general plan Map 6, Phasing Strategy (City of Hollister 2005a, p. 2.21). Each of the areas described above are identified on Figure 5, City Planning Areas.



Source: ESRI Streetmap North America 2010

Figure 1

Project Location

North Street Subdivision EIR

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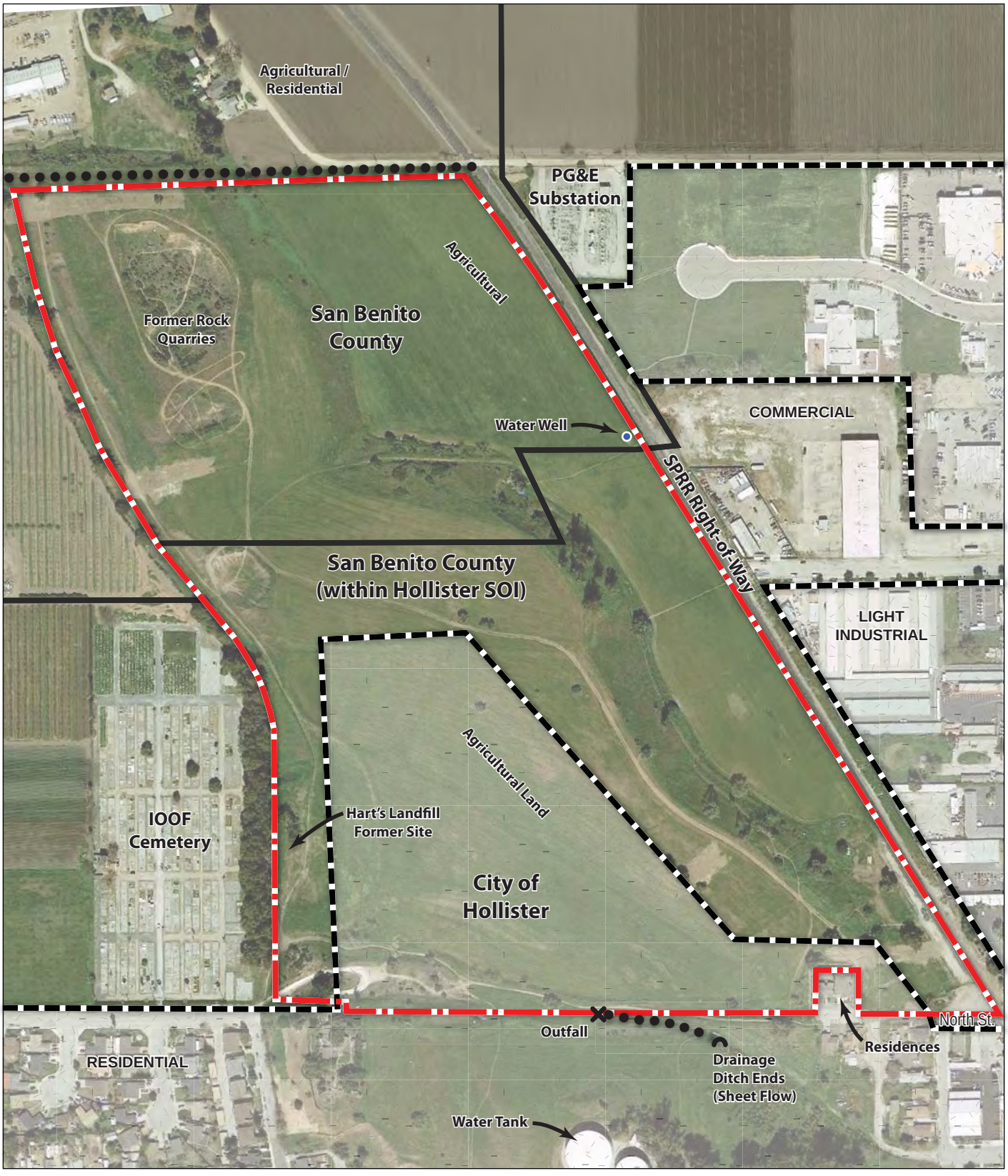

0 400 feet

Project Boundary

Hollister City Limits

Hollister SOI

Drainage Ditch

Source: Google Earth 2013, AEI Consultants 2012

Figure 2

Existing Site and Vicinity Conditions

North Street Subdivision EIR

E M C

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1 Southeast corner of the site looking west towards one of the adjacent residences. North Street is on the left.

2 Southeast corner looking northwest. SPRR right-of-way is to the right.

Project Boundary

3 Looking northwest across agricultural land on site. Ridgeline that runs through the center of the site is evident to left.

4 Pacific Gas and Electric Company substation east of the project site.

Source: Google Earth 2013

Figure 3

Site Photographs A

North Street Subdivision EIR

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(5) Looking north - view of agricultural land and residence to the north.

Project Boundary

(7) Former rock quarry.

(6) View looking south towards Vista Hill Park.

(8) IOOF Cemetery.

Source: Google Earth 2013

Figure 4

Site Photographs B

North Street Subdivision EIR

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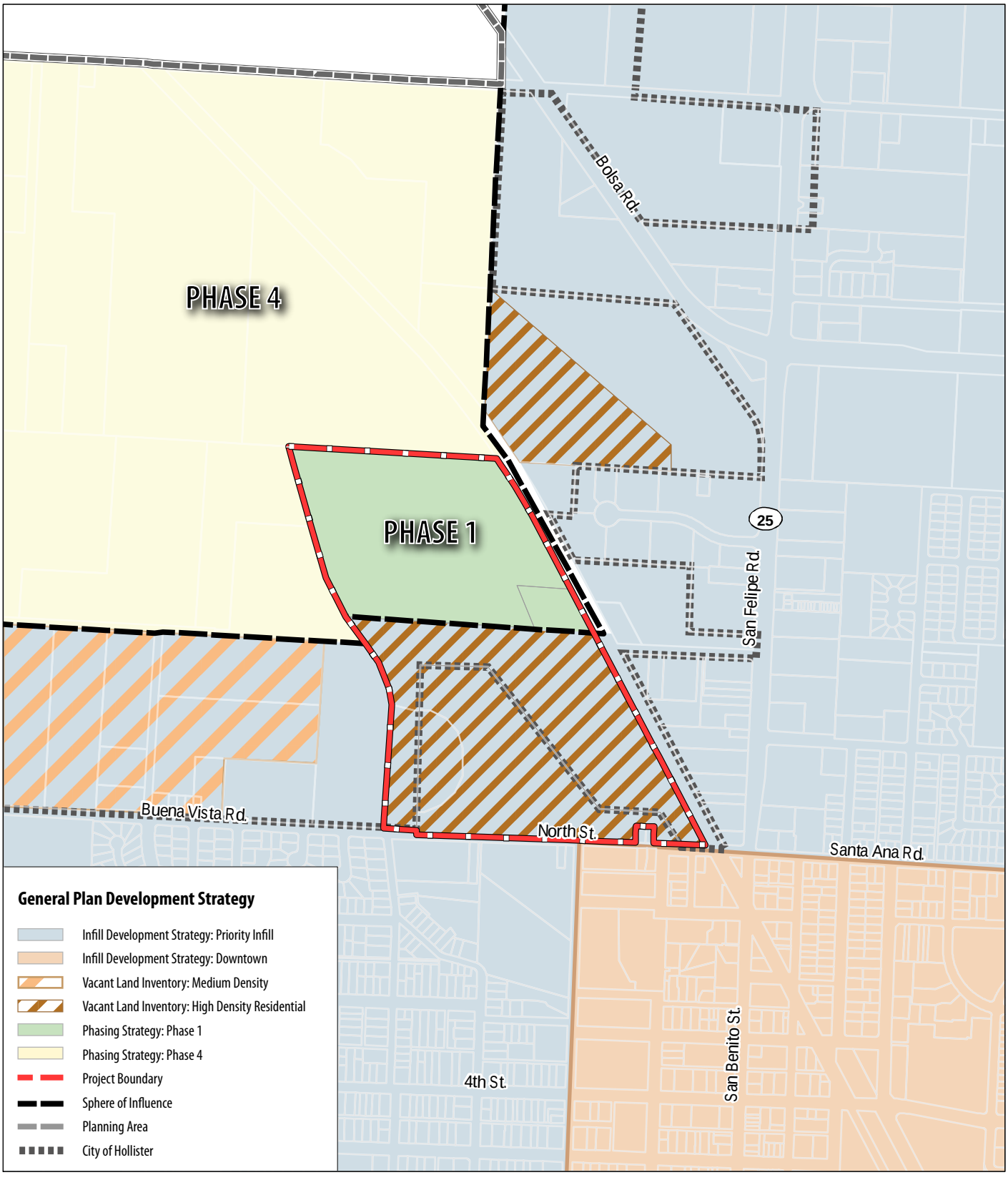

Source: City of Hollister General Plan 2005

Figure 5

City Planning Areas

North Street Subdivision EIR

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As mentioned above, the project site is located partially in the City of Hollister and partially in unincorporated San Benito County. As such, there are two applications of land use designations and zoning code districts that apply to different portions of the project site. The city general plan land use designation, city zoning, county zoning, and county general plan designation (*San Benito County 2035 General Plan, adopted June 2015*), as applicable, for each land area within the project site are as follows:

23.0± Acres in the City of Hollister City Limits

- City general plan land use designation: High Density Residential (HDR) (12-35 du/ac)
- City zoning: High Density Residential Performance Overlay Zone (R4 H/PZ)

27.0± Acres in Unincorporated San Benito County, but Within the City of Hollister Sphere of Influence

- City general plan land use designation: High Density Residential (HDR) (12-35 du/ac)
- County general plan land use designation: Residential Mixed (RM) (1-20 du/ac) (*San Benito County 2035 General Plan* Figure 3-2, Land Use Diagram North County Detail)
- County zoning: Residential Multiple (RM)

31.0± Acres in Unincorporated San Benito County and Outside of the City of Hollister Sphere of Influence

- City general plan land use designation: High Density Residential (HDR) (12-35 du/ac)
- County general plan land use designation: Residential Mixed (RM) (1-20 du/ac) (*San Benito County 2035 General Plan* Figure 3-2, Land Use Diagram North County Detail)
- County zoning: Residential Multiple (RM)

Figure 6, City General Plan Land Use Map, presents the land use designations for the project site and vicinity. Figure 7, Land Use Designations and Zoning Districts, presents both the city's and the county's general plan land use designations and zoning code districts.

2.2 STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

In accordance with CEQA, a statement of objectives sought by the proposed project should be clearly stated to aid the lead agency in developing a reasonable range of alternatives to evaluate in the EIR. These objectives are also utilized to aid decision makers in preparation of findings or statement of overriding considerations, if necessary (Title 14 CCR § 15124 (b)).

The following objectives, as prepared by the applicant, outline the underlying purpose of the proposed project. The objectives of the proposed project are to:

- Develop a residential project that is consistent with the goals of the city's general plan;
- Create a residential community consisting of 343 lots to allow 60 multi-family units and 283 single-family units;
- Improve an underutilized vacant 81-acre site identified in the city's general plan as "Vacant Land Inventory - High Density Residential," "Infill Development Strategy: Priority Infill" and "Phasing Strategy: Phase 1;"
- Provide a mix of housing types to serve the housing needs of the city;
- Participate in the completion of the needed connection from North Street to Buena Vista Road; and
- Provide a minimum of 20 acres of open/undeveloped area consisting of a meandering walking path integrated with an outdoor exercise track (parcourse), tot lot, picnic area, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking, and other associated improvements to serve the residents of the project and city.

2.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

On April 28, 2011, the City of Hollister Planning Commission passed and adopted Planning Commission resolution no. PC 2011-6, allocating and awarding 105 housing allocations to the area of the project site currently within the City of Hollister city limits and subject property. The applicant has prepared a vesting tentative map identifying 283 residential lots and ten parcels. One of the ten parcels on the vesting tentative map, Parcel C, is identified as "High Density Residential 60 units." A vesting tentative map and several supporting technical documents have been submitted to the city by DeNova Homes (applicant) to initiate the process of developing the site for residential use.

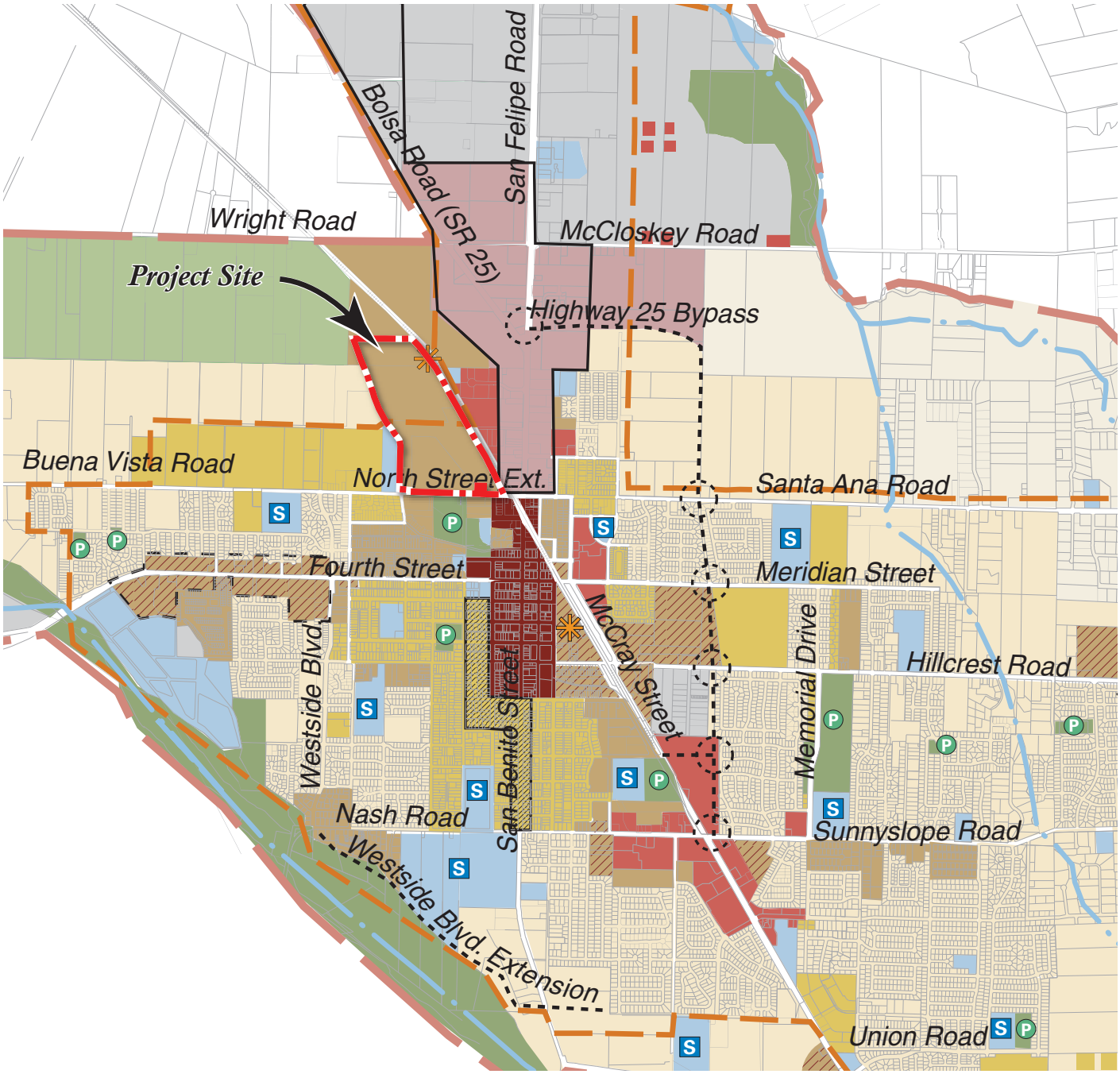

Figure 6

City General Plan Land Use Map

North Street Subdivision EIR

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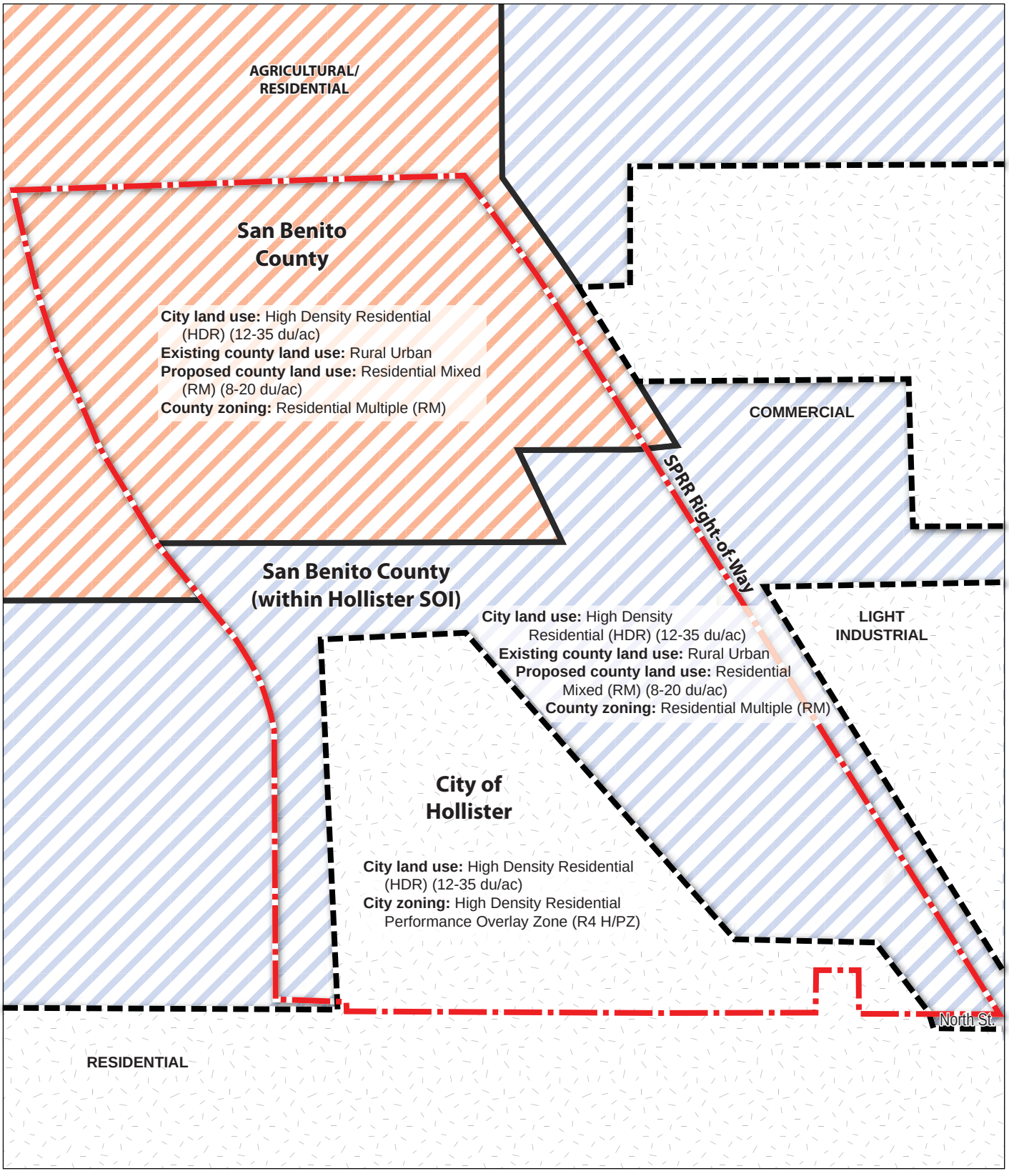

Source: County of San Benito General Plan 1992

Figure 7

Land Use Designations and Zoning Districts

North Street Subdivision EIR

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Due to the potential for significant environmental impacts associated with the project, in July 2014, the City determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) should be prepared for the project. Technical analysis of seismic hazards prepared as part of the EIR determined that two branches of the Calaveras fault are present on the site and their estimated locations relative to parcel boundaries and other landslide hazard areas of the site, constrain future development opportunities on the project site. These constraints are discussed in more detail in Section 3.7 of this EIR (Geology and Soils). As identified on the vesting tentative map, development of the site anticipates 343 residential units. Up to 127 units would be developed on lands within the existing city limit and approximately 216 units would be developed on lands that are currently outside the city limit in unincorporated San Benito County).

Project Overview

The proposed project includes a Sphere of Influence (SOI) amendment, a General Plan Amendment (GPA), prezone for the properties outside of the current city limits, annexation of the portion of the project site currently located outside of the city limits, and vesting tentative map approval.

The proposed project includes subdivision of approximately 81 acres of land. The project proposes a planned unit development (PUD), pursuant to Hollister Municipal Code section 16.16.030; with land use designation of Medium Density Residential (MDR) (8-12 du/ac) across the project site. Future development of the project site consistent with the residential land use densities proposed by the vesting tentative map could result in development of up to 343 residential units (283 single-family units and up to 60 multi-family units), an on-site water quality/retention basin, approximately 24 acres of open space, and several new roads providing access to the development.

The proposed vesting tentative map is shown as Figure 8, Vesting Tentative Map. The complete vesting tentative map sheet set is included as Appendix B. The proposed land uses as identified on the vesting tentative map are summarized in Table 1, Proposed Land Use Summary, below:

Residential development is proposed on approximately 34 acres of the 81-acre project site, which corresponds with an aggregate overall residential net density of 10.1 units per acre.

The proposed internal roadways would have connections at the future North Street extension along the southern boundary, which has already been approved and will be constructed by the city under its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). North Street currently consists of a short undeveloped roadway segment between Monterey Street and San Benito Street, east of the project site. Construction of the two-lane extension of North Street, between Locust Avenue and Monterey Street, is planned to occur concurrently with the proposed project. This extension of North Street is not part of the proposed project, but a funded improvement that will be completed in conjunction with the development of the adjacent undeveloped areas, which

include the project site. North Street changes name designation west of Locust Avenue to Buena Vista Road and east of San Benito Street to Santa Ana Road. With the planned extension, a continuous roadway would be provided connecting Buena Vista Road and Santa Ana Road. The project would require the construction of a new sewer line to connect the project site to the nearest point of connection with adequate conveyance capacity (at the sewer manhole located at the Buena Vista Road and Westside Boulevard intersection) (see Figure 9, Off-Site Utility Plans). It is anticipated that the sewer line extension would be constructed along with the North Street Extension project; however, the project applicant would be required to fund the installment of the sewer lines.

Table 1 Proposed Land Use Summary

Proposed Land Use	Units	Acreage (City)	Acreage (County)	Total Acreage
Multi-Family Residential[1]	60	1.22	0.1	1.32
Single-Family Residentia[1]	283	11.44	21.34	32.78
Retention Basin[2]	NA	0.00	0.84	0.84
Park and Trails (Developed)	NA	0.00	3.53	3.53
Park and Trails (PG&E Easement)	NA	0.00	0.94	0.94
Open Space (Developed)	NA	1.02	3.10	4.12
Open Space (Sloped Area)[3]	NA	0.87	17.08	20.41
Open Space (PG&E Easement)	NA	0.00	1.33	1.33
Roadways	NA	6.10	9.64	15.74
Total	**343**	**23.11**	**57.90**	**81.01**

Source: Proposed vesting tentative map, Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2015a, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2015b

Notes: 1. Total Acreage reflects buildable area. Seismic site constraints limit buildable area to approximately 1.32 acres. See related discussion in Section 3.7, Geology and Soils.

2. Based on area identified as "Water Quality/Retention Basin" on sheet 1 of the proposed vesting tentative map

3. Includes 3.57 acre Building Exclusion Zone on Parcel C.

Future development of the 5.27-acre Parcel C, the multi-family, high density residential portion of the project, would require separate discretionary permits prior to approval of development of that portion of the site. Each of these planning actions is described below.

Proposed Planning Approvals

The 81-acre project site is located partially within the City of Hollister and partially within unincorporated San Benito County. Approximately 23 acres are located within the city limit. Approximately 58 acres are located in unincorporated San Benito County including an approximate 31 acres of the site that are outside the city's SOI.

GENERAL NOTES

1. OWNER: BRIGANTINO FAMILY FARMS, LLC, 6430 VINEYARD ESTATES DR., HOLLISTER, CA 95023
2. APPLICANT: DENOVA HOMES, INC., 1500 WILLOW PASS CT., CONCORD, CA 94520
3. ENGINEER: CARLSON, BARBEE, & GIBSON, INC., 2633 CAMINO RAMON, SUITE 350, SAN RAMON, CA 94583, ANGELO OBERTELLO, R.C.E. NO. 64345, PHONE: (925) 866-0322
4. SOILS ENGINEER: T. MAKDISSY CONSULTING, INC., 23 LAS COLINAS LANE, SUITE 108, SAN JOSE, CA 95119, PHONE: (408) 227-8595
5. LAND AREA: CITY OF HOLLISTER: 23.11 ACRES; SAN BENITO COUNTY: 57.90 ACRES; TOTAL: 81.01 ACRES
6. RESIDENTIAL UNIT COUNT: 325
7. PROPOSED ZONING: PLANNED DEVELOPMENT (PD)
8. EXISTING ZONING: CITY OF HOLLISTER: R-4H/PZ (HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) 12-35 DU/AC; SAN BENITO COUNTY: RM (RESIDENTIAL MULTIPLE) 8-20 DU/AC
9. EXISTING GENERAL PLAN: CITY OF HOLLISTER: HDR (HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) 12-35 DU/AC; SAN BENITO COUNTY: RU (RURAL URBAN) 1 DU/5 AC
10. PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: CITY OF HOLLISTER: MDR (MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL)
11. UTILITIES: WATER: CITY OF HOLLISTER; STORM DRAIN: CITY OF HOLLISTER; GAS & ELECTRIC: PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC; TELEPHONE: AT&T TELECOMMUNICATIONS; CABLE TV: COMCAST CABLE SERVICES
12. APN: 053-370-037, 053-370-038, 019-130-026 & 019-130-027
13. MULTIPLE FINAL MAPS MAY BE FILED ON THE LANDS SHOWN ON THIS MAP PER SUBDIVISION MAP ACT 66456.
14. ALL EXISTING STRUCTURES, UTILITIES, TREES AND SURFACE IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN THE PROJECT SITE ARE TO BE DEMOLISHED AND REMOVED EXCEPT WITHIN THE OPEN SPACE SLOPED AREAS OR UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.
15. FLOOD ZONES SHOWN ARE PER FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP NO. FM06069C0185D. EFFECTIVE DATE: APRIL 16, 2009. ZONE X – AREA DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE THE 0.2% CHANCE FLOODPLAIN.
16. AERIAL TOPOGRAPHY WAS PREPARED BY AEROMETRIC SURVEYS ON APRIL 3, 2007 CONTOURS AT 1 FOOT INTERVAL.
17. NORTH STREET EXTENSION TO BE PREFORMED UNDER THE CITY OF HOLLISTER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN. NORTH STREET RIGHT OF WAY AND PROPOSED DESIGN GRADES PER CITY OF HOLLISTER CIP 2309 IMPROVEMENT PLANS BY SAN BENITO ENGINEERING & SURVEYING, INC. DATED NOVEMBER 2005.

PRODUCT & AREA SUMMARY

TYPE	PRODUCT OR AREA TYPE	CITY RESIDENTIAL UNITS	COUNTY RESIDENTIAL UNITS	TOTAL UNITS	TOTAL AREA
	MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (35 DU/AC)	50	10	60	1.32 AC
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (38' X 85')	0	58	58	4.30 AC
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (45' X 95')	75	45	120	16.00 AC
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (40' X 100')	2	103	105	12.48 AC
	WATER QUALITY/ RETENTION BASIN				0.84 AC
	PARKS & TRAILS				
	DEVELOPED				3.53 AC
	EASEMENT				0.94 AC
	OPEN SPACE				
	DEVELOPED				4.12 AC
	SLOPED AREA & FAULT SETBACK AREA				20.41 AC
	EASEMENT				1.33 AC
	TOTAL	127	216	343	65.27 AC

DENSITY:

NET AREA SUMMARY (CITY OF HOLLISTER):
- TOTAL AREA 23.11 AC±
- OPEN SPACE – SLOPED AREA 3.33 AC±
- NORTH STREET 1.62 AC±
- STREET AREA 4.46 AC±

NET AREA = 13.68 AC±

NET DENSITY = (127 DU / 13.68 AC) = 9.28 DU/AC

NET AREA SUMMARY (SAN BENITO COUNTY):
- TOTAL AREA 57.90 AC±
- PG&E EASEMENT 2.27 AC±
- OPEN SPACE – SLOPE AREA 17.08 AC±
- STREET AREA 9.64 AC±

NET AREA = 28.91 AC±

NET DENSITY = (216 DU / 28.91 AC) = 7.47 DU/AC

LEGEND
- PROJECT BOUNDARY
- EXISTING CITY LIMIT LINE
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- PROPOSED LOT LINE
- PROPOSED CURB LINE
- ADJACENT PROPERTY BOUNDARY

0 480 feet

Source: Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2015

Figure 8

Vesting Tentative Map

North Street Subdivision EIR

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0 240 feet

Source: DeNova Homes 2015

Figure 9

Off-site Utility Plan

North Street Subdivision EIR

E M C

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General Plan Amendment

The general plan amendment includes expanding the city's SOI to include the approximately 31 acres of the project site that are outside the SOI in unincorporated San Benito County and to change the city's land use designations on the entire site from High Density Residential (HDR) (12-35 du/ac.) to Medium Density Residential (MDR) (8-12 du/ac).

Prezone

The proposed project includes prezoning the 58 acres of the project site that are outside of the city limits to Medium Density Residential Performance Overlay Zone (R3 M/PZ) to be consistent with the general plan designation of MDR (as part of the GPA amendment above).

Sphere of Influence (SOI) Amendment

An amendment to the SOI is necessary to include the approximately 31 acres that are not currently within the SOI. The definition for a SOI, as set forth in Government Code 56076, is: "…a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency, as determined by the (the local agency formation) commission." Therefore, pending the general plan amendment, described above, a request will be submitted to the San Benito County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to modify the SOI and include the approximate 31 acres of the project site that is outside the SOI in unincorporated San Benito County.

As identified earlier, this portion of the project is identified as a "Phase 1 addition to the sphere of influence" on general plan Map 6, Phasing Strategy.

Annexation

The proposed project includes an application for annexation for the approximate 58 acres of the project site that are currently outside of the city limits pursuant to Section 56133(a) of the Cortese-Knox-Herzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. Annexation will be required prior to development of the project site within the city limits. State law requires that the property owner initiate or concur with the annexation. Upon approval of the general plan amendment, SOI, and prezoning by the City of Hollister, an application for a sphere change and annexation will be submitted to San Benito County LAFCo for consideration and approval.

Vesting Tentative Map

The proposed project includes a vesting tentative map. The vesting tentative map must be considered and approved by the city in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 16.36. The

vesting tentative map identifies 283 residential lots and ten parcels. One of the ten parcels on the vesting tentative map, Parcel C, is identified as "High Density Residential 60 units." Based on the summary provided on the vesting tentative map, future development would include up to 343 residential units (283 single-family units and up to 60 multi-family units). The vesting tentative map also identifies 4.47 acres of parks and trails, approximately 25.52 acres of open space, and a 0.84-acre water quality/retention basin on the northeast corner of the site (refer also to Table 1). Utilities, including storm drains, sanitary sewer, and water lines, would be developed in accordance with sheets 9 through 11 of the vesting tentative map.

Planned Unit Development

The vesting tentative map submitted by the applicant identifies the project as a "planned development" (sheet one). In accordance with the city's Municipal Code Section 16.16.030, at the time a tentative map for a planned unit development is filed, the subdivider will also apply for a planned development permit, which shall show in adequate detail the following:

- All lots, setback lines, streets, walkways and other features not in accord with current subdivision and zoning regulations;
- All proposed structures;
- Means (setbacks, covenants) whereby future structures will be controlled when the intent is to sell lots rather than completed structures; and
- Restrictive covenants and other legal documents controlling future activities within the development, maintenance of streets, open space, drainage facilities, utilities, paths, bridle trails and recreational areas (where not owned and maintained by a public agency) and other pertinent information required by an agency of the city.

The municipal code also states that "If the planned unit development is to be constructed in increments, the increments shall be shown on the tentative map, and initial increments shall include adequate open space to maintain desired density. Facilities and amenities shall be included with initial increment or increments to insure an appropriate environmental quality even if subsequent increments are not developed" (Ord. 1071 § 2, 2011; prior code § 18-9).

Physical Project Characteristics

Pending the approvals identified above, the project site is anticipated to be developed in accordance with the submitted vesting tentative map (refer to Figure 8, Vesting Tentative Map). As discussed above, the vesting tentative map identifies 283 single-family residential lots and ten parcels, with one parcel, Parcel C, is identified as "High Density Residential 60 units." Based on

the summary provided on the vesting tentative map, future development consistent with the vesting tentative map will include 343 residential units (283 single-family units and 60 multi-family units) for an overall net density of 9.94 units per net acre (343/34.4 acres).

Note, "net acres" does not include areas identified as sloped area, easement or roadways. Please refer to Table 1, presented earlier, for a summary of residential acres as identified on the vesting tentative map.

Access to the project site would be provided by two new roadways that intersect with the planned North Street extension. The first roadway (referred to as "A" Street on the vesting tentative map) would be located near the western site boundary and would form a new T-intersection with North Street. Several internal roadway extensions from "A" Street ("D" – "H" Streets) and courts provide access to the internal site lots. The second roadway (referred to as "J" Street on the vesting tentative map) would be located along the eastern site boundary and would form the north leg of the Thompson Street/North Street intersection. "A" Street and "J" Street would run north-south, parallel to each other and would be connected by "C" Street in the northern part of the site, providing access to all residential units within the site from both new roadways.

The vesting tentative map also identifies a 0.84-acre water quality/retention basin on the northeast corner of the site and approximately 25.52 acres of open space throughout the site.

Site Preparation

All existing temporary structures, utilities, trees, and surface improvements within the project site are to be demolished and removed except within the open space sloped areas or unless otherwise noted on the vesting tentative map. Grading and drainage plans were included as a component of the vesting tentative map.

Public Services

Public services to be provided by the City of Hollister include water, sanitary sewer and storm water services. PG&E will provide gas and electric services. San Benito County will provide services such as the land tax system, county jail and detention services, the court system, and other countywide services available both inside and outside of cities.

Phasing and Construction

The single-family residential portion of the proposed project is anticipated to be developed in four phases as illustrated on Figure 10, Phasing Plan. The Phasing Plan identifies Parcel C, the multi-family parcel, to be developed in a future phase by others. Information regarding the construction equipment (e.g. the number and type of equipment by phase) of the project is not yet available for the proposed project.

Off-site Changes

As identified on sheet one of the vesting tentative map, the extension of North Street would be constructed under the City of Hollister CIP. North Street currently consists of a short undeveloped roadways segment between Monterey Street and San Benito Street, east of the proposed project site. Construction of the two-lane extension of North Street, between Locust

Avenue and Monterey Street, is planned to occur concurrently with the proposed project. This extension of North Street is not part of the proposed project, but a funded improvement that will be completed in conjunction with the development of the adjacent undeveloped areas, which include the project site. North Street changes name designation west of Locust Avenue to Buena Vista Road and east of San Benito Street to Santa Ana Road. With the planned extension, a continuous roadway would be provided connecting Buena Vista Road and Santa Ana Road (Hexagon Traffic Consultants 2015). North Street is considered a major thoroughfare in the City of Hollister standards and will be providing a travel route from San Benito Street to the west side of Hollister as well as the main access point.

As identified in the City of Hollister Capital Improvement Projects Program Fiscal Year 2014/2015 CIP (City of Hollister 2014) extension of North Street includes street and frontage improvements, signal system modifications, installation of street lighting, and underground infrastructure for water, sewer and storm facilities where necessary.

It is noted that the vesting tentative map includes the North Street right-of-way and proposed design grades per City of Hollister CIP 2309 improvement plans by San Benito Engineering and Surveying, Inc. dated November 2005.

The proposed project requires an extension of the sanitary sewer to the west along Buena Vista road to the intersection of Westside Boulevard as depicted on Sheet 2 of the proposed vesting tentative map.

2.4 EIR USES AND APPROVALS

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15124(d), following is a list of agencies that are expected to use this EIR in their decision-making, and a list of the approvals for which this EIR will be used. These lists include information that is known to the lead agency.

PHASING SUMMARY

	38' x 85'	45' x 95'	50'/55' x 100'	TOTALS
PHASE 1	–	43	–	43
PHASE 2	–	28	40	68
PHASE 3	58	31	18	107
PHASE 4	–	18	29	47
TOTAL				265

0 375 feet

Source: DeNova Homes 2013

Figure 10

Phasing Plan

North Street Subdivision EIR

E M C

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Lead Agency

- City of Hollister
    - General Plan Amendment for SOI expansion for 31.0 acres and change in land use designation from High Density Residential to Medium Density Residential across the entire project site (Application 2014-1 as amended).
    - Prezoning 58 acres of the project site (Application 2014-9)
    - Vesting Tentative Map (Application TM 2013-2)
    - Planned Unit Development (Application CUP 2014-7)

Responsible Agencies

- San Benito County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)
    - SOI Amendment and Annexation

In addition, the project may require discretionary approvals, permits, and entitlements from other federal, state, and regional agencies including:

- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
    - Coverage under the Statewide NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activity

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3.0
ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

3.1 AESTHETICS

This information in this section is derived primarily from field observations and background information in the general plan and general plan EIR. A number of comment letters on the NOP cited concerns of project-related impacts to aesthetic resources. The comments cited concerns regarding hillside development, neighborhood compatibility, effects to natural vistas, compatibility with the natural landscape of Vista Hill Park, use of sound/privacy walls adjacent to existing residences, building mass and scale, and the extent of proposed tree removal.

Environmental Setting

A scenic vista is generally described as a clear, expansive view of significant regional features possessing visual and aesthetic qualities of value to the community. The City of Hollister is surrounded on three sides by mountains: the Gabilan Mountains to the south and west, and the Diablo Range to the east. These mountains provide a natural backdrop to the city's highly modified landscape and visually important attributes of the scenic character of San Benito County (County of San Benito 1994; 1998). In addition to the distant rim of the Coastal Mountains, the city is ringed by gently-rolling foothills to the east, south and west. The overall visual and physical character of the city has transformed over the past three decades from a predominantly agricultural community composed of a residential core arranged in a traditional tree-lined grid pattern and surrounded by orchards and fields into a largely suburban community of subdivisions and commercial strips that sprawl into farmlands. The visual character of the city is further defined by a lack of visually cohesive community design elements as evidenced by a variety of competing land uses, and building scales and types (City of Hollister 2005b, p. 4.7-1).

Visual Quality and Character

The project site is located within an area locally identified as Park Hill, and the site and some surrounding properties provide the only high ground in an otherwise flat landscape in the vicinity. The topography of the site is varied; there are a number of sloped areas on the site with gradients of 10 to 30 percent. Several trees are located on the site outside of tilled areas and on slopes. Elevations on the project site average about 320 feet with the exception of a portion along the eastern property line parallel to the railroad tracks, which is flat at about 270 feet (Zander Associates 2012). The project site is vacant and has historically been used primarily for agricultural production. A small former rock quarry is located within the northwestern portion of the site. As evidenced by the photographs in Figure 3 and Figure 4 (refer to Section 2.1), there are few distinguishing visual features on the project site. Other than its undeveloped nature, the sloped areas and higher elevation of the site are its character-defining visual features. The quality of these features is dependent on the perception and context of the viewer.

Public Views

As illustrated in Figure 2, a variety of land uses surround the project site, including agricultural operations and very low-density residential uses to the north; an active line of the Southern Pacific Railroad, a PG&E substation, commercial, and light industrial uses to the east; Vista Hill Park to the south; and agricultural operations and a public cemetery to the west;. Two residences abut the southern boundary of the project site off North Street. Residential neighborhoods are located south of North Street and south of Buena Vista Road to the southwest. Unobscured views of the site are limited when viewed from public vantage points near the site. Public views of the site are obscured by topography.

Figures 11 and 12, Public Views of the Site A and B, present photographs of the some of the existing views from public areas in the vicinity of the site. The project site is located approximately one-quarter mile from State Route 25 at the nearest point (near the PG&E substation). Existing public views that could be affected by the proposed project are available from a short segment of State Route 25, from Vista Hill Park, from a 500-foot length of North Street near the intersection of Thompson Street and from Buena Vista Road near the intersection with Locust Avenue. The availability of public views from North Street is limited due to topography and the presence of the two residences between the project site and North Street (refer to Figure 3). Public views from Buena Vista Road and Locust Avenue are limited to the western margin of the site due to its higher elevation than the roadway and adjoining parcels (refer to Figure 4).

1 View north from North Street.

2 View west from North Street.

Project Boundary

3 Looking south from San Felipe Road.

4 View southwest from San Felipe Road.

Source: Google Earth 2013

E M C

Figure 11

Public Views of the Site A

North Street Subdivision EIR

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5 View south from Highway 25.

7 View north from Vista Hill.

6 View north-northwest from Vista Hill.

8 View north-northeast from Vista Hill.

Source: Google Earth 2013

E M C

Figure 12

Public Views of the Site B

North Street Subdivision EIR

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Public views of the site are available from a segment of State Route 25 between Wright Road and Briggs Road, approximately one-half mile north of the project site. Much of the higher elevations of the site are visible from the southbound travel lane; the undeveloped project site blends with the natural visual character of Vista Hill Park (in the near background) and the distant mountains. Also, much of the project site is visible from the parking lot of Vista Hill Park with the exception of the northeast portion of the site, which is at a lower elevation than the slopes in the foreground (refer to 6-8 on Figure 12, Public Views of the Site).

Regulatory Setting

State

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) through its California Scenic Highway Mapping System considers certain scenic corridors along travel routes as visual resources of statewide importance. Although there are no officially designated scenic highways in San Benito County, State Route 25 between State Route 198 and State Route 156 is identified by Caltrans as being eligible for listing as a scenic highway.

City of Hollister General Plan

The following policies and implementation actions of the City of Hollister General Plan are relevant to the proposed project:

Policies

> **LU1.3 Design Review.** Require proposals for residential and nonresidential development projects adjacent to designated landmarks to undergo design review.
>
> **LU1.7 Special Planning Areas.** Develop special planning areas and design guidelines for the North Gateway, West Gateway, Downtown, "Old Town" Residential, and Home Office districts.
>
> **LU1.8 Signage.** Require that building signs be designed to fit within the scale and character of buildings
>
> **LU1.9 Cohesive Design Elements.** Use cohesive design elements in street trees, lighting and street furniture to strengthen character of the special planning areas and residential neighborhoods.

LU3.2 Street Trees. Promote street tree planting and other community design features to maintain visual quality and small town atmosphere.

LU3.4 Existing Trees. Preserve existing significant trees and tree groupings where possible. Replace trees removed due to site development.

LU3.5 Open Space Preservation. Require the provision of usable open space in multi-family residential developments in the form of ground-floor patios, upper-floor decks and balconies, and common recreational facilities.

LU3.6 Landscaping On Public and Private Sites. Require landscaping on public and private sites, including entry areas, street medians, parks, schools, parking lots, plazas, courtyards and recreational areas.

LU3.7 Alleys. Promote the beautification of alleys to encourage their use as open space.

LU4.5 Lighting and Furniture. Require compatible pedestrian and bicycle pathways and automobile routes with design elements that use buildings, trees, lighting and street furniture to define spaces for travelers.

LU6.4 Specific Plans. Encourage the use of specific plans to set development priorities and to facilitate appropriate and coordinated development of currently undeveloped land outside the city's sphere of influence.

LU7.1 Site Planning. Promote and encourage the use of creative residential site planning techniques such as clustered development and planned development to facilitate the objective of providing a mix and range of housing types.LU7.1 Site Planning.

LU8.3 Residential Character. Ensure that new development in multifamily neighborhoods supports, rather than detracts from, the existing residential character of the area.

LU8.4 Neighborhood Scale. Preserve and enhance the character of existing residential neighborhoods by limiting encroachment of new buildings and activities that are out of scale and character with surrounding uses.

LU9.1 Natural Design Elements. Ensure that building design takes into consideration air circulation, natural lighting, views, solar orientation, and shading areas to interior and exterior spaces.

LU10.2 Unique Spaces. Encourage a mix of uses that promotes convenience, economic vitality, fiscal stability, public safety, a healthy environment and a high quality of life.

LU10.4 Attractive Street Frontages. Encourage attractive, accessible, and pedestrian-friendly street frontages that contribute to the retail vitality of Downtown and other special planning areas.

LU11.1 Well-Articulated Buildings. Ensure that buildings are well articulated. Avoid large unarticulated shapes in building design such as blank walls or an unbroken series of garage doors on street frontages.

LU11.2 Unique Design Elements. Ensure that building designs include varied building façades, rooflines, and building heights to create interesting and differentiated building forms and shapes.

H2.2 Design that Fits into the Neighborhood Context. Enhance neighborhood identity and sense of community by designing new housing with a sensitive transition of scale and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

H2.3 Housing Design Principles. Provide stable, safe, and attractive neighborhoods through high quality architecture, site planning, and amenities that address the following principles:

a. Building Bulk Requirements

b. Street Patterns

c. "Sense of Place"

d. Visual Impact of Parking and Garages

e. Quality Building Materials

Implementation Actions

LU.J. Lighting Guidelines. In order to minimize light trespass and greater overall light levels in the city, new development and projects making significant parking lot improvements or proposing new lighting

shall be required to prepare a lighting plan for review by city planning staff. Require design guidelines to include the following provisions for lighting plans:

a. All light sources should be fully shielded from off-site view.

b. All lights to be downcast except where it can be proved to not adversely affect other parcels.

c. Escape of light to the atmosphere should be minimized.

d. Low intensity, indirect light sources should be encouraged, except where other types of lighting is warranted for public safety reasons.

e. On-demand lighting systems should be encouraged.

f. Mercury, metal halide, and similar intense and bright lights should not be permitted except where their need is specifically approved and their source of light is restricted.

City of Hollister Municipal Code

Section 17.14.010 of the city's Municipal Code includes design provisions for the Residential Performance Overlay Zoning District. Among other site planning and density criteria, the overlay district provides flexible standards to implement policies and programs in the general plan that call for new development with interesting street patterns, site planning, and neighborhood design to ensure that the scale and mass of new development preserves the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods. For lots near boundaries, the code section requires transitional setbacks and landscaping incorporated into the project design to assure that the new development is of a scale and character that will preserve and enhance the character of the existing residential neighborhood. This section also requires an approved Performance Agreement to ensure that new development and subdivisions meet general plan land use goals and policies.

Municipal Code Section 17.16.090 regulates exterior lighting, and includes performance and design standards for new development to provide adequate lighting for safety and security; reduce light pollution, light trespass, glare, sky glow impacts, and offensive light sources; prevent inappropriate, poorly designed or installed outdoor lighting; encourage quality lighting design, light fixture shielding, uniform light intensities, maximum lighting levels within and on property lines, and lighting controls; and promote efficient and cost-effective lighting to conserve energy. These lighting standards require that lighting be shielded with full cutoff or recessed to reduce light splay to adjoining properties, public right-of-way, and the night sky, through the use of measures such as down lighting and fixture shielding to confine glare and reflection within the site.

Municipal Code Section 17.24.240 provides for the use of Planned Development Permits to afford maximum flexibility in site planning/property development, design, and density/intensity, while protecting the integrity and character of the residential areas of the city; encourage innovation and the development of affordable housing; and ensure consistency with the General Plan. This section also outlines architectural and site plan design review procedures for Planned Unit Development and requires conformance with adopted design guidelines and policies.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G indicates that a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- substantially damage scenic resources including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; and/or
- create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the adjacent area.

City of Hollister General Plan EIR

The general plan EIR evaluated the environmental effects of general plan buildout using the following criteria:

> "a significant impact on visual quality [would occur] if one or more of the following conditions would result from the implementation of the proposed project: (1) A substantial change to the existing visual quality of the region or elimination of visual resources therein; (2) Development that is incompatible in scale with adjoining development; or (3) Obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public, or the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view."

The general plan EIR did not identify any impacts to visual and scenic resources resulting from general plan buildout conditions that could not be mitigated to a less than significant level through compliance with the general plan policies identified previously in this section. The Development Services Department is responsible for implementing and monitoring those policies and programs.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Analysis

The project site is not located within a designated scenic vista identified by either the City of Hollister general plan or the County of San Benito general plan. There are no officially designated scenic highways in San Benito County. Therefore, no impacts to scenic vistas or to visual resources within a state scenic highway would occur. For these reasons no further analysis of these issues is required.

Would the Project Substantially Degrade the Existing Visual Character or Quality of the Site and its Surroundings?

The proposed project would replace the rural character of the site (all agricultural fields, all trees, etc.) with urban uses (homes, apartments, streets, and open space). The proposed project does not include development on the character–defining slopes of the site. The proposed project includes the development of one- and two-story single-family homes, fencing, new landscaping and trees, as well as other structures and elements ancillary to residential development. The proposed project also includes pre-zoning for multi-family development, which could include townhomes, condominiums and/or apartments.

Approximately 47 percent of the site would be developed with these uses. Architectural plans and elevations have not yet been prepared for either the single-family or multi-family homes. Development of the project site would permanently change the existing visual character of the site. However, as demonstrated in the discussion of existing visual quality and public views of the site, the site has limited contribution to the overall visual quality and character of the city and adjacent neighborhoods, because public views of the site are limited by existing development and topography.

The general plan EIR identified buildout of the city's planning area to have a potentially significant impact on the visual character of the area; however, implementation of design guidelines, as well as the application of other design policies intended to mitigate any potentially adverse aesthetic effects of development, reduced this impact to a less-than-significant level. The proposed project would contribute to the impact identified in the general plan EIR and is subject to conformance with applicable design guidelines. Future development of the project site is subject to conformance with general plan polices and design guidelines, in addition to Municipal Code Section 17.14.090 that sets forth design standards for new development in multi-family residential overlay zones and with the Planned Development Permit requirements of Municipal Code Section 17.24.240.

Compliance with these policies, actions and code provisions would ensure that new development would be consistent with the neighborhood and community character. Additionally, developers of the project site are required to implement a performance agreement, which would ensure that the proposed project would comply with these policies and programs.

Due to the topography of the site and the limited availability of nearby public vantage points, much of the site is obscured from public views; the interior of the site is visible only from the northernmost portion of Vista Hill Park, which is at a higher elevation than the project site. Otherwise, only limited views of the site are available. The project site is obscured from view over much of State Route 25 by existing development. Limited views of the site against a backdrop of distant mountains are available from the southbound lane of a small segment of State Route 25 that is approximately one-half mile from the site. From this vantage point, the visual features of the project site are not discernable in the foreground of Vista Hill Park or distinguishable from the distant mountains. Development of the project site would not impede or obstruct these views.

Public views from adjacent surface streets consist only of the margins of the site. The perceived visual quality of the margins of the site when viewed from available public vantage points would be permanently changed by development with homes and streets, as would the perceived visual quality of the site when viewed from Vista Hill Park.

Regarding the views from Vista Hill Park, it is noted that the project site is situated at a lower elevation of the park and its development would not impair or obstruct long-range views of the valley's patchwork appearance of agricultural fields, or of the foothills and mountains visible from the park. In addition, the scenic quality of the view is already compromised by a number of factors, including the presence of city water storage tanks at the park, and the presence of residential, commercial and industrial development adjacent to the project site.

Despite these built-up features, the existing view of the rural undeveloped site from Vista Hill Park may be of value to the public and future development of the site would result in a significant change in the quality and nature of the view. For this reason, the impacts to the visual quality of the project site and its surroundings that would occur as a result of changing the rural nature of the site to urban uses would be significant.

Significant and Unavoidable Impact (Visual Character or Quality): The project would change the visual character of the project site from rural to urban and would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings when viewed from Vista Hill Park, which is a public vantage point. Implementation of the following mitigation measure will reduce this impact, but not to a less-than-significant level.

The city's general plan includes several policies intended to minimize impacts to the rural character and the visual quality of city that may occur with development. Consistent with policies of the general plan, implementation of the following mitigation measure shall be required:

Mitigation Measure

AES-1: The project developer shall comply with all city development standards and design guidelines. To mitigate the visual impact of new residential development introduced into undeveloped landscape, the project developer shall locate and design the future residential structures in a manner that enhances their visual integration into existing environs, when feasible. Design elements may include but shall not be limited to use of natural, unobtrusive materials and paint color to blend with surrounding land uses, sensitivity to transition of scale and compatibility with the area neighborhoods, use of the natural topography in building placement and design to shield development from public views, or implementing appropriate landscaping and design to minimize visual impacts. During construction, the project developer shall ensure that construction equipment, construction staging areas, and construction sites are sufficiently shielded, when feasible, to the extent that they do not substantially alter scenic views.

Implementation of the AES-1 will ensure that the overall design of the project would be of high quality and blend into the existing environment as feasible. However, even with implementation of this mitigation measure, the project site's rural visual character would be permanently altered as seen from the existing the public viewpoint of Vista Hill Park. There are no mitigation measures that would reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, even with the implementation of mitigation measure AES-1, the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact.

Would the Project Create a New Source of Substantial Light or Glare, Which Would Adversely Affect Day or Nighttime Views in the Adjacent Area?

The proposed project would introduce new sources of light and glare where none currently exist. Future development of the site would include outdoor lighting for streets and parking areas, as well as any parks and recreational facilities that may be constructed as part of the project. This lighting has the potential to result in light and glare impacts to the nearby existing residences, and could also detract from views of the night sky. Future development of the project site is subject to conformance with general plan polices and design guidelines, in addition to Municipal Code Section 17.16.090 that regulate exterior lighting. Compliance with these policies, actions and code provisions would reduce the effects of new sources of light and glare to less than significant. Therefore, the light and glare impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

Less than Significant Impact (New Sources of Light or Glare). The project would introduce new sources of light and glare; however, compliance with city policies, actions and code for lighting ensure that the impact would be less than significant.

3.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Environmental Setting

The project site is located in the northern portion of San Benito County, at the northern municipal boundaries of the city. The city is surrounded by agricultural row crop farming, orchards, vineyards, and lands used for livestock grazing. The site has been used for dry-farming organic hay. An agricultural irrigation well/pump motor on the eastern portion of the subject property; however, the well is not in use and there is no verifiable information when it was used in the past (AEI Consultants 2012). Anecdotal information provided to city staff by the applicant indicates that the project site has not been used for irrigated agricultural production since 2006, when an offsite water source was used.

Approximately 50 percent of the city's general plan planning area consists of prime farmland (City of Hollister 2005b, p. 4.11-1). The project site contains Prime Farmland, Urban Land and Other Land identified by the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Mapping Program (California Department of Conservation 2012). There are no Williamson Act land conservation contracts in effect on any portion of the project site.

San Benito County has contemplated residential development on the project site for nearly ten years. In September 2006, the county adopted a negative declaration (County of San Benito, 2006) and processed a zone change to Rural Urban/Residential (8+ du/ac) to foster infill development in proximity to Hollister, including the project site, and in other areas of the county. The San Benito County 2035 General Plan land use designation for the site is "RM" Residential Mixed, 1-20 du/ac. The City of Hollister General Plan land use designation for the site is High Density Residential, and the city has identified the site as a priority infill area.

Importance Of Agriculture In San Benito County

Agriculture is the County's largest industry. According to the County's 2013 Crop Report, miscellaneous vegetables, spinach, lettuce, bell peppers, and wine grapes, have been the top economic crops in recent years, accounting for a gross value of $197 million in 2013; total crop value in 2013 was about $330 million (San Benito County Agricultural Commissioner, 2013 Crop Report).

The number of cultivated acres of farmland has slightly decreased as the region has become increasingly urbanized, but a significant area of agricultural production remains in the County. According to the California Department of Conservation California Farmland Conversion Report 2008-2010 (2014), the total amount of Prime Farmland in San Benito County was 27,425 acres; a total of 1,276 acres of Prime Farmland were taken out of crop production from 2008 to 2010, with 337 acres converted to non-agricultural use. Conversion of cropland to urban uses can adversely affect the efficiency of remaining farming operations in the area. Agricultural production and efficiency decreases because of increased air pollution, and crop diseases increase because of inadequate care of off-farm ornamental plants, and restrictions on pesticide use and burning. Agricultural production costs increase because of rising land costs, competition for limited water resources, theft and vandalism of farm equipment, crop pilferage, road congestion, and personal injury liability associated with farm trespass (page 57).

Project Site and Vicinity Land Uses

The project site is undeveloped land, much of which is used to dry farm hay. Although a number of trees are present on the site, it is not located within an area zoned for forestland, timberland, or timberland production by either the County of San Benito or the City of Hollister. The majority of surrounding land is not currently used for agricultural purposes; however, agricultural parcels to the north and northwest of the project site are also identified as containing Prime Farmland by the Department of Conservation.

As illustrated in Figure 2, presented earlier, a variety of land uses surround the project site, including: agricultural operations and very low-density residential uses to the north; an active line of the Southern Pacific Railroad, a PG&E substation, commercial, and light industrial uses to the east; Vista Hill Park to the south; and agricultural operations and a public cemetery to the west.. Two residences abut the southern boundary of the project site off North Street. Residential neighborhoods are located south of North Street and south of Buena Vista Road to the southwest.

Farmland Value Assessment Methods

Farmlands Mapping and Monitoring Program. Under the Farmlands Mapping and Monitoring Program, established pursuant to California Government Code section 65570, the California Department of Conservation evaluates farmland resources, publishes a map of important farmlands, and a list of soil types that qualify for determination as important farmlands. The Important Farmlands Map for Santa Clara County provides an inventory of agricultural resources in the county. The map does not necessarily reflect general plan or zoning designations, city limit lines, changing economic or market conditions, or other land use policies, although developed areas are designated as such.

Administered by the Department of The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program defines Prime Farmland as land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. The land must have been used for production of irrigated crops some time during the four years prior to the mapping date. Farmland of Statewide Importance is land with a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for agricultural production, having only minor shortcomings, such as less ability to store soil moisture, compared to Prime Farmland. Unique Farmland is farmland of lesser quality soils but used for production of some of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but can include some non-irrigated orchards or vineyards appropriate in certain climatic zones of California.

Land Capability Classification and Storie Index Rating. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service classifies each soil type in a land capability classification, indicating the suitability of soils for most kinds of crops. The primary capability classes are rated from Class I (fewest limitations) to Class VIII (serious limitations). Subclasses are utilized to characterize limitations: "e" for erosion, "w" for water saturation, "s for shallow, clayey, or stony soils, and "c" for climatic limitations. Finally, numerals are used to further explain limitations: "0" for sand and gravel substrates, "1" for erosion potential, "2" for poor drainage or flooding, "3" for slow permeability, "4" for coarse texture, "5" for fine texture, "6" for salt or alkali, "7" for stone or rock, "8" for shallow depth, and "9" for low fertility or toxicity. The land capability classification indicates the soil's suitability for most kinds of farming.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service uses the Storie index rating system to numerically express (from 0, lowest, to 100, highest) the relative degree of suitability and value of a soil type for general intensive farming purposes. The rating is based on soil profile characteristics; texture of the surface horizon; slope; and other conditions, such as high water table, risk of erosion, and high alkalinity. A rating of 80 to 100 points is given to Grade 1 soils, which have no limitations to farming and also have a high suitability rating. Grade 2 soils rate 60 to 80 points and are suitable for most crops. Grade 3 soils rate 40-60 points, and are suitable to a limited range of crops. Grade 6 is the lowest grade with 0-20 points.

Project Site Farmland Value

Farmlands Mapping Program. The project site contains 15.49 acres of Prime Farmland, 2.78 acres of Urban Land and 64.29 acres of Other Land identified by the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Mapping Program (California Department of Conservation 2012). The Prime Farmland is located along the eastern boundary of the site, the railway tracks and sloped areas. Figure 13, Important Farmland, shows the locations of each farmland designation on the project site.

Soils Types and Farmland Value Ratings. The United State Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, identifies seven soils types found on the project site. There are no Class I soils on the site; however, 22.5 percent of the project site consists Sorrento silty clay loam, which is a Grade 1 soil highly valued for intensive agricultural uses by the Department of Conservation and San Benito County. Sorrento soils are located in roughly the same locations as the Prime Farmland designation of the site. On-site soils are presented in Figure 14, Soil Map. These soils types are listed and described in terms of agricultural value in Table 2, Project Site Soils Agricultural Characteristics.

Table 2 Project Site Soils Agricultural Characteristics

Soil Type	Land Capability Classification	Storie Rating	Acres	Percent of Project Site
AnC2 Antioch loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes, eroded	IIIs-3	50 Grade 3	33.59	40.7
MnG Mined land and dumps, Undifferentiated group	VIIIs-1	<5 Grade 6	0.15	<1
SlE2 Soper gravelly loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, eroded	VIe-1	44 Grade 3	30.21	36.6
SrA Sorrento silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	IIe-5	85 Grade 1	18.6	22.5

Source: Soil Conservation Service 1969, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service 2015

Note: See text for explanation of soils ratings.

Regulatory Setting

City of Hollister General Plan

The following general plan policies are applicable to the proposed project:

> **Policy OS1.1 Open Space Preservation.** Retain and protect open space areas whenever practical through the protection of prime farmlands, the prevention of new development in areas subject to natural hazards, that serve as wildlife habitat or as visual assets for the community, and where the development of additional parks and trails is possible. Open space areas can also function as connections between neighborhoods, for example with the creation of pathways in environmentally appropriate areas.

Project Boundary | Prime Farmland (P) 15.49 acres | Urban and Built-Up Land (D) 2.78 acres | Other Land (X) 64.29 acres

0 400 feet

Source: California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program 2012, San Benito County 2015

Figure 13

Important Farmlands Map

North Street Subdivision EIR

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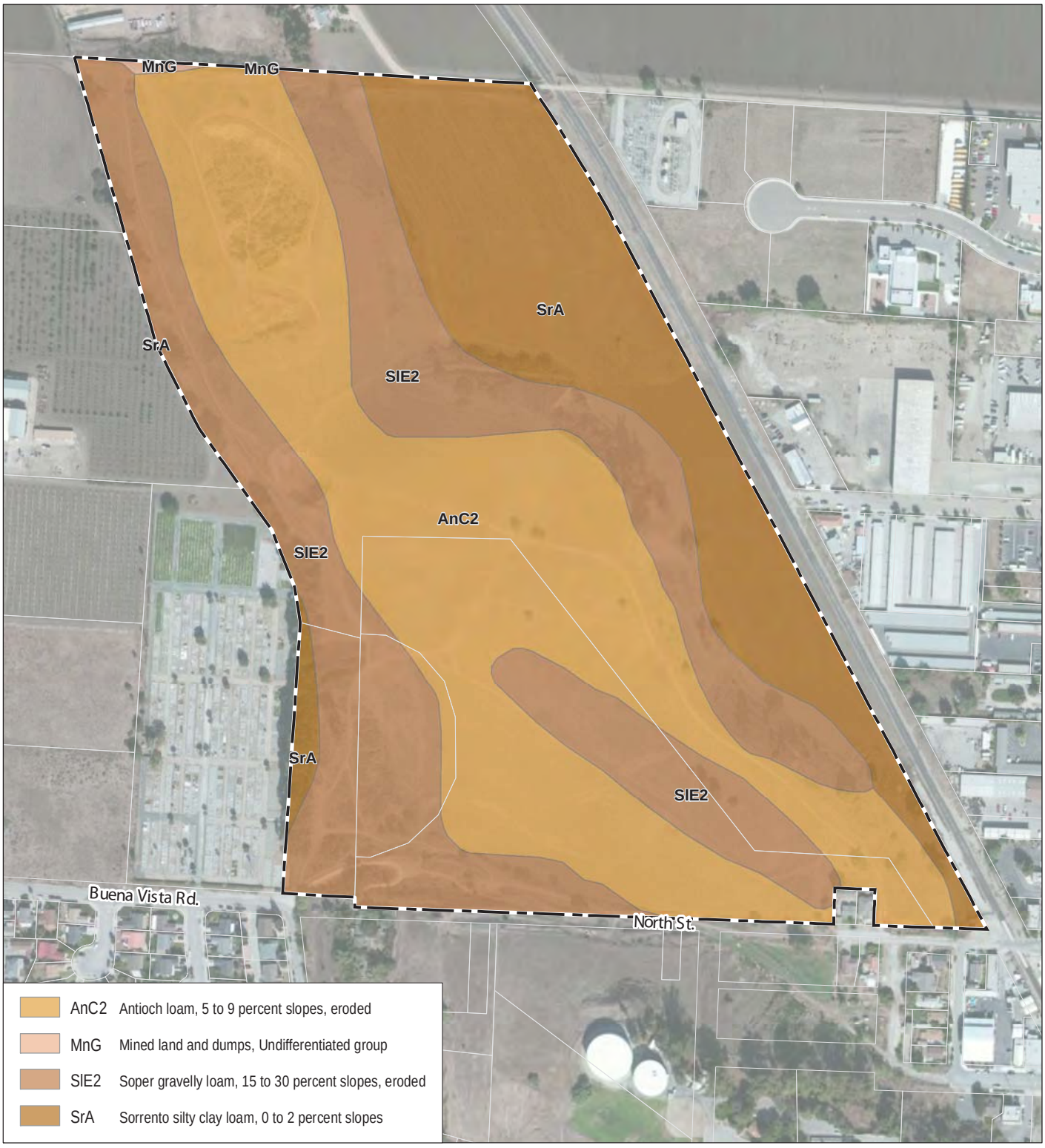

Project Boundary | AnC2 (33.59 acres) | MnG (0.15 acres) | SlE2 (30.21 acres) | SrA (18.60 acres)

0 400 feet

Source: Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture 2014, San Benito County 2015, Esri 2015

Figure 14

Soil Map

North Street Subdivision EIR

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Policy OS1.2 Cluster Development. Wherever feasible, encourage those proposing development to cluster planned residential development, leaving open space buffers in proposed site plans, particularly on the borders of development facing agricultural uses and State Routes 25 and 156. This will diminish the potential for land use conflicts and improve opportunities for visual harmonization between agricultural and urban activities.

Policy OS2.1 Premature Conversion of Prime Farmland. Whenever possible, minimize the premature conversion of prime farmland to nonagricultural uses by directing urban growth toward portions of the Hollister Planning Area which have not been identified as prime farmland.

Policy OS2.2 Coordination with San Benito County to Preserve Prime Farmlands. Encourage the County of San Benito to maintain existing County land use policies that discourage urban development in rural areas within the County as a way to ensure continuing agricultural operations within portions of the Hollister Planning Area. Coordinate with the County of San Benito in efforts to maintain prime farmlands in active agricultural use whenever possible and in all efforts to maintain the continued economic viability of agriculture within the Hollister Planning Area.

Policy OS2.3 Williamson Act Contracts. Encourage the sponsors of subdivisions on agriculturally viable land to enter and maintain prime soils of the proposed subdivision in Williamson Act contracts as a means of off-setting the loss of agricultural land.

Policy OS2.4 Residential Development Near Agricultural Areas. Require developers to inform potential buyers of homes near agricultural areas of the possible hazards associated with the application of pesticides/herbicides and nuisances from other cultivation practices. In those cases where the County of San Benito's "Right-to-Farm" Ordinance applies to the City review of projects, homeowners shall also be informed of this ordinance by developers.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would result in any of the following:

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;

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; or

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 forest land to non-forest use.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated From Further Consideration

Williamson Act Conflicts. There are no parcels subject to Williamson Act easements on the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the Williamson Act and no further analysis is required.

Forest and Timberland Resources. The proposed project site does not contain forestland or commercial timberland and is not zoned for forest land, timberland or Timberland Production by San Benito County. Therefore no impacts to these resources could result from the proposed project.

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 Nonagricultural Use?

The proposed project would convert 15.29 acres of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses. The city's general plan EIR identified the loss of Prime Farmland due to buildout of the general plan as a significant cumulative impact to agricultural activity within the county. The proposed project would contribute to this impact. The general plan EIR also noted that compliance with the general plan policies and implementing actions would reduce the impact, but not to a less-than-significant level. In adopting the general plan, the city found that the loss of agricultural land was an important consideration in the development of new land uses, but the benefits of converting Prime Farmland for residential uses outweighed the significant environmental impact. A Statement of Overriding Considerations was adopted by the City Council for the loss of important farmland, including Prime Farmland, identified in the general plan EIR.

General plan policy OS2.1 addresses the premature conversion of Prime Farmland, and calls for directing urban growth, whenever possible, toward portions of the Hollister Planning Area that are not identified as Prime Farmland. There are no mitigation measures or specific agricultural preservation programs adopted by the City of Hollister that provide mitigation for the loss of important farmland. However, general plan policy OS2.2 calls for coordination with San Benito County "to maintain prime farmlands in active agricultural use whenever possible and in all efforts to maintain the continued economic viability of agriculture within the Hollister Planning Area."

The newly adopted county general plan (2015) includes two policies that were not in effect at the time the Hollister general plan was adopted. The county's general plan policy LU-3.10 addresses the loss of Prime Farmland with Class I soils by encouraging the preservation of up to an equal number of acres (1:1 ratio) either on- or off-site or by the payment of in-lieu fees for some or all of the land. Policy LU-3.10 further states that funds collected shall be used for agricultural protection and/or affiliated programs within San Benito County, and that the county shall work with the City of Hollister to encourage them to adopt a similar agricultural conversion mitigation ratio. County policy LU-3.14 further allows the county to consider the use of land trusts or other financial incentives to preserve agricultural soil resources and to protect the integrity of important agricultural areas for future use. The county policies are intended to minimize impacts to regionally important farmlands by establishing a program designed to mitigate the loss of Prime Farmland and Class I soils in the unincorporated areas of the county.

As previously noted, both the city and county have identified the project site as a priority infill area. Although the site contains Prime Farmland, the site does not contain any Class I soils that

are protected by San Benito County 2035 General Plan policy LU-3.10, and no county agricultural mitigation programs have been developed. As such, the details of how such a program would work and which lands would be a priority is unknown. Further, the public has not had the benefit of providing input on a resolution or ordinance that would establish such a program.

Significant and Unavoidable Impact (Conversion of Prime Farmland): The proposed project would convert 15.29 acres of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses. This is considered a significant adverse environmental impact. Feasible mitigation is not available to reduce this impact to less than significant; therefore the impact is significant and unavoidable.

Despite General Plan policies, neither the City of Hollister nor San Benito County have developed an agricultural mitigation program. Additionally, the entire project site has been designated as a priority medium to high density in-fill development in both the City and County General Plans. Though a small portion was historically used or row crop cultivation, it has laid fallow for several years, there are no Class 1 soils on-site, and commercial development is adjacent to the parcel. The City has long had the policy of only allowing continuing agricultural practices as a non-conforming use, and not allowing agricultural uses to begin anew. It is uncertain that any to-be-developed agricultural mitigation program would include the project site, or would place any priority on mitigation for the loss of agricultural lands on the project site. There are no feasible mitigation measures that would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, even with the implementation of mitigation measure, the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact and, in order to approve the project, the Hollister City Council will need to adopt a statement of overriding considerations to demonstrate how the benefits of the project outweigh the significant impact.

WOULD THE PROJECT 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 FOREST LAND TO NON-FOREST USE?

The proposed project would place new residential uses in proximity to active farming operations. As the proposed project is implemented, agricultural operations would continue on parcels adjacent to the project site. The proximity of residential uses to active agricultural operations could lead to nuisance complaints about agricultural practices related to spraying, odors, dust, and noise. In turn, the farmer(s) continuing to operate on adjacent farmlands could complain about trespassing, vandalism, damage to crops, urban pets, and other infringements on farming operations.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation (Conflict between Agriculture and Urban Uses): Placement of residential uses in proximity of active farming operations will lead to complaints regarding nuisance or infringement. This is considered a significant adverse environmental impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure will reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level.

The city's general plan includes a policy for minimizing potential land use conflicts along the urban/agriculture interface, including implementation of an agricultural community disclosure ordinance. Consistent with the general plan, implementation of the following mitigation measure shall be required:

Mitigation Measure

AG-1. Developers shall inform potential buyers of homes near agricultural areas of the possible hazards associated with the application of pesticides/herbicides and nuisances from other cultivation practices. In those cases where the County of San Benito's "Right-to-Farm" Ordinance applied to the city review of projects, homeowners shall also be informed of this ordinance by developers. This information shall be included on all deeds for future development on the project site, prior to occupancy. Implementation of this mitigation measure will be the responsibility of project developers.

Implementation of mitigation measure AG-1 will ensure potential conflicts between non-agricultural uses on the project site and adjacent farming operations are reduced to a less-than-significant level by requiring disclosure of neighboring farming practices and applicable "Right-to- Farm" ordinances.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

This section identifies existing air quality conditions in the project vicinity and North Central Coast Air Basin ("air basin"), identifies the sources and character of emissions from the proposed project, and identifies potential impacts and mitigation measures. Comments on the NOP were received from the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (hereinafter "air district"). Accordingly, information in this section is drawn primarily from the air district's *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines* (2008) (hereinafter "air quality guidelines") and the results of emissions modeling using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2013.2.2. The results of the emissions modeling are found in Appendix C.

Environmental Setting

The air basin lies along the central coast of California covering an area of approximately 5,159 square miles. The air basin is comprised of several interconnected valleys: a portion of the Santa Clara Valley; San Benito Valley; Salinas Valley, and Carmel Valley. The semi-permanent high-pressure cell in the eastern Pacific Ocean is the basic controlling factor in the climate of the air basin. In the summer, the high pressure cell is dominant and causes persistent west and northwest winds over the entire California coast. Air descends in the Pacific high-pressure cell forming a stable temperature inversion of hot air over a cool coastal layer of air. The onshore air currents pass over cool ocean waters to bring fog and relatively cool air into the coastal valleys and the warmer air aloft acts as a lid to inhibit vertical air movement.

The generally northwest-southeast orientation of mountain ridges restricts and channels the summer on-shore air currents. Surface heating in the interior portion of the Salinas and San Benito valleys creates a weak low pressure, which intensifies the on-shore airflow during the afternoon and evening.

The air pollution potential for the county as a whole is relatively high (particularly with respect to photochemical pollutants) due to hot summer temperatures, abundant sunlight, and the presence of these frequent temperature inversions that limit the dispersion of pollutants and mixing of air layers. The air basin encounters its most significant air quality problems in late spring and fall when a combination of weak onshore winds and a stable temperature create an inversion that restricts the vertical and horizontal dispersion of pollutants. It is most often during this season that the north or east winds develop to transport pollutants from either the San Francisco Bay Area or the Central Valley into the air basin. This relatively stationary air mass is sustained by a high pressure cell along the Pacific Ocean which can enable pollutants to build up over several days (City of Hollister 2005).

During the winter, the Pacific high-pressure cell migrates southward and has less influence on the air basin. Air frequently flows in a southeasterly direction out of the Salinas and San Benito valleys, especially during night and morning hours. Northwest winds are nevertheless still dominant in winter, but easterly flow is more frequent. The general absence of deep, persistent inversions and the occasional storm systems usually result in good air quality for the basin as a whole in winter and early spring.

Existing Air Quality Conditions

Existing air quality concerns within the air basin are primarily related to increases of regional criteria air pollutants (i.e., ozone and particulate matter); exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants and odors.

Common Air Pollutants

The most common and widespread air pollutants of concern, or "criteria pollutants," include ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, reactive organic gasses, sulfur dioxide, and lead. The common properties, sources, and related health and environmental effects are summarized in Table 3, Common Air Pollutants. The primary pollutants of concern in San Benito County include ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter 10 and 2.5 microns or less in size.

Table 3 Common Air Pollutants

Pollutant	Properties	Major Sources	Related Health & Environmental Effects
Ozone (O_3)	Created by the chemical reaction between oxides of nitrogen and volatile organic compounds (VOC) in the presence of heat and sunlight. Ground level ozone is the principal component of smog.	▪ Motor vehicle exhaust; ▪ Industrial emissions; ▪ Gasoline vapors; ▪ Chemical solvents.	▪ Reduced lung capacity; Irritation of lung airways and inflammation; ▪ Aggravated asthma; ▪ Increased susceptibility to respiratory illnesses (i.e. bronchitis).
Suspended Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	Describes particles in the air, including dust, soot, smoke, and liquid droplets. Others are so small that they can only be detected with an electron microscope.	▪ Motor vehicles; ▪ Factories; ▪ Construction sites; ▪ Tilled farm fields; ▪ Unpaved roads; ▪ Wood burning.	▪ Aggravated asthma; ▪ Increases in respiratory symptoms; ▪ Decreased lung function; ▪ Premature death; ▪ Reduced visibility.
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Colorless, odorless gas that is formed when carbon in fuel is not burned completely.	▪ Fuel combustion; ▪ Industrial processes; ▪ Highly congested traffic.	▪ Chest pain for those with heart disease; ▪ Vision problems; ▪ Reduced mental alertness; ▪ Death (at high levels)
Nitrogen Oxides (NO_X)	Generic form for a group of highly organic gases, all of which contain nitrogen	▪ Motor vehicles; ▪ Electric utilities; ▪ Industrial, commercial,	▪ Toxic to plants; ▪ Reduced visibility; ▪ Respiratory irritant.

Pollutant	Properties	Major Sources	Related Health & Environmental Effects
	in varying amounts. Many of the nitrogen oxides are odorless and colorless.	and residential sources that burn fuel.	
Sulfur Dioxides (SO_X)	Sulfur oxide gases are formed when fuel containing sulfur such as coal and oil is burned and when gasoline is extracted from oil, or metals are extracted from ore.	▪ Electric utilities (especially coal-burning); ▪ Industrial facilities that derive their products from raw materials to produce process heat.	▪ Respiratory illness, particularly in children and the elderly; ▪ Aggravates existing heart and lung diseases.
Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	Precursor of ground-level ozone.	▪ Petroleum transfer and storage; ▪ Mobile sources; ▪ Organic solvents.	▪ Potential carcinogen (e.g. benzene); ▪ Toxic to plants and animals.

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District and U.S. EPA

Ozone and Related Compounds. Ozone is produced by chemical reactions, which are triggered by sunlight, involving nitrogen oxides and reactive organic gases. Nitrogen oxides are created during combustion of fuels, while reactive organic gases are emitted during combustion and evaporation of organic solvents. Since ozone is not directly emitted to the atmosphere, but is formed because of photochemical reactions, it is considered a secondary pollutant. Ozone is a seasonal problem, occurring roughly from April through October.

Ozone is a strong irritant that attacks the respiratory system, leading to the damage of lung tissue. Asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory ailments, as well as cardiovascular diseases, are aggravated by exposure to ozone. A healthy person exposed to high concentrations may become nauseated or dizzy, may develop a headache or cough, or may experience a burning sensation in the chest. Research has shown that exposure to ozone damages the alveoli (the individual air sacs in the lung where the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between the air and blood takes place). Research has shown that ozone also damages vegetation.

Calculating reactive organic gases and nitrogen oxides emissions from typical construction equipment is not necessary because temporary emissions of these ozone precursors have been accommodated in State- and federally-required air plans.

Sulfur Oxides. Sulfur oxides are gases formed when fuel containing sulfur, such as coal and oil, is burned, when gasoline is extracted from oil, or metals are extracted from ore. Sulfur oxides dissolve in water vapor to form acid, and interacts with other gases and particles in the air to form sulfates and other products that can be harmful to people and their environment.

Nitrogen Dioxide. Nitrogen dioxide is a reddish-brown gas that can irritate the lungs and can cause breathing difficulties at high concentrations. Like ozone, nitrogen dioxide is not directly emitted, but is formed through a reaction between nitric oxides and atmospheric oxygen. Nitric oxides are a major contributor to ozone formation. Nitrogen dioxide also contributes to the formation of particulate matter (see discussion below). Nitrogen dioxide concentrations in the air basin have been well below ambient air quality standards; therefore, nitrogen dioxide concentrations from land use projects are not a concern.

Suspended Particulate Matter. Particulate matter is comprised of small, suspended particles, primarily composed of dust particles, nitrates, and sulfates. Particulate matter is classified as under 10 microns (PM_{10}) and under 2.5 microns ($PM_{2.5}$). PM_{10} is directly emitted to the atmosphere as a byproduct of fuel combustion, wind erosion of soil and unpaved roads, and from construction or agricultural operations. Small particles are also created in the atmosphere through chemical reactions. Approximately 64 percent of fugitive dust is PM_{10}. Minimal grading typically generates about 10 pounds per day per acre on average while excavation and earthmoving activities typically generate about 38 pounds per day per acre.

Although particles greater than 10 microns in diameter can cause irritation in the nose, throat, and bronchial tubes, natural mechanisms remove much of these particles. Particles less than 10 microns in diameter are able to pass through the body's natural defenses and the mucous membranes of the upper respiratory tract and enter into the lungs. The particles can damage the alveoli. The particles may also carry carcinogens and other toxic compounds, which can adhere to the particle surfaces and enter the lungs.

The air district's air quality guidelines consider emissions of 82 pounds per day or greater of PM_{10} from construction activity to be significant; this typically equates to general construction activity over an area of at least 8.1 acres per day, or grading/excavation over an area of at least 2.2 acres per day.

Carbon Monoxide. Carbon monoxide is a component of motor vehicle exhaust, which contributes about 56 percent of all carbon monoxide emissions nationwide. Other non-road engines and vehicles (such as construction equipment and boats) contribute about 22 percent of all carbon monoxide emissions nationwide. Carbon monoxide can cause harmful health effects by reducing oxygen delivery to the body's organs (like the heart and brain) and tissues. Carbon monoxide contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone.

Higher levels of carbon monoxide generally occur in areas with heavy traffic congestion. In cities, 85 to 95 percent of all carbon monoxide emissions may come from motor vehicle exhaust. Concentration of carbon monoxide is a direct function of vehicle idling time and, thus, traffic flow conditions. Transport of carbon monoxide is extremely limited; it disperses rapidly from the source under normal meteorological conditions. Under certain meteorological conditions, however, carbon monoxide concentrations close to a congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthy levels, affecting local sensitive receptors (residents, school children, hospital patients, the elderly, etc.). Emissions thresholds established for carbon monoxide apply to direct or stationary sources.

Typically, high carbon monoxide concentrations are associated with roadways or intersections operating at unacceptable levels of service. Congested intersections with high volumes of traffic could cause carbon monoxide "hot spots," where localized high concentrations of carbon monoxide occur.

Lead. Lead was formerly a major air pollutant of concern. Levels of lead in the air decreased 94 percent between 1980 and 1999, following the removal of lead from gasoline. Today, the highest levels of lead in air are usually found near lead smelters and a few other industrial and utility plants.

Toxic Air Contaminants. Toxic air contaminants are pollutants that may be expected to result in an increase in mortality or serious illness or may pose a present or potential health hazard. Health effects include cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, damage to the body's natural defense system, and diseases that lead to death. Toxic air contaminants can be classified as either carcinogens or non-carcinogens. An incremental risk of ten excess cancer cases per million at the Maximally Exposed Individual would result in a significant impact. The ten-in-one-million risk level is used by the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" (AB 2588) program and California's Proposition 65 as the public notification level for air toxic emissions from existing sources.

Diesel Emissions. Diesel exhaust is the predominant toxic air contaminant in urban air and is estimated to represent about two-thirds of the cancer risk from toxic air contaminants. Diesel engines emit a complex mix of pollutants including nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and toxic air contaminants. The most visible constituents of diesel exhaust are very small carbon particles or "soot," known as diesel particulate matter. Diesel exhaust also contains over 40 cancer-causing substances, most of which are readily adsorbed on the soot particles. Among the toxic air contaminants contained in diesel exhaust are dioxin, lead, polycyclic organic matter, and acrolein.

Short-term exposure to diesel particulate matter is associated with variable irritation and inflammatory symptoms. Diesel engine emissions are responsible for a majority of California's estimated cancer risk attributable to air pollution. In 2000, the California Air Resources Board

(CARB) identified an average potential cancer risk of 540 excess cases per million people, statewide, from diesel particulate matter. In addition, diesel particulate matter is a significant fraction of California's particulate pollution. Assessments by CARB and United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) estimate that diesel particulate matter contributes to approximately 3,500 premature respiratory and cardiovascular deaths and thousands of hospital admissions annually in California. Diesel exhaust contains several chemicals detrimental to visibility and vegetation (Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment 2001).

Diesel exhaust is especially common during the grading stage of construction (when most of the heavy equipment is used), and adjacent to heavily trafficked roadways where diesel trucks are common. The risks of exposure to diesel particulate matter and potential health effects resulting from prolonged exposure are greater near high-volume freeways. U.S. EPA regulates diesel engine design and fuel composition at the federal level, and has implemented a series of measures since 1994 to reduce nitrogen oxides and particulate emissions from off-road diesel equipment. EPA Tier 2 diesel engine standards were implemented from 2001 and 2006, Tier 3 standards from 2006-2008, and Tier 4 standards are being phased in through 2015. Ultralow sulfur off-road diesel fuel, 15 parts per million (ppm) will become standard in 2010, replacing the current 500 ppm fuel. The Tier 4 engines and ultralow sulfur fuels will reduce emissions by up to 65 percent compared to older engines and fuel (U.S. EPA 2004). Ultralow sulfur off-road diesel fuel, 15 parts per million (ppm) is now the standard in California, replacing the current 500 ppm fuel (Clean Diesel Fuel Alliance 2013). The Tier 4 engines and ultralow sulfur fuels will reduce emissions by up to 65 percent compared to older engines and fuel (U.S. EPA 2004). California's Regulation for In-use Off-road Diesel Vehicles establishes a state program to reduce nitrogen oxides and particulate emissions from older construction equipment. Several provisions of the regulation are currently suspended (pertaining to fleet composition and vehicle retrofits), and some provisions are in force (idling restrictions and reporting). As the regulation is fully implemented, it will reduce construction equipment emissions over time (CARB 2010/2011).

Asbestos. Asbestos handling and disposal is regulated by federal and state law. Asbestos is found in several kinds of building materials. Asbestos is generally not harmful when asbestos-containing materials are left undisturbed, but when disturbed microscopic fibers can be dislodged and remain in the air for long periods. If asbestos fibers are inhaled they can become lodged in body tissues and pose a serious health threat, especially lung disease.

Asbestos is also found naturally-occurring in certain rock formations in the California Coast Ranges and elsewhere. Asbestos is the generic term for the naturally-occurring fibrous (asbestiform) varieties of six silicate minerals. These minerals are: chrysotile, tremolite (when fibrous), actinolite (when fibrous), crocidolite (fibrous riebeckite), anthophyllite (when fibrous), and amosite (fibrous cummingonite-grunerite). Chrysotile is the most common asbestos mineral

in California and belongs to the serpentine mineral group. Naturally occurring asbestos can be released from serpentinite and ultramafic rocks when the rock is broken or weathered. At the point of release, the asbestos fibers may become airborne, causing air quality and human health hazards. Weathered asbestos becomes a component of the soil and can migrate downstream. Asbestos-containing rock has sometimes been used for unpaved gravel roads, landscaping, and fill. Asbestos may be released to the atmosphere due to vehicular traffic on unpaved roads, during grading for development projects, and at quarry operations.

The project site is not located in an area where naturally occurring asbestos-containing rock is likely to be present. Major areas of serpentine rock outcroppings within San Benito County are located in the southern portion of the county (California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology 2000). Therefore the project site is not likely to contain significant amounts of asbestos.

Sensitive Receptors

Although air pollution can affect all segments of the population, certain groups are more susceptible to its adverse effects than others. Children, the elderly, and the chronically or acutely ill are the most sensitive population groups. These sensitive receptors are commonly associated with specific land uses such as residential areas, schools, parks, retirement homes, and hospitals.

In April 2005, CARB released the *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook*, which is intended to encourage local land use agencies to consider the risks from air pollution prior to making decisions that approve the siting of new sensitive receptors (e.g., schools, homes or daycare centers) near sources of air pollution. Unlike industrial or stationary sources of air pollution, siting of new sensitive receptors does not require air quality permits or approval by air districts, but could create air quality problems.

Sensitive receptors nearest to the project site are the residences near the south east and south west of the project site. There are no hospitals or schools located within one quarter mile of the site.

Other Emissions Sources

Other potential sources of concentrated air pollutant emissions potentially affecting sensitive receptors include stationary sources (power and industrial plants, large generators, etc.) and farming operations (chemical sprays). According to the air district there are no stationary sources within the project site boundaries; there are seven stationary sources outside but within 1,000 feet of the project site. The project site includes and is adjacent to farmland, where agricultural chemicals may be used. Table 4, Permitted Stationary Sources, shows the permitted sources within 1,000 feet of the project site. Figure 15, Stationary Sources, shows the location of the permitted sources.

Table 4 Permitted Stationary Sources

Source	Location
Gas Station	250 Benito Street between Hill Street and 3rd Street
Gas Station	105 San Felipe Road
Gas Station	301 Gateway Drive west of San Felipe Road
Gas Station	10 San Felipe Road
Gas Station	5 San Felipe Road
Sanitary Sewer Lift Station	Near Intersection of 2nd Street and East Street
Emergency Generator	420 Hill Street

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District 2015

Construction Emissions

Emissions generated during construction are "short-term" in the sense that they would be limited to the actual periods of site development and construction. Short-term construction emissions are typically generated by the use of heavy equipment, the transport of materials, and construction employee commute trips. Construction-related emissions consist primarily of reactive organic gasses, nitrogen oxides, PM_{10}, and carbon monoxide. Emissions of reactive organic gasses, nitrogen oxides, and carbon monoxide are generated primarily by the operation of gas and diesel-powered motor vehicles, asphalt paving activities, and the application of architectural coatings. Emissions of PM_{10} are generated primarily by wind erosion of exposed graded surfaces.

Odors

Odors are generally regarded as an annoyance rather than a health hazard, although some odorous substances can be harmful at higher concentrations. Manifestations of a person's reaction to odors can range from psychological (e.g., irritation, anger, or anxiety) to physiological (e.g., circulatory and respiratory effects, nausea, vomiting, and headache). Although offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm, they can be very unpleasant, leading to considerable stress among the public and often generating citizen complaints to local governments and the air district. Common sources of odors include wastewater treatment plants, landfills, confined animal facilities, farming, composting operations, food manufacturing plants, paper mills, refineries, and chemical plants. Geothermal power plants, petroleum production

and refining, and sewer gas are specific sources of hydrogen sulfide in California. Statewide standards or regulation of odors is limited to hydrogen sulfide and odors associated with composting operations.

Because offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm and no requirements for their control are included in state or federal air quality regulations, the air district does not regulate odor emissions other than through its nuisance rule. Any actions related to odors are based on citizen complaint. Potential odor sources near the project site include active agricultural parcels to the west and north of the project site and commercial and industrial uses adjacent to the east boundary of the project site.

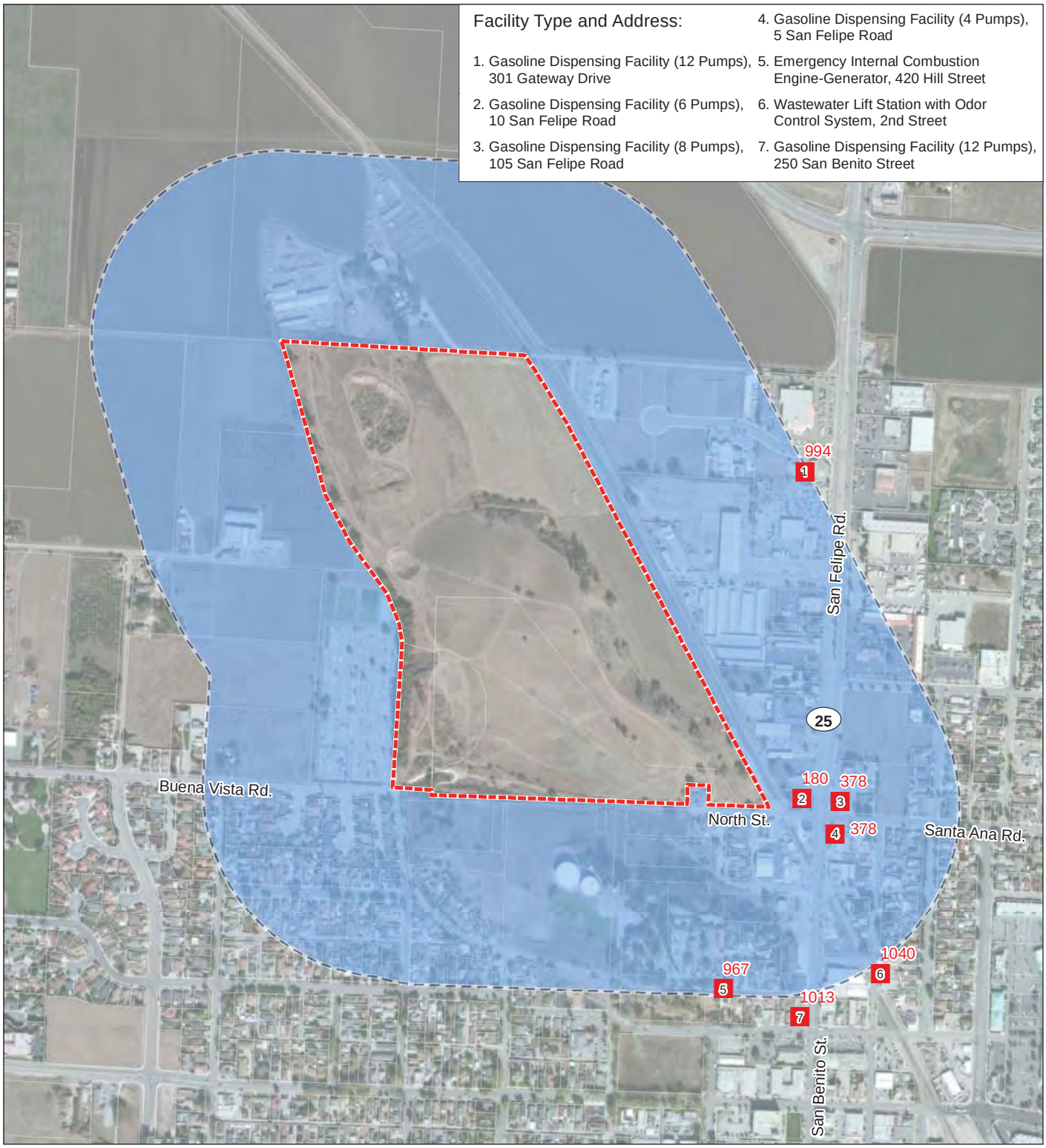
Air Basin Attainment Status

In accordance with the Clean Air Act, CARB is required to designate regions of the state as attainment, non-attainment, or unclassified with regard to that region's compliance with criteria air pollutants standards. An "attainment" designation for a region signifies that pollutant concentrations do not violate the standard for that pollutant in that region. A "non-attainment" designation indicates that a pollutant concentration violated the standard at least once. An "unclassified" designation signifies that available data does not support either an attainment or non-attainment status. The California Clean Air Act divides designations into moderate, serious, and severe air pollution attainment categories, with increasingly stringent control requirements mandated for each category. The air basin is in non attainment with state mandated thresholds for ozone and suspended particulate matter. Table 5, Ambient Air Quality Attainment Status, identifies the current status within the air basin for each criteria pollutant.

Table 5 North Central Coast Air Basin Attainment Status Designations

Pollutant	State	Federal
Ozone (O_3)	Non-attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Suspended Particulates (PM_{10})	Non-attainment	Attainment
Fine Particulates ($PM_{2.5}$)	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	San Benito Co – Unclassified	Attainment/Unclassified
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, 2015



Project Boundary | Area within 1,000 feet of site | Stationary Source (distance to project boundary measured in feet)

0 750 feet

Source: San Benito County 2015, Esri 2015

Figure 15

Stationary Sources

North Street Subdivision EIR

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Ambient Air Quality

Ambient air pollutant levels are monitored at several monitoring stations in the air basin. Air quality monitoring stations usually measure pollutant concentrations ten feet above-ground level; therefore, air quality is often referred to in terms of ground-level concentrations.

Local ambient air quality in San Benito County is monitored by the air district at Hollister (Fairview Road), and at Pinnacles National park by the National Park Service. The air district monitoring station closest to the project site is located near the intersection of Fairview Road and Hillcrest Road, approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the project site.

Table 6, Summary of Ambient Air Quality Data (2011-2013), summarizes the most recent three years of published monitoring data from the district's monitoring station.

Table 6 Summary of Ambient Air Quality Data (2011-2013)

Pollutant and Measurement Standard	2011	2012	2013
Ozone (O_3)[1]			
Maximum concentration, 1-hr/8-hr (ppm)	0.078/0.067	0.074/0.064	0.076/0.070
# days state standard (1-hr/8-hr) exceeded	0/0	0/0	0/0
# days federal standard (1-hr/8-hr) exceeded	NA	NA	NA
Suspended Particulate Matter (PM_{10})[2]			
Maximum 24-hour concentration ($\mu g/m^3$)	24.0	105.0	98.4
Estimated number of days state standard exceeded[3]	4.5	19.3	20.4
Estimated number of days federal standard exceeded[3]	0	0	0
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) [1]			
Maximum 24-hour concentration ($\mu g/m^3$) [2]	30.4	28.6	21.2
Estimated number of days federal standard exceeded	0	0	0

***Source*:** CARB 2015. Aerometric Data Analysis and Measurement System, as found at http://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/

***Notes*:** 1. Ozone and particulate data obtained from the Hollister Fairview Road monitoring station
2. $\mu g/m^3$ = Micrograms per Cubic Meter
3. Estimated average number of days per year

According to the air district, there are no CO "hotspots" in San Benito County (Cynthia Searson, email message to Consultant, February 20, 2015.)

Regulatory Setting

Federal Plans and Regulations

The federal Clean Air Act, adopted in 1970 and amended in 1990, provides the basis for federal air quality standards. The Clean Air Act is implemented by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Clean Air Act established two types of national air standards: primary and secondary. Primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of sensitive persons such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings.

State Plans and Regulations

The Lewis-Presley Air Quality Management Act, adopted in 1976 and amended in 1987, and the California Clean Air Act, adopted in 1988 and amended in 1992, provide the basis for air quality regulation in the state, particularly maintaining ambient air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter, collectively referred to as "criteria pollutants." CARB is responsible for coordinating air quality attainment efforts, setting standards, conducting research and creating solutions to air pollution.

Federal and State Standards for Criteria Air Pollutants

Ambient air quality is described in terms of compliance with the state and national standards. The state and federal clean air acts established two types of National Ambient Air Quality Standards for each criteria pollutant. Primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of "sensitive" populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings (U.S. EPA 2001).

In general, criteria pollutants are pervasive constituents, such as those emitted in vast quantities by the combustion of fossil fuels. Both the state and federal governments have developed ambient air quality standards for the identified criteria pollutants, which include ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. Table 7, Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards, lists state and federal ambient air quality standards for criteria air pollutants. The state standards generally have lower thresholds than the federal standards, yet both are applicable to the proposed project. When thresholds are exceeded at regional monitoring stations, an "attainment plan" must be prepared that outlines how an air quality district will achieve compliance. Generally, these plans must provide for district-wide emission reductions of five percent per year averaged over consecutive three-year periods.

Table 7 Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards[1]		Federal Standards[2]			
		Concentration[3]		Primary[3,4]		Secondary[3,5]	
		ppm	µg/m^3	ppm	µg/ m^3	ppm	µg/ m^3
Ozone	1 Hour	0.09	180	-	-	-	-
	8 Hour	0.07	137	0.075	147	0.075	147
PM_{10}[6]	24 Hour	-	50	-	150	-	150
	Annual	-	20	-	-	-	-
$PM_{2.50}$[6]	24 Hour	-	-	-	35	-	35
	Annual	-	12	-	12	-	15
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8 Hour	9.0	10	9	10	-	-
	1 Hour	20.0	23	35	40	-	-
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)[7]	Annual	0.030	57	0.053	100	0.053	100
	1 Hour	0.18	339	100	188	-	-
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)[8]	Annual	-	-	0.030	See note[10]	-	-
	24 Hour	0.04	105	0.14	See note[10]	-	-
	3 Hour	-	-	-	-	0.5	1,300
	1 Hour	0.25	655	0.075	196	-	-
Lead[9,10]	30 Day Average		1.5	-	-	-	-
	3 month revolving	-	-		0.15		0.15
	Calendar Quarter	-	-	See note[10]	1.5	See note[10]	1.5
Visibility Reducing Particles[11]	8 Hour	See note[11]		No Federal Standards			
Sulfates	24 Hour		25				
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03	42				
Vinyl Chloride[9]	24 Hour	0.01	26				

Source: CARB, June 4, 2013. http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/aaqs2.pdf.

Notes:

1. California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide (1 and 24 hour), nitrogen dioxide, suspended particulate matter—PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and visibility reducing particles, are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.
2. National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual averages or annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest eight hour concentration in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM_{10}, the 24 hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 $\mu g/m^3$ is equal to or less than one. For $PM_{2.5}$, the 24 hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard. Contact EPA for further clarification and current federal policies.
3. Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.
4. National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect the public health.
5. National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.
6. On December 14, 2012, the national annual $PM_{2.5}$ primary standard was lowered from 15 $\mu g/m^3$ to 12.0 $\mu g/m^3$. The existing national 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ standards (primary and secondary) were retained at 35 $\mu g/m^3$, as was the annual secondary standard of 15 $\mu g/m^3$. The existing 24-hour PM_{10} standards (primary and secondary) of 150 $\mu g/m^3$ also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over three years.
7. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the three-year average of the annual 98th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 100 ppb. Note that the national 1-hour standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the national 1-hour standard to the California standards the units can be converted from ppb to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 100 ppb is identical to 0.100 ppm.
8. On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO_2 standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the three-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb. The 1971 SO_2 national standards (24-hour and annual) remain in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2010 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1971 standards, the 1971 standards remain in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2010 standards are approved. Note that the 1-hour national standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.
9. CARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as 'toxic air contaminants' with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.
10. The national standard for lead was revised on October 15, 2008 to a rolling 3-month average. The 1978 lead standard (1.5 μg/m3 as a quarterly average) remains in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2008 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1978 standard, the 1978 standard remains in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2008 standard are approved.
11. In 1989, CARB converted both the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard and the Lake Tahoe 30-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which are "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" and "extinction of 0.07 per kilometer" for the statewide and Lake Tahoe Air Basin standards, respectively.

State and Federal Hazardous Air Pollutant Standards

The EPA has established National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants, which are regulated by source-specific rules. Examples of regulated sources include asphalt processing, boat manufacturing, chromium electroplating, coke ovens, dry cleaning, leather finishing, plywood manufacturing, polymer and resin manufacturing, and surface coating of various products. The standards for a particular source category require the maximum degree of emission reduction that the EPA determines to be achievable, which is known as the Maximum Achievable Control Technology.

The Toxic Air Contaminant Identification and Control Act (AB 1807, Tanner 1983) created California's program to reduce exposure to air toxics. The Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Information and Assessment Act (AB 2588, Connelly 1987) supplements the AB 1807 program, by requiring a statewide air toxics inventory, notification of people exposed to a significant health risk, and facility plans to reduce these risks.

Under AB 1807, CARB is required to use certain criteria in the prioritization for the identification and control of air toxics. In accordance with California Health and Safety Code section 39666(f), CARB must consider criteria relating to "the risk of harm to public health, amount or potential amount of emissions, manner of, and exposure to, usage of the substance in California, persistence in the atmosphere, and ambient concentrations in the community." AB 1807 also requires CARB to use available information gathered from the AB 2588 program to include in the prioritization of compounds.

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment assists CARB by developing the health assessment part of the toxic air contaminants identification documents; reviews facility risk assessments for the "Hot Spots" Program; is developing new risk assessment guidelines for the "Hot Spots" Program; and is the lead agency for Proposition 65. The Department of Pesticide Regulation regulates toxic air contaminants that are also pesticides. No quantified concentration thresholds are established, because the state has determined there is insufficient available scientific evidence to support the identification of a threshold exposure level. The air district has not identified any “Hot Spots” in San Benito County.

Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District

The air district is the regional agency with responsibility for monitoring air quality and achieving attainment of state and federal standards in the three Monterey Bay counties. The air district exercises its jurisdiction within the air basin. The air district is charged with regulatory authority over stationary sources of air emissions, monitoring air quality within the air basin, providing guidelines for analysis of air quality impacts pursuant to CEQA, and preparing an air quality management plan to maintain or improve air quality in the air basin.

Air Quality Management Plan. The air district is delegated with local responsibility to implement both federal and state mandates for improving air quality in the air basin through implementation of an air quality plan. The air district adopted the *Air Quality Management Plan for the Monterey Bay Region* (AQMP) in 1991 and completed several updates in subsequent years, most recently in 2013. The AQMP presents measures to control emissions of volatile organic compounds from stationary and mobile sources in order to meet the ozone standard mandated by the California Clean Air Act. In 2006 the air resources board made the ambient air quality standards more stringent by adding an 8-hour ozone average to the standard.

The AQMP outlines the steps that will be taken to come into attainment with the state and federal standards, and also requires measures to further reduce ozone levels in the air. The principal strategies for ozone reduction that are relevant to the proposed project are construction equipment emissions control measures, transportation control measures, and low-NO_x gas-fired water heater and furnace requirements. The AQMP transportation control measures reflect relevant projects included in Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program.

To achieve and maintain ambient air quality standards, the air district also has adopted various rules and regulations for the control of airborne pollutants. Air district rules and regulations applicable to the proposed project include the following:

> Rule 402 (Nuisances). The purpose of this rule is to prohibit emissions that may create a public nuisance. Applies to any source operation that emits or may emit air contaminants or other materials.
>
> Rule 425 (Use of Cutback Asphalt). The purposed of this rule is to limit emissions of vapors of organic compounds from the use of cutback and emulsified asphalt. This rule applies to the manufacture and use of cutback, slow cure, and emulsified asphalt during paving and maintenance operations.
>
> Rule 426 (Architectural Coatings). The purpose of this rule is to limit emissions of volatile organic compounds (ROG, NOx, etc) from architectural coatings.

Projects related directly to population growth will generate population-related emissions (e.g., motor vehicles, residential heating and cooling emissions). These emissions have been forecast in the AQMP using population forecasts adopted by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). Thus, population-related projects which are consistent with AMBAG regional population forecasts are consistent with the AQMP. For a proposed residential project, consistency is determined by comparing the project population at the year of project completion with the forecast for the appropriate five year increment (e.g., if project completion is 2018, the

project would be compared with year 2020 forecasts) for the jurisdiction in which the project is located. A proposed residential project is consistent with the AQMP if the population increase resulting from the project will not cause the estimated cumulative population (i.e., existing population plus population from locally-approved and unconstructed projects) to exceed forecasts for the next five year increment.

Air District CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (2008). The purpose of the air district air quality guidelines is to inform public agencies, consultants, project proponents and the general public of the air district's adopted thresholds of significance and to provide guidance in the review and evaluation of air quality impacts of projects that are subject to CEQA. The air quality guidelines are intended to provide uniform procedures for assessing air quality impacts and preparing the air quality section of environmental documents. They are also intended to help streamline the CEQA review process for project proponents, lead agencies, and the air district.

Local Plans and Regulations

Hollister General Plan. The City of Hollister General Plan Natural Resources and Conservation (NRC) element includes the following polices and implementing actions to reduce air quality impacts.

Policies

> **NRC 2.1, State and Federal Standards for Air Quality**. Continue to comply and strive to exceed state and federal standards for air quality. Review all development proposals for consistency with the current Air Quality Management Plan of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District.
>
> **NRC 2.2, Air Quality Considerations in Land Use Planning**. To ensure excellent air quality, promote land use compatibility for new development by using buffering techniques such as landscaping, setbacks, and screening in areas where different land uses abut one another.
>
> **NRC 2.3, Air Quality Planning and Coordination.** Integrate air quality considerations with the land use and transportation processes by mitigating air quality impacts through land use design measures, such as encouraging project design that will foster walking and biking.
>
> **NRC 2.4, Particulate Matter Pollution Reduction.** Promote the reduction of particulate matter pollution from roads, parking lots, construction sites, agricultural lands and other activities. This would

include: (1) requiring the watering of exposed earth surfaces during excavation, grading and construction activities; (2) requiring the daily (or as needed based upon actual circumstances) cleanup of mud and dust carried onto street surfaces by construction vehicles; and (3) requiring that appropriate measures to be taken to reduce wind erosion during construction, such as watering of soil, replanting and repaving.

NRC 2.5, Circulation Alternatives to Reduce Impacts on Air Quality. Promote circulation alternatives that reduce air pollution.

Implementing Actions

CSF.D.9. Adopt a performance standards ordinance. As part of the ordinance, establish procedures for the review and referral of applications to ensure that the proposed development will not make a significant contribution to the emission of regional air pollutants (i.e., carbon monoxide, reactive hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides).

NRC.H, Apply air quality standards in development review. Through development review, require developers to implement strategies for air quality improvement. Ensure that any proposed new sources of particulate matter use latest control technology (such as enclosures, paving unpaved areas, parking lot sweeping and landscaping) and provide adequate buffer setbacks to protect existing or future sensitive receptors.

NRC.I, Apply standards to sensitive air quality receptors. Through development review, ensure that siting of any new sensitive receptors provides for adequate buffers from existing sources of toxic air contaminants or odors.

NRC.J, Apply Title 24 requirements. Meet or exceed Title 24 energy conservation requirements, and, where possible, require structural and landscaping design to make use of natural heating and cooling. Encourage the use of solar and alternative energy technologies to meet or exceed Title 24 requirements.

NRC.L, Coordinate with other agencies in air quality planning. Cooperate with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District and other agencies in their efforts to ensure compliance with existing air quality regulations.

NRC.M, Establish buffers to protect air quality. Through development review, ensure that any proposed new sources of toxic air contaminants or odors provide adequate buffers to protect sensitive receptors and comply with existing health standards.

NRC.N, Identify opportunities for transit-oriented development. Assist in educating developers and the public on the benefits of pedestrian and transit-oriented development.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

Based on the air quality guidelines (Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District 2008b, page 5-14), and air district guidance on consistency with the Air Quality Management Plan (Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District 2011), the project would have a significant air quality impact if it would:

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Air Quality Management Plan:
  - Exceed Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments population forecasts for the jurisdiction.
- Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation:
  - Emit 137 pounds per day or more of an ozone precursor air pollutant (volatile organic compounds or nitrogen oxides).
  - Directly emit 550 pounds per day or more of carbon monoxide.
  - Generate traffic that significantly affects levels of service.
  - Emit 82 pounds per day or more of suspended particulate matter on-site, which is equivalent to general construction activity over an area of at least 8.1 acres per day, or grading/excavation over an area of at least 2.2 acres per day.
  - Emit 82 pounds per day or more of suspended particulate matter from vehicle travel on unpaved roads.
  - Directly emit 150 pounds per day or more of sulfur oxides.
- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the air basin is non-attainment (ozone/ozone precursors and suspended particulate matter) under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.

- Expose existing or reasonably foreseeable sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations:
    - Cause or contribute to an exceedance of a carbon monoxide standard as measured by Level of Service (LOS) degradation at a project-affected intersection and confirmed by dispersion modeling. The air quality guidelines require carbon monoxide hot spot analysis under the following project conditions:
        - Intersections degrading to below LOS D;
        - Volume to capacity ratio increases by 0.05 at LOS E or F intersections;
        - The delay at LOS E or F intersections increases by 10 seconds or more; or
        - Reserve capacity at un-signalized LOS E or F intersections decreases by 50 or more.
    - Cause a violation of suspended particulate matter standard at a sensitive receptor.
    - Expose sensitive receptors or the general public to substantial levels of toxic air contaminants if the source of the contaminants results in an additional cancer risk of ten in one million or greater over a 70-year exposure period, for the maximally exposed individual.
- Create or expose a substantial number of people to objectionable odors.

Emissions Modeling

The air district recommends the use of the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) emissions estimator model for proposed projects that exceed screening thresholds contained in the air quality guidelines. The CalEEMod program estimates both project mobile-source and operational emissions, including vehicular, direct, and indirect emissions. The model also estimates greenhouse gas emissions from land development projects. The model contains default data for vehicular emissions (e.g., emission factors, trip lengths, meteorology, source inventory, etc.) provided by various California air districts to account for local requirements and conditions. Direct emissions include natural gas combustion associated with the heating of water and space, along with the emissions from use of gas-powered landscape equipment. Indirect emissions include off-site generation of electricity, and off-site processes associated with the land use, such as water treatment and delivery. Vehicular emission rates of volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides are sensitive to the year of analysis because emissions rates are decreasing as vehicles with more effective emission controls dominate the fleet mix. The anticipated operational year for the analysis performed for the proposed project is 2020.

Model inputs include air basin information from the air district, project-related inputs based upon the amount and type of existing and proposed land uses. Detailed CalEEMod results are presented in Appendix C. Model results for criteria pollutants, including ozone, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and suspended particulate matter, are summarized in the following discussion of impacts and mitigation measures.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

Consistency with the Air Quality Management Plan. The proposed project would not conflict with the AQMP. Projects related directly to population growth generate population-related emissions (e.g., motor vehicles, residential heating and cooling emissions). Population-related emissions have been estimated in the AQMP using population forecasts adopted by AMBAG. Population-related projects that are consistent with these forecasts are consistent with the AQMP. For cumulative impacts, the air district recommends that projects be assessed for consistency with the AQMP. AMBAG updated its regional population forecast in 2014, but the air district has not yet updated the AQMP, and recommends that AQMP consistency be determined using the air district's 2011 *Consistency Determination Procedure for Residential Development Projects* for the 2008 AQMP (Amy Clymo 2015). The proposed project was evaluated for consistency with the AQMP using the air district's *Consistency Determination Procedure for Residential Development Projects* (2011). The originally proposed project (450 dwelling units) was evaluated using an anticipated buildout/occupancy year of 2020. The results of the evaluation process are included as Appendix D. The evaluation determined that the proposed project would be consistent with AQMP at 2020 and later time periods. The scale of the proposed project has since been reduced from 450 dwelling units to 343 dwelling units, which would also be within the AQMP and AMBAG projections.

According to the Monterey Bay Area 2014 Regional Forecast (AMBAG 2014), the city's population was 34,928 in 2010. The estimated population for 2020 is anticipated to be 39,975 people, and for 2025 is 41,704. The 2014 AMBAG population projections are based upon an anticipated 1.05 percent annual growth rate. The AMBAG forecast reported that the housing unit requirements for the city in 2010 were 10,401. Projected housing units requirements are expected to be 11,176 in 2020 and the anticipated number of housing units to accommodate expected population growth in 2025 is 11,534. More recent demographic data is available from the California Department of Finance, which maintains general inventories of housing stock and population data based upon U.S. Census data. The Department of Finance Table E-1 reports that in 2014, the population of the City of Hollister was 36,370 persons, a 0.1 percent decrease from the 2013 population of 36,676 (California Department of Finance 2015a). According to the

Department of Finance Table E-5, as of January 1, 2014, the city's existing housing stock consists of 10,647 total housing units with 10,092 units occupied and an average of 3.61 persons per household (California Department of Finance 2015b). Both the most recent growth rate and the anticipated population reported by the Department of Finance are below the AMBAG projections for the year 2020.

At project buildout (estimated 2020), the proposed project would provide housing for approximately 1,238 persons, based on a uniform application of an average 3.61 persons per household to 343 dwelling units regardless of housing type. The increase in the city's total population (a total of 37,370 persons) resulting from development of the proposed project would be less than the AMBAG 2020 projections upon which the AQMP is based. The increase in population generated by the proposed project would be accommodated by city and regional growth projections and is consistent with air district air quality planning efforts. Therefore no impacts would occur from inconsistencies with the AQMP.

Create or Expose Existing and Future Sensitive Receptors to Unacceptable Levels of CO (Create or Contribute to CO "Hotspots"). Traffic generated by the proposed project would cause the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection to deteriorate from unacceptable LOS E to unacceptable LOS F, with a 45.8-second increase in delay during the PM peak hour. While the increase in traffic would also increase mobile-source CO emissions that exceed air district thresholds, there are no sensitive receptors at this intersection that could be exposed to project-related emissions. Parcels adjacent to this intersection are either vacant or developed with industrial or agricultural uses. Therefore, no impacts to sensitive receptors would occur. Additionally, as reported in Section 3.16, Traffic and Circulation, implementation of mitigation measure T-1 would mitigate the proposed project's impact to LOS at this intersection to a less-than-significant level if signalization improvements to the intersection are implemented prior to project implementation. Therefore, further analysis of this topic is required.

Odors. Development of the project would not include new sources of substantial odors.

WOULD THE PROJECT VIOLATE ANY AIR QUALITY STANDARD OR CONTRIBUTE SUBSTANTIALLY TO AN EXISTING OR PROJECTED AIR QUALITY VIOLATION?

Operational Emissions. The proposed project would result in new sources of mobile (indirect) and operational (direct) emissions. The CalEEMod modeling results for the proposed project (343 dwelling units) are summarized in Table 8, CalEEMod Operational Modeling Results (Pounds per Day). Detailed results are presented in Appendix C.

Table 8 CalEEMod Operational Modeling Results (Pounds per Day)

	Volatile Organic Compounds (ROG)	Nitrogen Oxides	Suspended Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	Carbon Monoxide (CO)
Summer (Unmitigated)	598.24	35.82	91.01	800.72
Summer (mitigated)[1]	73.92	28.69	21.25	154.10
Winter (unmitigated)	599.13	39.24	111.69	823.24
Winter (mitigated)[1]	74.80	32.12	21.25	176.63
Air District Thresholds	137	137	82	550

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District and EMC Planning Group Inc. 2015

Note: 1. Assumes only non-wood-burning hearths would be allowed in new development.

The proposed project would result in unmitigated operational emissions that exceed the air district thresholds for ROG, PM_{10} and CO. According to the model, the bulk of operational emissions are from area sources.

The model results (Table 8) indicate that use of natural gas hearths only in new residential development would reduce area source operational ROG emissions by about 88 percent; NOx emissions would be reduced by 18 to 20 percent; PM_{10} emissions would be reduced by 81 percent; and CO emissions by about 79 to 80 percent; all well below the air district thresholds. Other reductions in area source emissions would also be achieved by compliance with the air district's Rule 426 that requires low VOC architectural coatings in new development.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Emissions that Exceed District Thresholds): The proposed project would generate ozone precursor, particulate matter and carbon monoxide emissions that exceed air district thresholds and contribute to regional air quality violations. This is considered a significant adverse impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure

AQ-1. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall include the following air emissions reduction features on the project plans:

a. Solid fuel heating appliances (i.e., wood-burning fireplaces; wood stoves; etc.) shall be prohibited. Restrictions on solid fuel heating appliances shall be included on deeds for individual parcels.

b. Low VOC-emitting paints and coatings shall be used in all new construction.

Implementation of mitigation measure AQ-1 would prohibit solid fuel heating appliances and require that low VOC-emitting coatings be used in construction, which would reduce project-related area source emissions below the air district thresholds and ensure operational area source emissions are at a less-than-significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

Temporary Construction Dust Emissions. The proposed project also would generate dust and other emissions from construction equipment during site preparation and construction activities. Project-related construction dust emissions would contribute to the region's non-attainment status for PM_{10} and could significantly affect local air quality.

The project site is approximately 81 acres. The applicant has indicated that site preparation and grading activities could exceed 35 acres per day. Future development of uses consistent with the specific plan would include construction activities that would result in grading and excavation exceeding 2.2 acres or grading or other light earth movement exceeding 8.1 acres in a day. As noted above, according to the air district's CEQA guidelines, a project that includes excavation or grading to that extent would generate dust that would exceed the air district standards (82 lbs per day) for suspended particulate matter (PM_{10}), and which would contribute to the air basin's nonattainment status for PM_{10}. The air district has identified feasible mitigation measures, that when implemented, reduce the impacts of construction dust emissions to less than significant.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Temporary Construction Dust Emissions that Exceed District Thresholds): The proposed project would generate dust and other emissions from construction equipment during site preparation and construction that exceed air district thresholds, contribute to the region's non-attainment status for PM_{10}, and could significantly affect local air quality. This is a significant adverse impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-2. Prior to issuance of grading, or building permits, the applicant or developers of the project site shall prepare a grading plan subject to review and approval by the city. In the event ground disturbance exceeds 2.2 acres per day for initial site preparation activities that involve extensive earth moving activities (grubbing, excavation, rough grading), and 8.1 acres per day for activities that involve minimal earth moving (e.g. finish grading) these limits, the required grading plans shall include the following measures:

a. Water all active construction sites continuously. Frequency should be based on the type of operation, soil, and wind exposure;

b. Prohibit all grading activities during periods of high wind (over 15 mph);

c. Apply chemical soil stabilizers on inactive construction areas (disturbed lands within construction projects that are unused for at least four consecutive days);

d. Apply non-toxic binders (e.g., latex acrylic copolymer) to exposed areas after cut and fill operations and hydroseed area;

e. Haul trucks shall maintain at least 1'-0" of freeboard;

f. Plant tree windbreaks on the windward perimeter of construction projects of adjacent to open land;

g. Cover inactive storage piles;

h. Sweep streets if visible soil material is carried out from the construction site;

i. Post a publicly-visible sign written in English and Spanish with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The phone number of the air district shall also be visible to ensure compliance with rule 402 (nuisance); and

j. Limit the area under construction at any one time.

AQ-3. Prior to commencement of construction activities, the contractor shall appoint a qualified site monitor to ensure that the dust control plan is implemented. Evidence of implementation shall be submitted to the City of Hollister Planning Department within three days of commencement of grading, and monthly thereafter as long as grading occurs.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-2 and AQ-3 would reduce the impacts of suspended particulate matter generated by construction activities to a less than significant level.

Construction Diesel Exhaust. Diesel exhaust includes air contaminants that can cause adverse health effects. Development of the project site would utilize diesel-fueled heavy equipment, which would increase exposures of existing residences located along North Street and Buena Vista Avenue near the southern boundary of the project site. Diesel-powered trucks and equipment would emit NOx, acrolein, and diesel particulate matter during the construction phase. Construction equipment can emit substantial amounts of NOx that could have a small, but cumulative effect on ozone concentrations. The air district air quality guidelines do not have thresholds that apply to these emissions.

Calculating ROG and NOx emissions from typical construction equipment is not required by the air district because temporary emissions of these ozone precursors have been accommodated in State- and federally-required air plans (MBUAPCD 2008b, page 7-1). Therefore, the air quality impacts of construction ROG and NOx emissions are less than significant.

Construction activities associated with future development of the project site would likely involve use of the heavy-duty off-road equipment and large trucks that use diesel fuel resulting in a cumulative contribution to emissions of diesel particulate matter. CARB's Regulation for In-use Off-road Diesel Vehicles establishes a state program to reduce emissions from older construction equipment. Equipment built to EPA Tier 4 diesel engine standards and utilizing ultralow sulfur fuel would result in diesel emissions that are substantially lower than older equipment. However, older equipment not meeting the Tier 4 standards would result in greater emissions and a cumulatively considerable air quality impact.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Construction Diesel Exhaust): Construction activities associated with future development of the project site would likely involve use of the heavy-duty off-road equipment and large trucks that use diesel fuel resulting in a contribution to emissions of diesel particulate matter.

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce construction equipment exhaust emissions from older vehicles (NOx and diesel particulate matter):

Mitigation Measures

AQ-4. The developer shall reduce nitrogen oxides exhaust and particulate matter emissions by implementing one of the following measures prior to the start of construction:

- Provide a plan, acceptable to the air district, demonstrating that the heavy-duty (> 50 horsepower) off-road vehicles and equipment to be used in the construction project, including owned, leased and subcontractor vehicles, will achieve a

project wide fleet-average 20 percent nitrogen oxides reduction and 45 percent particulate matter reduction compared to the most recent CARB fleet average for the time of construction; or

- Provide a plan, acceptable to the air district, that all off-road construction vehicles/equipment greater than 50 horsepower that will be used on site for more than one week shall: 1) be manufactured during or after 1996, 2) shall meet the nitrogen oxides emissions standard of 6.9 grams per brake horsepower hour, and 3) shall be equipped with diesel particulate matter filters.

AQ-5. Prior to the onset of site preparation, grading and construction activities, the project applicant(s) or developer(s) shall require in construction contracts that all off-road construction vehicles comply with the detailed specifications required in Mitigation Measure AQ-4 and shall submit evidence demonstrating compliance with this measure to the City of Hollister Planning Department for review and approval.

AQ-6. The developer shall reduce NOx and particulate matter exhaust emissions by implementing the following measures prior to the start of construction:

- Contractors shall install temporary electrical service whenever possible to avoid the need for independently-powered equipment (e.g. compressors).
- Signs at the construction site shall be clearly visible to advise that that diesel equipment standing idle for more than five minutes shall be turned off. This would include trucks waiting to deliver or receive soil, aggregate, or other bulk materials. Rotating drum concrete trucks may keep their engines running continuously if on-site and staged away from residential areas.
- Properly tune and maintain equipment for low emissions.
- Stage large diesel powered equipment at least 200 feet from any active land uses (e.g., residences).

These mitigation measures are consistent with the measures recommended in the air quality guidelines (Table 8-3) that limit the number of vehicles, type of fuel used, hours of daily operation and duration of use. Implementation of these measures would reduce and subsequently limit exposure to construction exhaust emissions. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-4 – AQ-6, would ensure that construction emissions are reduced to a less than significant level.

WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN A CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE NET INCREASE OF ANY CRITERIA POLLUTANT FOR WHICH THE AIR BASIN IS NON-ATTAINMENT (OZONE/OZONE PRECURSORS AND SUSPENDED PARTICULATE MATTER) UNDER AN APPLICABLE FEDERAL OR STATE AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARD?

According to the CalEEMod air quality modeling performed for the proposed project, Operational PM_{10} and ROG emissions from project development would exceed the air district thresholds and therefore, project-related PM_{10} and ROG emissions would be cumulatively considerable.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Cumulatively Considerable Net Increase of a Criteria Pollutant): The proposed project would generate ROG and PM_{10} emissions during construction and operations that would contribute to cumulative air quality conditions for which the air basin is in nonattainment.

With implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-2 – AQ-6 the proposed project's contribution to cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

See Mitigation Measures AQ-2 – AQ-6 above.

WOULD THE PROJECT EXPOSE EXISTING OR REASONABLY FORESEEABLE SENSITIVE RECEPTORS TO SUBSTANTIAL POLLUTANT CONCENTRATIONS?

During construction, the sensitive receptors in existing residences near the south boundary of the project site could be exposed to PM_{10} emissions that would temporarily exceed standards, and to equipment exhaust emissions.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Construction Dust and Equipment Exhaust – Sensitive Receptors): During construction, the sensitive receptors in existing residences near the south boundary of the project site could be exposed to PM_{10} emissions that would temporarily exceed standards.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-2 – AQ-5 would reduce dust and equipment exhaust emissions and corresponding impacts of exposure to these emissions to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures

See Mitigation Measures AQ-2 – AQ-5 above.

WOULD THE PROJECT EXPOSE SENSITIVE RECEPTORS OR THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO SUBSTANTIAL LEVELS OF TOXIC AIR CONTAMINANTS IF THE SOURCE OF THE CONTAMINANTS RESULTS IN AN ADDITIONAL CANCER RISK OF TEN IN ONE MILLION OR GREATER OVER A 70-YEAR EXPOSURE PERIOD, FOR THE MAXIMALLY EXPOSED INDIVIDUAL?

Less-than-Significant Impact (Stationary Source Toxic Air Contaminants): There are seven sources of stationary emissions located at or within 1,000 feet of the site which could potentially expose future residents to toxic contaminants.

Exposure to Stationary Sources of Toxic Air Contaminants. The proposed project would not include new sources of toxic air emissions. The proposed project is not located near a high-volume freeway, which is the most common source of prolonged residential exposures to toxic air contaminants. Other sources of toxic air contaminants include the stationary sources within 1,000 feet of the project site such as generators, gas stations, and other emitters identified by the air district and shown graphically in Figure 15, Stationary Sources. As illustrated by Figure 15, there are seven sources of stationary emissions located at or within 1,000 feet of the site. All of these sources are located south and southeast (downwind) of the site. Taking into account the prevailing north and northwest winds in this region, receptors on the project site are not likely to be exposed to substantial emissions from these sources. Proposed roadways and open space would provide additional distance between new residences and these stationary source emitters (see Figure 8, Vesting Tentative Map presented earlier), further reducing the likelihood of exposure. No mitigation is required.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The biological resources section is based on the results of a reconnaissance-level field survey conducted by EMC Planning Group senior biologist Andrea Edwards on May 9, 2014 and the following documents included in Appendix E:

- EMC Planning Group. June 2014. Biological Report Peer Review for the Proposed North Street Subdivision. Monterey, California;

- Zander Associates. January 2013. Burrow Assessment: North Street Property, Hollister, California. San Rafael, California; and
- Zander Associates. November 2012. Biological Resources Reconnaissance: North Street Property, Hollister, California. San Rafael, California.

This section addresses the existing biological resource conditions on the site; the federal, state, and regional/local regulatory framework pertaining to biological resources; and an evaluation of anticipated biological resources impacts due to the proposed project.

Environmental Setting

Project Region

The project site is located in the north-central portion of the City of Hollister in San Benito County, within the Central Coast range of California. The Diablo mountain range borders the county to the east and the Gabilan mountain range borders the county to the south and west. Two incorporated cities, San Juan Bautista and Hollister, are located on the nearly flat valley floor between these ranges, in the northern portion of the county.

The valley floor where the City of Hollister is located is underlain by geologically young, unconsolidated stream deposits (San Benito County 2013). The region is generally characterized by rolling hills and grazing land with annual grassland and oak woodland to the east and to the south, and flat, cultivated, and developed land to the north and west. The climate of the Hollister area is characterized by warm summers and cool, moist winters. The average temperatures for summer and winter are 73°F and 46°F, respectively. However, it is not unusual for temperatures to rise above 100°F occasionally in the spring and summer or to fall below 40°F occasionally in the winter. The average yearly rainfall is 13 inches, with most of this precipitation occurring from October to May.

Existing Uses and Topography

The approximately 81-acre site is located partially in the City of Hollister and partially in unincorporated San Benito County. As shown on Figure 2, Existing Site and Vicinity Conditions, presented earlier, most of the site contains agricultural land in active cultivation of organic hay. The project site's topography includes the higher western portion of the site and slopes down to the lower eastern portion of the site, with elevations ranging from about 365 to 270 feet. The San Benito River is just over one mile southwest of the site, but is separated from the site by dense, mainly residential development.

Plant Communities

The active agricultural areas comprising the majority of the site are used to produce wheat (*Triticum aestivum*). The sunken former rock quarry area in the northwestern portion of the site is disturbed but still contains many native shrubs, dominated by coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) but infested with non-native and invasive Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*). Some portions of the site contain a mixture of native and non-native/ornamental trees and shrubs, including along the slope between the higher and lower portions of the site and scattered in other locations. Occasional native trees and shrubs present include coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), California black walnut (*Juglans* sp.), and California buckeye (*Aesculus calfornica*). Non-native trees present include pepper (*Schinus molle*), pine (*Pinus* sp.), and almond (*Prunus* sp.). Many gum trees (*Eucalyptus* sp.) are also present along the site's western boundary.

Non-native grassland patches present throughout the site are dominated by wild oats (*Avena* spp.) and ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*). Other non-native species common in this plant community include foxtail chess (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), barley (*Hordeum murinum*), shortpod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), radish (*Raphanus sativus*), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), long-beaked filaree (*Erodium botrys*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), cheeseweed (*Marva parvifolia*), bull mallow (*Malva nicaeensis*), poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*), common sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), wild lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), California burclover (*Medicago polymorpha*), and sourclover (*Melilotus indica*).

Wildlife Habitats

Wildlife species expected to occur on the site include those generally adapted to active agricultural lands and disturbed non-native grassland habitats. Vegetation found on the site could support reptile species such as western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), southern alligator lizard (*Elgaria multicarinatus*), and gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer*).

Avian species may forage within the agricultural areas, including killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), American pipit (*Anthus rubescens*), savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), and western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*). Other common native species may nest in the on-site trees and shrubs.

Mammal species expected to occur include California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*), and black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californica*). Mammal burrows were identified in the abandoned quarry area during surveys conducted for the *Biological Resources Reconnaissance* in November 2012 (Zander Associates 2012). A subsequent assessment

of the burrows indicate that species including bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), and striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) occur on the site (Zander Associates 2013). Scat belonging to a species in the weasel family was also found, indicating the possible presence of American badger (*Taxidea taxus*).

No wetlands/waterways or riparian habitats occur on the site, and no amphibian species are expected to occur. However, the shallow, ephemeral drainage feature adjacent to the southern boundary of the site may provide breeding habitat for common species such as western toad (*Anaxyrus boreas*).

Wetlands and Waterways

Though a shallow, ephemeral, man-made drainage is present just south of the site, the soils, vegetation, and hydrologic characteristics that typically define wetland and water features are absent from the site. No wetlands or waterways are present on the project site, and the proposed project would not impact this nearby drainage feature.

Special-Status Species

The project site was evaluated for the potential presence of a variety of special-status species. Occurrence data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS 2014) *Endangered Species Program* county-wide list, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW 2014) *California Natural Diversity Database*, and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS 2014) *Rare and Endangered Plant Inventory* were reviewed to determine the potential for special-status species to occur at the project site. Records were reviewed for the Hollister U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS) quadrangle map (in which the project site occurs), and within the eight surrounding USGS quadrangle maps (Chittenden, San Felipe, Three Sisters, San Juan Bautista, Tres Pinos, Natividad, Mount Harlan, and Paicines).

Special-status species in this analysis are those listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Rare, or as Candidates for listing by the USFWS and/or CDFW; or as Rare Plant Rank 1B or 2B species by the CNPS. This designation also includes CDFW Species of Special Concern and Fully Protected species. Special-status species are generally rare, restricted in distribution, declining throughout their range, or have a critical, vulnerable stage in their life cycle that warrants monitoring.

Special-Status Plants. Special-status plants generally occur in relatively undisturbed areas and are largely found within unique plant communities and/or habitats such as serpentine grasslands, vernal pools, or alkali flats. Special-status plants that have the potential to occur in the project vicinity based on the above data are listed in Table 9, Special-Status Plant Species

with the Potential to Occur in the Project Vicinity, along with their legal status and suitable habitat requirements. Potential to occur on the site was determined for each species by evaluating the geographic ranges and habitat requirements of species and existing conditions on the site. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service, the site contains three soil types, all of which are classified as loams (USDA 2014).

Table 9 Special-Status Plant Species with the Potential to Occur in the Project Vicinity

Common and Scientific Name	Status (Federal/State/ CNPS)	Habitat	Potential to Occur on the Site
Alkali milk-vetch *(Astragalus tener* var. *tener)*	--/--/1B.2	Alkaline soils of playas, adobe clay valley and foothill grasslands, and alkali vernal pools; elevation 0-60 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Congdon's tarplant (*Centromadia parryi* spp. *congdonii*)	--/--/1B.1	Valley and foothill grasslands (alkaline); elevation 1-230 meters. May occur on various substrates, and in disturbed and ruderal (weedy) areas.	Not expected to occur on the site; outside the known geographic distribution range for this species.
Fragrant fritillary *(Fritillaria liliacea)*	--/--/1B.2	Coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and coastal prairie. Serpentine or clay substrates; elevation 3-410 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Gabilan Mountains manzanita *(Arctostaphylos gabilanensis)*	--/--/1B.2	Chaparral and cismontane woodlands on granitic substrates; elevation 300-700 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Hernandez spineflower *(Chorizanthe biloba* var. *immemora)*	--/--/1B.2	Chaparral and cismontane woodland; elevation 600-800 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Hoover's button-celery *(Eryngium aristulatum* var. *hooveri)*	--/--/1B.1	Vernal pools, alkaline depressions, roadside ditches, and other wet places near the coast; elevation 5-45 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.

Common and Scientific Name	Status (Federal/State/ CNPS)	Habitat	Potential to Occur on the Site
Indian Valley bush-mallow *(Malacothamnus aboriginum)*	--/--/1B.2	Rocky, often burned areas in chaparral and cismontane woodlands; elevation 150-1700 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Loma Prieta hoita *(Hoita strobilina)*	--/--/1B.1	Wet areas on serpentine substrates in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland; elevation 30-860 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Monterey spineflower *(Chorizanthe pungens* var. *pungens)*	FT/--/1B.2	Sandy openings in maritime chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland; elevation 3-450 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site; outside the known geographic distribution range for this species.
Most beautiful jewel-flower *(Streptanthus albidus* ssp. *peramoenus)*	--/--/1B.2	Serpentine outcrops, on ridges and slopes in chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, and cismontane woodland; elevation 120-730 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Pajaro manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pajaroensis)*	--/--/1B.1	Sandy soils in chaparral habitat; elevation 30–760 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Pink creamsacs *(Castilleja rubicundula* ssp. *rubicundula)*	--/--/1B.2	Openings on serpentine soils; chaparral, meadows and seeps, and valley and foothill grassland. Elevation 20-900 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Pinnacles buckwheat *(Eriogonum nortonii)*	--/--/1B.3	Sandy areas in chaparral or valley and foothill grassland, often on recent burns; elevation 300-975 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Prostrate vernal pool navarretia *(Navarretia prostrata)*	--/--/1B.1	Mesic soils of coastal scrub, meadows and seeps, alkaline valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools; elevation 15-700 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.

Common and Scientific Name	Status (Federal/State/ CNPS)	Habitat	Potential to Occur on the Site
Round-leaved filaree *(California macrophylla)*	--/--/1B.1	Clay soils in cismontane woodlands and valley and foothill grasslands; elevation 15-1200 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Saline clover *(Trifolium hydrophilum*)	--/--/1B.2	Mesic, alkaline sites in marshes and swamps, valley and foothill grasslands, and vernal pools. Elevation 0-300 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.
San Joaquin spearscale *(Atriplex joaquiniana)*	--/--/1B.2	Alkaline soils in chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, playas, and valley and foothill grasslands; elevation 0-835 meters.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable habitat.

Sources: CDFW 2014, CNPS 2014, USFWS 2014, EMC Planning Group 2014

Listing Status Codes:

Federal (USFWS)

FE - Listed as Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

FT - Listed as Threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

FC – Candidate for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

State (CDFW)

SE - Listed as Endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.

ST - Listed as Threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.

SR - Listed as Rare under the California Endangered Species Act.

SC – Candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act.

CNPS Rare Plant Ranks and Threat Code Extensions

1B: Plants that are considered Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere.

2B: Plants that are considered Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere.

.1: Seriously endangered in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat).

.2: Fairly endangered in California (20-80 percent occurrences threatened).

.3: Not very threatened in California (less than 20 percent of occurrences threatened low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known).

Special-Status Wildlife. Special-status wildlife often requires undisturbed or minimally disturbed habitats. Table 10, Special-Status Wildlife Potentially Occurring in the Project Vicinity, shows special-status wildlife species documented within the project vicinity, their listing status and suitable habitat description, and their potential to occur on the site. Detailed information on certain special-status wildlife species with potential to occur on the project site follows the table.

Table 10 Special-Status Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur in the Project Vicinity

Common and Scientific Name	Status (Federal/State)	Habitat	Potential to Occur on the Site
American badger *(Taxidea taxus)*	--/SSC	Found in drier, open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats with friable soils.	Low potential to occur on the site due to marginally suitable burrow habitat in the former rock quarry area (Zander Associates 2013).
Bank swallow *(Riparia riparia)*	--/ST	Colonial nester; nests primarily in riparian and other lowland habitats; requires vertical banks or cliffs with fine-textured sandy soils near streams, rivers, lakes, or the ocean to dig nesting hole.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable bank or cliff nesting habitat.
Burrowing owl *(Athene cunicularia)*	--/SSC	Open, dry grasslands, deserts, and ruderal (weedy) areas. Requires suitable burrows. This species is often associated with California ground squirrels.	Low potential to occur on the site due to marginally suitable habitat. The site does not contain a concentration of active small mammal burrows due to regular agricultural disturbance.
California red-legged frog *(Rana draytonii)*	FT/SSC	Rivers, creeks, and stock ponds of the Sierra foothills and coast range, preferring pools with overhanging vegetation. May also be found in a variety of upland habitats.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable aquatic habitat in the vicinity.
California tiger salamander *(Ambystoma californiense)*	FT/ST	Breeds in vernal pools and stock ponds of central California; adults aestivate in grassland habitats adjacent to the breeding sites.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable aquatic habitat in the vicinity.
Coast Range newt *(Taricha torosa)*	--/SSC	Breeds in ponds, reservoirs, and slow-moving water. May also occur in large streams and rivers.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable perennial aquatic habitat.
Golden eagle *(Aquila chrysaetos)*	--/FP	Typically frequents rolling foothills, mountain areas,	Low potential to occur on the site due to presence of

Common and Scientific Name	Status (Federal/State)	Habitat	Potential to Occur on the Site
		woodland areas, sage-juniper flats, and desert habitats.	marginally suitable nesting and foraging habitat.
Least Bell's vireo *(Vireo bellii pusillus)*	FE/SE	Summer resident of Southern California in low riparian habitats in the vicinity of water or in dry river bottoms (below 2,000 feet in elevation). Nests placed along margins of bushes or on twigs along pathways.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable riparian habitat.
Pallid bat *(Antrozous pallidus)*	--/SSC	Deserts, grasslands, scrublands, woodlands, and forests. Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting. Roosts must protect bats from high temperatures.	Low potential to occur on the site due to the presence of marginally suitable habitat.
San Joaquin kit fox *(Vulpes macrotis mutica)*	FE/ST	Frequents annual grasslands or grassy open stages with scattered shrubby vegetation. Needs loose-textured sandy soils for burrowing and suitable prey base. Utilizes enlarged (4 to 10-inch diameter) ground squirrel burrows as denning habitat. May forage in adjacent agricultural habitats.	Not expected to occur. Almost all regional records for this species are from the 1970s; however, there is a record from 1992 just over two miles west of the City of Hollister. Therefore, a species suitability assessment and focused burrow and mammal track/scat assessment were conducted on the site, concluding the site "does not appear to provide suitable habitat" and is "highly unsuitable" for this species (Zander Associates 2013).
San Joaquin whipsnake *(Masticophis flagellum ruddocki)*	--/SSC	Frequents chaparral habitats, specifically scrublands, rocky hillsides, gullies, canyons, and stream courses of the foothills.	Low potential to occur on the site due to marginally suitable rocky habitat and available burrows. The nearest recorded observation is from the San Benito River (Zander Associates 2012).

Common and Scientific Name	Status (Federal/State)	Habitat	Potential to Occur on the Site
Steelhead *(Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus)*	FT/SSC	Coastal stream with clean spawning gravel. Requires cool water and pools. Needs migratory access between natal stream and ocean.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable perennial aquatic habitat.
Swainson's hawk *(Buteo swainsoni)*	--/ST	Nests in large trees especially in riparian corridors. Forages in agricultural fields and grasslands.	Not expected to occur on the site. Although trees may present perch sites and/or breeding habitat, the distribution of this species is concentrated within the Central Valley.
Tricolored blackbird *(Agelaius tricolor)*	--/SE	Breeds near fresh water, primarily emergent wetlands, with tall thickets. Forages in nearby grassland and cropland habitats.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable wetland habitat.
Western mastiff bat *(Eumops perotis californicus)*	--/SSC	Many open, semi-arid habitats, including conifer and deciduous woodlands, coastal scrub, grasslands, chaparral, etc. Roosts in crevices in cliff faces, high buildings, trees, and tunnels.	Low potential to occur on the site due to the presence of marginally suitable habitat.
Western pond turtle *(Emys marmorata)*	--/SSC	Open slow-moving water of rivers and creeks of central California, with rocks and logs for basking.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable wetland or riparian habitat.
Western red bat *(Lasiurus blossevillii)*	--/SSC	Roosts primarily in trees, 2-40 feet above the ground, from sea level up through mixed conifer forests. Prefers habitat edges and mosaics with trees that are protected from above and open below, with open areas for foraging.	Low potential to occur on the site due to the presence of marginally suitable habitat.

Common and Scientific Name	Status (Federal/State)	Habitat	Potential to Occur on the Site
Western spadefoot *(Spea hammondii)*	--/SSC	Primarily occurs in grasslands, but also occurs in woodlands. Requires vernal pools or other temporary wetlands for breeding.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable aquatic habitat in the vicinity.
Western yellow-billed cuckoo *(Coccyzus americanus occidentalis)*	FC/SE	Nests in dense riparian forests. Inhabits broad, lower flood bottoms of larger river systems.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable riparian habitat.
White-tailed kite *(Elanus leucurus)*	--/FP	Rolling foothills and valley margins with scattered oaks, and river bottomlands or marshes next to deciduous woodlands. Open grasslands, meadows, or marshes for foraging located close to isolated, dense-topped trees for nesting and perching.	Low potential to occur on the site due to presence of marginally suitable nesting and foraging habitat.
Yellow-breasted chat *(Icteria virens)*	--/SSC	Breeds in brushy tangles, briers, and stream thickets. May occur in overgrown pastures and upland thickets.	Not expected to occur on the site due to lack of suitable thicket habitat.

Sources: Zander Associates 2012 and 2013, CDFW 2014, USFWS 2014

Listing Status Codes:

Federal (USFWS)

FE - Listed as Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

FT - Listed as Threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

FC – Candidate for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

State (CDFW)

SE - Listed as Endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.

ST - Listed as Threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.

SC – Candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act.

FP - CDFW Fully Protected species under California Fish and Game Code.

SSC – CDFW Species of Special Concern.

Burrowing Owl. Burrowing owl is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. Burrowing owls live and breed in burrows in the ground, especially in abandoned ground squirrel burrows. Optimal

habitat conditions include large, open, dry, and nearly level grasslands or prairies with short to moderate vegetation height and cover, areas of bare ground, and populations of burrowing mammals. This species occurs in open, dry grasslands, deserts, and shrub-lands with low-growing vegetation; it usually occupies natural burrows excavated by other fossorial species such as the California ground squirrel. Burrowing owls have also been known to utilize man-made areas such as culverts, concrete rubble piles, and artificial dens for breeding sites. In open habitats, they prefer flat, open areas where the vegetation is relatively short, affording an observable vantage point from which to evade potential predators.

Resident burrowing owls are rare in northern San Benito County, although wintering owls are known to occur in the area and have been documented within two miles of the project site. There are no known breeding records of this species in the immediate vicinity of Hollister, although this may due to lack of survey effort rather than reflect true absence. Burrowing owls have low potential to occur on the site due to regular agricultural ground disturbance. Nevertheless, the presence of potential burrow habitat could support wintering owls on the site.

American Badger. American badger is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. It is an uncommon, permanent resident found throughout most of the state, except in the northern North Coast area. Typical habitats include drier open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats with friable soils suitable for burrows. Prey species include fossorial rodents such as rats, mice, chipmunks, ground squirrels, and pocket gophers. Badger diet shifts seasonally depending on the availability of prey and may also include reptiles, insects, earthworms, eggs, birds, and carrion.

This wide-ranging species occurs in plains, prairies, and woodlands; it prefers relatively open, uncultivated ground. Badgers have large home ranges and are generally solitary aside from temporary family groups, transient mating bonds, and overlapping home ranges. The nearest recorded occurrence of this species is within one mile of the site, but the site's proximity to urban uses, lack of continuity with adjacent habitat or migratory routes, and history of regular agricultural disking result in only marginally suitable habitat on the site. Therefore, the species has low potential to occur in the complex of burrows present at the northern edge of the former rock quarry area on the site.

San Joaquin Whipsnake. This species is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. The range of the San Joaquin whipsnake extends from Colusa County in the Sacramento Valley to Kern County in the San Joaquin Valley, and westward into the inner south coast ranges. An isolated population occurs in the Sutter Buttes. Preferred habitat includes open, dry, treeless areas, including grassland and saltbush scrub. This species takes cover in rodent burrows, bushes, trees, and rock piles. They hibernate approximately one foot underground in soil or sand and are diurnal, typically active from March through October. The nearest recorded observation in the project vicinity is along the San Benito River, less than two miles from the project site. The

likelihood of San Joaquin whipsnake occurring on the property is considered very low due to the site's proximity to urban uses, lack of continuity with adjacent habitat, and history of disking; however, on-site open rocky habitats with annual grassland species and available burrows are considered marginally suitable habitat.

Special-Status Bats. The CDFW Species of Special Concern pallid bat, western mastiff bat, and western red bat have low potential to occur on the site due to the presence of marginally suitable roosting habitat consisting of native and non-native trees. See Table 2 above for further details on the habitat requirements for each of these special-status bat species.

Nesting Birds (Including Special-Status Golden Eagle and White-Tailed Kite). Trees and shrubs present within and adjacent to the project site have the potential to provide breeding habitat for nesting birds protected by the California Fish and Game Code and/or the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, including golden eagle and white-tailed kite, state-listed fully protected species with low potential to occur on the project site. If any active nest(s) of protected bird species should occur on or adjacent to the site, then noise-generating construction activities conducted during the bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31) could result in bird nest failure/abandonment.

Regulatory Setting

Federal Laws and Regulations

Federal Endangered Species Act. The Federal Endangered Species Act forms the basis for the protection of threatened or endangered plants and animals. Section 7 imposes limits on the actions of federal agencies that might impact listed species. Section 9 prohibits the "taking" of a listed species by anyone, including private individuals, and state and local agencies. Section 10 requires the issuance of an incidental take permit before any action may be taken that would harm, harass, injure, kill, capture, collect, or otherwise hurt any individual of an endangered or threatened species. In the case of saltwater fish and other marine organisms, the requirements of the Federal Endangered Species Act are enforced by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The USFWS enforces all other cases.

Section 9 of the Federal Endangered Species Act prohibits the "take" of any wildlife species listed as "endangered" or "threatened." "Take" is defined under the Federal Endangered Species Act as follows: "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." "Harm" is defined to mean an act that actually kills or injures wildlife. Such an act may include significant habitat modification or degradation where it actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering. If "take" of a listed species is necessary to complete an otherwise

lawful activity and if a federal agency will carry out, fund, or approve that activity, this triggers the need for consultation under Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act. For those projects that do not involve federal agency action, Section 10 of the Federal Endangered Species Act can be utilized to obtain authorization for the "incidental take" of listed species through development of a habitat conservation plan.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Migratory birds are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act makes it unlawful to take, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any listed migratory bird, including their feathers or other parts, nests, eggs, young, or products, except in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. The vast majority of birds found in the project region are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Clean Water Act, Section 404: Navigable Waters. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a federal agency with regulatory authority over navigable waters and other aquatic sites, including wetlands, which may be impacted by development. The goal of the Clean Water Act (CWA) is to "restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." To meet this objective, the CWA prohibits the discharge of any pollutants into navigable waters, except as allowed by permits issued under Section 404 of the CWA. Section 404 authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to issue permits for and to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill materials into waters of the U.S.

State Laws and Regulations

California Endangered Species Act. Under the California Endangered Species Act, the CDFW maintains a list of endangered and threatened species. Under the California Endangered Species Act, an agency reviewing a proposed project within its jurisdiction must determine whether any state-listed endangered or threatened species may be present in the project area and determine whether the proposed project will have a potentially significant impact on such species. Section 2080 prohibits, among other things, the "take" of state-listed threatened or endangered species. Under California Endangered Species Act, "take" means to "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill," or to attempt any of these acts. However, the CDFW has the authority to permit the "incidental take" of state-listed species, subject to certain conditions.

California Fish and Game Code. Under Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code, it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders of Falconformes or Strigiformes (birds of prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird, except as otherwise provided by the applicable statute and regulations. California statutes also accord "fully protected" status to a number of specifically identified birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. Species subject to this level of protection are listed in Sections 3505 and 3511 (birds), Section 4700 (mammals), and Section 5050 (reptiles and amphibians).

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act/Water Quality Certification. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act is California's comprehensive water pollution statute, and authorizes the State to implement the federal CWA. It specifically regulates the discharge of waste that could affect the quality of the "waters of the State." The Act requires that any person discharging waste that could affect State jurisdictional waters must file a report of discharge with the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB); in turn, the RWQCB determines whether a "Waste Discharge Requirements" permit is required. If an applicant proposes to discharge dredged or fill material into jurisdictional waters, Section 401 of the federal CWA requires that the applicant obtain a Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB to confirm that the discharge will comply with applicable effluent limitations and water quality standards.

Streambed Alteration Agreement. State and local public agencies are subject to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. Under this statute, the CDFW must approve any proposed activity that would substantially divert, obstruct, or alter the natural flow, or substantially modify the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake, the purpose of which is to protect wildlife resources, through the issuance of a Streambed Alteration Agreement.

California Native Plant Protection Act. The California Native Plant Protection Act is intended to preserve, protect, and enhance endangered or rare native plants. The Act directs the CDFW to establish criteria for determining which native plants are rare or endangered. Under the Act, a species is endangered when its prospects for survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes. A species is rare, although not threatened with immediate extinction, if it is in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become endangered if its present environment worsens. This Act prohibits any person from importing into or taking, possessing, or selling within the State any endangered or rare native plant, except as incident to the possession or sale of the real property on which the plant is growing or as otherwise excepted under the Act.

Local Policies and Plans

City of Hollister Municipal Code – Street Tree Regulation

The City of Hollister Municipal Code (City of Hollister 2014) Title 12 (Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places), Chapter 12.24 – Street Trees, Section 12.24.050 states that "no person shall … remove or replace any street tree without prior written authority therefor issued by the director."

Standards of Significance

The following biological resource thresholds for evaluating a project's environmental impacts are based on the state CEQA Guidelines (Appendix G). For purposes of this Draft EIR, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modification, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, endangered, threatened or other 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;
- 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;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, coastal, riverine, stream, marsh, vernal pool, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- 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;
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; and/or
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

The information below identifies the anticipated biological resource impacts of the proposed project. Where potentially significant impacts are identified, an applicable mitigation measure is included to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

Sensitive Natural Communities. The project site does not contain any sensitive natural communities (including riparian habitats). Given the existing site conditions and lack of sensitive natural communities, the proposed project would have no impact on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community.

Wetlands and Waterways. The project site does not contain any wetlands or waterways. Given the existing site conditions and lack of wetlands or waterways, the proposed project would have no impact on wetlands or waterways.

Habitat Conservation Plans. The project site is not located within an area covered by any adopted habitat conservation plan. Given the site location, the proposed project would have no impact on any adopted habitat conservation plan.

WOULD THE PROJECT HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH HABITAT MODIFICATION, ON ANY SPECIES IDENTIFIED AS A CANDIDATE, SENSITIVE, ENDANGERED, THREATENED OR OTHER 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?

Burrowing owls have low potential to occur on the site due to regular agricultural ground disturbance; nevertheless, the presence of potential burrow habitat could support wintering owls on the site. The site's proximity to urban uses, lack of continuity with adjacent habitat or migratory routes, and history of regular agricultural disking result in only marginally suitable American badger habitat on the site; this species has low potential to occur in the complex of burrows present at the northern edge of the former rock quarry area.

The likelihood of San Joaquin whipsnake occurring on the property is considered very low due to the site's proximity to urban uses, lack of continuity with adjacent habitat, and history of disking; however, on-site open rocky habitats with annual grassland species and available burrows are considered marginally suitable habitat. The pallid bat, western mastiff bat, and western red bat have low potential to occur on the site due to the presence of marginally suitable roosting habitat consisting of native and non-native trees.

Finally, given the existing vegetation present on and adjacent to the site, protected nesting birds (including special-status golden eagle and white-tailed kite) have the potential to breed on or adjacent to the site during the bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31).

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Special-Status Species): The project will result in the loss of less than 81 acres (due to designated open space areas) of low to moderate quality wildlife habitat, and based on the presence of suitable habitat on the site, may potentially impact special-status species (burrowing owl, American badger, San Joaquin whipsnake, special-status bats, and nesting birds). Potential impacts to special-status species and protected active bird nests through direct loss of wildlife due to site preparation and construction activities would be considered significant.

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce these significant potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1. Burrowing Owl. To avoid/minimize potential impacts to burrowing owls, the project developer will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a two-visit (i.e. morning and evening) presence/absence survey at areas of suitable habitat on and adjacent to the project site no less than 14 days prior to the start of construction. Surveys shall be conducted according to methods described in the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (CDFW 2012). If these pre-construction "take avoidance" surveys performed during the breeding season (February through August) or the non-breeding season (September through January) for the species locate occupied burrows in or near the construction area, then consultation with the CDFW would be required to interpret survey results and develop a project-specific avoidance and minimization approach.

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-2. American Badger. Prior to the start of construction, a qualified wildlife biologist shall conduct surveys of the grassland and burrow habitat on the site to identify American badger burrows/dens. These surveys shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to the start of construction. If an American badger burrow/den is found during the surveys, coordination with the CDFW shall be undertaken in order to develop a suitable strategy to avoid impacts to the burrow/den. Impacts to active badger dens shall be avoided by establishing exclusion zones around all active badger dens, within which construction related activities shall be prohibited until denning activities are complete or the den is abandoned. A qualified biologist shall monitor each den once per week in order to track the status of the den and to determine when a den area has been cleared for construction.

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-3. San Joaquin Whipsnake. Prior to the start of construction, a qualified wildlife biologist shall conduct surveys of the grassland and burrow habitat found on the site to identify San Joaquin whipsnakes or nests. If San Joaquin whipsnakes are found during pre-construction surveys of the project site, they shall be moved to suitable habitat at least 500 feet outside of the construction impact area. If a whipsnake nest is found during pre-construction surveys, a 100-foot buffer shall be established to prevent construction disturbance until the eggs have hatched and the whipsnakes have dispersed or are relocated to suitable habitat at least 500 feet outside of the construction impact area.

Pre-construction surveys for San Joaquin whipsnake can be conducted in coordination with pre-construction surveys for other species. The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-4. Special-Status Bats. Mature trees removed due to project implementation shall be removed in two stages: stage one will include removal of tree limbs, and stage two will include removal of the main trunk on a subsequent day. This will allow any potentially present, day-roosting bats the opportunity to relocate. If bat roosts are encountered during tree removal, a bat specialist shall be hired to assist in any relocation efforts.

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

BIO-5. Nesting Birds. If construction activities begin during the bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31), or if construction activities are suspended for at least two weeks and recommence during the bird nesting season, then the developer will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey for nesting birds. The survey shall be performed within suitable nesting habitat areas in and adjacent to the site to ensure that no active nests would be disturbed during project implementation. This survey will be conducted no more than two weeks prior to the initiation of construction activities. A report documenting survey results and plan for active bird nest avoidance (if needed) will be completed by the qualified biologist and submitted to the City of Hollister for review and approval prior to construction activities.

If no active bird nests are detected during the survey, then project activities can proceed as scheduled. However, if an active bird nest of a protected species is detected during the survey, then a plan for active bird nest avoidance shall determine and clearly delineate an appropriately sized, temporary protective buffer area around each active nest, depending on the nesting bird species, existing site conditions, and type of proposed construction activities. The protective buffer area around an active bird nest is typically 75-250 feet, determined at the discretion of the qualified biologist.

To ensure that no inadvertent impacts to an active bird nest will occur, no construction activities will occur within the protective buffer area(s) until the juvenile birds have fledged (left the nest), and there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting, as determined by the qualified biologist.

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

With implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-5, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on special-status species by avoiding the direct loss of special-status wildlife and protected active bird nests during site preparation and construction activities.

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?

In general, wildlife movement corridors provide connectivity between habitat areas, enhancing species richness and diversity, and usually also provide cover, water, food, and breeding sites. For example, the nearby San Benito River is a regionally important wildlife movement corridor. However, the agricultural project site is routinely disturbed, and is surrounded mainly by development and active agricultural row crop fields. Wildlife movement across the site is likely restricted to common species that might use the site for local movement opportunities, such as coyote (*Canis latrans*), common raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), and Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*). The agricultural site does not function as a regional wildlife movement corridor connecting important habitat areas or contain native wildlife nursery sites.

The project site, along with the neighboring agricultural properties to the west and north, likely only facilitates limited local movement of urban-adapted generalist wildlife species. The adjacent commercial and residential development areas reduce its functional value for wildlife species moving through the larger landscape.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Wildlife Movement): The proposed project would interfere to a limited extent with the local wildlife movement of urban-adapted generalist species, but provides low functional value for facilitating regional wildlife movement and would not substantially interfere with wildlife movement; therefore, the impact is less than significant.

WOULD THE PROJECT CONFLICT WITH ANY LOCAL POLICIES OR ORDINANCES PROTECTING BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES, SUCH AS A TREE PRESERVATION POLICY OR ORDINANCE?

The proposed project open space areas would retain most on-site native trees and particularly those trees located on sloped ground. Although most of the trees present on the project site are not located along existing streets and will be retained after development within designated open space/sloped areas, some street trees located along North Street at the southern boundary of the site may qualify as city-regulated street trees and may be proposed for removal. This would conflict with the City of Hollister's Street Tree Ordinance (Chapter 12.24 of the municipal code).

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Local Policies or Ordinances): Potential project impacts to city-regulated street trees through tree removal(s) due to site preparation and construction activities would be considered significant.

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this significant potential impact to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure

BIO-6. Prior to removal of any city-regulated street tree(s) along North Street, the project developer shall obtain written authority from the city director to remove the tree(s).

The project developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure.

With implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on local polices or ordinances protecting biological resources by requiring city approval prior to removal of any city-regulated street tree(s).

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section presents the regional and site setting with regard to cultural resources, and discusses the potential for existence of cultural resources at the project site. The following assessment of potential project impacts on these resources is based on information obtained from the Hollister general plan and general plan EIR, and a *Preliminary Archaeological Reconnaissance for the Brigantino Project, Hollister California* (Archaeological Consulting 2007) (archaeological report). This archaeological report was prepared for a previously-proposed project on the project site. One comment regarding the potential archaeological sensitivity of the project site was received during circulation of the NOP. The commenter reported anecdotal information regarding the potential for paleontological resources to be encountered during construction.

Environmental Setting

The project site is located within the area of greater archaeological sensitivity identified on Figure 15 of the city's general plan EIR (City of Hollister 2005b, p. 4.6-2). Archaeologically sensitive areas are illustrated to indicate the general vicinity in which archaeological resources are likely to exist based on topography and location of natural resources such as water. There are no structures on the project site.

Prehistoric Period

The city's general plan EIR (2005b) notes that little is known of the original inhabitants of the Hollister area. Evidence suggests that the Ausayma Indians, who were part of the Costanoan or Ohlone linguistic group, had dwelt in the vicinity since 5,000 B.C. They were generally divided among "tribelets" that occupied villages of generally less than 200 people. Their communities likely occupied sites along the Santa Ana Creek east of Hollister and the San Benito River. The combination of resources that could be found in and beside the watercourses prior to Spanish and American settlement made such areas well suited for human habitation: Tule reeds as thatch material for housing; willows for baskets and poles; oaks for acorns; as well as abundant fish and prey species, e.g. geese, antelope, and mule deer. The tribal economy was subsistence-based. Like most other California Indians, the Ausaymas were exclusively hunter-gatherers. Residual artifacts include shell, stone and bone implements, particularly projectile points.

The archaeological report provides additional information on potential archaeological resources associated with prehistoric habitation patterns in the area. Occupation sites can be expected most often at the confluence of streams, other areas of similar topography along streams, or in the vicinity of springs. These original sources of water may no longer be present or adequate. Also, resource gathering and processing areas, and associated temporary campsites, are frequently found on the coast and in other locations containing resources utilized by the group. Factors which influence the location of these sites include the presence of suitable exposures of rock for bedrock mortars or other milling activities, ecotones, the presence of specific resources (oak groves, marshes, quarries, game trails, trade routes, etc.), proximity to water, and the availability of shelter. Temporary camps or other activity areas can also be found along ridges or other travel corridors.

Historic Period

The city's general plan EIR (2005b) provides a brief background of the history of Hollister. Several Spanish expeditions crossed the San Benito Valley in the late 18th century, and a mission was established in 1797 in San Juan Bautista. Historic settlement in the Hollister area began in 1868 when 50 farmers formed the San Justo Homestead Association and purchased 21,000 acres of land from sheep rancher, Colonel William Hollister. They subdivided the land into homesteads and set aside 100 acres for a town site. The association voted to name the future City Hollister after the prior owner of the Rancho San Justo. Settlement proceeded in and around Hollister, particularly in the wake of the extension of a Southern Pacific Railroad line through the community in 1870.

The city incorporated in 1868 and became the seat of government for the newly-formed San Benito County in 1874. Hollister also became the economic hub of the County, surpassing San Juan Bautista in the 1870's in terms of commerce and social activity. Surrounded by fertile,

alluvial soils, Hollister primarily derived its importance from its traffic in grains grown in the upper San Benito Valley. Some of the best wheat and hay in the state was raised here, and by 1890 Hollister had become known as "Hay City" for being the primary distribution point for the high volume of hay produced in the vicinity.

The Southern Pacific Railroad line reached Hollister in 1870 and Tres Pinos by 1873. The railroad facilitated shipments of the area's hay, grain, cattle and ore production to nearby areas. In 1872, the City of Hollister was incorporated and two years later the County of San Benito was created from the inland portion of Monterey County, and Hollister became the county seat. The City of Hollister continues to be the focus of commercial and social activity in the predominantly agricultural county (San Benito County Historical Society, 2015).

Paleontological Setting

Paleontology is the science of life of past geological periods from fossil remains. Paleontological resources include fossil remains as well as fossil localities and unique geologic formations that have produced fossil materials. Such locations and specimens are important resources. CEQA includes protection for these sensitive resources and requires that they be addressed during the environmental review process.

San Benito County is within the Coast Range physiographic province of California. Bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and Central Valley to the east, the region is typified by northwest-southeast trending mountains ranges and fault systems. From the Upper Cretaceous geological period through the Miocene epoch, much of the Hollister area was covered by shallow, warm seas. Sediment washed from adjacent mountains accumulated in the valleys producing extensive terrestrial sediment deposits, within which paleontological remains are preserved.

Known paleontological resources are located along Tres Pinos Creek, southeast of the city, and approximately six and one half miles southeast of the project site. The paleontological features associated with the Tres Pinos Creek deposit consist primarily of micro fossils and invertebrates, but also include a small number of vertebrate fossils (Mintier Harnish 2010, pp. 10-42 - 10-43).

Site surveys for paleontological resources were not conducted because evidence of paleontological resources is typically not apparent on the ground surface, and would only be discovered in any event during project excavation. No unique geological features are present on the site surface. However, a written comment on the NOP presented anecdotal information of possible mammoth fossils/tusks on the property, citing a 1923 Hollister Freelance news article. According to the commenter, "a tusk was dug up in one of the quarries on Park Hill and shipped off to the University of California...." (The NOP and NOP comment letters are included as Appendix A of this DEIR).

A county-wide database search of the files of the University of California Berkeley Museum of Paleontology, and the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology was undertaken in 2010 as part of the County's 2035 general plan update. The results are summarized in the *San Benito County General Plan Background Report* (Mintier Harnish 2010). According to the background report, the first major paleontological discovery in the county occurred in 1937. This find consisted of "the most complete Plesiosaur skeleton ever found" and was excavated from the Moreno Formation in the Panoche Hills (p. 10-42). The background report notes that fossils are found in the Moreno and Tremblor Formations, the exposed faces, of which, are located mostly within the Panoche-Coalinga area of the county. Other invertebrates, vertebrates, and plant fossils have been found in other areas, primarily in rock formations in the southern portion of the County. The background report did not identify any paleontological finds in the vicinity of the city limit.

Another search of the database records for localities with the City of Hollister and San Benito County was conducted with assistance from a University of California Berkeley Museum of Paleontology Senior Museum Scientist and Collection Manager (Dr. Ken Finger, pers. com., March 9, 2015). This search confirmed that there is no record of the referenced find in the museum database. According to the collection manager, there are over 100 localities for paleontological resources in San Benito County and most of the listed "localities" are not from a geologic era where mammoth bones/fossils would occur. In summary, there are no known paleontological resources or unique geological features within the boundaries of the project site; however, it is possible that the anecdotal reference has some merit; therefore, this analysis assumes that the project area may be sensitive for paleontological resources.

Archaeological Reconnaissance

The archaeological report was prepared based on the results of a field reconnaissance of the project site and a background records search at the Northwest Regional Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System, located at Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park. The regional information centers have been established by the California Office of Historic Preservation as the local repository for all archaeological reports which are prepared under cultural resource management regulations. The background literature search at the appropriate regional information center is required by state guidelines and current professional standards. Following completion of the project, a copy of the report must be deposited with that organization.

The literature searches are undertaken to determine if there are any previously recorded archaeological resources within the project site, and whether the site has been included in any previous archaeological research or reconnaissance project. The record search of the Northwest Regional Information Center files found that there are seven cultural resources recorded within a kilometer (approximately one-half mile) of the project site, one prehistoric archaeological site

and six historic resources. None are located on or immediately adjacent to the project site. Approximately four acres in the extreme southern portion of the project site was included in a previous study conducted in 2004 for the extension of North Street. The California Inventory of Historical Resources, California Historical Landmarks, and the National Register of Historic Places were also checked for listed cultural resources which might be present in the project area; none were discovered. No improvements are depicted on the site on an 1868 General Land Office Plat map, an 1859 Rancho San Justo Plat map, or the 1923 USGS Hollister Quadrangle map.

The field reconnaissance was conducted on May 18, 2007. The survey consisted of a "general surface reconnaissance" of all parts of the project area which could reasonably be expected to contain visible cultural resources, and which could be viewed without major vegetation removal or excavation. At the time of the field survey, most of the project site had been disked, providing very good soil visibility. Part of the southeastern corner remained in tall weeds, limiting visibility there to rodent burrows and trails. The flat eastern part of the project area was in cultivation. Overall, soil surface visibility was considered adequate for the purposes of this reconnaissance (p. 1). None of the materials frequently associated with prehistoric archaeological resources in this area (dark midden soil, eroded marine shell fragments, bones or bone fragments, fire-altered rocks, flaked or ground stone, bedrock mortars, etc.) were noted during the survey. A sparse scattering of modern materials were observed throughout the southern part of the hilly project area, including ceramics, ferrous metal, brick, and clam shell. However, no potentially significant historic period archaeological materials were noted (p. 4).

Regulatory Setting

State Historic Criteria

Under CEQA, a "unique archaeological resource" is defined as an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria: (1) contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information; (2) has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type; or (3) is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person (Public Resources Code, Section 21083.2 (h)).

If an archaeological site does not meet the criteria for inclusion on the CRHR but does meet the definition of a unique archeological resource as outlined in Public Resources Code section 21083.2, it is entitled to special protection or attention under CEQA. Treatment options under

section 21083.2 include activities that preserve such resources in place in an undisturbed state. Other acceptable methods of mitigation under Section 21083.2 include excavation and curation or study in place without excavation and curation.

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, subdivision (e) and California Health and Safety Code section 7050.5 require that construction or excavation be stopped in the vicinity of discovered human remains until the county coroner has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required. Additionally, if the remains are of Native American origin, work may not resume unless:

- the descendants of the deceased Native Americans have made a timely recommendation to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code section 5097.98;
- the Native American Heritage Commission was unable to identify a descendant or the descendant failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the Commission; or
- the landowner or his or her authorized representative rejects any timely recommendations of the descendent, and mediation conducted by the Native American Heritage Commission has failed to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.

The CEQA Guidelines also specify the procedures to be followed in case of the discovery of human remains on non-federal land. The disposition of Native American burials falls within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission.

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(a)(i) defines an historical resource as, among other things, a resource listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). In addition, a resource is presumed to constitute an historical resource if it is included in a local register of historical resources unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5 (a)(2)).

A cultural resource is considered "significant" if it qualifies as eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). Properties that are eligible for listing in the CRHR must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
2. Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history;

3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values; and/or

4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

Archaeological resources may also be historically significant. Further, a property may be automatically listed in the CRHR if it is formally determined eligible for the National Register of Historical Places (NRHP). Properties that are formally determined eligible for the NRHP are those that are designated as such through one of the federal preservation programs administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation.

The CRHR interprets the integrity of a cultural resource based upon its physical authenticity. A historic cultural resource must retain its historic character or appearance and thus be recognizable as a historic resource. Integrity is evaluated by examining the subject's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. If the subject has retained these qualities, it may be said to have integrity. It is possible that a cultural resource may not retain sufficient integrity to be listed in the NRHP yet still be eligible for listing in the CRHR. If a cultural resource retains the potential to convey significant historical/scientific data, it may be said to retain sufficient integrity for potential listing in the CRHR.

City of Hollister Municipal Code

The city's Municipal Code Section 17.16.030 archaeological and historic resources, addresses the incidental disruption of archaeological or historic resources discovered during any construction. This section requires cessation of construction activity, notification of the Planning Department and examination by a qualified archaeologist or historian for historic resources, so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded, subject to the approval of the Director, and disposition of artifacts may occur in compliance with applicable State and Federal laws.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines appendix G indicates that a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5;

- cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5;

- directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature; and/or
- disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Analysis

Historic Architectural Resources. There are no structures on the project site and the site is not located within a historic district. Archival evidence noted in the archaeological report indicates that the site has been historically vacant since 1859. Therefore, no impacts to significant historic architectural resources would result from the proposed project and no further analysis of this issue is required.

Would the Project Cause a Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of an Archaeological Resource Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?

The archival research indicates that the project site is not located within a recorded archaeological deposit, although several archaeological studies have occurred within one half mile of the project site, and a portion of the southern corner of the site was previously assessed for archaeological resources.

However, there remains potential that discovery of unknown and unanticipated buried cultural resources could occur during grading and construction activities. Damage to significant cultural resources would be considered a significant adverse environmental impact.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Damage to Archaeological Resources): During site preparation and construction of the project, previously undiscovered archaeological resources could be accidentally discovered; damage of these undiscovered resources would be considered a significant impact.

The following mitigation measure would reduce the potential impact to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure

CR-1. The project developer shall include the following language on all bid and construction documents:

> In the event that cultural resources are discovered, work within a 50-meter radius (165 feet) of the find shall be stopped, the Planning Department notified, and a qualified archaeologist (who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in archaeology and/or history) shall be retained to examine the find and make appropriate recommendations. Such measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, or other appropriate measures consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21083.2. The project developer shall be required to implement the identified measures for the protection of cultural resources.

The proposed project also is subject to compliance with Hollister Municipal Code Section 17.16.030. In addition to compliance with this code provision, implementation of mitigation measure CR-1 would require construction to be halted and appropriate evaluation and actions be taken should archaeological resources be discovered during construction. Implementation of the mitigation measure would reduce potentially significant impacts associated with significant archaeological resources to a less-than-significant level.

WOULD THE PROJECT DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DESTROY A UNIQUE PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCE OR SITE OR UNIQUE GEOLOGIC FEATURE?

Development of the proposed project could result in the potential destruction or damage of paleontological resources (i.e., fossils, fossil formations) that may be present below ground. The project site has not been surveyed for paleontological resources. No unique geological features are present on the site surface. However, there is a possibility of the unanticipated discovery of paleontological resources during ground-disturbing activities associated with construction. Therefore, development of the project could impact significant paleontological resources that have not yet been discovered, which could result in a significant impact.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Damage to Paleontological Resources): During site preparation and construction of the project, previously undiscovered paleontological resources could be accidentally discovered; disruption of these undiscovered resources would be considered a significant impact.

The following mitigation measure would reduce the potential impact to a less-than-significant level.

CR-2. The project developer shall include the following language on all construction and bid documents:

> In the event that any previously undiscovered paleontological resources are discovered, all work within a 50-meter radius (165 feet) of the finding shall be stopped, the County Planning Department notified, and a qualified paleontologist retained to examine the find and make appropriate recommendations, including, if necessary, feasible mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The project developer shall be required to implement the identified mitigation measures for the protection of paleontological resources.

Implementation of mitigation measure CR-2 would require construction to be halted and appropriate evaluation and actions be taken should paleontological resources be discovered during construction. Implementation of the mitigation measure would reduce potentially significant impacts associated with unique paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level.

WOULD THE PROJECT DISTURB ANY HUMAN REMAINS, INCLUDING THOSE INTERRED OUTSIDE OF FORMAL CEMETERIES?

Development of the proposed project could result in the potential destruction or damage of human remains as yet to be discovered on the site. Previously undiscovered archaeological resources, including human remains, could be present on the site and accidentally discovered during earth moving activities associated with site preparation and construction of the proposed project.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Disturbance of Human Remains): Site preparation and construction of the project could result in the potential disturbance of human remains as yet to be discovered on the site; destruction or damage of human remains would be considered a significant impact.

The following mitigation measure is required to minimize the impact.

CR-3. In the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains on the project site, the City of Hollister will ensure that this language is included in all construction documents in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(e):

> "If human remains are found during construction there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the coroner of San Benito County is contacted to determine that

no investigation of the cause of death is required. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descendent from the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent may then make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The landowner or their authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance if: a) the Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a most likely descendent or the most likely descendent failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission; b) the descendent identified fails to make a recommendation; or c) the landowner or their authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendent, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner."

Implementation of mitigation measure CR-3 would require construction to be halted and appropriate evaluation and actions be taken should human remains be discovered during construction. Implementation of the mitigation measures would reduce potentially significant impacts associated with accidental discovery of human remains to a less-than-significant level.

3.6 FIRE SERVICES

The discussion in this section is based upon information contained in the *Plan For Services North Street Residential Project City of Hollister/County of San Benito, CA* (Kimley-Horn 2014) (plan for services), and information contained in the city's general plan and general plan EIR. LAFCo comments on the NOP requested analysis of fire prevention and protection services.

Environmental Setting

The project site is located within the existing service area of the City of Hollister Fire Department. The fire department is the primary provider of fire protection services within the entire county, and is the first responder for emergency medical services, medical aid requests, vehicle accidents, specialized rescue and fire suppression, and fire prevention services including building plan review, site inspection and public education, arson investigation, and hazardous material releases.

The fire department operates four fire stations. Station 1 is located at 110 5th Street between East Street and Sally Street, a distance of about one-half mile from the southern portion of the site at North Street. Station 1 consists of four personnel, one engine, a rescue vehicle and a ladder truck. Station 2 is located on the southern side of the city at 1000 Union Road between Valley View Road and Airline Highway, a distance of over three miles southeast of the project site. This station consists of one engine, a brush engine and water tender manned by four personnel. Station 3 is currently under construction near the intersection of Flynn Road and Aerostar Drive but is operational and staffed with one engine and four personnel. Station 4 is located in the City of San Juan Bautista, as the Hollister fire department contractually provides service to the City of San Juan Bautista, and consists of one engine and staffed with two personnel (Josh Buzzetta, telephone interview, March 4, 2015). Fire Chief Leo Alvarez (phone message, March 30, 2015) stated that the Hollister Fire Department's response time goal is five minutes.

The San Benito County Fire Department provides initial response in certain areas of the city under an automatic aid agreement between the City of Hollister and the County of San Benito. In turn, the Hollister Fire Department has a mutual aid agreement with the County of San Benito for fire protection in unincorporated areas just beyond the Hollister city limits. The San Benito County Fire Station, operates under contract with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire), and is located at 1979 Fairview Road. CalFire is a State wildland fire agency established to protect non-Federal, unincorporated lands within California.

When available, CalFire also assists with fire protection services in San Benito County, including areas adjacent to the project site. However, CalFire is not automatically dispatched to EMS calls either within their districts or the automatic aid areas, but responds only on the request of a law enforcement agency or other fire protection agency (City of Hollister 2005b). Five CalFire stations and bases are located in San Benito County, including the Hollister Station on Fairview Road east of the city and facilities at the Hollister Airport.

Regulatory Setting

State

Fire Hazard Severity Zones. California Public Resources Code Sections 4201-4204 and California Government Code Sections 51175-89 direct CalFire to map areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. These zones, referred to as Fire Hazard Severity Zones are used to identify appropriate mitigation strategies to reduce risk associated with wildland fires. The project site is not located in a fire hazard severity zones (CalFire 2015).

City of Hollister General Plan

The following policies and implementing actions of the general plan are applicable to the proposed project.

Policies

LU2.2 Fiscally Sound Development. Evaluate the fiscal impact of projects as part of the development review process to assure that new development does not reduce standards or unduly increase the burden on existing residents.

CSF1.1 Adequate Capabilities and Capacity of Local Public Services. Ensure that future growth does not exceed the capabilities and capacity of local public services such as wastewater collection and treatment, local water supply systems, fire and police protection, maintenance of streets and roads, local school systems, parks and recreational facilities, and landfill capacity, and ensure that public services meet Federal and State standards and are available in a timely fashion.

CSF1.2 New Development Requirements for Public Services. Require new development applications to identify the impacts that the proposed development would have on the provision of public services, and approve those applications that can mitigate impacts or contribute a proportional fair share so that local public services can be maintained at an acceptable level.

CSF1.3 Performance Standards. Require all applicants proposing development projects within the Hollister Planning Area to meet performance standards for community services and facilities to be established in the Performance Standards Ordinance. Once adopted, require applications for new development to provide evidence that such development will meet all performance standards prior to approval, as provided by the Performance Standards Ordinance.

CSF1.6 Other Infrastructure Planning. Require the preparation of infrastructure master plans in areas outside the designated Sphere of Influence as a prerequisite to annexation. Such plans shall contain, but not be limited to, plans for sewer services, water service, storm drainage, traffic circulation, recreation facilities, school facilities and funding alternatives for police and fire services.

CSF1.7.3 Development Review Criteria for Public Services. Prior to granting approval, evaluate each new development in terms of whether the proposed development would be located within the existing service areas of local service providers (fire protection, police protection, solid waste disposal, schools, etc.), and not result in a reduction in their current capabilities.

CSF4.8 Fire Safety. Ensure that development within the Hollister Planning Area does not exceed the capability of the Hollister Fire Department and the San Benito County Fire Department to provide an adequate level of fire protection.

CSF4.11 Requirements for Fire Safety. Ensure that all new development will be adequately designed to minimize risks to life and property through the implementation of the Fire Protection Master Plan. New development will be protected from fire hazards through the provision of peak load water supply systems capable of providing the flow required for fire suppression, through the design of roads with adequate widths and turning radii, and through adequate separation between buildings, prior to project approval.

Implementing Actions

CSF.D.3 Adopt a performance standards ordinance. As part of the ordinance, establish procedures for the review and referral of applications to ensure that adequate fire protection can be provided for the proposed development.

CSF.II Require fire agency review. Require the appropriate fire protection agency to review all development proposals within the Hollister Planning Area to verify that the peak-load water supply system will provide an adequate flow of water for fire suppression, and to ensure that there are adequate road widths and turning radii, and adequate separation distances between buildings to meet the fire protection standards established in the Fire Protection Master Plan.

CSF.JJ Require fire protection mitigation in new development. Require individual project developers to negotiate with the Hollister Fire Department to determine additional mitigation for proposed projects prior to the issuance of building permits. Such mitigation may include the payment of impact fees, the development of new fire protection facilities and/or the provision of firefighting equipment.

Hollister Municipal Code

Municipal Code Chapter 3.16, Police and Fire Protection Fees, requires the payment of impact fees to offset the costs of additional manpower and equipment demands due to the development and growth of new residential areas. The fees are fixed by the city council from time to time, by resolution, and the payment of these fees is required prior to the issuance of a building permit or the filing of a parcel or final map, whichever occurs first. Fees are dedicated for the hiring of new personnel and procurement of equipment associated with new personnel.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that a project may result in a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- Result in the need for new or altered fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable response times or other performance objectives.
- 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.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

Significant Risk of Wildland Fire. This impact may be considered significant if the proposed project would 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. According to CalFire's San Benito County Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map (2007), the project site is not located fire hazard severity zone. The project site is located in the San Benito County Local Responsibility Area, which does not contain "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones" (CalFire 2015). The project site is not located in an area prone to wildland fire or excessive fuel loading, and the city's fire station, Station 1, is located at 110 5th Street between East Street and Sally Street, a distance of about one-half mile from the site, and is readily accessible to emergency and fire personnel should an incident occur.

The project site is not located in an area identified by CalFire as prone to wildland fire or excessive fuel loading; therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Fire Protection Facilities. The closest fire station to the site is Station 1 located at 110 5th Street between East Street and Sally Street, roughly one-half mile from the southern portion of the site. Fire Chief Leo Alvarez (phone message, March 30, 2015) stated that the Hollister Fire Department's response time to the project site is approximately three minutes. Because the project site is located within the Hollister Fire Department's response time standard, no new fire facilities would be required to serve the project.

Development of the residential uses on the project site consistent with the tentative map would result in an increase the service demand for fire protection and prevention. According to the plan for services, the incremental increases in staffing will be financed by the imposition of a Mello-Roos public safety tax. Project applicants of individual projects within the project site would be required to pay fire impact fees in order to finance any incremental increases in fire services. The purpose of these impact fees is to mitigate the cumulative effect on fire facilities from build-out of the general plan. Additionally, development in the project site would be required to implement current fire safety codes in compliance with the California Building Code, Uniform Fire Code and obtain approval from the city for design features such as project access and turning radii, road grades and road widths adequate for emergency equipment access. Since future residential development of the site would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of or need for new or physically altered fire facilities, no environmental impact is anticipated.

3.7 Geology and Soils

This section of the Draft EIR provides a discussion of the project site's geologic, seismic, and soil conditions. The project's potential impacts related to existing geologic, seismic and soil conditions are evaluated and feasible mitigation measures are proposed where applicable. No comments regarding geology or soils were received in response to the NOP.

The following analysis is based in part on a geologic assessment and supplement prepared by T Makdissy Consulting, Inc. in 2013 entitled *Geologic Assessment of the Brigantino Property North of North Street and Thompson Street Intersection, Hollister, California for DeNova Homes* (2013a) and *Updated 2010 CBC Seismic Criteria, and Supplemental Foundation Design Recommendations* (2013b), and their supplemental letter report: *The Brigantino Property Hollister, California, Geologic Input for Environmental Impact Report* (2015) (hereinafter "2015 report"). These reports are included as Appendix F.

The geologic assessments included: field testing, research and review of relevant geologic literature, stereoscopic aerial photographs, geologic maps, Alquist-Priolo maps, seismic hazard maps, and a probabilistic earthquake study; performance of geologic field reconnaissance,

including sampling and soil borings at the site, laboratory testing of selected soil samples, and analysis of the collected data. The 2015 report summarizes the findings of the geologic assessments and provides additional background and recommendations.

Environmental Setting

Regional Geologic Setting

The project site is located in the California Coast Range Geomorphic Province near the City of Hollister. The primary local geologic feature is the Hollister Valley, which is bounded on the southwest by the San Andreas fault zone and the Gabilan Mountain Range, which is composed of granitic and Tertiary marine, as well as volcanic rocks. To the north and east, the valley is bounded by the Diablo Mountain Range, which is composed of metamorphosed marine sedimentary and igneous rocks of the Franciscan Formation and Great Valley Sequence.

The active San Andreas and Calaveras faults strongly influence the geologic structure in the Hollister area. These northwest-striking faults are characterized by mainly strike-slip displacement. Movement along the San Andreas and Calaveras faults caused uplift of the basement rocks bordering the valley. The resulting combination of faulting and folding formed a structural basin that was a seaway during late Miocene to Pliocene time (T. Makdissy Consultants 2015).

As noted in the 2015 report (p. 2), extensive flood plain sediments ("San Benito Gravels; QTsb") were deposited in the valley during the Pliocene and Pleistocene eras. Subsidence caused by Pleistocene tectonic activity resulted in deposition of sand, silt, and clay over the San Benito Gravels. These deposits are interpreted as late Pleistocene - Holocene age deposits from a large lake or alternatively as shallow, short lived lakes in a fluvial environment. Lowering of sea-level and tectonic uplift during the Holocene resulted in down-cutting by the San Benito River, alluvial fan formation, and mass wasting of upland areas by landslides and erosion.

Medium-textured flood-plain deposits consist mainly of stiff sandy silt and silty clay with lenses of clean sand. The 2015 report notes that exploratory trenches in downtown Hollister exposed subsurface materials indicating a fluvial depositional setting rather than a lakebed environment for these types of deposits (p. 2). Also, Sorrento series soils are associated with the medium-textured flood-plain deposits.

Faulting and Seismicity

The project site is situated in the seismically active San Francisco and Monterey Bay Areas. Relatively strong, damaging earthquakes occur fairly frequently in the Hollister area.

Historically, earthquakes have caused strong ground shaking and damage in the region that includes San Benito County, the most recent being the 1989 moment magnitude 6.9 Loma Prieta earthquake. According to Rogers (1980, as cited by T. Makdissy Consultants 2015), between 1800 and 1961 at least 19 earthquakes he defined as "major" caused damage in the City of Hollister. Since 1961, two additional earthquakes have caused significant damage in Hollister, namely the 1976 "Coyote Lake" earthquake and the 1984 "Morgan Hill" earthquake, which suggests that earthquakes capable of causing damage in Hollister occur on the average of about once every decade. According to the 2015 report, a major earthquake is likely to produce strong ground shaking effects within the region sometime during the next 30 years. Earthquakes on active or potentially active faults, depending on their magnitude and distance from the project site, could produce a wide range of ground shaking intensities.

While seismologists cannot predict earthquake events, the U.S. Geological Survey's Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities assesses the likelihood of earthquake occurrences and periodically updates its Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast (UCERF) publication. The 2015 UCERF assessment determined that the estimated rate of earthquakes around magnitude 6.7 (the size of the destructive 1994 Northridge earthquake) has gone down by about 30 percent from 2008 estimates. The 2015 estimate for the likelihood that California will experience a magnitude 8 or larger earthquake in the next 30 years has increased from about 4.7 percent to about 7.0 percent. UCERF estimates that each region of California will experience a magnitude 6.7 or larger earthquake in the next 30 years. Additionally, there is a 63 percent chance of at least one magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake occurring within the San Francisco Bay - Monterey Bay region and adjacent areas, including San Benito County, between 2007 and 2036 (T. Makdissy Consultants 2015, p. 5).

Project Site Setting

A number of preliminary geologic assessments have been conducted in the vicinity and on the project site. Site-specific assessments were prepared in 2007, 2008, and 2013. (T Makdissy Consultants 2013a) evaluated a portion of the site located within the City of Hollister city limits (referred to in the report as "parcel 3") and a portion of the site within the county jurisdiction and also within a State of California Earthquake Fault Zone (referred to in the report as "parcel 1"). The remainder of the project site, which includes the former landfill area, is referred to as "parcel 2" in the report but was not included in the geologic assessment. Parcel 2 is roughly consistent with the area identified as Parcel C and Parcel D in the vesting tentative map (refer to Figure 8, Vesting Tentative Map presented earlier).

A supplemental assessment was prepared for the site (T Makdissy Consultants 2013b) which provided supplemental geotechnical information, updated 2010 seismic criteria and supplemental foundation recommendations. The 2015 report summarizes the findings of the

previous reports and evaluates the remainder of the project site, in particular Parcel C, based upon review of published regional sources and additional information provided by the applicants.

Intensity Criteria for Earthquakes

Earthquake magnitude is a measure of the total amount of energy released in an earthquake. With increasing magnitude (i.e., larger earthquakes), ground motions are stronger, last longer, and are felt over larger areas. Earthquake intensity is a measure of the effects of earthquake ground motions on people and buildings. Earthquake intensity is often more useful than magnitude when discussing the damaging effects of earthquakes. The most common intensity scale is the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale, which ranges from I to XII. Table 11, Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale for Earthquakes, describes the effects of earthquakes and compares the Richter Scale (magnitude) to the Modified Mercalli Scale (intensity).

Classification of Faults

In addition to the Modified Mercalli Scale that classifies the intensity of the event, faults are classified according to criteria provided by the Uniform Building Code, as identified in Table 12, Uniform Building Code Fault Classifications.

Topography. The site encompasses a ridge and a relatively flat alluvial plain in the eastern portion of the site that extends up to the railroad right-of-way at the east property line (T Makdissy Consultants 2013b). A high, steep slope transects the center of the property with a sinuous northwesterly trend. Gradients along this slope range from 2: 1 to l: 1 or steeper locally. There is a large, north facing cut slope at the north property line.

Underlying Geology and Subsurface Characteristics. The geotechnical investigations conducted prior to 2015 revealed information about subsurface conditions. Investigations within the ridgetop and flanks of the site revealed that the surface and near-surface soils consist of exposed residual soil, colluvial soil (loose rock and soil at the base of slopes) and local accumulations of fill overlying sediments belonging to the San Benito Formation as well as materials associated with a fault zone (T. Makdissy Consultants 2015). Trenching in the alluvial flat within the southeastern corner of the site exposed residual soils overlying alluvial deposits (T. Makdissy Consultants 2013a).

Table 11 Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale for Earthquakes

Richter Magnitude Scale	Modified Mercalli Scale	Effects of Intensity
0.1-3.0	I	Earthquake shaking not felt.
0.1-3.0	II	Shaking felt by those at rest.
3.0-4.0	III	Felt by most people indoors; some can estimate duration of shaking.
4.0-5.0	IV	Felt by most people indoors. Hanging objects rattle, wooden walls, frames creak.
4.0-5.0	V	Felt by everyone indoors; many estimate duration of shaking. Standing autos rock. Crockery clashes, dishes and glasses rattle. Doors open, close and swing.
5.0-6.0	VI	Felt by all; many frightened and run outdoors. Some heavy furniture moved; a few instances of fallen plaster or damaged chimneys. Damage slight.
6.0	VII	People frightened and walls unsteady. Pictures and books thrown, dishes/glass is broken. Weak chimneys break. Plaster, loose bricks and parapets fall.
6.0-7.0	VIII	Difficult to stand, waves on ponds, cohesionless soils slump. Stucco and masonry walls fall. Chimneys, stacks, towers, elevated tanks twist and fall.
7.0	IX	General fright as people are thrown down. Hard to drive, trees broken, damage to foundations and frames. Reservoirs damaged, underground pipelines break.
7.0-8.0	X	General panic, ground cracks, masonry and frame buildings destroyed. Bridges destroyed, dams, dikes and embankments damaged. Railroads bent.
8.0	XI	Large landslides, water thrown, general destruction of buildings; pipelines destroyed; railroads bent.
8.0+	XII	Total nearby damage, rock masses displaced. Lines of sight/level distorted. Objects thrown into air.

***Source*:** United States Geologic Survey 2015.

Table 12 Uniform Building Code Fault Classifications

Fault Type	Characteristics
A	Faults that have a Richter magnitude potential of 7.0 and a slip rate equal to or greater than 5 millimeters/year. These types of faults are considered to be active and capable of producing large magnitude events. Most segments of the San Andreas Fault are classified as a Type A fault.
B	All faults that are not Type A or Type C. Includes most of the active faults in California.
C	Faults that have a Richter magnitude potential of less than 6.5 and a slip rate of less than or equal to 2 millimeters/year. These faults are considered to be sufficiently inactive and not capable of producing large magnitude events, such that potential near-source ground shaking effects can be ignored. Most faults outside of California are Type C.

***Source*:** California Building Standards Commission, 2010 California Building Code California Code of Regulations

The site has been quarried extensively in the past for sand and gravel deposits for construction fill, primarily in the northern portion of the site (T Makdissy Consultants 2013a), and within Parcel C. The former quarry within the northern portion of the site provides the only exposures of subsurface earth materials onsite. Local accumulations of fill overlie the surficial soils and San Benito Formation at the site. Within the quarry exposures, colluvial and residual soils and local fills also overlie sediments of the San Benito Formation; the most extensive exposure of near surface soils and subsurface geologic units was identified within a large quarry (T. Makdissy Consultants, 2013a).

The majority of the site is underlain by San Benito Formation, with an alluvial plain in the eastern portion of the site underlain by Holocene alluvial and lake-formed deposits. To date, twenty three exploratory borings and eight test pit excavations have been conducted and logged as part of two previous geotechnical feasibility investigations on the project site (T. Makdissy Consultants, 2013b). Additionally, approximately 2,282 feet of exploratory fault trenching has been performed within various parts of the property. These excavations have confirmed the ridge top and adjacent flanks (slopes) are underlain by Plio-Pleistocene San Benito Formation and the low-lying eastern portion of the site is underlain by Holocene lake and streambed deposits. The 2015 report also notes that site investigations conducted in 2007 and 2008 depicted and described old alluvium overlying the San Benito Formation across the ridge top. However, the 2015 report noted that more recent found that these investigations are inconsistent with previous published mapping as well as the most recent site-specific investigation (T. Makdissy, 2013a) which did not identify old alluvium at the site.

The 2015 report (pp. 2-3) notes that the deposits on the site consist generally of the following materials:

1. unconsolidated, horizontally stratified, fine grained sands, silts and clays located on the eastern portion and western edge of the site (depth undetermined);

2. semi-consolidated, crudely stratified sequences of sands, sandy gravels, silts and clays folded into a series of somewhat parallel, northwest trending anticlines and subtle synclines across the southern portion of the ridge, whereas in the northern portion of the site the stratification is primarily flat. This unit has been affected by the regional and local tectonic stresses (T. Makdissy, 2013a);

3. surficial "Basin Deposits" located within the southwestern portion of the property characterized as clayey sand or unconsolidated plastic clay and silty clay; and

4. undocumented fill in the former Hart Landfill (to depths of 20 feet), near the southern portion of the site (to a depth of 8 ft), and within and adjacent to the abandoned quarry pits in the northern portion of the property. In general, undocumented fill has the potential to settle over time and in response to changing groundwater and runoff conditions, as well as seismic shaking conditions.

Soil Characteristics. According to the Soil Survey of San Benito County (1969), soils on the project site consist of four types: Antioch loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes, eroded (AnC2); Mined land and dumps, undifferentiated group (MnG); Soper gravelly loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, eroded (SIE2); and Sorrento silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (SrA). On-site soils consist primarily of Antioch loam (refer to Figure 14, Soil Map and Table 2, Project Site Soils Agricultural Characteristics, presented earlier). The characteristics of these soil types is presented below

Antioch loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes, eroded. This soil series consists of moderately well-drained soils that formed in alluvium derived from a wide range of sedimentary rocks. These soils have a loamy surface and clayey subsoil. These soils are found on long terraces and fans, and nearly level to strongly sloping. Runoff is slow, and the hazard of erosion is slight. The site consists of more than 40 percent Antioch loam, and this soil is the most prevalent on the project site.

Mined land and dumps, undifferentiated group. These soils areas are generally bare, but a few of the older quarries have a thin cover of grass and forbs. Drainage is generally excessive, runoff is rapid, and silt production is high. Less than one percent of the site is mined land and dumps.

Soper gravelly loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, eroded. Soils in this series are well drained loamy soils that are underlain by stratified, semi-consolidated sand and gravel at a depth of 30 to 48 inches. Soper soils are used mostly for dryland pasture and range. On soper gravelly loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, eroded, soil runoff is rapid and the hazard of erosion is severe. More than 36 percent of the site is soper gravelly loam.

Sorrento silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes. The Sorrento series consists of well-drained, loamy soils that formed in alluvium derived from calcareous sandstone and shale.

Undocumented Fill. As noted previously, accumulations of undocumented (non-engineered) fills exist in the southwestern portion of the property, in the general area of Parcel C as well as the extreme southern portion of the property. As reported by T. Makdissy Consultants (2015), the fills encountered in portions of the site are considered to have a potential for seismically induced settlement. Non-engineered fills on slopes or at slope crests can serve as source material for debris flows as well.

Groundwater. Both branches of the Calaveras Fault have disrupted groundwater patterns in the Hollister area. The 2015 report (p. 3) notes that a water well survey taken between 1913 and 1919 indicates historical (depth to) ground water levels have varied between 30 feet to 50 feet deep within the alluvial plan immediately to the east of Park Hill and to greater than 50 feet within Park Hill itself. Groundwater was not encountered in the recent soil borings conducted at the site, the deepest of which extended to a depth of 40 feet below the alluvial plain in the eastern portion of the site. Fluctuations in the groundwater table can be expected with changes in seasonal rainfall, urbanization, and construction activities at or in the vicinity of the project site.

Faulting and Seismicity. As noted previously, the Hollister area is considered an area of high seismicity with earthquakes strong enough to cause damage. Several active and potentially active faults are located within the Hollister Valley; the San Andreas, the Calaveras (Main Branch and Eastern Branch), the Tres Pinos Fault (a southern extension of the Calaveras fault), the Quien Sabe Fault, the Sargent Fault. The active San Andreas fault lies approximately eight miles to the west of the project site. The Calaveras fault, a branch of the San Andreas fault, bisects the City of Hollister and the main trace of this fault is located essentially at, or just beyond, the west property line of the site (T. Makdissy Consulting 2013a page 8). A collapsed fold line is also present at the southeastern corner of the site. The California Geological Survey divides the Calaveras fault into northern and southern sections, with an estimated earthquake recurrence interval for the southern section at 33 years and an estimated recurrence interval for the northern section at 146 years. Faults that have the possibility of causing significant ground shaking at the project site are listed in Table 13, Late Quaternary Faults in the Project Vicinity.

Table 13 Late Quaternary Faults in the Project Vicinity

Fault	Distance[1]	Activity[2]	Classification[3]	Earthquake Magnitude[4]
Calaveras, Southern Segment	Crosses the western portion of the site	<150	Active	6.2
Sargent Fault Zone, Southeastern section	2.2 miles to the northwest	<15,000	Recently Active	6.8
San Andreas Fault, Santa Cruz Mountains segment	13.0 miles west-northwest	<150	Active	7.0
San Andreas Fault, Creeping Segment	5 miles southwest	<150	Actively Creeping	N/A
Zayante-Vergeles Fault	9.4 miles west	<15,000	Potentially Active	6.2
Quien Sabe Fault	4.7 miles northeast	<15,000	Potentially Active	6.4

Source: T. Makdissy Consultants 2015

Note: 1. Distance from project site

2. Most recent activity in years. Defines one of three time categories in which the most recent prehistoric surface-rupturing or surface-deforming earthquake occurred based on geologically recognizable evidence of faulting, folding, or liquefaction. The categories are (1) Historic (<150 years), (2) latest Quaternary (<15 ka), and (3) late Quaternary (<130 ka).

3. An "active" fault is defined by the State of California as a fault that has had surface displacement within Holocene time (approximately the last 10,000 years). A "potentially active" fault is defined as a fault that has shown evidence of surface displacement during the Quaternary (last 1.6 million years), unless direct geologic evidence demonstrates inactivity for all of the Holocene or longer.

4. Anticipated Maximum Moment Magnitude

The 2015 report provides further delineation of the trace faults on the project site and notes that these faults have been identified by the State of California as being capable of producing earthquakes larger than moment magnitude 6 in the vicinity of the project site (p. 7). Figure 16, On-site Trace Faults, presents an overlay of the trace fault and collapsed fold line locations on the project site, and conceptual Building Exclusion Zones, within which no habitable buildings would be constructed. A 135-wide zone is proposed on the northwestern portion of the site and a 100-foot-wide zone is proposed on Parcel C.

PRODUCT & AREA SUMMARY

TYPE	PRODUCT OR AREA TYPE	CITY RESIDENTIAL UNITS	COUNTY RESIDENTIAL UNITS	TOTAL UNITS	TOTAL AREA
	MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (35 DU/AC)	50	10	60	1.32 AC
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (35' X 85')	0	58	58	4.30 AC
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (45' X 95')	75	45	120	16.00 AC
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (50'/55' X 100')	2	103	105	12.48 AC
	WATER QUALITY/ RETENTION BASIN				0.84 AC
	PARKS & TRAILS				
	DEVELOPED				3.53 AC
	EASEMENT				0.94 AC
	OPEN SPACE				
	DEVELOPED				4.12 AC
	SLOPED AREA & FAULT SETBACK AREA				20.41 AC
	EASEMENT				1.33 AC
	TOTAL	127	216	343	65.27 AC

0 320 feet

Source: Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2015

Figure 16

On-Site Trace Faults

North Street Subdivision EIR

E M C

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The Calaveras Fault (Southern Segment)

The 2015 report provides information on the southern segment of the Calaveras Fault as it relates to the region and the project site. According to the report this fault exhibits both tectonic (aseismic) creep and primary fault surface rupture. The report notes that numerous structures, streets, and sidewalks located along the Calaveras Fault in the City of Hollister are offset as a result of the effects of ongoing aseismic surface creep (surface displacement along the fault in the absence of earthquakes). The 2015 report identifies several studies that reported fault-slip "episodes" beneath the earth's surface, several of which have been followed by surface fault creep or earthquakes, or both. One event in 1971 resulted in tectonic creep totaling 8.5 millimeters over a six-mile-long stretch of the Calaveras Fault Zone. The report concludes that, as with the San Andreas Fault Zone, tectonic creep along the Calaveras Fault Zone is occurring along one specific fault trace within the zone: the "Main Branch".

The California Geological Survey (1996) has assigned a slip rate of 15 mm per year to the southern Calaveras Fault. The latest version of the Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast (UCERF3) offers a slip rate of between 10 to 20 mm per year with a best estimate rate of 15 mm per year. (p. 6). With respect to the underlying geology of the region and project site, the 2015 report notes that tectonic stresses associated with the Calaveras Fault Zone in the Hollister area have deformed and truncated the San Benito Formation, which also underlies the project site. In summary, site-specific seismic concerns are due to the project site being located in an area that is immediately crossed by the Calaveras Fault and is within about five miles of the San Andreas Fault, both of which are major regional faults considered as most susceptible to generating future earthquakes. Additionally, as noted previously, there is a 63 percent chance of at least one magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake occurring within the San Francisco Bay - Monterey Bay region and adjacent areas between 2007 and 2036. During such an earthquake the danger of fault surface rupture at the site is slight, but very strong ground to severe seismic shaking would occur (T. Makdissy Consultants 2015). Therefore, it appears likely that periodically the project site will be shaken by earthquakes generated by movements along nearby active faults and, possibly, along nearby potentially active faults.

Seismic Hazards

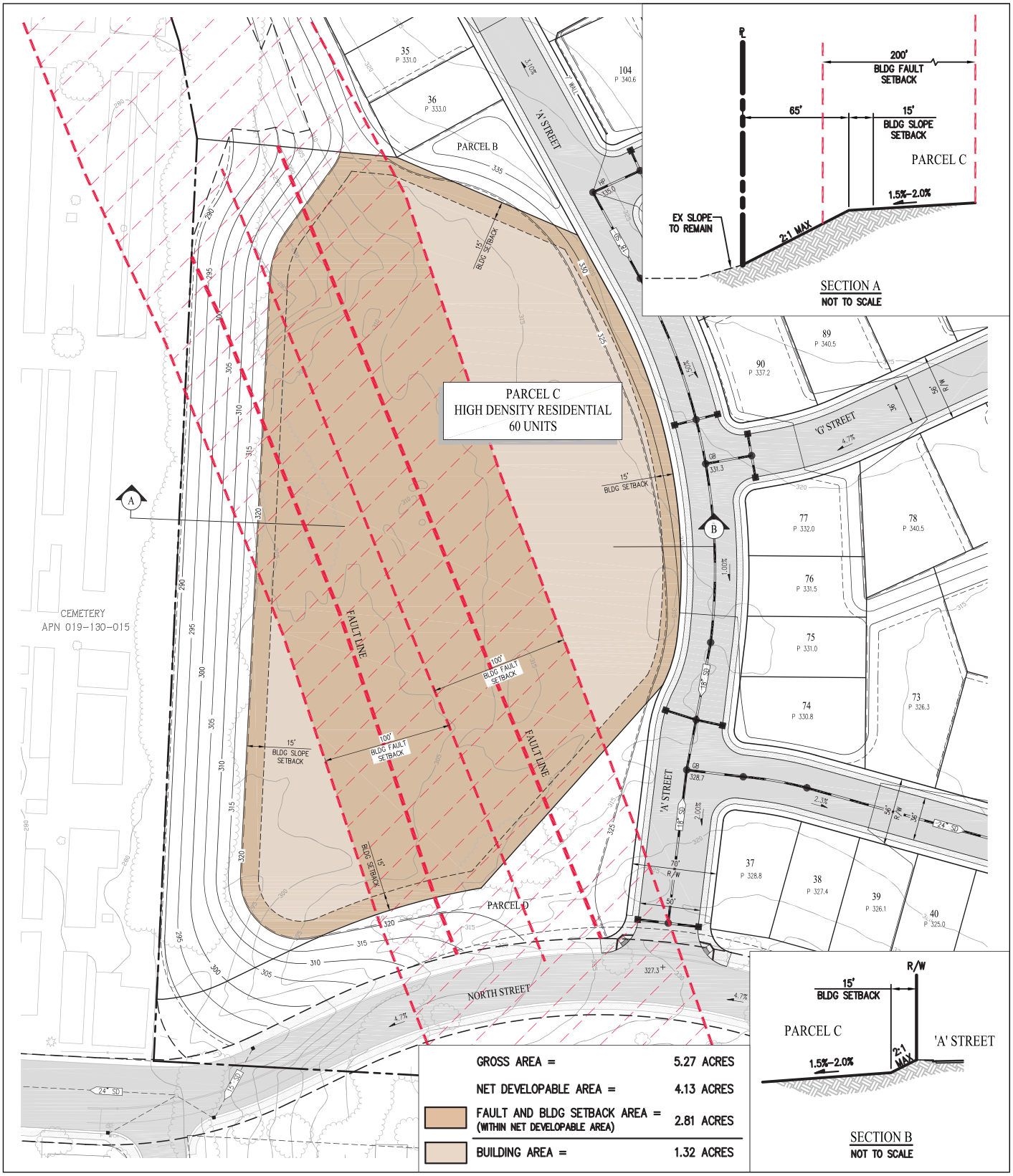
Potential seismic hazards resulting from a nearby moderate to major earthquake can generally be classified as primary and secondary. The primary effect is fault ground rupture, also called surface faulting. Common secondary seismic hazards include ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides and subsidence. Each of these potential hazards is discussed below.

Surface Rupture. Surface rupture is an actual cracking or breaking of the ground along a fault during an earthquake, and is generally limited to a linear zone a few yards wide. Structures built over an active fault can be damaged or destroyed if the ground ruptures. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was created to prohibit the location of structures designed for human occupancy across the traces of active faults, thereby reducing the loss of life and property from an earthquake. The project site is located at the juncture of two active faults, the Calaveras Main Branch fault, and the Calaveras Eastern Branch fault (refer to Figure 17). As such, a portion of the site is located within a state-designated Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Before any new habitable buildings (in this case wood frame single family dwellings) could be permitted within these regulatory zones, a project proponent is required by law (Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972) to have a geologic investigation prepared to demonstrate that proposed buildings would not be constructed across active faults.

As noted in the 2015 report, a previous study by Earth Systems Pacific (2007) recommended a 50-foot setback from the identified fault for habitable buildings and recommended additional trenching be conducted in the northern portion of site as well as in the extreme southeast comer of the site as these areas are located in the state-designated Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Additional trenching was conducted in the 2013 geologic evaluations (T Makdissy Consultants 2013a and 2013b). The February 2013 report concluded that the potential for surface-fault rupture along any of the identified "active" fault traces at the site is considered to be high. Additionally the main trace of the Calaveras is located essentially at or just beyond the west property line. The project applicant has proposed a Building Exclusion Zone that begins at the west property line and extends east of the zone of deformation. The location of the proposed Building Exclusion Zone within Parcel C is presented in Figure 17, Building Exclusion Zone: Parcel C.

Ground Shaking. The report estimates that the project site could experience average peak accelerations in excess of 0.65g, which would correlate with ground shaking intensities of MMI greater than or equal to IX. Ground shaking at this level is considered to be violent in intensity. MMI IX is typically associated with cracked ground, broken pipes, landslides along riverbanks and steep slopes, liquefaction-related effects, and open cracks in cement pavements and asphalt road surfaces.

Landslides. The May 2013 geologic assessment (T Makdissy Consultants 2013b) identified, and the 2015 report confirmed, a potential for shallow slope failure in the steep east-facing slope that extends over the entire length of the eastern part of the project site. Slope height ranges from10 feet at the south end to 55 feet at the northern end with a section in the middle up to 70 feet. The 2015 report concludes that the slopes appear stable and do not show signs of gross instability; however, the results of a stability analysis indicate a potential for shallow slope failures.



0 110 feet

Source: Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2015

Figure 17

Building Exclusion Zones

North Street Subdivision EIR

E M C

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Liquefaction. Soil liquefaction occurs where saturated, cohesion-less or granular soils undergo a substantial loss in strength due to excess build-up of water pressure within the pores during cyclic loading such as earthquakes. Due to the loss of strength, soils gain mobility that can result in significant deformation, including both horizontal and vertical movement where the liquefied soil is not confined. Intensity and duration of seismic shaking, soil characteristics, overburden pressure, and depth to water are all primary factors affecting the occurrence of liquefaction.

The 2015 report states that soils most susceptible to liquefaction are saturated, loose, clean, uniformly graded, Holocene age, and fine grained sand deposits. Silts and silty sands have also proven susceptible to liquefaction or partial liquefaction. The occurrence of liquefaction is generally limited to soils within 50 feet of the ground surface. The 2015 report notes that soils on the site would not be susceptible to liquefaction due primarily to their dense stratification and the lack of groundwater within 50 feet of the site surface (pp. 8-9).

Lateral Spreading. Lateral spreading or lurching typically occurs as a form of horizontal displacement of relatively flat-lying material toward an open face such as an excavation, channel, or body of water. Generally, in soils, this movement is due to failure along a weak plane and may often be associated with liquefaction. The 2015 report states that lateral spreading could occur on the alluvial plain in the eastern portion of the site; however, there are no open slope faces in proximity to this area. The 2015 report concludes that the potential for lateral spreading is low (p. 9).

Seismically Induced Settlement. Seismic densification is the densification of unsaturated, loose granular soils due to strong vibrations such as that resulting from earthquake shaking. Granular soils and loose fills above groundwater may be subject to this phenomenon. As noted previously subsurface soils consist of medium dense to dense sand and gravel layers. Subsurface data and previous analysis concluded that the the low-lying northeast corner of the site would be susceptible to seismically induced ground settlement, but the potential for this phenomenon would be low on the ridge (Park Hill). The 2015 report states that cone penetrometer tests on the flat-lying northeast portion of the site should give more definitive data on the settlement potential (p. 9).

Ridge Top Shattering. Ridge top shattering occurs most commonly along the crests of sharp ridges, oriented roughly parallel with active faults where seismic energy is concentrated as was observed in the 1971 San Fernando earthquake and later, during the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. The 2015 report notes that although much of the site is located on a ridge that is oriented parallel to the active faults in the region (in particular the Calaveras fault), the ridge that dominates the central portion of the site is substantially flat-topped and extensive trenching has failed to encounter evidence of shattering on the ridgetop. The report concludes that this topographic feature is not conducive to the occurrence of this phenomenon (p. 9).

Expansive Soils

Expansive soils can experience significant volume changes with variations in moisture content usually during seasonal cycles of wetting and drying. Expansive soils will swell when wetted, and will shrink when dried. Such changes can cause distress to building foundations, slabs on grade, pavements, and other surface structures if not designed properly. As noted previously, the 2013 and 2015 reports identified that soil borings revealed that on-site subsurface soils consist of undocumented fill, native silty/sandy clays, and silty gravelly sands with layers of gravel to at least the explored depth of 56 feet below finished grade. The soils have low to moderate expansion potential for the major part on top of the ridge, and some medium to highly expansive clays at the lower portion adjacent to the railroad corridor. The 2015 report notes that the geotechnical studies conducted at the site determined the surficial soils in the ridge portion of the site have a low to moderate expansion potential (p. 11).

Regulatory Setting

State

California and Uniform Building Codes. The California Building Code (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) and the Uniform Building Code provide standards for testing and building construction as well as safety measures for development within earthquake prone areas. The project site is located within Seismic Zone 4, which is expected to experience the greatest effects from earthquakes, and which requires the most stringent standards for seismic design.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act **(**Pub. Res. Code Division 2, Chapter 7.5, commencing with Section 2621) was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. The Alquist-Priolo Act's main purpose is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active faults. The Act only addresses the hazard of surface fault rupture and is not directed toward other earthquake hazards.

As noted above, the project site is located within the Earthquake Fault Zone defined for a trace of the Calaveras fault by the State Geologist pursuant to the Alquist-Priolo Act.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act. The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (Pub. Res. Code Division 2, Chapter 7.8, commencing with Section 2690) (1990) requires the State Geologist to designate Seismic Hazard Zones. These zones assist cities and counties in fulfilling their responsibilities for protecting the public from the effects of non-surface fault rupture earthquake hazards such as strong ground shaking, earthquake-induced landslides, liquefaction, or other ground failures. The California Geological Survey has not issued a Seismic Hazards Map for the Hollister area, which includes the project site.

City of Hollister General Plan

HS1.1 Location of Future Development. Permit development only in those areas where potential danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the community can be adequately mitigated, including development which would be subject to severe flood damage or geological hazard due to its location and/or design.

Development also should be prohibited where emergency services, including fire protection, cannot be provided.

HS1.2 Safety Considerations in Development. Review Require appropriate studies to assess identified hazards and assure that impacts are adequately mitigated.

HS1.4 Seismic Hazards. Assure existing and new structures are designed to protect people and property from seismic hazards. Review all development proposals for compliance with the Alquist- Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act and the Uniform Building Code as a way to reduce the risk of exposure to seismic hazards for those who will be living and working within the Hollister Planning Area.

HS1.5 Geotechnical and Geologic Review. Require all geologic hazards be adequately addressed and mitigated through project development. Development proposed within areas of potential geological hazards shall not be endangered by, nor contribute to, the hazardous conditions on the site or on adjoining properties.

HS1.6 Engineering Tests for Geologic Conditions. Require engineering tests for those development projects which may be exposed to impacts associated with expansive soils, so that building foundation footings, utility lines, roadways and sidewalks can be designed to accept the estimated degree of soil contraction, expansion and settlement, according to the standards of the Uniform Building Code.

City of Hollister Municipal Code

16.28.010 Soils Report Required. A soils report, prepared by a civil engineer registered in this state and based upon adequate test borings, shall be submitted for every subdivision. (Prior code § 18-34)

> **17.14.030 Earthquake Hazard Overlay Zone.** B. Property Development Standards. These standards supplement regulations in the base zoning district for the property. 1. Surface Fault Hazard Investigation: A surface fault hazard investigation shall be required on the portion of property within the fault hazard zone that meets the definition of a project in Section 2621.6(a) of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

The following thresholds for measuring a project's environmental impacts are based on the CEQA Guidelines and generally accepted standards for environmental documents prepared pursuant to CEQA. For the purposes of this Draft EIR, impacts are considered to be significant if any of the following would result from implementation of the proposed project:

- Expose people or structures to 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 Publications 42
  - Strong seismic ground shaking
  - Seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction
  - Landslides
- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;
- 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;
- Be located on an expansive soil, as defined in the Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code, creating substantial risks to life or property; or
- Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

The 2015 report did not identify high risk areas of the site or the immediate vicinity for geologic hazards associated with subsidence, lateral spreading, or liquefaction (unrelated to seismic hazards). Also, the proposed project would connect to city utility infrastructure for wastewater collection and treatment. As such, the suitability of on-site soils for septic tanks or alternative waste disposal systems is not applicable to the proposed project. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in impacts associated with these hazards and therefore, no further discussion is required.

WOULD THE PROJECT EXPOSE PEOPLE OR STRUCTURES TO POTENTIAL SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING RUPTURE OF A KNOWN EARTHQUAKE FAULT?

As previously noted (T Makdissy Consultants 2013a; 2013b; 2015) several areas of the site are located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The potential for surface-fault rupture along any of the identified "active" fault traces at the site was determined to be high. As noted in the geotechnical reports and illustrated by Figure 17, the main and east branches of the Calaveras fault traverse the site from the south to the northwest. Both faults cross Parcel C, within which multifamily residential uses are proposed. North of Parcel C, the faults join and traverse the western edge of the project site through Parcel A. Additionally, a new and previously unrecognized fault follows the Calaveras Main Branch approximately 100 to 200 feet to the east. Areas immediately adjacent to the fault traces could be exposed to surface fault rupturing or other ground deformation during a seismic event. These areas also would be expected to experience aseismic creep, which also has the potential to damage buildings or other infrastructure improvements including those within the existing gas pipeline easement at the north of the site. The proposed use for Parcel A is open space and therefore, no impact would occur in this location. However, the proposed residential development of Parcel C would increase risks of human harm, loss of life and/or property damage, which would be a significant impact.

The two fault investigation reports prepared in connection with the project site indicate that any future ground rupture/secondary deformation would likely be confined to an area very close to the mapped fault surface traces/zones, and possibly along the collapsed fold line. Based on these findings, the proposed project includes Building Exclusion Zones that follows the surface traces of the Main Branch, the newly discovered subsidiary trace, and the short collapse fold hinge line as recommended by T. Makdissy Consulting in their 2013 geologic assessment (as reported by T.

Makdissy, 2015). As noted, earlier reports recommended a 100-foot-wide Building Exclusion Zone (50-foot setbacks from the mapped fault traces) along the Main Branch of the Calaveras Fault trace. The 2015 report recommends a 135-foot wide Building Exclusion Zone in the northern portion of the site and two parallel 100-foot wide Building Exclusion Zones in Parcel C, unless further geotechnical investigation and site-specific fault mapping indicates a lesser distance is sufficient to mitigate impacts related to surface fault rupture. No habitable structures would be placed within the Building Exclusion Zones, thus reducing the likelihood of human harm or property damage due to fault rupture (p. 13). The ultimate widths of the building exclusion zones would be determined during preparation of the design-level geotechnical reporting required by the city when specific development is proposed. The 2015 report includes the following recommendations to ensure that the proposed Building Exclusion Zones sufficiently reduce the risks of human harm and property damage resulting from fault rupture.

1. Preparation by a qualified geotechnical consultant of a comprehensive design level geologic and geotechnical report for the City's approval, as part of the application process for the project's first tentative subdivision map, which shall cover the entire project site. This design level report shall incorporate, and/or update as needed, the recommendations of both the ESP (2007) geotechnical and (2008) fault investigation report, as well as the T. Makdissy 2013 fault investigation (2013a) and the T. Makdissy geotechnical update (2013b) relative to the proposed project, to ensure that all geotechnical, geologic and soils conditions are adequately mitigated.

2. The design level geologic/geotechnical report shall also confirm that the proposed 135-foot wide Building Exclusion Zone within the northern portion of the site, as well as the two parallel 100-foot wide building exclusions zones within Parcel C are of sufficient width to adequately mitigate risks associated with ground rupture based on then-current site conditions, or make recommendations to modify the Building Exclusion Zones as determined necessary to adequately mitigate primary fault ground rupture and secondary deformation impacts.

3. The project shall be designed in accordance with the recommendations of the design level, project specific report, and shall also incorporate the recommendations set forth in the fault investigations of 2008 and 2013 (2013a) and set forth in the geotechnical feasibility reports of 2007 (ESP), and 2013 (T. Makdissy, 2013b) and the supplemental Peer Review Response letter of 2015 (T. Makdissy, in preparation) subject to the approval of the City's geologic/geotechnical consultant, or City Engineer.

4. Development of the project site shall comply with the provisions of the Alquist Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, to avoid placing habitable structures over active or potentially active faults (and, if applicable, secondary fault related or seismic features) in order to minimize the potential for ground fault rupture and secondary deformation

impacting the structures. The final Building Exclusion Zone shall be clearly demarcated on the TM, Final Map, and all improvement plans. Future uses within the Building Exclusion Zone shall be limited to non-habitable improvements (e.g., roadway improvements, parks, open space, buffers, trails, etc.) and all recommendations included in the 2008 (Earth Systems Pacific) and 2013 (T. Makdissy Consulting) fault investigations, and in the 2007 (Earth Systems Pacific) and 2013 (T. Makdissy) geotechnical reports will be incorporated into the project design subject to the approval of the City's to the extent determined appropriate by the City and the geologic/geotechnical consultant, or City Engineer.

Implementation of the above recommendations would reduce the project's impacts associated with ground rupture. However, to ensure these impacts are reduced to a less than significant level, the following mitigation measure is recommended:

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation: Implementation of mitigation measure GEO-1 will ensure that potential impacts of seismically induced human harm or property damage related to ground rupture resulting from development within a known fault are less than significant by incorporating all remedial measures and exclusions as identified by the geotechnical assessments to the project design.

Mitigation Measure

GEO-1. Development of the project site shall comply with the then most recent California Building Code design standards and performance thresholds for construction within seismic zones to avoid or minimize potential damage from fault rupture. All recommendations of the ESP (2007) geotechnical and (2008) fault investigation report, the T. Makdissy 2013 fault investigation (2013a), the T. Makdissy geotechnical update (2013b), the 2015 geotechnical assessments prepared by T. Makdissy, and the structural design requirements as prescribed by the most current version of the California Building Code, will be incorporated into a final geotechnical report and the project plans.

Future uses within the Building Exclusion Zone shall be limited to non-habitable improvements (e.g., roadway improvements, parks, open space, buffers, trails, etc.).

All plan sets shall include Building Exclusion Zones and/or setbacks as identified in the 2013 and 2015 geotechnical assessments (T Makdissy Consultants 2013a; 2013b; 2015), or as refined in the approved final geotechnical report, subject to the review and approval by the city's engineer or engineering consultant.

The final geotechnical report and project plans shall be prepared in consultation with the geotechnical consultant, subject to the review and approval of the city's engineer or engineering consultant.

Implementation of this mitigation measure is the responsibility of the developer and shall be implemented prior to approval of improvement plans.

WOULD THE PROJECT EXPOSE PEOPLE OR STRUCTURES TO POTENTIAL SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING STRONG SEISMIC GROUND SHAKING?

Strong ground shaking occurring on the project site during a major earthquake may cause severe damage to future buildings and other improvements constructed as part of the project, and therefore may expose people and structures to substantial adverse effects. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

Historically, major earthquakes centered on the Calaveras and San Andreas faults have resulted in moderate to severe ground shaking in the project vicinity. It is expected that a major earthquake will result in severe ground shaking on the project site during the life of the project. Strong ground shaking will cause dynamic loading, resulting in stress to buildings and other improvements.

As identified in the 2015 report all structures designed and built in accordance report recommendations and with the California Building Code would respond well except under the most severe circumstances. The report notes that "structures designed and built in compliance with the California and Uniform Building Codes are highly unlikely to experience substantial collapse" during strong ground shaking, but some structural damage would be expected (p. 13). Further, the design of future improvements is subject to compliance with California Building Code standards and performance thresholds for Seismic Zone 4 as part of the city's standard building permit application review practices. Compliance with these criteria in addition to mitigation measure GEO-1, would avoid or reduce risks of human harm and/or damage from ground shaking, and the impacts are less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation: – Seismically-Induced Ground Shaking: With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, and compliance with city general plan policies and the structural design standards and performance thresholds of the most recent versions of the California and Uniform Building Codes, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to seismically-induced ground shaking.

WOULD THE PROPOSED PROJECT EXPOSE PEOPLE OR STRUCTURES TO POTENTIAL SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING SEISMIC-RELATED GROUND FAILURE INCLUDING LIQUEFACTION?

Liquefaction

According to the 2015 report, the most comprehensive interpretive study of liquefaction potential in the Hollister area indicates the ridge area of the site has a very low potential for liquefaction. Further, the report notes that subsurface investigations conducted in 2007 and 2013 confirmed that the alluvial plain in the eastern portion of the property has a low potential for liquefaction. The 2015 report concluded that risks of seismically-induced liquefaction and lateral spreading are low within the alluvial plain and very low on the ridge. Compliance with the city's general plan policies requiring the preparation of project-specific geotechnical reports, implementation of mitigation measure GEO-1, and compliance with the most recent version of the building code prior to approval of improvement plans further reduce these risks. Therefore the proposed project would not result in significant impacts due to seismically-induced liquefaction. No additional mitigation is required.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation – Seismically-Induced Liquefaction: With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, and compliance with city general plan policies and the structural design standards and performance thresholds of the most recent versions of the California and Uniform Building Codes, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to seismically-induced liquefaction.

Subsidence

The 2015 report concluded that development of the project site could expose people and property to unstable soils resulting from seismically-induced settlement of surface and near surface sandy soils located within the flatlying northeastern portion of the site. Seismically-induced soil settlement that could result in harm to humans or property damage is a significant impact.

Seismically-induced ground settlement can occur in unsaturated sandy soils which can impact construction overlying these materials. Seismically induced soil settlement is typically mitigated through grading or foundation design, a combination of both grading and foundation design, or subsurface densification techniques. According to the 2015 report, geotechnical investigations conducted at the site by in 2007 concluded that there is a high potential for surface and near surface sandy soils located within the flat-lying northeastern portion of the site to experience

seismically-induced settlement during an earthquake. Cone Penetrometer Test explorations are recommended as part of the design level study within the flat-lying eastern portion of the site to further refine these estimates, and develop project-specific design and construction criteria to reduce these impacts. Implementation of mitigation measure GEO-3 in addition to mitigation measures GEO-1 and GEO-2, would reduce the impacts related to seismically induced settlement of surface and near surface soils to less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

Less than Significant Impact With Mitigation – Seismically-induced Subsidence: With implementation of mitigation measure GEO-2 in addition to mitigation measure GEO-1, project-related impacts to people and structures resulting from subsidence would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure

GEO-2. As part of the required design-level geotechnical report required in mitigation measure GEO-1, the applicants shall conduct cone penetrometer test explorations within the flat-lying eastern portion of the site to guide the development of project-specific design and construction criteria. The tests shall be conducted prior to submission of improvement plans to the City, and their results shall be included in the design-level geotechnical report for review and approval by the city engineer and/or his or her designate.

Differential Settlement

The 2015 report concluded that development of the project would increase risks of seismic-related ground differential settlement in areas underlain by undocumented (non-engineered) fill soils in the Parcel C area and in the southwestern portion of the site (p. 15). The report determined that the risks of significant impacts to people or structures as a result of seismic-related ground settlement in areas underlain by undocumented fill is moderately high.

As noted in the report, undocumented fills are generally presumed to be non-engineered and are typically addressed during site preparation and grading operations by removal and reapplication under controlled engineering conditions, or removed from the project site altogether if deemed unsuitable as fill source material. Suspicious fills on the project site have been estimated as varying from a few feet to at least 20 feet thick in some areas. Implementation of mitigation measures GEO-1 –GEO-2 reduce the impacts to people or property from fill settlement to a less-than-significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

Less than Significant Impact – Seismically-induced Differential Soil Settlement: With implementation of mitigation measures GEO-1 - GEO-2 project-related impacts to people and structures resulting from differential settlement would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

WOULD THE PROPOSED PROJECT EXPOSE PEOPLE OR STRUCTURES TO POTENTIAL SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING LANDSLIDES?

The 2015 report notes that the geotechnical evaluations of ESP (2007) and T. Makdissy (2013b) show that there is a potential for relatively shallow landsliding on the steep slopes along the eastern flank of the ridge at the site. An additional slope stability analysis was performed for the project as part of the 2015 report. The analysis determined that shallow slope failures could occur along the ridge (T. Makdissy, 2015). Due to the sandy nature of the soil profile, storm water runoff and irrigation water that infiltrates underlying soil layers would not create a build up of groundwater or water pressure condition that would contribute to large landslides or mudflows. However, residential irrigation and other operational urban runoff if not controlled could have detrimental affects on slopes and contribute to the risks of shallow slope failures.

As noted in the report, the proposed building setbacks shown in the Building Envelope Study have accounted for these relatively shallow slope failures by creating a setback buffer between the toe and crest of the slope and the residential structures (refer Figure 17). Based on the slope stability analysis, the recommended building setbacks for lots at the top of the slope are 20 feet and 30 feet (T. Makdissy 2013b, p. 5). The 2015 report recommends that measures for controlling runoff and providing construction phase slope protection as identified in the 2013b report are incorporated into the design-level geologic/geotechnical investigations. These measures are already required to be included in mitigation measure GEO-1. Implementation of mitigation measure GEO-1 would reduce the risks of landslides to less than significant. No additional mitigation is required.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation– Landslides: With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, and compliance with city general plan policies and the structural design standards and performance thresholds of the most recent versions of the California and Uniform Building Codes, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to seismically-induced landslides or other shallow slope failures.

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-SITE LANDSLIDE OR COLLAPSE?

Debris and Mudflows

Debris flows, or mudslides, can originate during periods of heavy rainfall on steep slopes, particularly where topography can focus runoff and source material (thick surficial deposits) is available. As noted in the 2015 report (p. 14), the eastern flank of the ridge at the site is steep and high (70 to 80 feet); these slopes typically have only minor accumulations of surficial soils and lack topographic swale shapes that can concentrate runoff; the areas located along the slope crests of the highest slopes tend to face in the opposite direction from the downslope direction which tends to discourage runoff from flowing down the slope face; the risk of debris flows potentially impacting residential structures at the site is low. Due to the predominately sandy nature of the slope faces, debris flows would be primarily be flowable material rather than blocks of earth material.

The 2015 report concludes that the building setbacks established by the Tentative Map have provided for a buffer in the unlikely event that a debris flow or flows occur at the site. This buffer would reduce the risks of human harm or property damage resulting from mud or debris flow to less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Less than Significant Impact – Debris or Mud Flow The potential for debris and mud flow to cascade to lower elevations along the east-facing slope during periods of heavy rainfall is low due to the composition of on-site soils, the topography of the slope and the use of setbacks reduce the likelihood of human harm and/or property damage resulting from this phenomenon.

Other Slope Failure

The presence of over steepened, near vertical bluffs along the northern, eastern and western borders of the abandoned quarry (the larger of two present) in the north central portion of the property presents a risk of slope failures and toppling of blocks of the dense cemt-like San Benito Formation soils. The smaller quarry located just southwest of the large quarry does not have over steepened slopes. The 2015 report identifies high risks of bluff failures that could result in human harm or property damage in this area. This is a significant impact.

As a matter of common practice abandoned quarry excavations within proposed development areas are typically re-graded to acceptable slope angles, or backfilled altogether with engineered fill during mass grading operations. To reduce the impacts of quarry bluff failures to a less-than-significant level, the 2015 report recommends that grading and site preparation measures to

reduce the risks of landslides in the abandoned quarry are included in the design-level geotechnical report required by mitigation measure GEO-1. Developers of the project shall comply with the grading and site preparation recommendations (pertaining to the abandoned quarry) set forth in the required design level geotechnical report. The report and improvement plans would be subject to review and approval by the appropriate design professional (i.e. geotechnical engineer, structural engineer) and the City as required.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation – Slope Failure in Former Quarry Areas. Implementation of mitigation measure GEO-3 in addition to mitigation measure GEO-1 will ensure that potential impacts of human harm or property damage related to slope failures within the former quarry areas of the site are reduced to less than significant by incorporating all remedial measures and exclusions as identified by the geotechnical assessments.

Mitigation Measure

GEO-3. Prior to the issuance of grading permits, grading and site preparation measures to reduce the risks of landslides in the abandoned quarry shall be developed and incorporated into the required design-level geotechnical study. The report and related improvement plans are subject to review and approval by the city engineer or his/her designate. Developers of the project shall comply with the grading and site preparation recommendations (pertaining to the abandoned quarry) set forth in the approved design level geotechnical report.

WOULD THE PROPOSED PROJECT RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL SOIL EROSION OR THE LOSS OF TOPSOIL

The proposed project includes altering the topography at the site in order to create residential neighborhoods and access roads. Development typically introduces a considerable amount of non-porous and/or low porosity surfaces throughout the development thereby increasing the quantity and rates of surface runoff. These elements increase erosion, and sedimentation within development areas, and also increases sedimentation within downstream water bodies. The amount of erosion is dependent on soil type, vegetation cover, slope length and gradient, as well as new or altered drainage patterns. Two of the four soil types on the site (Mixed land and dump, and Sopher soils) have a high to severe erosion potential based upon the site topography where they are found. The main areas post-development that are susceptible to erosion are the existing natural slopes, primarily due to direct rainfall. The impact of any erosion potential of the slopes can be controlled by drainage improvements at the base of slopes. Specific erosion control measures are identified in the 2013b report and would be incorporated into the design-level investigation geologic/geotechnical report required by mitigation measure GEO-1.

Construction of the proposed project will temporarily expose soils to the erosive effects of wind and water during construction. Project grading and removal of vegetation will result in the exposure and disturbance of the soils, which could result in substantial erosion and loss of topsoil during construction.

Construction-related erosion impacts are also addressed in Section 3.3, Air Quality, and Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality. Implementation of mitigation measure AQ-2 requires preparation of a grading plan to minimize dust emissions during construction. Also, in compliance with the city's storm water management plan the project applicant is required to submit a grading and construction runoff plan that identifies BMPs to reduce the amount of construction runoff and pollution entering the storm drainage system (refer to section 3.10 for examples of BMPs). As noted in the discussion of Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts, the proposed project must also comply with Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast (RWQCB 2013) as mandated by the RWQCB. Further, the proposed project is subject to compliance with city general plan policies CSF3.1 (Adequate Drainage Facilities) and CSF3.2 (Erosion and Sediment Control). In particular, policy CSF 3.2 requires preparation of an erosion and sediment control plan when development plans are submitted.

In addition to compliance with general plan policies and standard conditions of grading and building permit approval, and with implementation of mitigation measures AQ-2, GEO-1 – GEO-3, implementation of mitigation measure GEO-4 would ensure that soil erosion impacts are reduced to a less-than-significant-level. No additional mitigation is required.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation– Loss of Topsoil and Erosion: Compliance with general plan policies and standard conditions of grading and building permit approval, and in addition to implementation of mitigation measures AQ-2, GEO-1 – GEO-3, implementation of mitigation measure GEO-4 ensures that soil erosion impacts are reduced to a less-than-significant-level.

Mitigation Measure

GEO-4. The project developer shall incorporate all recommendations of the design-level geotechnical report required by mitigation measure GEO-1 into all required grading plans. Development of the project shall comply with site preparation, grading, slope protection, erosion control and drainage recommendations set forth in the design level geotechnical report required under Impact GEO-1. All grading, drainage and erosion control plans shall be subject to review and approval by the city engineer or his or her designate prior to issuance of a grading permit.

WOULD THE PROJECT BE LOCATED ON AN EXPANSIVE SOIL, AS DEFINED IN THE TABLE 18-1-B OF THE UNIFORM BUILDING CODE, CREATING SUBSTANTIAL RISKS TO LIFE OR PROPERTY?

Expansive soils present on the project site may cause movement or heaving, potentially resulting in damage to foundations, concrete pads and pavements. This is considered a significant impact.

According to the 2015 report (p. 16), surface and near-surface soils observed during fault trenching and exploratory drilling and test pits conducted at the site consist of clays of a moderately high plasticity. The alluvial soils in the flatlying eastern alluvial plane have the highest plasticity index values; the ridge top soils exhibit relatively lower values. As such, the expansive potential of on-site soils is moderately high to high on the alluvial plane and soils on the ridge top exhibit low to moderate expansion potential. Site preparation and grading recommendations typically address mitigating expansive soils through (depending on severity of expansive potential); soil removal, chemical (i.e., lime) treatment, moisture conditioning or foundation design. Recommendations to address expansive soils are contained in the previous reports conducted on the site and implementation of GEO-1 – GEO-3 ensure that the expansive potential of soils is addressed in the required design-level geotechnical report, and implemented in site preparation activities, grading plans and foundation design and construction on the site. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce impacts resulting from expansive soils to a less-than-significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation – Expansive Soils: Due to project compliance with city general plan policies and standard conditions of approval, implementation of GEO-1 – GEO-3 impacts resulting from expansive soils are reduced to a less-than-significant level.

The proposed project has the potential to increase the risks of human harm and property damage during seismic events and that could otherwise occur due to expansive or unstable soils on the project site and that would result in significant impacts. The proposed project could also result in erosion and the loss of topsoil due to construction and operations of future development on the project site. However, for the reasons described above, these impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level through compliance with city general plan policies, standard conditions of approval, and with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in this section. Therefore, no significant impacts related to geology and soils would occur.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This section of the EIR summarizes the relevant environmental setting in terms of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; identifies potential climate change impacts from project implementation; and evaluates the significance of those potential impacts. This analysis is based on the results of GHG modeling using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod). The CalEEMod results are included in Appendix C. Additional information regarding related regulations and legislation was utilized, most notably from the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and from the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook, a Guide for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts for Projects Subject to CEQA Review* (San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District 2012), recommended for use by the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District.

The Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District provided commented on the NOP that GHG emissions for the proposed project should be evaluated and that several GHG reduction measures should be considered for inclusion into the proposed project.

Environmental Setting

Climate Change Science

The international scientific community has concluded with a high degree of confidence that human activities are causing an accelerated warming of the atmosphere. The resulting change in climate has serious global implications and consequently, human activities that contribute to climate change may have a potentially significant effect on the environment. In recent years, concern about climate change and its potential impacts has risen dramatically. That concern has translated into a range of international treaties and national and regional agreements aimed at diminishing the rate at global warming is occurring. The federal government has begun to tackle concerns about climate change through a range of initiatives and regulatory actions. Many states and local agencies, private sector interests, and other public and private interests have also taken initiative to combat climate change. At the state level, California has taken a leadership role in tackling climate change, as evidenced by the programs outlined in the Regulatory Setting section below.

Causes and Effects of Climate Change

The years between 2005 and 2010 were the warmest on record for the United States (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2011). Scientific consensus is that this warming is largely the result of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from human activities including industrial processes, fossil fuel combustion, and changes in land use, such as deforestation.

Unaddressed, climate change will have significant impacts across the United States and around the world. The generalized potential effects of climate change in California were summarized by the California Environmental Protection Agency in its April 2006 report entitled *Climate Action Team Report to the Governor and the Legislature*. Among the key effects are: substantially reduced availability of water supply; temperature increases projected at 8.0 to 10.4 degrees Fahrenheit under more severe emissions scenarios; exacerbation and acceleration of coastal erosion; impacts on surface water quality from seawater intrusion into the Sacramento Delta; general decline in agricultural production resulting from increased scarcity of water supply; increased vulnerability of natural areas and agricultural production from rising temperatures and increases in potential pest infestation; increased growth rates and expanded ranges of weeds, insect pests, and pathogens with elevated temperatures; increased energy demand especially during hot summer months; and economic impacts resulting from reduced winter recreation.

Numerous climate change models have been developed since the Climate Action Team report noted above was released in 2006. Over time, modelers have been refining the models and the inputs to the models in an effort to more precisely project climate change effects and to do so at more narrow geographic scales. For example, refined modeling of conditions in the San Francisco Bay Area conducted by Scripps Institute for Oceanography for the California Energy Commission suggests that by the end of the twenty-first century, the range of warming ranges from about 2°C to 6°C (about 3.5 °F to 11°F) under one model scenario, with temperatures averaging 1.5°C greater under a second scenario (Cayan, Tyree, and Iacobellis 2012). The California Energy Commission has funded the Cal-Adapt program, which has developed an on-line compendium of climate change information for California that, among other things, identifies a range of future global warming scenarios that can be accessed interactively. This information can be found at: http://cal-adapt.org/page/about-caladapt.

Climate change may result in a range of consequences including the following:

- Increase in unpredictable weather: The years of 1995-2010 saw the warmest global temperatures that have ever been recorded since measurements began in 1850. Combined with longer summer seasons, increased temperatures over prolonged periods can reduce soil moisture level, which increases the need for many emissions-producing activities such as irrigation and air conditioning, and in turn, increase in demand for electrical generation and distribution infrastructure.

- Increase in rate of wildfires: Wildfire risk is based on a combination of factors including precipitation, winds, temperature, and vegetation, all of which are susceptible to the impacts of increased warming. Wildfires are expected to grow in number and size throughout the state as a result of increased temperatures induced by climate change.

- Deterioration of public health: Heat waves are expected to have a major impact on public health, to decrease air quality and increase mosquito-breeding and mosquito-borne diseases. The elderly, young, and poor, are vulnerable populations that do not have the resources to deal with the costs of health care or adapt to the changes that are expected to impact their communities.

- Decrease in supply and quality of fresh water: Warmer average global temperatures cause more rainfall than snowfall, making the winter snowfall season shorter and accelerating the rate at which the snow packs melt in the spring. A change to a liquid-precipitation system has the potential to reduce storage capacity (snowpack), water quality, and the accessibility of water for emergencies. With rain and snow events becoming less predictable and more variable, frequency of flood events could increase and reliability of fresh water supplies could decrease.

- Increase in residential electricity demands for cooling: Warming temperatures are predicted to cause significant increases in residential electricity demand for cooling in summer months, especially for residential developments built in warm, inland areas. Coupled with the negative impacts of increased temperatures on electrical infrastructure and earlier spring snowmelt on hydropower production, climate change could have significant impacts on energy supply in California.

- Reduction in the quality and quantity of agricultural products: Crops and food products that are likely to be affected include wine grapes, fruits, nuts, and milk. A 15 percent increase in land fallowing is expected to occur under a dry and warm climate scenario. Land fallowing would reduce agricultural productivity and affect the agricultural economies.

- Rise in sea levels resulting in the displacement of coastal businesses and residences: During the past century, sea levels along California's coast have risen about seven inches. If temperatures rise into the higher projected warming range, sea level is expected to rise an additional 16 to 55 inches by the end of the century. Changes of this magnitude would inundate coastal areas with salt water, accelerate coastal erosion, threaten vital levees and inland water systems, and disrupt wetlands and natural habitats.

- Damage to marine ecosystems and the natural environment.

- Decrease in the health and productivity of California's forests.

Although certain environmental effects are widely accepted to be potential hazards to certain locations, such as rising sea level for low-lying coastal areas, it is currently infeasible to predict all environmental effects of climate change at any one location, and it would be speculative to do so.

The potential effects of climate change in San Benito County are related to temperature, precipitation, snowpack storage and water supply, extreme weather events, water supply, water quality, and agriculture. There is significant uncertainty associated with predicting specific changes for these various climate change-related effects at a county level.

Greenhouse Gas Types

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are called greenhouse gases. GHGs are emitted by natural processes and human activities. The human-produced GHGs most responsible for global warming are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and chlorofluorocarbons. The contribution of these GHGs to global warming is summarized in Table 14, GHG Types and Their Contribution to Global Warming.

Table 14 GHG Types and Their Contribution to Global Warming

Greenhouse Gas	Percent of all GHG	Typical Sources
Carbon dioxide (CO_2)	83.0 percent	Combustion of fuels, solid waste, wood
Methane (CH_4)	10.3 percent	Fuel production/combustion; livestock, decay of organic materials
Nitrous Oxide (N_2O)	4.5 percent	Combustion of fuels, solid waste; agricultural and industrial processes
Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)	2.2 percent	Industrial processes

Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency 2011

Note: Percentages reflect weighting for global warming potential.

Climate Change as a Cumulative Effect

Global climate change is, as the name implies, a global phenomenon. Greenhouse gas emissions released to the atmosphere from a variety of human activities and natural processes that occur across the globe are contributing to global warming. While the U.S. emits the largest per capita volume of GHGs of any country in the world, other major countries contribute substantial volumes of emissions that continue to grow on a per capita basis. Because climate change is a global phenomenon, it is highly unlikely that any one development project located anywhere in the world would have a significant individual impact on climate change. It is the sum total of contributions of development around the world that contribute to the problem. Hence, global climate change is inherently a cumulative effect.

The volume of GHG emissions generated by an individual project can be quantified. However, the precise indirect effects of a single project are difficult if not impossible to identify due to the complexity of local, regional, and global atmospheric dynamics and to the broad scale at which global warming impacts such as sea level rise, increase in weather intensity, decrease in snowpack, etc. are known to occur.

Greenhouse Gas Global Warming Potentials

Each type of GHG has a different capacity to trap heat in the atmosphere and each type remains in the atmosphere for a particular length of time. The ability of a GHG to trap heat is measured by an index called the global warming potential (GWP) expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent. Carbon dioxide is considered the baseline GHG in this index and has a GWP of one. Methane has a GWP of 21 times that of CO_2, and N_2O has a GWP of 310 times that of CO_2. Table 15, Global Warming Potentials by GHG Type, summarizes GWPs for a variety of GHGs.

Table 15 Global Warming Potentials by GHG Type

GHG	Atmospheric Lifetime (Years)	Global Warming Potential (100-Year Time Horizon)
Carbon Dioxide CO_2	50-200	1
Methane CH_4	12 (+/- 3)	21
Nitrous Oxide N_2O	120	310
HFC-23	264	11,700
HFC-134a	14.6	1,300
HFC-152a	1.5	140
PFC Tetrafluoromethane CF_4	50,000	6,500
PFC Hexafluoroethane C_2F_6	10,000	9,200
Sulfur Hexaflouride SF_6	3,200	23,900

Source: Mintier Harnish 2010.

The families of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and perfluorocarbons (PFCs) have a substantially greater global warming potential than other GHGs, generally ranging from approximately 1,300 to over 10,000 times that of CO_2. CFCs have no natural source and were first synthesized in 1928. They were used for refrigerants, aerosol propellants, and cleaning solvents. With the discovery that they are able to destroy stratospheric ozone, a successful global effort to halt their production has been implemented such that levels of the

major CFCs are now remaining steady or declining. HFCs are synthetic, man-made chemicals that are used as a substitute for CFCs. Prior to 1990 the only significant emissions were of HFC-23. HFC-134a emissions are increasing due to its use as a refrigerant. HFCs are manmade for applications such as automobile air conditioners and refrigerants. Two common PFCs are tetrafluoromethane (CF_4) and hexafluoroethane (C_2F_6). The two main sources of these GHGs are primary aluminum production and semiconductor manufacture. Sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6) is an inorganic, odorless, colorless, nontoxic, nonflammable gas. It is used for insulation in electric power transmission and distribution equipment, in the magnesium industry, in semiconductor manufacturing, and as a tracer gas for leak detection (Mintier Harnish 2010).

While CO_2 represents the vast majority of the total volume of GHGs released into the atmosphere, the release of even small quantities of other types of GHGs can be significant for their contribution to climate change.

The GHG volume produced by a particular source is often expressed in terms of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e). Carbon dioxide equivalent describes how much global warming a given type of GHG will cause, with the GWP of CO_2 as the base reference of one. It is useful because it allows comparisons of the impact from different GHGs with differing GWPs. If a project is a source of several types of GHGs, their individual GWPs can be standardized and expressed in terms of CO_2e.

Inventories of Greenhouse Gases

World/U.S. Estimates of GHG Emissions. In 2004, total worldwide GHG emissions were estimated to be 49,000 teragrams carbon dioxide equivalent (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007). A teragram equals one MMT. In 2009, U.S. GHG emissions were 6,633.2 teragrams carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e). GHG emissions vary annually due to factors such as weather, economic conditions, and cost of various energy sources. The highest GHG emissions year in the United States was 2007, with total emissions of 7,263 teragrams CO_2e. In 1990, the year frequently used as a baseline for emissions, GHG emissions in the United States were 6,182 teragrams CO_2e (United States Environmental Protection Agency 2011).

California GHG Emissions Inventory. California is a substantial contributor of global greenhouse gases. Based on CARB's most recent state GHG inventory, a net of about 451.6 million tons of CO_2e were generated in 2010 (California Air Resources Board 2013). In 2010, about 38 percent of all GHG gases emitted in the state came from the transportation sector. Electric power generation (in state generation and out of state generation for imported electricity) and industrial uses were the second and third largest categories at about 21 percent and 19 percent, respectively. The commercial and residential use sectors combined to generate

about 10 percent of the 2010 emissions, while the agricultural sector contributed about seven percent. Other sources include high global warming potential gases at about three percent and landfill waste emissions at about two percent of the total state inventory.

San Benito County GHG Emissions Inventory. Greenhouse gas emissions generated in San Benito County represent a small fraction of the statewide emissions inventory. Baseline GHG emissions in the unincorporated area of County were developed for 2010 as part of the County's 2035 general plan update draft EIR process and are found in a document entitled *Appendix D - Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Methods Appendix* (URS 2012).

The inventory includes emissions from five GHG emission sectors: transportation, area sources, energy use, solid waste, and agriculture. Based on this inventory, in 2010 there were 300,220 MT of CO_2e emitted in 2010. This is equivalent to 0.06 percent of the 2010 California GHG inventory. The greatest contributor to total baseline GHG emissions was transportation, followed by agriculture. In 2020 under business as usual conditions (no reductions from state measures or general plan policy implementation actions), GHG emissions volumes are projected to increase to 330,980 MT in 2020 and to 369,065 MT in 2035.

Existing Sources of GHG Emissions within the Project Site

The project site is currently in dryland agricultural hay production. A minor volume of mobile source GHG emissions from use of agricultural machinery is the only notable existing baseline GHG emission source. The site does not contain notable sources of sequestered carbon such as trees that would be lost as a result of its conversion to urban use. Trees are located on the sloped area of the site, but this area will be preserved as part of the project; the remainder of the site has been largely in agricultural production and its long-term agricultural and continual disking over time has likely depleted soil carbon sequestration potential.

Regulatory Setting

For projects being undertaken in California, the CEQA process is used as a primary tool for evaluating climate change impacts of land use development projects of the type proposed. Federal, state, and regional policy and regulations pertaining to climate change are summarized below.

International and Federal

In 1988, the United Nations and the World Meteorological Organization established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to assess "the scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relevant to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts, and options for adaptation and mitigation."

In March 1994, the United States joined a number of countries around the world in signing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Under the Convention, governments gather and share information on GHG emissions, national policies, and best practices; launch national strategies for addressing GHG emissions and adapting to expected impacts, including the provision of financial and technological support to developing countries; and cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

The Kyoto Protocol, which went into effect in February 2005, was an outcome of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Countries that have signed the Protocol are required to demonstrate their commitment to reduce their emissions of GHGs or engage in emissions trading. About 170 countries had, at one point, signed the Protocol. Industrialized countries are required to reduce their GHG emissions by an average of five percent below their 1990 levels by 2012. The U.S. Senate approved a non-binding "Sense of the Senate" resolution in July 1997 by a margin of 95-0 that expressed opposition to the treaty's provisions, most notably the disparity in GHG emissions reduction obligations between industrialized nations and developing nations. In 2001, the President indicated that he would not submit the treaty to the U.S. Senate for ratification, which effectively ended American involvement in the Kyoto Protocol. International leaders have since met periodically to address the future of international climate change commitments post-Kyoto.

Coinciding with the opening of the Copenhagen Climate Conference, in December 2009, the EPA issued an Endangerment Finding under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act, opening the door to federal regulation of GHGs. The Endangerment Finding notes that GHGs threaten public health and welfare and are subject to regulation under the Clean Air Act. The final findings were published in the Federal Register on December 15, 2009 and became effective on January 14, 2010.

Federal regulation of GHGs can occur through other means, such as fuel efficiency standards. A new national policy to increase fuel economy for all new cars and trucks sold in the United States has been put into place. The new standards would cover model years 2012 through 2016, and would require an average fuel economy standard of 35.5 miles per gallon in 2016. The U.S. EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Transportation, released a notice of intent to conduct joint rulemaking to establish vehicle GHG emissions and fuel economy standards in May 2009. The final standards were adopted by the U.S. EPA and the Department of Transportation on April 1, 2010.

State of California

State policy and regulatory guidance has grown out of its effort to meet goals under the landmark Global Warming Solutions Act, which was passed in 2006 as California Assembly

Bill 32 (AB 32). Several other legislative acts, executive orders, and opinions from the California State Attorney General have provided further GHG emissions reduction guidance and reinforced CEQA as the appropriate evaluation tool for assessing climate change impacts of new development.

California Assembly Bill 32. AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, requires CARB to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990 by 2020. Among its key components are:

- Identify a list of discrete early action GHG emission reduction measures that can be implemented prior to the adoption of the statewide GHG limit and the measures required to achieve compliance with the statewide limit;
- Adopt a statewide GHG emissions limit that is equivalent to the 1990 level (an approximate 25 percent reduction in existing statewide GHG emissions);
- Adopt regulations to implement the early action GHG emission reduction measures;
- Adopt quantifiable, verifiable and enforceable emission reduction measures by regulation that will achieve the statewide GHG emissions limit by 2020, to become operative on January 1, 2012 at the latest; and
- Monitor compliance with and enforce adopted emission reduction measures.

The state is continuing to work to meet the milestones for implementing AB 32.

Scoping Plan. CARB's AB 32 Scoping Plan, which was adopted in December 2008, contains the main strategies California would pursue to reduce GHGs by approximately 169 MMT by the year 2020, or a reduction of approximately 30 percent from the 2020 projected emissions level of 596 MMT under a business as usual scenario. The business as usual scenario refers to GHG emissions that would occur in the future in the absence of implementing GHG reduction strategies included in the Scoping Plan. The strategies address reduced emissions for light-duty vehicles, the Low-Carbon Fuel Standard, a range of energy efficiency measures includes building and appliance energy efficiency, increasing the percentage of electricity generated by renewable sources, and implementation of a cap-and-trade program. With regard to land use planning, the Scoping Plan expects a GHG reduction of approximately 5.0 MMT CO_2e would be achieved with implementation of Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), discussed further below.

AB 32 does not mandate action at the local level. However, the Scoping Plan identifies that local agencies should strive to reduce GHG emissions within their boundaries by 15 percent from 2008 levels by 2020 to help achieve emissions reductions needed to meet AB 32 goals.

Since the Scoping Plan was adopted, many of the measures included in it have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. Among the most notable are implementation of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, the Renewable Portfolio Standard, and a GHG emissions cap-and-trade program. Under cap-and-trade, an overall limit on GHG emissions from capped sectors has been established and facilities subject to the cap will be able to trade permits (allowances) to emit GHGs. The program started on January 1, 2012. Enforceable compliance obligations started in 2013. The program applies to facilities that comprise 85 percent of the states GHG emissions.

In August 2011, CARB released the *Final Supplement to the AB 32 Scoping Plan Functional Equivalent Document* (California Air Resources Board 2011). The Supplement was prepared to provide a more in-depth analysis of the five alternatives to the Scoping Plan that were originally included in that document. The supplemental analysis was conducted in response to litigation brought against CARB which challenged the adequacy of the alternatives analysis contained in the Scoping Plan. The Supplement includes an update of the business as usual GHG emissions projections that were contained in the Scoping Plan. The update is based on more recent economic conditions (including the economic downturn) and on reduction measures from the Scoping Plan that are already in place. The updated 2020 business as usual emissions forecast of 507 MMT CO_2e is lower than that contained in the 2008 Scoping Plan. With this forecast, only a 16 percent reduction below business as usual GHG emissions levels would be needed to return to 1990 levels (e.g. 427 MMT CO_2e) by 2020.

First Update to the 2008 Climate Change Scoping Plan. In response to comments on the 2008 Scoping Plan, and AB 32's requirement to update the Scoping Plan every five years, CARB revised and reapproved the Scoping Plan, and prepared the First Update to the 2008 Scoping Plan in 2014 (the 2014 Scoping Plan). The 2014 Scoping Plan contains the main strategies California will implement to achieve a reduction of 80 MMT of CO_2e emissions, or approximately 16 percent, from the state's projected 2020 emission level of 507 MMT of CO_2e under the business as usual conditions scenario defined in the 2014 Scoping Plan. The 2014 Scoping Plan also includes a breakdown of the amount of GHG reductions CARB recommends for each emissions sector of the state's GHG inventory. The 2014 Scoping Plan includes several strategies to reduce GHG emissions, including the Low Carbon Fuels Standard, the Pavley Rule, the Advanced Clean Cars program, the Renewable Portfolio Standard, and the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

California Senate Bill 97. Senate Bill 97 (SB 97), signed in August 2007, directed the California Office of Planning and Research to prepare, develop, and transmit to the Natural Resources Agency guidelines for the feasible mitigation of GHG emissions adopted those guidelines in January 2010. SB 97 also describes the CEQA process as an appropriate tool for addressing and mitigating global warming impacts from new development projects that are subject to CEQA. In

2009, the California Office of Planning and Research adopted amendments to the CEQA Guidelines as directed by SB 97. The amendments provide guidance about analysis and mitigation approaches to incorporate into environmental documents.

In June 2008, the California Office of Planning and Research released a Technical Advisory entitled *CEQA and Climate Change: Addressing Climate Change through California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review*. The California Office of Planning and Research recommended an analysis methodology that includes: 1) identifying sources of GHG emissions; 2) making a good-faith effort to calculate, model, or estimate the amount of GHG emissions from a project, including the emissions associated with vehicular traffic, energy consumption, water usage and construction activities; 3) determining the significance of the project GHG emissions; and 4) identifying and adopting feasible mitigation measures to reduce the identified impact if it is determined to be significant.

California Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities Strategy). This 2008 bill sets forth a mechanism for coordinating land use and transportation on a regional level for the purpose of reducing GHGs. The focus is to reduce miles traveled by passenger vehicles and light trucks. CARB is required to set GHG reduction targets for each metropolitan region for the years 2020 and 2035. Each of California's metropolitan planning organizations then prepares a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) that demonstrates how the region will meet its GHG reduction target through integrated land use, housing, and transportation planning. Once adopted by the metropolitan planning organizations, the SCS is to be incorporated into that region's federally enforceable regional transportation plan. If a metropolitan planning organization is unable to meet the targets through the SCS, then an alternative planning strategy must be developed which demonstrates how targets could be achieved, even if meeting the targets is deemed to be infeasible.

Local agencies that adopt land use, housing, and transportation policies that are consistent with and facilitate implementation of the related GHG reduction strategies in an SCS benefit through potential CEQA streamlining for qualifying projects proposed within their boundaries. Adoption of such policies can be a part of a general plan update or other similar policy adoption process. However a local agency's general plan is not required to be consistent with an SCS.

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments is the local metropolitan planning organization charged with implementing SB 375 emission reduction targets set by CARB. The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments is the metropolitan planning organization for San Benito, Monterey, and Santa Cruz Counties and their incorporated cities. The *Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy* (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments 2014) was adopted in June 2014. The SCS includes a proposed regional land use and transportation scenario designed to meet the regional GHG reduction target set by CARB.

Title 24 Standards/Energy Conservation. California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) were first established in 1978 to reduce California's energy consumption. The standards were most recently updated in January 2010. Energy efficient buildings require less electricity, natural gas, and other fuels, the use of which creates GHG emissions.

California Assembly Bill No. 1493. AB 1493, enacted on July 22, 2002, required the CARB to develop and adopt regulations that reduce GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks. CARB estimates that the regulation will reduce GHG emissions from the light-duty/passenger vehicle fleet by 18 percent in 2020 and by 27 percent in 2030, compared to today.

Renewable Energy Legislation/Orders. The California Renewable Portfolio Standard Program, which requires electric utilities and other entities under the jurisdiction of the California Public Utilities Commission to meet 20 percent of their retail sales with renewable power by 2017, was established by SB 1078 in 2002. The renewable portfolio standard was accelerated to 20 percent by 2010 by SB 107 in 2006. The program was subsequently expanded by the renewable electricity standard approved by CARB in September 2010, requiring all utilities to meet a 33 percent target by 2020. The renewable electricity standard is projected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the electricity sector by at least 12 MMT of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2020.

Executive Order S-3-05. The Governor announced on June 1, 2005, through Executive Order S-3-05, GHG emission reduction targets as follows: by 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels; by 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; by 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels. Some literature equates these reductions to 11 percent by 2010 and 25 percent by 2020.

Executive Order S-01-07. Issued on January 18, 2007, this order mandates that a statewide goal be established to reduce the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by at least 10 percent by 2020 and that a Low Carbon Fuel Standard for transportation fuels also be established.

Executive Order S-13-08. This Executive Order enhances the state's management of climate impacts from sea level rise, increased temperatures, shifting precipitation and extreme weather events. In December 2009, the California Natural Resources Agency released the 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy Discussion Draft. The document provides interim guidance to state and local agencies on planning for the impacts and risks of climate change.

Executive Order B-30-15. Issued on April 29, 2015, this order advances the intent of Executive Order S-3-05 by establishing a California GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels

by 2030. The order aligns California's GHG reduction targets with those of leading international governments. The new emission reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 is intended to facilitate the state's goal of reducing emissions 80 percent under 1990 levels by 2050. This is in line with the scientifically established levels needed in the U.S. to limit global warming below two degrees Celsius - the warming threshold at which scientists say there will likely be major climate disruptions such as super droughts and rising sea levels.

California Green Building Standards Code. The Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), which requires all new buildings in the state to be more energy efficient and environmentally responsible, took effect on January 1, 2011. These comprehensive regulations will achieve major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption and water use to create a greener California.

California Air Pollution Control Officers Association

The California Air Pollution Control Officers Association has prepared three guidance documents that together describe methods for quantifying GHG emissions and mitigation measures. The first document, *CEQA and Climate Change*, was released in 2008 and describes methods to estimate and mitigate GHG emissions from projects subject to CEQA. This report evaluates several GHG thresholds that could be used to evaluate the significance of a project's GHG emissions. The second document, *Model Policies for Greenhouse Gases in General Plans*, provides background information, examples, references, links, and a systematic worksheet to help local governments in moving toward GHG considerations in General Plan updates, or in the development of specific Climate Action Plans. In cooperation with the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management and the National Association of Clean Air Agencies, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association released a third document, *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures: A Resource for Local Government to Assess Emission Reductions from Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures*, in August 2010. The document provides methodologies to quantify project-level mitigation of GHG emissions associated with land use, transportation, energy use, and other related project areas.

Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District

The Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District ("air district") has been in the process of developing guidance for evaluation of GHG emissions impacts for several years. In June 2011, the air district proposed interim thresholds of significance for use in the CEQA analysis process. After release of the interim guidance, the air district consulted with various stakeholders regarding the proposed thresholds. To date, the air district has not formally adopted thresholds of significant or other district-specific guidance regarding analysis of GHG impacts as part of the CEQA process. However, the air district has been informally recommending that local lead

agencies consider using thresholds of significance adopted by the San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District ("SLO air district") as described in its *CEQA Air Quality Handbook, a Guide for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts for Projects Subject to CEQA Review* (San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District 2012), until such time as the air district formally adopts its own thresholds of significance. Information about the SLO air district guidelines is provided in the Thresholds or Standards of Significance section below.

City of Hollister

The City of Hollister General Plan was adopted in 2005. The consideration of climate change as an environmental, development planning, and general plan policy issue did not arise for local jurisdictions until after the passage of AB 32 in 2006. Therefore, the existing General Plan does not contain policies that directly address climate change. However, a number of General Plan policies do provide direction that would directly or indirectly result in reduced GHG emissions, especially from mobile sources (transportation) and energy use. These polices are found primarily in the Land Use, Circulation, and Natural Resources and Conservation elements of the General Plan. Representative applicable policies and implementation measures are as follows:

> **LU 4.1, Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.** Ensure that business areas have adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities and universal accessibility and that easy connections to transit are available whenever possible. Secure funding to implement the Hollister Bicycle Master Plan.
>
> **LU 4.2, Alternatives to Automobiles.** To the extent possible, encourage alternatives to the use of private automobiles. Encourage a range of transportation options, including driving, walking, biking and transit, without allowing any one to preclude the others.
>
> **LU 4.4, Streets, Paths and Bikeways.** Ensure that streets, paths and bikeways contribute to the system of a fully connected transportation network.
>
> **LU 5.1, Local Jobs and Housing Balance.** Strive to maintain balance between the number of local jobs and the number of available housing units within the planning area.
>
> **LU 5.2, Mixed-Use.** Encourage mixed-use development types that enhance the viability of Downtown Hollister in order to preserve its social, cultural, historical and governmental significance.

LU 6.1, Infill Development. Facilitate infill development opportunities by establishing an annexation policy in cooperation with the County of San Benito and the Local Agency Formation Commission to annex unincorporated county areas surrounded by the city.

LU 9.1, Natural Design Elements. Ensure that building design takes into consideration air circulation, natural lighting, views, solar orientation, and shading areas to interior and exterior spaces.

LU 9.2, Energy Efficiency. Integrate good design with the use of energy efficient techniques and equipment and with materials and construction practices that minimize adverse environmental effects.

C 2.1, Bicycle Facilities. Cooperatively work with COG, Caltrans, and San Benito County to develop, implement and maintain bicycle facilities providing direct access to major public facilities, schools and employment centers as described in the San Benito County Bicycle Master Plan.

C 2.3, Pedestrian Connections. Work with local businesses, private developers, and public agencies to ensure provision of safe pedestrian pathways to major public facilities, schools and employment centers. Require new developments to provide internal pedestrian connections and linkages to adjacent neighborhoods and community facilities.

C 4.2, Public Transit. Cooperatively work with COG, Caltrans, and San Benito County to develop, implement and maintain public transit services.

NRC 3.1, Development Practices to Conserve Resources. Promote development practices, which will result in the conservation of energy, water, minerals and other natural resources, and promote the use of renewable energy technologies (such as solar and wind) when possible.

NRC 2.3, Air Quality Planning and Coordination. Integrate air quality considerations with the land use and transportation processes by mitigating air quality impacts through land use design measures, such as encouraging project design that will foster walking and biking.

NRC 2.5, Circulation Alternatives to Reduce Impacts on Air Quality. Promote circulation alternatives that reduce air pollution.

NRC.J, Apply Title 24 requirements. Meet or exceed Title 24 energy conservation requirements, and, where possible, require structural and landscaping design to make use of natural heating and cooling. Encourage the use of solar and alternative energy technologies to meet or exceed Title 24 requirements.

NRC.N, Identify opportunities for transit-oriented development. Assist in educating developers and the public on the benefits of pedestrian and transit-oriented development.

NRC 3.2, Resource-Efficient Organizations and Businesses. Encourage businesses, commercial property owners, apartment building owners and non-profit organizations to be resource, energy and water efficient.

NRC 3.3, Resource Efficiency in Site Development. Encourage site planning and development practices that reduce energy demand, support transportation alternatives and incorporate resource- and energy-efficient infrastructure.

NRC 3.4, Resource-Efficient Building Design. Promote and encourage residences to be resource, energy and water efficient by creating incentives and removing obstacles to promote their use. Require those proposing new development to incorporate energy conservation measures in the design and construction of all proposed residential, commercial, industrial and public buildings. This would include: 1. High-efficiency heating-ventilation-air conditioning systems for maximum energy efficiency; 2. Design window systems to reduce thermal gain during warm weather and heat loss during cool weather; and, 3. Install high-efficiency sodium lamps for all street and parking lot lighting.

NRC 3.5, Efficiency in Government. Promote and serve as an effective leader in implementing conservation practices and incorporating resource-efficient alternatives in government facilities and services.

The city currently does not have an adopted plan in place for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G indicates that a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- generate a significant amount of greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
- conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Climate Change as a Cumulative Effect

Global climate change is, as the name implies, a global phenomenon. Greenhouse gas emissions released to the atmosphere from a variety of human activities and natural processes that occur across the globe are contributing to global warming. While the U.S. emits the largest per capita volume of GHGs of any country in the world, other major countries contribute substantial volumes of emissions that continue to grow on a per capita basis. Because climate change is a global phenomenon, it is highly unlikely that any one development project located anywhere in the world would have a significant individual impact on climate change. It is the sum total of contributions of development around the world that contribute to the problem. Hence, global climate change is inherently a cumulative effect.

The individual contribution of a project to GHGs in the atmosphere can generally be quantified in terms of volume of greenhouse gas emissions that it generates. However, the precise indirect effects of that contribution are difficult if not impossible to identify due to the complexity of local, regional, and global atmospheric dynamics and to the broad scale at which global warming impacts such as sea level rise, increase in weather intensity, decrease in snowpack, etc. are known to occur.

Quantified Thresholds of Significance – Significant Amount of GHG Emissions

Though climate change is a cumulative, global issue, impacts of individual projects on climate change as assessed in the CEQA process are generally considered relative to the climate change context at the state, regional, and/or local jurisdiction boundary scale. CEQA thresholds of significance for GHG emissions address whether the incremental cumulative contribution of a specific project to GHG emissions is significant at the state, regional, and/or local scale. At the state scale, consistency with AB 32 is typically the appropriate threshold, since AB 32 is intended to reduce GHG emissions generated within the state. Where regional or local plans for reducing GHG emissions have been adopted, the thresholds contained in those plans generally serve as the appropriate threshold of significance. However, quantified thresholds of significance for GHG emissions have not yet been adopted by CARB at the state level, the air district at the regional level, or the city at the local level.

Despite the fact that applicable state, regional, or local quantified thresholds of significance have not been adopted, the SLO air district has developed and adopted quantified GHG emissions

thresholds of significance that can serve as de facto guidance for assessment of GHG impacts for projects located within the air district boundary, including San Benito County. As noted previously in the Regulatory Setting section above, the air district has informally recommended that until it develops and adopts its own thresholds of significance, use of the SLO air district thresholds is appropriate for evaluating GHG impacts of projects within the air district boundary. The SLO air district thresholds are based on an analysis methodology contained in the SLO air district's *SLOAPCD Greenhouse Gas Thresholds and Supporting Evidence* (San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District 2012). That document presents the methodology and substantial evidence used to determine the thresholds. The city has not adopted the SLO air district thresholds, but is referring to them based on the recommendation of the air district.

The SLO air district's *CEQA Air Quality Handbook, a Guide for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts for Projects Subject to CEQA Review* contains its GHG thresholds. One of three thresholds can be used to assess the significance of a project's GHG impacts: 1) consistency with a qualified GHG reduction plan, 2) generation of 1,150 MT (MT) CO_2e per year or less, or 3) generation of 4.9 MT CO_2e per service population per year. Regarding the third threshold, the service population is defined as the sum of the new resident population and new employees generated by a land use development project. A development's total GHG emissions volume is divided by the service population to yield a GHG efficiency metric that is presented in terms of MT of CO_2e per service population per year.

In the broadest context, the thresholds were established to guide development within the boundaries of the SLO air district to reduce GHG emissions consistent with the targets identified in AB 32. These thresholds provide an understanding of GHG emissions volumes above which the SLO air district has concluded, based on substantial evidence, that the impact of the contribution of GHG emissions from individual projects should be deemed significant.

Executive Order B-30-15 – Year 2030 GHG Emissions Target. As described in the Policy and Regulatory Setting section above, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-30-15 in April 2015. It establishes a year 2030 GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The 2030 target is intended to serve as the successor to the 2020 target of 29 percent below business as usual as established in AB 32 and the Scoping Plan. At this time, the new target has not yet been promulgated into regulatory guidance by CARB or any other state agency, though the order directs CARB to update the Scoping Plan to express the 2030 target. The executive order does inherently constitute a regulation or requirement adopted to implement a statewide, regional or local plan for the reduction of GHG emissions per CEQA Guidelines section 15064.4. Therefore, the executive order is not a GHG reduction plan established for the purpose of mitigating GHG impacts. The executive order includes a new policy goal, and cites evidence that it is based on the best current science, but it does not appear to implement, interpret or make specific a law that is currently in force and enforced by any public agency.

Like many local air districts, the SLO air district has not yet determined if and when it will modify its current GHG CEQA guidance to reflect the new 2030 target. It is likely that the SLO air district, as well as other air districts and local lead agencies, will look to CARB to incorporate the new target into the next Scoping Plan update and/or into specific regulatory direction. This would signal the need to revise existing or adopting new plans for the reduction of GHG emissions (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15064.4) that reflect the 2030 executive order reduction goal.

In light of the above discussion and the fact that the proposed project would be operational prior to 2020 - the emissions reduction target year embedded in the SLO air district's current CEQA guidance, that guidance and the thresholds it contains remain applicable for assessing the GHG impacts of the proposed project.

Applicable GHG Reduction Plan

Regarding conflict with an applicable GHG reduction plan, neither the air district nor city have yet developed a qualified plan for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. In the case of the SLO air district, since its thresholds were developed based on a goal to reduce emissions within its district consistent with AB 32 and the air district recommends use of the SLO air district's GHG thresholds of significance, the SLO air district's *CEQA Air Quality Handbook, a Guide for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts for Projects Subject to CEQA Review* serves as the applicable GHG reduction plan.

GHG Analysis Methodology

The GHG analysis methodology below is based on assessment of the project's projected annual GHG emissions volume relative to the SLO air district threshold of significance. The projected GHG emissions volume is estimated using CalEEMod. The proposed project would generate a significant volume of GHG emissions that could have a significant impact on the environment if its annual GHG emissions volume exceeds the SLO air district's 4.9 MT CO_2e/service population/year threshold of significance. The service population threshold can be used where projects generate population and/or new employees. The SLO air district's service population threshold is applicable in that the proposed project will generate a population increase.

To utilize the service population threshold, the projected population increase created by the project must be determined. The new resident population is projected at 1,238 people. This is equivalent to the product of 343 residential units and the city's average of 3.61 persons per household per the California Department of Finance (California Department of Finance 2015b). The proposed project will not directly generate new employees. Therefore, the total service population is 1,238.

Analysis, Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

Conflict with the Applicable GHG Reduction Plan. As has been previously described, the SLO air district's *CEQA Air Quality Handbook, a Guide for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts for Projects Subject to CEQA Review* is the applicable GHG reduction plan given the Monterey Bay Air Quality Management District's recommendation that it be utilized as guidance for reducing GHG emissions from new development. The 4.9 MT CO_2e/service population threshold of significance reflects the level of emissions reduction needed from new cumulative development to enable the SLO air district to meet the 2020 GHG emissions reduction target identified in AB 32. Since the proposed project would generate GHG emissions that fall below the 4.9 MT/service population impact threshold, the proposed project is consistent with the applicable GHG reduction plan and by extension, is consistent with AB 32.

WOULD THE PROJECT GENERATE A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, THAT MAY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

The proposed project would generate GHG emissions during its construction and long-term operation. These emissions are forecast using CalEEMod. As described in Appendix C, existing baseline GHG emissions from existing agricultural operations were not considered; the use of the site for dryland farming would be a very nominal source of GHG emissions. Therefore, baseline emissions volumes are not subtracted from the projected annual project emissions to arrive at net emissions. As will be illustrated below, this fact does not affect the impact significance determination.

Construction Emissions Estimate

Table 16, Unmitigated Construction Phase GHG Emissions, shows the one-time GHG emissions from constructing the project. One-time construction emissions total approximately 3,404 MT CO_2e. This value is taken from section 2.1, Overall Construction, of the CalEEMod model results included in Appendix C. The SLO air district recommends that total construction emissions be amortized over a 20-year period and added to annual operational GHG emissions to arrive at a total project annual GHG emissions volume. Using this approach, the proposed project would generate construction emissions of about 170 MT CO_2e per year. CalEEMod defaults have been used for the number and type of construction equipment to be utilized during the construction process and for other construction emissions because more project specific data is currently not available. No construction mitigation measures were utilized to calculate a mitigated construction emissions volume.

Table 16 Unmitigated Construction Phase GHG Emissions (MT)

	Bio CO_2	NBio CO_2	CH_4[1]	N_2O[2]	CO_2e
Total Construction Emissions	0.0	3,396.77	0.35	0.00	**3,404.09**

Source: CalEEMod, EMC Planning Group 2015

Notes: Abbreviations: CH_4 – methane, CO_2 - carbon dioxide, N_2O - nitrogen dioxide, CO_2e - carbon dioxide equivalents. Bio CO_2 represents emissions generated by biological processes, primarily decomposition of waste in a landfill. Nbio CO_2 represents emissions generated by all other sources, primarily fossil fuel combustion.
[1]CH_4 volume multiplied by its GWP of 21 to arrive at CO_2e.

Annual Mitigated Operational Emissions Estimate

Table 17, Mitigated Operational Phase GHG Emissions, shows a projected annual operational emissions volume of 5,320.4 MT CO_2e. This volume is considered mitigated because mitigation measure AQ-1 in Section 3.3, Air Quality, prohibits installation of solid fuel heating appliances in new homes. While targeted at reducing criteria air emissions, specifically VOC, the mitigation measure also results in an incremental reduction in GHG emissions. The unmitigated GHG emissions volume is 5,594.18 MT CO_2e per year, a difference of 273.78 MT CO_2e per year. The mitigated emission volume is taken from section 2.2, Overall Operational, Mitigated Operational, of the CalEEMod model results included in Appendix C.

Table 17 Mitigated Operational Phase GHG Emissions (MT/year)

Emissions Source	Bio CO_2	NBio CO_2	CH_4[1]	N_2O[2]	CO_2e
Area Source	0.00	248.93	0.01	0.00	250.52
Energy	0.00	1,202.72	0.04	0.02	1,208.60
Mobile Source	0.00	3,606.10	0.16	0.00	3,609.37
Waste	77.86	0.00	4.60	0.00	174.49
Water	7.09	49.52	0.73	0.02	77.42
Total Unmitigated Operational Emissions					**5,320.40**

Source: CalEEMod, EMC Planning Group 2015

Notes: Abbreviations: CH_4 – methane, CO_2 - carbon dioxide, N_2O - nitrogen dioxide, CO_2e - carbon dioxide equivalents. Bio CO_2 represents emissions generated by biological processes, primarily decomposition of waste in a landfill. Nbio CO_2 represents emissions generated by all other sources, primarily fossil fuel combustion.
[1]CH_4 volume multiplied by its GWP of 21 to arrive at CO_2e.
[2]N_2O volume multiplied by its GWP of 310 to arrive at CO_2e.

Given the residential nature of the proposed project, an assumption is made that refrigerants and other forms of high GWP GHG emissions would not be generated.

Total Project GHG Emissions and Comparison to Operational Impact Threshold

Table 18, GHG Emissions per Service Population, summarizes total annual GHG emissions and identifies the consistency of the emissions volume with the service population threshold of significance.

Table 18 GHG Emissions per Service Population (MT/year)

Emissions Source/Standard	CO2e
Mitigated Operational Project Emissions	5,320.40
Annual Construction Emissions (amortized over 20 years)[1]	170.00
Total Annual Operational GHG Emissions	**5,490.40**
Service Population = 1,238 (population increase)	
Annual Emissions/Service Population (5,490.40/1,238)	4.43
Comparative SLO District Service Population Threshold	4.90
Project emissions are below the SLO air district threshold of significance	

Source: EMC Planning Group 2015

Notes: [1]Per SLO air district guidelines, amortized construction emissions are to be included in the total project emission volume.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Significant GHG Emissions): Annual operational GHG emissions from the proposed project would not generate a significant volume of GHG emissions; therefore, the impact is less than significant.

As can be seen in Table 18, GHG Emissions per Service Population, the proposed project would generate annual operational GHG emissions of 4.43 MT/service population, which is lower than the SLO air district threshold of significance of 4.9 MT/service population by 0.47 MT or about nine percent. Consequently, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact from generation of GHG emissions.

The actual annual operational GHG emissions and resulting annual GHG emissions/service population would likely be incrementally lower than identified in this analysis. As part of the project design, future developers must comply with existing state regulations such as CALGreen and with city regulations such as water conservation measures that would further reduce GHG emissions As a result, the 4.43 MT GHG emissions/service population is conservative.

3.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section of the Draft EIR discusses the potential presence of hazardous materials and conditions on and near the project site, and analyzes the potential risk of any such conditions in proximity to existing and proposed development. Comment letters on the NOP included concerns regarding consistency with the airport land use plan including the projects potential location within airport safety zones.

This analysis is based on the results of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (hereinafter referred to as "Phase I ESA") and Phase II Soil Investigation prepared by AEI Consultants in 2012 in connection with the project site, the City of Hollister General Plan, and the San Benito County Emergency Operations Plan. The Phase I ESA and Phase II Soil Investigation are included as Appendix F of this EIR.

Environmental Setting

On-Site Uses

The project site consists of agricultural and undeveloped land and contains no permanent structures or utilities. On-site operations include cultivation of organic hay. The property is occupied by multiple homeless encampments (nonpermanent structures), and an old irrigation well is also present. A Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) pipeline easement is located on the northern property boundary. Two rock quarries (reportedly active from at least 1939 to 1955), are also present onsite. The pipeline easement and rock quarries are identified on Figure 18, Phase I ESA Site Map.

On-Site Topography

The project site is located within an area locally identified as Park Hill, with the western and central portions of the property consisting of hilly topography and the eastern portion being relatively flat. The regional topography slopes to the north. Groundwater is reported to be variable, ranging from predominantly west (shallow groundwater zone), predominantly northwest (mid-depth groundwater zone) to east-northeast (deep groundwater zone). Based on topographic inspection, the topographic variability of the site is consistent with variable groundwater flow directions. The nearest surface water body is the San Benito River, located approximately 1.15 miles south of the property.

Surrounding Uses

The project site is bounded by agricultural land to the north; the intersection of Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way and unnamed service road, followed by agricultural land to the northeast; the railroad right-of-way, followed by commercial and industrial uses to the east; the intersection of railroad right-of-way and North Street, followed by EM Property Rentals to the southeast; residences, North Street, undeveloped land and City of Hollister-owned land, water tanks, cellular towers to the south; the intersection of Buena Vista Road (North Street) and College Street, followed by an apartment complex to the southwest; and agricultural land, orchards, the IOOF Cemetery, undeveloped land and portion of closed Hart's Landfill and undeveloped/fallow agricultural land to the west (refer to Figure 18, Phase I ESA Site Map).

The Hollister Municipal Airport, which supports general aviation activities, is located less than two miles north of the project site. The project site is within the airport influence area of the city's airport land use plan.

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Findings

A Phase I ESA dated December 11, 2012, was prepared by AEI Consultants to determine the presence or absence of hazardous materials on or near the project site. The findings of the Phase I ESA are summarized as follows.

Recognized Environmental Conditions. Recognized environmental conditions are defined by the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard Practice E1527- 05 as the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products on a property under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, groundwater, or surface water of the property. The Phase I ESA did not identify any recognized environmental conditions associated with the subject property or nearby properties.

Historical Recognized Environmental Conditions. Historical recognized environmental conditions are defined by the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard Practice E1527-05 as an environmental condition which in the past would have been considered a recognized environmental condition, but which may or may not be considered a recognized environmental condition currently. The Phase I ESA did not identify any historical recognized environmental conditions associated with the subject property or nearby properties.

De Minimis Environmental Conditions. De minimis environmental conditions include environmental concerns identified by AEI that warrant discussion but do not qualify as recognized environmental conditions, as defined by the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard Practice E1527-05. The Phase I ESA did not identify any de minimis environmental conditions associated with the subject property or nearby properties:

Business Environmental Risks. Business environmental risks include risks which can have a material environmental or environmentally-driven impact on the business associated with the current or planned use of the subject property, not necessarily limited to those environmental issues required to be investigated in the standard American Society for Testing and Materials scope. BERs may affect the liabilities and financial obligations of the client, the health & safety of site occupants, and the value and marketability of the subject property. The Phase I ESA identified the following business environmental risks associated with the subject property or nearby properties:

- The subject property has been developed for a variety of agricultural uses (orchards, row crops and/or hay cropping) since at least 1921, with the associated historical onsite use of a diesel-fired prune dipper.

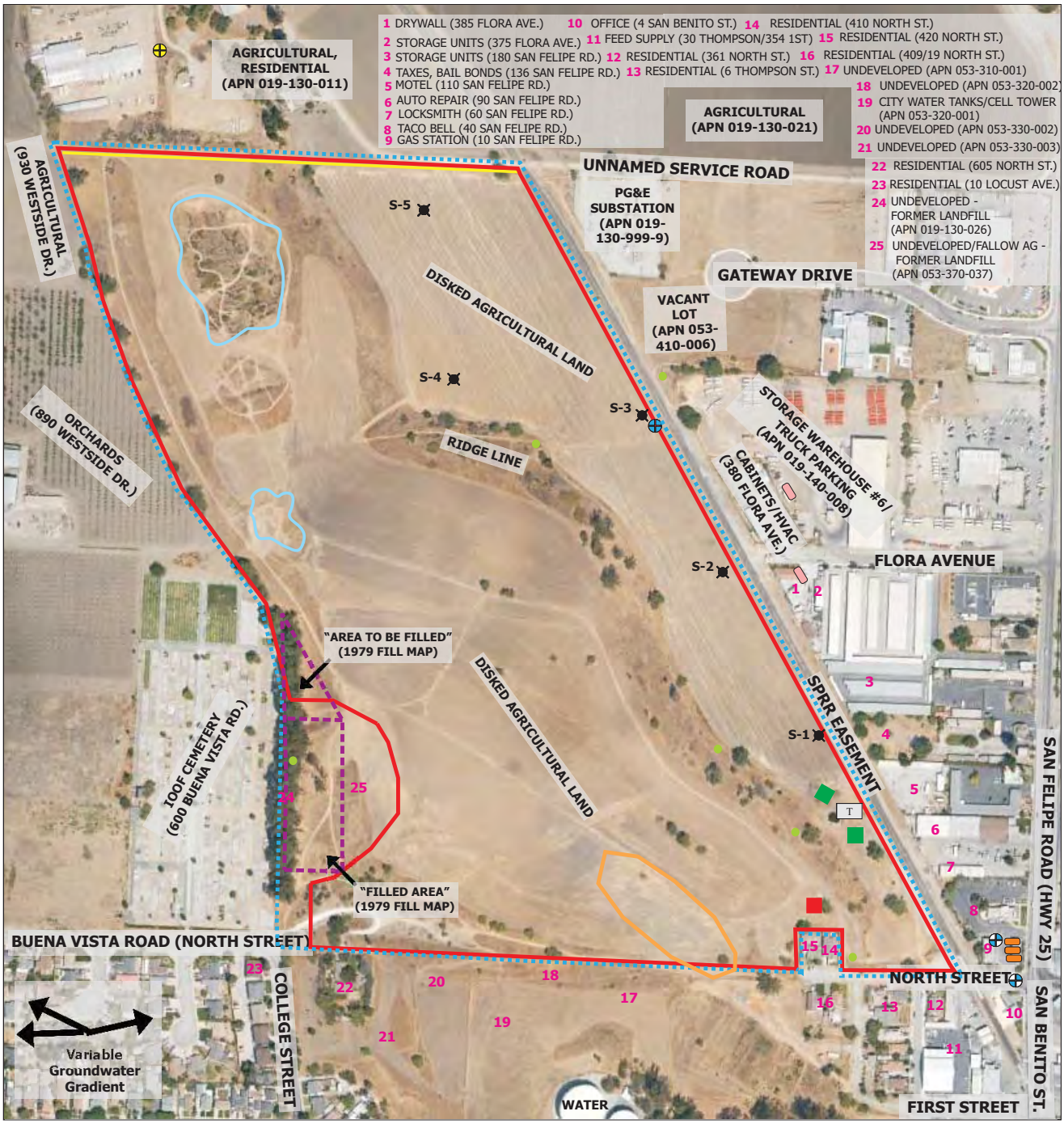
  No indication of a significant impact to shallow soil due to pesticides, select metals, asbestos, and mid- to heavy-petroleum products was identified at the property.

  However, as evidence of a minor release of diesel and motor oil was identified in the area of the former prune dipper, and given that no information was available as to the exact location of diesel storage associated with the former prune dipper, concentrations of diesel and motor oil higher than that detected during the Phase I may be encountered during grading activities prior to residential redevelopment.

The west-southwestern adjacent property contains what is known as the historical Hart's Landfill site. The landfill was operational from approximately 1950 until 1983 and accepted mainly construction related waste such as concrete and wood; however other materials such as asbestos paper, household garbage and pesticide containers were also disposed of onsite. Tires and concrete were observed on one of the slopes of the landfill during the Phase I ESA onsite reconnaissance. The landfill is identified on Figure 16, Phase I ESA Site Map, presented earlier.

Soil samples collected from the western/southwestern edge of the property to evaluate whether reported dumping of asbestos had resulted in an adverse release to onsite shallow soils did not reveal any asbestos in concentrations exceeding the laboratory reporting limit (0.25 percent) any of the samples collected.

Interviews conducted as part of the Phase I ESA with the Hart's Landfill CalRecycle Inspector, Mr. Jon Whitehill, indicated that the majority of the Hart's Landfill was likely located on the west-southwestern adjacent property. He stated that landfill gas was not a concern based on the "type of inert waste disposed of at the site" and that the site did not have "the potential to impact adjacent parcels."



Approximate Current Property Boundary
Approximate Pre-2007 Property Boundary
Hart's Landfill (CalRecycle)
PG&E Gas Line
Prune dipper remnants
Building pad remnants
Pole-mounted transformer
Water well/pump
Plugged O&G Well (DOGGR map)
Fill area (ESP, '07)
Depression (former quarry area)
Fuel UST
Fuel AST
Homeless camp
Shallow monitoring well (105 San Felipe Rd. LUST)
Soil boring (ESP, '07)

not to scale

Source: AEI Consultants 2015

Figure 18

Phase I ESA Site Map

North Street Subdivision EIR

E M C

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Phase II Soil Investigation Findings

A Phase II Soil Investigation dated December 10, 2012, was prepared by AEI Consultants concurrently with the Phase I ESA described above. The Phase II Soil Investigation was conducted to assess whether shallow soils of portions of the property had been adversely impacted by prior uses, including agricultural production, a reported diesel-fired prune dipper, and adjacent landfill reported to have had asbestos disposal. AEI performed the sampling activities at the property on November 27, 2012. The investigation included the collection and analyses of shallow soil samples from a total of sixty-eight locations throughout the property: sixty where agriculture activities occurred, three in the area of the former prune dipper, and five in the vicinity of the former landfill. The specific soil sampling locations are mapped on figure 2 of Phase II Soil Investigation (included as Appendix F of this EIR).

Sixty discrete shallow soil samples were collected throughout the property where agricultural activities were performed to evaluate whether agricultural uses had had resulted an adverse release to onsite shallow soils.

To evaluate whether a significant release of diesel had occurred in the area of the former prune dipper operation, three discrete shallow soil samples were collected in the area of the former diesel-fired prune dipper, including one immediately adjacent to prune dipper chimney remnants.

Five discrete shallow soil samples were collected from the western/southwestern edge of the property to evaluate whether reported dumping of asbestos had resulted an adverse release to onsite shallow soils.

Based on the findings of the Phase II Soil Investigation, no indication of a significant impact to shallow soil due to pesticides, the analyzed metals, asbestos, and mid to heavy petroleum product was identified at the property. No further investigation relating to the historical application of pesticides on the property, the former prune dipper, or for asbestos associated with the former adjacent and overlapping Hart's Landfill was recommended.

However, the Phase II Soil Investigation noted that that evidence of a minor release of diesel and motor oil was identified in the area of the former prune dipper, and no information was available as to the exact location of diesel storage associated with the former prune dipper. Therefore, concentrations of diesel and motor oil higher than that detected during this investigation may be encountered during grading activities prior to residential redevelopment in this area.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act. The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act requires community relations components during the assessment of hazardous substances at inactive waste sites. The purpose of this act is to identify and clean up chemically contaminated sites that pose a significant environmental health threat. The hazard ranking system is used to determine whether a site should be placed on the national priorities list for cleanup activities.

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act. The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act pertain primarily to emergency management of accidental releases. It requires formation of state and local emergency planning committees, which are responsible for collecting material handling and transportation data for use as a basis for planning. Chemical inventory data is made available to the community at large under the "right-to-know" provision of the law. In addition, this act also requires annual reporting of continuous emissions and accidental releases of specified compounds. These annual submissions are compiled into a nationwide toxics release inventory.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act. The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act is the statutory basis for the extensive body of regulations aimed at ensuring the safe transport of hazardous materials on water, rail, highways, through air, or in pipelines. It includes provisions for material classification, packaging, marking, labeling, placecarding, and shipping documentation.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. Hazardous waste is regulated under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. Subtitle C establishes regulatory standards for the generation, transportation, storage, treatment, and disposal of hazardous wastes. In regulatory terms, hazardous waste under this act is a waste that appears on one of the four hazardous wastes lists (F-list, K-list, P-list, or U-list), or exhibits at least one of four characteristics: ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity.

State

State Agencies. The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal-EPA) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) establish rules governing the use of hazardous materials and the management of hazardous waste. Within Cal-EPA, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has primary regulatory responsibility, with delegation of enforcement to local jurisdictions that enter into agreements with Cal-EPA, for the management of hazardous materials and the generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous waste.

California Hazardous Waste Control Act. The California Hazardous Waste Control Act (Health & Safety Code § 25100 et seq.) is the State's equivalent to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and closely parallels it by regulating the generation, storage, transportation, treatment, and disposal of hazardous waste in the State. The primary authority for enforcement of California Hazardous Waste Control Act and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act itself lies with the DTSC. The EPA has granted the State the authority to administer all regulations under both the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the California Hazardous Waste Control Act.

Regional

Airport Land Use Commission. As adopted by the Council of San Benito County Governments acting in its capacity as the Airport Land Use Commission for San Benito County, the basic function of the Hollister Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Airport Land Use Commission 2012) (hereinafter "airport land use compatibility plan") is to promote compatibility between Hollister Municipal Airport and the land uses surrounding it to the extent that these areas have not already been devoted to incompatible uses. The airport land use compatibility plan accomplishes this function through establishment of a set of compatibility criteria applicable to new development around the airport. Neither the airport land use compatibility plan nor the Airport Land Use Commission have authority over existing land uses or over operation of the airport.

Geographically, the airport land use compatibility plan pertains to lands within the jurisdictions of the City of Hollister and San Benito County. Any city, special district, community college district, or school district that exists or may be established or expanded into the Hollister Municipal Airport Influence Area defined by this airport land use compatibility plan are also subject to the provisions of the plan. The authority of the Airport Land Use Commission does not extend to state, federal, or tribal lands.

City of Hollister General Plan

The following City of Hollister General Plan goals and policies are relevant to the proposed project regarding hazards and hazardous material impacts:

> **LU9.5** Avoidance of Hazardous Development Areas
>
> **LU6.**4 Specific Plans
>
> **HS1.1** Location of Future Development. those areas where potential danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the community can be adequately mitigated, including development which

would be subject to severe flood damage or geological hazard due to its location and/or design. Development also should be prohibited where emergency services, including fire protection, cannot be provided.

HS1.2 Safety Considerations in Development Review. Require appropriate studies to assess identified hazards and assure that impacts are adequately mitigated.

HS1.3 Coordination with San Benito County and Other Agencies on Safety Matters. Cooperate with the County of San Benito and with other government agencies in all matters related to safety, hazardous waste management and emergency planning.

HS1.12 Potential Hazardous Soils Conditions. Evaluate new development prior to development approvals on sites that may contain hazardous materials.

HS1.13 Hazardous Waste Management. Support measures to responsibly manage hazardous waste to protect public health, safety and the environment, and support state and federal safety legislation to strengthen requirements for hazardous materials transport.

HS1.14 Hazardous Materials Storage and Disposal. Require proper storage and disposal of hazardous materials to prevent leakage, potential explosions, fires, or the escape of harmful gases, and to prevent individually innocuous materials from combining to form hazardous substances, especially at the time of disposal. Provide the public, industry, agriculture and local government with the available information needed to enable them to take rational and cost effective actions to minimize, recycle, treat, dispose of or otherwise manage hazardous wastes within the Hollister Planning Area.

HS.M Designate emergency evacuation routes. Designate emergency evacuation routes in conjunction with the County of San Benito, and make them known to the public.

HS.R Require cleaning on sites with hazardous soils. Sites within Hollister that are contaminated with hazardous substances should be cleaned through decontamination of soils and filtration of ground water.

HS.S Review and update the City's Emergency Plan. The City shall regularly update its Emergency Plan.

City of Hollister Hazardous Waste Ordinance

The use and storage of hazardous materials in the city is regulated under Hollister's Hazardous Waste Ordinance (1984), which is contained in Chapter 10A of the city's Municipal Code. As identified in the city's general plan:

> The ordinance is consistent with and mirrors many provisions of Chapter 695 of the State Health and Safety Code, as it requires triple containment of all underground storage tanks and plumbing. All major producers and storers of hazardous waste must maintain a current inventory of on-site toxic materials with the City's Fire Department. The department is presently compiling a map for the location of chemical storage around the city.
>
> Any person who uses or handles a hazardous material to obtain a permit from the Hollister Fire Department, with some limited exceptions. The Hazardous Materials Division is responsible for the following CUPA programs:
>
> - Hazardous Materials Business Plan Program (CA Health & Safety Code Chapter 6.95)
> - Hazardous Waste Program (CA Health & Safety Code, Chapter 6.5)
> - Underground Storage Tank Program (CA Health & Safety Code, Chapter6.7)
> - Accidental Release Program (CA Health & Safety Code, Chapter 6.95)
> - Aboveground Storage Tank (CA Health & Safety Code, Chapter 6.67)
> - Uniform Fire Code (Section 8001.3.2 - 8001.3.3a) (City of Hollister General Plan page (page 4.5-2)

It is noted that as part of the Phase I ESA, on December 5 and 6, 2012, AEI conducted a telephone interview with Hollister Fire Department staff member Fred Cheshire who indicated that hazardous materials inspections/permitting duties have been transferred to the San Benito County Environmental Health Department.

City of Hollister Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Municipal Airport

In 2001, the City of Hollister adopted the *Comprehensive Land Use Plan Hollister Municipal Airport* (Aries Consultants, LTD. 2001) (herein after referred to as the "airport land use plan"). The

airport land use plan identifies both an inner and outer safety zone with restrictions on residential uses and an influence area. The city's general plan recommends that all development within the identified influence areas be reviewed for compatibility with the 2001 airport land use plan or its subsequent updates during the development review process. The airport land use plan states that all areas within the airport influence area should be regarded as potentially subject to aircraft overflights. Although sensitivity to aircraft overflight vary from one person to another, overflight sensitivity is particularly important within residential areas (page 3-18).

San Benito County Environmental Health Department

San Benito County is responsible for implementing Chapter 6.95 of Division 20 of the California Health and Safety Code (§ 25500 et seq.), relating to hazardous materials release response plans and inventory. The San Benito County Environmental Health Department has been designated the lead agency for hazardous materials programs, and acts as the single point of contact for issuance of permits. Site inspections of all hazardous materials programs (i.e., aboveground tanks and underground tanks, hazardous waste treatment, hazardous waste generators, hazardous materials management plans, etc.) are consolidated and accomplished by a single inspection.

The program provides emergency response to chemical events to furnish substance identification; health and environmental risk assessment; air, soil, water, and waste sample collection; incident mitigation and cleanup feasibility options; and on-scene coordination for state Superfund incidents. The program also provides for the oversight, investigation, and remediation of unauthorized releases from underground tasks.

San Benito County Emergency Operations Plan

The San Benito County Emergency Operations Plan (2005) provides guidance for the County's response to extraordinary emergency situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and nuclear defense operations – both during war and peacetime. The emergency operations plan concentrates on operational concepts and response procedures relative to large scale disasters, and addresses operations for the entire County.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

The following thresholds for evaluating a project's environmental impacts are based on the State CEQA Guidelines and standards used by San Benito County. For purposes of this Draft EIR, impacts are considered significant if the following could result from implementation of the proposed project:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;
- 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 (during construction or operation);
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within a quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;
- Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment;
- Be located within an airport land use plan, or where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport, public use airport, or private airstrip, and thus result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area; or
- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

Wildfire is addressed in Section 3.6, Fire Services of this Draft EIR.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

Emission of Hazardous Material within a School. Residences do not routinely transport, use, or dispose of hazardous materials or present a reasonably foreseeable release of hazardous materials. During project construction, the use and handling of hazardous materials would occur in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and requirements. The closest schools to the site are the San Andreas Continuation High School to the east, Sacred Heart Elementary School to the southwest and Calaveras Elementary School to the west. Each of the schools is approximately one half mile from the project site. Therefore, the project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school and there is no impact.

Be Located on a Site that is Included on a List of Hazardous Materials Sites. Government Code Section 65962.5 requires that the Department of Toxic Substances Control compile and regularly update a list of hazardous waste facilities and sites. A search of the Envirostor website (Department of Toxic Substances Control 2015) revealed that there are no listed hazardous sites within one half mile of the project site. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Impair Implementation of or Physically Interfere with an Adopted Emergency Response or Evacuation Plan. The current San Benito County Emergency Operations Plan contains procedures for responding to various types of large-scale emergencies within San Benito County including incorporated cities, and defines emergency response and management roles for county and city officials. The city would implement emergency response measures to address emergency management, including notifications, evacuations, and other necessary measures in the event of an emergency. The project would be required to adhere to the emergency response and management activities defined within the Emergency Operations Plan, and therefore it would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with the Emergency Operations Plan.

As identified in the city's general plan (page 5.7) the city's primary evacuation routes would be along State Highways 25 and 156. The project would not encroach on or obstruct any existing evacuation routes.

The proposed project would not impede or conflict with any adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. There would be no impact.

Would the Project Create a Significant Hazard to the Public or the Environment through the Routine Transport, Use, or Disposal of Hazardous Materials?

Project construction activities may involve the use and transport of hazardous materials. These materials may include fuels, oils, mechanical fluids, and other chemicals used during construction. Transportation, storage, use and disposal of hazardous materials during construction activities would be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations. All construction activities would be subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process that requires the preparation of a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), which would be reviewed and approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (refer to discussion in Section 3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality of this EIR).

Residential units do not routinely transport, use, or dispose of hazardous materials or present a reasonably foreseeable release of hazardous materials, with the exception of common residential-grade hazardous materials such as household cleaners, paint, etc. Therefore, project operation would not result in an impact.

Enforcement of hazardous material regulations and rapid response by local agencies would reduce the project's hazardous materials transportation, use, and disposal impacts and ensure that the risk of potential hazard to the public and the environment are less than significant.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Use, Transport, or Disposal of Hazardous Materials). Project construction may involve the use, transport and disposal of hazardous materials; however, required compliance with applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations would ensure the risk of hazard to the public and/or the environment is less than significant.

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?

Because agricultural, light industrial, and commercial uses on the project site are likely, in the past or currently, to have used or stored hazardous materials on the project site, the potential exists that project site soils have been locally contaminated by spills or leakage of these materials. Exposure of future residents or students to soils contamination is a potential health hazard and environmental impact

The project site has been developed for a variety of agricultural uses (orchards, row crops and/or hay cropping) since at least 1921, with the associated historical onsite use of a diesel-fired prune dipper. In addition the project site is adjacent to and overlapping the former Hart's Landfill.

The Phase I ESA and Phase II Soil Investigation did not find any significant impact to shallow soil due to pesticides, select metals, asbestos, and mid to heavy petroleum product on the property and no further investigation relating to the potential historical application of pesticides on the property, the former prune dipper, or former Hart's Landfill was recommended.

However, as evidence of a minor release of diesel and motor oil was identified in the area of the former prune dipper, and given that no information was available as to the exact location of diesel storage associated with the former prune dipper, concentrations of diesel and motor oil higher than that detected during this investigation may be encountered during grading activities prior to residential redevelopment. Such soil, if encountered, should be tested and, if needed, appropriately profiled for proper disposal.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Potential Release of Hazardous Materials). Concentrations of diesel and motor oil or undocumented storage structures may be encountered during construction which may create a significant hazard to the public or the environment if disturbance results in release of hazardous materials into the environment.

Mitigation Measure

HAZ-1. The project developer shall include the following language on all bid and construction documents:

> In the event that unidentified contamination (including stained soils) or features (such as an unaccounted for underground storage tank) are observed during construction, work within a 50-meter radius (165 feet) of the find shall be stopped, the Planning Department notified, and a qualified environmental professional shall be retained by the project developer to examine the find and make appropriate recommendations. Any underground storage tank shall be removed and properly disposed of in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Any observed stained soils may require testing. Results of the sampling (if necessary) shall indicate the level or remediation efforts that may be required. In the event that subsequent testing indicates the presence of any hazardous materials beyond acceptable thresholds, a work plan shall be prepared subject to review and approval by the San Benito County Environmental Health Department and the City of Hollister in order to remediate the soil in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations prior to resuming construction work in the affected area.

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would ensure that in the event that unidentified contamination and/or features (such as contaminated soils or unaccounted for underground storage tanks) are discovered during construction activities, structures are removed and contaminated soils are remediated and or disposed of in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. With mitigation, the potential for the project to 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 is less than significant.

Would the Project be Located within an Airport Land Use Plan, or Where Such a Plan has not Been Adopted, Within Two Miles of a Public Airport, Public Use Airport, or Private Airstrip, and thus Result in a Safety Hazard for People Residing or Working in the Project Area?

The project site is located less than two miles from the Hollister Municipal Airport and is located within the airport land use plan area. The city's general plan identifies that the northern portion of the site is within the outer safety zone (map 16). However, the airport land use plan itself identifies that although the project is within the outer airport influence area (figure 7); it is outside the airport safety zone and is outside the traffic pattern zone (figure 6).

The 2012 airport land use compatibility plan identifies the site within the airport influence area (map1) but outside any airport safety zones (map 3), and outside the critical airspace protection zone (map 4). On the airport land use compatibility plan's compatibility policy map (map 5), the northern portion of APN 019-130-027 (the area primarily outside of the city's SOI), is within the Routine Overflight Zone. The remainder of the site (including APN 019-130-026, 053-370-038 and the southern part APN 019-130-027) is within the Airport Influence Area.

The airport land use compatibility plan requires that any development proposed within the Routine Overflight Zone comply with the following:

a. Deed Notices shall be recorded for all properties within the scope of the development. The routine required in Routine Overflight. Zone boundary matches the outer boundary of the horizontal surface as defined by FAR Part 77.

b. All owners, potential purchasers, occupants (whether owners or renters) and potential occupants (whether owners or renters) will receive dull and accurate Real Estate Transaction Disclosure concerning the noise, safety, or overflight impacts associated with the airport operations prior to entering any contractual obligation to purchase, lease, rent or otherwise.

Areas within the Airport Influence Area will require a Real Estate Transaction Disclosure (part b, above). Veronica Lezama, Transportation Planner with Council of Governments and the Airport Land Use Committee, confirmed that the site location as described in the 2012 airport land use compatibility plan is accurate and that the project is outside the safety zones but the project will, due to its location within the routine overflight zone and/or airport influence area, be subject the requirements of the plan for either Deed Notice and/or Real Estate Transaction Disclosure (pers. communication March 15, 2015). This document will disclose to future occupants of the residences that they may be subject to annoyances or inconveniences associated with proximity to airport operations (noise, vibration or odors). No significant safety concerns are identified; however, as the site is within the Airport Influence Area of the airport, future residents are subject to aircraft overflight which brings some incremental additional safety risk due to aviation accident than those living or working outside an aircraft overflight area. The impact is less than significant.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Aviation Safety Issues). The project site is within the airport land use plan and is exposed to an incremental aviation safety risk due to being within an Airport Influence Area and aircraft overflight zone; however, this will not result in a significant safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

3.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This section of the Draft EIR addresses the project's potential environmental impacts associated with surface hydrology and water quality. The discussion in this section is based on information found in the City of Hollister General Plan (2005), the City of Hollister Storm Water Management Plan (2000), available flood hazard mapping and other technical information, and project application materials including a *Utility Report North Street Property Hollister, California* prepared by Carlson, Barbee & Gibson Inc (2013) (hereinafter "utility report"). Wastewater is discussed in section 3.18 of this EIR. Groundwater impacts, water supplies and are discussed in section 3.17 of this EIR.

Environmental Setting

Project Vicinity Drainage

The project site is located within the city's planning area. According to the City of Hollister's Storm Water Management Plan, the San Benito River, Santa Ana Creek, and the Santa Ana Creek tributary that crosses Fairview Road at John Smith Road are the three natural channels that receive storm water from the city's storm water collection system (City of Hollister 2000). The city drains into two distinct drainage basins: the San Benito River basin and the San Felipe Lake basin. The San Felipe Lake basin (located about ten miles northwest of the project site) collects runoff from the Santa Ana Creek, Dos Picachos, Arroyo De Los Viboras, Pacheco Creek, and the Tequisquita slough sub-basins.

The San Benito River is located just over one mile southwest of the site, but is separated from the site by dense, mainly residential development. It flows through the southern and western portions of the city's planning area. The San Benito River is listed as an impaired water body under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. It is impaired by fecal coliform and sedimentation/siltation. As a result, storm water discharges into the San Benito River must meet water quality objectives and total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) established by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for these pollutants.

On-Site Drainage Patterns

The project site does not contain defined drainage features. The site's topography includes the higher western portion of the site that slopes down to the lower eastern portion of the site, with elevations ranging from about 365 to 270 feet. Existing drainage patterns on the site follow the topography, and drainage occurs via surface sheet flow after storm events. No direct hydrological connections to natural drainages in the site vicinity are present. As with much of

the city's planning area, the drains northerly to Santa Ana Creek, which flows into San Felipe Lake, located about ten miles northwest of the project site. Current agricultural practices on the site include dry farming of organic hay without the use of pesticides or irrigation. No irrigation ditches are present.

Flood Hazards

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the project area (FEMA 2009), the site is mapped as Zone X (Other Areas), which is defined as areas determined to be outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain. No flood hazard areas are mapped on or in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The site is not located within or near a 100-year flood zone; flooding during a 100-year storm event would be confined to the areas adjacent to the San Benito River, southwest of the site or to Santa Ana Creek, east of the site. Both of these flood-prone areas are located sufficiently downslope of the project site such that the site would not be subject to flooding and inundation hazards.

Urban Runoff

Urban development is widely regarded as a leading cause of pollution throughout California and the nation, by altering watershed hydrology and introducing pollutants. Urban development alters the natural hydrology in the watershed in several ways. Natural drainage systems are replaced with pipes and ditches, the land is graded, and impervious surfaces are created, all of which may reduce percolation, increase surface runoff, and damage aquatic habitat. Further, removal of vegetation increases erosion potential. In addition, urbanization tends to bring more pollutants. At the same time, the changes to the land's natural hydrology may reduce the land's natural capacity to remove pollutants, further heightening the problem of pollutants being washed into the storm drain system and ultimately into surface waters. Alternatively, urban runoff may be directed to a waste water treatment plant.

In summary, urban development produces runoff that may be substantially greater in volume, velocity, and/or pollutant load than pre-development runoff from the same area. Increased runoff volume and velocity can also significantly affect beneficial uses of aquatic ecosystems due to physical modifications of watercourses, such as bank erosion and widening of channels.

As noted in the Hollister storm water management plan, in the Hollister urban area, many different sources of urban runoff pollution have been identified due to the variety of land uses within the watershed (City of Hollister 2000). Sources and examples of activities that may generate urban pollutants are listed below:

- **Industrial facilities:** Industrial chemical processes; chemical and waste storage; fleet maintenance and vehicle washing; and landscaping.
- **Commercial businesses including food and vehicle service facilities:** vehicle and equipment maintenance; food processing; vehicle washing; landscaping; and chemical and waste storage.
- **Residential dwellings:** vehicle washing; home vehicle repair; home painting and construction projects; chemical waste and storage; and landscaping.
- **Construction and remodeling projects:** grading; vegetation removal; concrete washout; vehicle and equipment fluids; landscaping; and material and waste storage.
- **Municipal sewer system and private sewer laterals:** leaking, cracked, and debilitated pipelines; and overflows from blocked pipelines.

In general, urban areas contain a number of urban pollutants associated with various types of residential and ancillary uses (City of Hollister 2000). As noted in the Hollister storm water management plan, in the Hollister urban area, storm water pollutants of concern include:

- Metals;
- Solvents;
- Paint;
- Concrete and masonry products;
- Detergents;
- Vehicle fuels and fluids;
- Oil and grease;
- Pesticides and fertilizers (organic compounds and nutrients);
- Pet waste and sewage (bacteria, pathogens, and oxygen-demanding compounds);
- Debris and litter; and
- Sediment and silt.

Regulatory Setting

Federal Clean Water Act

Section 303: Water Quality Objectives. Section 303 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 U.S.C. § 1313) requires states to adopt water quality standards for all surface waters of the United States. Water quality standards are typically numeric, although narrative criteria based upon biomonitoring methods may be employed where numerical standards cannot be established or where they are needed to supplement numerical standards. Standards are based on the designated beneficial use(s) of the water body. Where multiple uses exist, water quality standards must protect the most sensitive use. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine RWQCBs are responsible for assuring implementation of and compliance with the provisions of the CWA.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. The purpose of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program is to establish a comprehensive storm water quality program to manage urban storm water and minimize pollution of the environment to the maximum extent practicable. The NPDES program consists of: (1) characterizing receiving water quality; (2) identifying harmful constituents; (3) targeting potential sources of pollutants; and (4) implementing a Comprehensive Storm Water Management Program.

NPDES permits are issued by the U.S. EPA or by the states under U.S. EPA-approved permit programs that incorporate the CWA technological standards. Specifically, Section 402(p) of the CWA (33 U.S.C. § 1342(p)) establishes a framework for regulating municipal and industrial storm water discharges under the NPDES program, and requires controls to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including management practices, control techniques and systems, as well as design and engineering methods. California's Municipal Storm Water Permitting Program is implemented through the SWRCB and the RWQCBs.

Section 402 of the CWA (33 U.S.C. § 1342) mandates that certain types of construction activity comply with the requirements of the NPDES storm water program. In California, permitting occurs under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity, issued to the SWRCB and implemented and enforced by the nine RWQCBs. The project site is within the jurisdiction of the Central Coast RWQCB.

The first iteration of the Phase II Rule, issued in 1999, required that construction activities that disturb land equal to or greater than one acre require permitting under the NPDES program.

The NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity (Construction General Permit) required all dischargers, where construction activity disturbed one or more acres, to take the following measures:

- Develop and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which specified Best Management Practices (BMPs) that would prevent all construction pollutants from contacting storm water with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving off-site into receiving waters.
- Eliminate or reduce non-storm water discharges to storm sewer systems and other waters of the U.S.
- Perform inspections of all BMPs.

On September 2, 2009, the SWRCB adopted a revised NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity (Order 2009-0009 DWQ), which became effective in July 2010. This permit covers construction projects that disturb one or more acres, or those projects that are part of a larger common plan of development that disturbs more than one acre in total.

One of the biggest differences in the revised General Permit involves the specificity necessary for BMPs. Whereas the previous General Permit left the selection of BMPs to the discretion of the applicant and allowed the applicant to present them in qualitative terms, the revised General Permit requires that the applicant implement a SWPPP that: (1) includes specific BMPs, (2) includes a greater number of BMPs, and (3) establishes quantitative numeric effluent limitations for water quality metrics such as pH and turbidity. The specific requirements will depend on an assessment of the risk level associated with a particular site. In addition, the revised General Permit requires a Rain Event Action Plan, which must be designed to protect all exposed portions of the site within 48 hours prior to any likely precipitation event. The revised General Permit also includes significant new monitoring and reporting requirements.

State

State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969 (Cal. Water Code § 13020 et seq.) authorized the SWRCB to provide comprehensive protection for California's waters through water allocation and water quality protection. This Act established the responsibilities and authorities of the nine RWQCBs, which include preparing water quality plans for areas in the region, identifying water quality objectives, and issuing NPDES permits and Waste Discharge Requirements.

Regional

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. The SWRCB and the nine RWQCBs have the authority in California to protect and enhance water quality, both through their designation as the lead agencies in implementation the Section 319 non-point source program of the CWA (33 U.S.C. § 1329) and under the State's primary water pollution control legislation, the Porter-Cologne Act. The Central Coast RWQCB guides and regulates water quality in streams and aquifers of the Central Coast region through designation of beneficial uses, establishment of water quality objectives, administration of the NPDES permit program for storm water and construction site runoff, and Section 401 (33 U.S.C. § 1341) water quality certification where development results in infill of jurisdictional wetlands or other waters of the U.S. under Section 404 of the CWA (33 U.S.C. § 1344). Water quality objectives are defined as limits or levels of water quality constituents and characteristics established for the reasonable protection of beneficial uses or prevention of nuisances.

City of Hollister General Plan

Construction and maintenance of public services and utilities in the City of Hollister, such as drainage improvements, are enabled and regulated by the city's general plan. The following policies from the City of Hollister General Plan associated with hydrological impacts are applicable to the proposed project.

Community Services and Facilities (CSF) Element

> **Policy CSF3.1: Adequate Drainage Facilities.** Require project developers to provide adequate storm drains for storm water runoff. Review all proposed development projects to ensure that adequate provisions have been included to accommodate peak flows and that projects will not significantly impact downstream lands, and will avoid impacts on riparian vegetation.
>
> **Policy CSF3.2: Erosion and Sediment Control.** Require project developers to implement suitable erosion control measures.
>
> **Policy CSF3.3: Local, State and Federal Standards for Water Quality.** Continue to comply with local, State and Federal standards for water quality.
>
> **Policy CSF3.4: Water Quality Tests and Mitigation.** As part of the development review process, require developers to conduct well and ditch tailwater tests to determine the presence of "Category I" herbicides

and pesticides, and triazide herbicides, as well as other chemicals that have the potential to pollute the groundwater and cause health risks. Based on findings, and at the project applicant's expense, implement appropriate requirements to protect public health.

Policy CSF3.5: Infiltration Areas. Require new development to identify sites which may be used for vegetated swales or strips, infiltration, media infiltration, water-oil separators, wet ponds, constructed wetlands, extended detention basins and multiple systems which may enhance water quality.

Policy CSF3.6: Education and Outreach on Water Quality Programs. Support public education regarding water pollution prevention and mitigation programs.

Policy CSF3.7: Pollution from Urban Runoff. Address non-point source pollution and protect receiving waters from pollutants discharged to the storm drain system by requiring Best Management Practices. This would include:

1. Support alternatives to impervious surfaces in new development, redevelopment, or public improvement projects to reduce urban runoff into storm drain system and creeks;

2. Require that site designs work with the natural topography and drainages to the extent practicable to reduce the amount of grading necessary and limit disturbance to natural water bodies and natural drainage systems; and

3. Where feasible, use vegetation to absorb and filter fertilizers, pesticides and other pollutants.

Health and Safely (HS) Element

Policy HS1.1: Location of Future Development. Permit development only in those areas where potential danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the community can be adequately mitigated, including development which would be subject to severe flood damage or geological hazard due to its location and/or design. Development also should be prohibited where emergency services, including fire protection, cannot be provided.

> **Policy HS1.9: Flood Hazards.** Review all development proposals to verify that either no portion of the proposed development lies within the 100-year floodplain or that the applicant has taken adequate measures to eliminate the risk of flood damage in a 100-year storm consistent with the City of Hollister Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance as amended from time to time.

City of Hollister Storm Water Management Plan

The storm water management plan defines strategies and guidelines for the protection of water quality and reduction of pollutant discharges within the City (City of Hollister 2000). Included in the storm water management plan are public education; public participation; illicit discharge detection/elimination; construction site storm water runoff control; post construction storm water management; and pollution prevention/good housekeeping for municipal operations.

All new and redevelopment project which receive their first discretionary approval for design element on, or after, March 6, 2014, or if no discretionary approval is required, receive their first ministerial permit on, or after that date are subject to Resolution No. R3-2013-003, Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast (RWQCB 2013) as mandated by the RWQCB, as applicable. In general, projects which create and/or replace 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface are subject to the requirements. The requirements for Tier 1 projects (projects including single-family homes that create or replace more than 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface are summarized as follows:

Implement Low Impact Development (LID) Measures:

- Limit disturbance of creeks and natural drainage features.
- Limit clearing, grading, and soil compaction.
- Minimize impervious surfaces.
- Minimize runoff by dispersing runoff to landscape or using permeable pavements.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

The following thresholds for evaluating a project's environmental impacts are based on the CEQA Guidelines (Appendix G). An impact to surface hydrology or water quality is considered significant if implementation of the proposed project would result in any of the following:

- Violate any water quality standards or requirements;

- 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;
- 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 run-off in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;
- Create or contribute runoff water, which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff;
- Otherwise substantially degrade water quality;
- Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map;
- Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows;
- 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; or
- Cause inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

Wastewater impacts are evaluated in in section 3.18 of this EIR. Groundwater impacts, water supplies and water service are evaluated in section 3.17 of this EIR.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

Housing or Structures within a 100-year flood hazard area; exposure to risks involving flooding, or inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. As discussed earlier in this section, the project site is not located within a mapped flood hazard area; the site is within Flood Zone X, areas determined to be outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain. The project site is not located in a dam or levee inundation area. With respect to seiches and tsunamis, these are the result of waves in bodies of water created by earthquakes. It is not expected that seiches could cause an impact on the proposed project area since there are no large water bodies in the vicinity of the site. A tsunami is not likely to affect the site as the Pacific Ocean is more than 40 miles away and is separated from the site by mountainous areas. Since the project site development areas are relatively flat, with small sloped areas on the site retained as vegetated open space areas, no significant mudflow impacts would result from the proposed project.

The proposed project would comply with city general plan policies HS1.1 (Location of Future Development) and HS1.9 (Flood Hazards). The proposed project would not place housing or other structures within a mapped flood hazard area; expose people or structures to flood hazards; or cause inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

Therefore, no impact with respect to these environmental topics would occur.

WOULD THE PROJECT VIOLATE ANY WATER QUALITY STANDARDS?

WOULD THE PROJECT OTHERWISE SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE WATER QUALITY?

The project includes extension of a 12-inch potable water line from west of the site to the existing 12-inch water line from the storage tank atop Park Hill, the replacement of an existing 6-inch sewer line in North Street from just west of Monterey Street to the existing system in Thompson Street, and the installation of a new storm drain system from West Street to beyond the Union Pacific Railroad crossing (Kimley-Horn & Associates 2014).

The proposed project will comply with city general plan policies CSF3.3 (Local, State and Federal Standards for Water Quality), CSF3.4 (Water Quality Tests and Mitigation), and CSF3.6 (Education and Outreach on Water Quality Programs). In general, water quality is regulated by the SWRCB through the NPDES program. The goal of the program is to control and reduce pollutants to water bodies from point and non-point discharges for both long-term project activities and construction activities.

Projects disturbing more than one acre of land during construction are required to file a notice of intent to be covered under the NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity for discharges of storm water associated with construction activities. The applicant must propose measures that are consistent with this permit and with recommendations and policies of the local regulatory agency and the RWQCB. The project applicant would be required to file the notice of intent.

Further, the State NPDES General Construction Permit requires development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that uses storm water "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) to control runoff, erosion, and sedimentation from the site both during and after construction. The SWPPP has two major objectives: (1) to help identify the sources of sediments and other pollutants that affect the quality of storm water discharges; and (2) to describe and ensure the implementation of practices to reduce sediment and other pollutants in storm water discharges.

BMPs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Schedule earthwork to occur primarily during the dry season to prevent most runoff and erosion.
2. Protect drainages and storm drain inlets from sedimentation with berms or filtration barriers, such as filter fabric fences, hay bales, or straw wattles.
3. Divert runoff from exposed slopes to on-site sediment basins before the runoff is released from the site.
4. Install gravel construction entrances to reduce tracking of sediment onto adjoining streets.
5. Sweep on-site paved surfaces and surrounding streets daily to collect sediment before it is washed into storm drains.
6. After construction is completed, clean all drainage culverts of accumulated sediment and debris.
7. Stabilize stockpiles of topsoil and fill material by watering daily, or by the use of chemical agents.
8. Store all construction equipment and material in designated areas away from storm drain inlets. Surround construction staging areas with earthen berms.
9. Wash and maintain equipment and vehicles in a separate area surrounded by berms, with runoff directed to a lined retention basin.
10. Collect construction waste daily and deposit in covered dumpsters.

In addition, according to the city's storm water management plan, the project applicant would be required to submit a grading and construction runoff plan that identifies BMPs to reduce the amount of construction runoff and pollution entering the storm drainage system.

The proposed project must also comply with Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast (RWQCB 2013) as mandated by the RWQCB. The proposed project includes an approximately 0.8-acre retention basin, that would provide infiltration for the entire site. According to the utility report (p 3) the total capacity of the proposed retention basin would be 4.1 acre-feet with the retention basin sizing calculated using the pond storage sizing method provided in the City of Hollister's Design Standards. The utility report also notes that a retention basin capacity of 0.19 acre-feet based is required based on a percolation rate of 144 inches/ hour. The report notes that the retention basin size would provide infiltration for the entire 81 acres, based on a mean annual rainfall of 16 inches and assuming that 30 percent of each lot would be impervious (i.e. roof, driveway,

patio, etc.). The report recommended an additional siltation basin to meet stormwater treatment standards; the combined capacity of the 0.8-acre retention basin and accompanying siltation basin is 4.5 acre-feet. The proposed basin has been designed to conform to requirements of the 2012 Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (CBC 2013, p. 5). Stormwater flows greater than the 15-year storm event would also enter the basin and excess runoff would discharge to the northeast along the existing drainage pattern near the railroad corridor. Development of the infiltration basin would mean that the storm drain system for the site would not connect to or impact the North Street storm drain system or other downstream city facilities after project development.

Because the proposed project must go through the NPDES permit process for construction and comply with the RWQCB's Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements, the proposed project would not violate any water quality standards or otherwise substantially degrade water quality during construction or during project operation (post construction).

Less than Significant Impact – Water Quality Standards and Requirements: Due to project compliance with city general plan policies, the required project NPDES permit, the SWPPP implementation of BMPs, RWQCB's Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements, the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact on water quality standards, and would not otherwise substantially degrade water quality.

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 OR SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE THE RATE OR AMOUNT OF SURFACE RUN-OFF IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD RESULT IN FLOODING ON- OR OFF-SITE?

The proposed project requires grading for residential development; this is not anticipated to result in significant changes to the drainage pattern on the site and would not result in the alteration of a river or stream. The overall topography of the site will be maintained, with sloped portions of the site retained at current elevations in designated open space areas as shown in the site plans. All storm water flows would be collected by a network of curbs/gutters and storm drains, and collected in one main retention and siltation basin (refer to sheets 6-8 of the Vesting Tentative Map package, included as Appendix B of this EIR). The combined capacity of the 0.8-acre retention basin and accompanying siltation basin is 4.5 acre-feet. The proposed basin would discharge overland at its northeast corner through the railroad corridor, which follows the

existing natural drainage of the site's lower plateau According to the utility report, the proposed retention basin is designed to capture all drainage flows and provide infiltration for the entire 81-acre site based on a 15-year storm event (CBG 2013, p. 5). Drainage in excess of the basin's 15-year storm event design capacity would be released from the basin to the northeast near the existing railroad corridor, which follows the existing drainage pattern on the lower plateau.

The proposed project will comply with city general plan policies CSF3.1 (Adequate Drainage Facilities) and CSF3.2 (Erosion and Sediment Control). In particular, policy CSF 3.2 requires preparation of an erosion and sediment control plan when development plans are submitted. Preparation and implementation of an erosion control plan would ensure that the project would not result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation.

Less than Significant Impact (Erosion, Siltation, and Flooding): Due to the existing project design features, and NPDES permit and city general plan requirements, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact to the existing drainage pattern of the site, and would not result in substantial erosion/siltation or flooding.

WOULD THE PROJECT CREATE OR CONTRIBUTE RUNOFF WATER, WHICH WOULD EXCEED THE CAPACITY OF EXISTING OR PLANNED STORM WATER DRAINAGE SYSTEMS OR PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF POLLUTED RUNOFF?

The project site is undeveloped and does not contain any impervious surfaces. Development of the project would add impervious surfaces on the project site through construction of buildings, parking areas, roadways, and other project improvements. An increase in impervious surfaces has the potential to increase runoff from the site, which in turn could transport urban pollutants to off-site areas.

As identified previously, a number of pollutants and chemicals associated with development of the project that are typical of urban development, including bacteria from pet wastes, pesticides, fertilizers and landscape maintenance debris, petroleum products, hydrocarbons, litter, sediment, and construction debris, could enter urban runoff that is discharged from the project site. The impacts of urban runoff are particularly acute during the first storm event of the year, when accumulations of urban pollutants are flushed into the storm drain system.

The project would increase storm water runoff on the project site due to the addition of impervious surfaces. This increased runoff necessitates the construction of on-site drainage facilities. Therefore the project would construct a storm water collection and disposal system that captures and retains storm water runoff.

For water quality purposes, as specified in the project plans for the 81-acre site, Parcel J in the northeastern corner of the site will become an approximate 0.8-acre retention and siltation basin, with a total capacity of 4.5 acre-feet (CBG 2013). As noted previously, the proposed basin is designed based on a 15-year storm event and in conformance to the performance and design criteria of the 2012 Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (CBC 2013, p. 5).

The proposed project will comply with city general plan policies CSF3.5 (Infiltration Areas) and CSF3.7 (Pollution from Urban Runoff). Additionally, the city has an active municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4) Phase II permit for storm water discharge.. The proposed project would create more than 2,500 square feet of impervious surfaces and, therefore, is subject to compliance with the RWCQB Post-Construction Stormwater Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast (RWQCB 2013). As noted previously, these requirements include LID measures that limit disturbance of creeks and natural drainage features, minimize clearing, grading, and soil compaction, minimize impervious surfaces and reduce runoff by including infiltration methods in project design and dispersing runoff to landscape, using permeable pavements.

Residential development will include construction of a storm drain system to collect and convey storm water to the on-site retention and siltation basin; drainage in excess of the basin's 15-year storm event design capacity would be released to the northeast near the existing railroad corridor, which follows the existing drainage pattern on the lower plateau. To ensure residential development of the site does not result in flooding and/or impacts to the city's storm drainage system, the following mitigation measures shall be required.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Runoff that Exceeds Capacity or Polluted Runoff): The proposed project would result in additional impervious surface areas such as streets and buildings, which resulting in increased storm water drainage and polluted runoff.

Mitigation Measures

HYD-1. Prior to approval of final site plans, the applicant shall obtain city approval of a final drainage plan for the project that complies with the City of Hollister Best Management Practices and standards established for compliance with non-point discharge emissions for storm water and that substantially detain storm water runoff on the project site with any of the following methods including the on-site retention and siltation basin, reduction of impervious surfaces, vegetated swales, permeable paving, landscaping, and other strategies.

The drainage plan shall include measures conforming to the requirements of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Coast Region, Resolution No. R3-2013-0032, entitled "Post-Construction Storm Water Management Requirements for Development Projects in the Central Coast Region," dated July 12, 2013 (PCRs), as applicable.

HYD-2. Prior to any approval of any storm water permit, grading permit or improvement plans the applicant shall obtain all applicable permits directly associated with the grading activity, including, but not limited to the State Water Board's CGP, State Water Board 401 Water Quality Certification, U.S. Army Corps 404 permit, and California Department of Fish and Game 1600 Agreement. Further, the applicant shall provide evidence to the City Engineer that the required permits have been obtained.

HYD-3. Prior to any site development or grading, the applicant shall submit for review and approval by the Engineering Department a grading plan that complies with Chapter 15.14 Grading and Best Management Practice Control of the Hollister Municipal Code. Low Impact Development (LID) strategies shall be considered and incorporated as part of site planning and design as appropriately feasible.

With implementation of mitigation measures HYD-1 – HYD-3, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on water quality resulting from increased storm water drainage and polluted runoff, through compliance with a city-approved drainage plan that detains storm water runoff in the on-site retention and siltation basin. This will greatly decrease the creation of runoff water so that it would not exceed the capacity of storm water drainage systems and contribute additional to polluted runoff. No additional mitigation is required.

3.11 NOISE

This section of the Draft EIR includes a summary of relevant background information and applicable regulations, a description of existing ambient noise conditions, and an analysis of potential noise impacts of the proposed project. Feasible mitigation measures are recommended, as necessary, to reduce significant noise impacts. Comment letters on the NOP cited concerns regarding construction noise, vibration, the project's potential use of sound walls, and exposure of future residents to airport noise and/or vibration.

The information contained within this section is based on information and data from the *City of Hollister General Plan* (2005a) and *Noise Assessment Study for a Single-Family Development Brigantino, Property Hollister (*Edward L. Pack Associates, Inc. 2014*)* (hereinafter "noise report"). The noise report can be found in Appendix H.

Environmental Setting

Acoustic Fundamentals

Noise may be defined as unwanted sound. Noise is usually objectionable because it is disturbing or annoying. Noise is generated by many mobile sources (e.g., automobiles, trucks, and airplanes) and stationary sources (e.g., construction sites, machinery, and industrial operations).

Airborne sound is a rapid fluctuation of air pressure above and below atmospheric pressure. Sound levels are usually measured and expressed in decibels (dB) with 0 dB corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing. Most of the sounds which we hear in our normal environment do not consist of a single frequency, but rather a broad range of frequencies. As humans do not have perfect hearing, environmental sound measuring instruments have an electrical filter built in so that the instrument's detector replicates human hearing. This filter is called the "A-weighting" network and filters out low and very high frequencies. The most common method of characterizing sound in California is the A-weighted sound level or dBA. Although the A-weighted noise level may adequately indicate the level of noise at any instant in time, community noise levels vary continuously. Most environmental noise includes a mixture of noise from distant sources that create a relatively steady background noise from which no particular source is identifiable. To describe the time-varying character of environmental noise, the statistical noise descriptors, L_1, L_{10}, L_{50} and L_{90} are commonly used.

The three most commonly used descriptors are L_{eq}, DNL (or "L_{dn}"), and CNEL. The energy-equivalent noise level, L_{eq}, is a measure of the average energy content (intensity) of noise over any given period. The day-night average noise level, DNL, is the 24-hour average of the noise intensity, with a 10-dBA "penalty" added for nighttime noise (10 PM to 7 AM.) to account for the greater sensitivity to noise during this period. CNEL, the community equivalent noise level, is similar to DNL but adds an additional 5-dBA "penalty" for night-time noise. Common noise level descriptors are summarized below in Table 19, Definitions of Acoustical Terms.

Human Response to Noise

The human response to environmental noise is subjective and varies considerably from individual to individual. However, certain noise levels can be expected to elicit a reponse ranging from painfully loud to quiet for most individuals. Table 20, Typical Noise Levels in the Environment and Human Response, below, shows the typical human response and noise sources for A-weighted noise levels.

Table 19 Definitions of Acoustical Terms

Term	Definition
Decibel, dB	A unit describing the amplitude of sound, equal to 20 times the logarithm to the base 10 of the ratio of the pressure of the sound measured to the reference pressure.
A-Weighted Sound Level, dBA	The sound pressure level in decibels as measured on a sound level meter using the A-weighting filter network. The A-weighting filter de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequency components of the sound in a manner similar to the frequency response of the human ear and correlates well with subjective reactions to noise.
Equivalent Noise Level, L_{eq}	The average A-weighted noise level during the measurement period.
L_{max}, L_{min}	The maximum and minimum A-weighted noise level during the measurement period.
L_{01}, L_{10}, L_{50}, L_{90}	The A-weighted noise levels that are exceeded one percent, 10 percent, 50 percent, and 90 percent, respectively, of the time during the measurement period.
Day/Night Noise Level, DNL	The average A-weighted noise level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 10 decibels to levels measured in the night between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am.
Community Noise Equivalent Level, CNEL	The average A-weighted noise level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of five decibels in the evening from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm and after addition of 10 decibels to sound levels measured in the night between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am.

Source: Edward L. Pack Associates, Inc. (2014), EMC Planning Group 2014

Unfortunately, there is no completely satisfactory way to measure the subjective effects of noise or of the corresponding reactions of annoyance and dissatisfaction. This is primarily because of the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance and habituation to noise over differing individual experiences with noise. Thus, an important way of determining a person's subjective reaction to a new noise is the comparison of it to the existing environment to which one has adapted: the so-called "ambient" environment. In general, the more a new noise exceeds the previously existing ambient noise level, the less acceptable the new noise will be judged.

Regarding increases in A-weighted noise levels, the Environmental Protection Agency has determined the following relationships that will be helpful in understanding this analysis:

- Except in carefully controlled laboratory experiments, 1-dB change cannot be perceived by humans.
- Outside of the laboratory, a 3-dB change is considered a just-perceivable difference.

Table 20 Typical Noise Levels in the Environment and Human Response

Common Noise Source	Noise Level (dBA)	Human Response
Jet Fly-over at 1,000 feet	120-150+	Painfully Loud
Motorcycle at 20 ft. (110 dBA) Nightclub Music (105 dBA)	100 - 120	Physical Discomfort
Diesel Pump at 100 feet (95 dBA) Freight Train at 50 feet (90 dBA) Food Blender (90 dBA) Jet Plane at 1000 feet (85 dBA) Freeway at 50 feet (80 dBA) Alarm Clock (80 dBA)	70-100	Annoying
Average Traffic at 100 feet (70 dBA) Pass. Car, 30 mph at 25 feet (65 dBA) Vacuum Cleaner (60 dBA) Suburban Background (55 dBA)	50-70	Intrusive
Normal Conversation (50 dBA) Light Traffic at 100 feet (45 dBA) Refrigerator (45 dBA) Desktop Computer (40 dBA) Whispering (35 dBA) Leaves Rustling (20 dBA) Threshold of Hearing (0 dBA)	0-50	Quiet

Source: Edward L. Pack Associates, Inc. (2014)

- A change in level of at least 5 dB is required before any noticeable change in community response would be expected. An increase of 5 dB is typically considered substantial.
- A 10-dB change is subjectively heard as an approximate doubling in loudness and would almost certainly cause an adverse change in community response.

Existing Noise Environment

The existing noise environment at the site is created primarily by railroad operations on the adjacent Union Pacific Railroad line, which typically carries two freight trains per day. The trains usually pass by the site between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM. Occasional small operations of a single or double engine movement and track maintenance also occur. It is not uncommon for freights to stop and wait at or near the North Street and San Felipe Road crossing.

Traffic noise from San Felipe Road is part of the background noise environment. North Street currently dead ends at the site and carries 200 vehicles per day. Buena Vista Road also dead ends at the site as it becomes a driveway into a single residence. Buena Vista Road east of Locust Street carries 30 vehicles per day. A connection of North Street to Buena Vista Road along the southerly border of the site is planned.

Noise from the nearby agricultural uses is audible at the northerly area of the site due to the relatively quiet background sound levels during morning and afternoon hours. Agricultural noise does not significantly impact the site.

The commercial uses across the railroad tracks to the east include a QuickStop gas station and market, a Taco Bell with a drive-thru, automotive repair facilities, two motels, a mini-storage facility and several small businesses. Of these commercial uses, only the auto repair facilities and the substation produced distinctly audible noise at the site. Air tools and testing of vehicles were noticeable, but did not significantly affect the on-site noise levels. These sources were also intermittent. Transformer hum was audible at the northeasterly corner of the site but was not measurable. The Taco Bell drive-thru is 265 feet from the nearest planned residence. Although noisy vehicles were slightly audible at the site, the Taco Bell menu board was not audible.

Because the site is a vacant field, wildlife noise, particularly cricket noise during the evening and early nighttime hours, is a significant part of the noise environment. As the project builds out, cricket noise will reduce.

Existing Noise Levels

To determine the existing noise environment at the site, continuous recordings of the sound levels were made on-site at four locations:

- Location 1 was 45 feet from the centerline of North Street (and 308 feet from the railroad centerline) at the gated entrance to the site.
- Location 2 was 130 feet from the centerline of the railroad tracks at the large oak tree near the southeasterly area of the site.
- Location 3 was 86 feet from the centerline of the railroad tracks, corresponding to the planned lot line of the homes near the northeasterly area of the site.
- Location 4 was near the northwesterly corner of the site at the lot line of the homes nearest the agricultural area.
- Location 5 was at a distance of 50 feet from the centerline of Buena Vista Road.

The measurement locations are shown in the noise report Figure 2 (Illingworth and Rodkin 2014, p. 11)

All measurements were made on May 14-15, 2014 for a continuous period of 48 hours and included measurements during the daytime and nighttime periods of the DNL index with the exception of location 5, which was measured as part of the 2004 North Street/Buena Vista Road connection noise study, as referenced in the noise report.

Noise Measurement Location 1. The L_{eq}'s on the first day of measurements at Location 1, 45 feet from the centerline of North Street, ranged from 45.2 to 57.2 dBA during the daytime and from 41.0 to 52.6 dBA at night. On the second day of measurements, the L_{eq}'s ranged from 45.1 to 64.9 dBA during the daytime and from 39.5 to 51.5 dBA at night.

Noise Measurement Location 2. The L_{eq}'s on the first day of measurements at Location 2, 130 feet from the centerline of the railroad near North Street, ranged from 39.9 to 48.1 dBA during the daytime and from 38.2 to 51.5 dBA at night. On the second day of measurements, the L_{eq}'s ranged from 42.4 to 57.0 dBA during the daytime and from 36.7 to 48.4 dBA at night.

Noise Measurement Location 3. The L_{eq}'s on the first day of measurements at Location 3, 86 feet from the centerline of the railroad tracks near the northeasterly corner of the site, ranged from 39.5 to 56.2 dBA during the daytime and from 48.6 to 54.1 dBA at night. On the second day of measurements, the L_{eq}'s ranged from 41.5 to 72.5 dBA during the daytime and from 46.5 to 52.8 dBA at night.

Noise Measurement Location 4. The L_{eq}'s on the first day of measurements at Location 4, at the northwesterly corner of the planned Lot 1, ranged from 26.8 to 45.5 dBA during the daytime and from 33.2 to 47.3 dBA at night. On the second day of measurements, the L_{eq}'s ranged from 29.7 to 45.1 dBA during the daytime and from 26.7 to 42.3 dBA at night.

Noise Measurement Location 5. The noise measurements for the North Street connection study were made for a period of 24 continuous hours as part of a 2004 noise study, as referenced in the noise report. The L_{eq}'s ranged from 52.5 to 61.0 dBA during the daytime and from 41.8 dBA to 53.5 dBA at night.

Observations at the site indicate that noise from the commercial area across the railroad tracks to the east is not significant at the site.

Traffic and railroad noise contain wide spectra of frequency components from 100 to 10,000 Hertz (Hz), which are associated with engine, tire, drive-train, exhaust, wheel/rail interaction and other sources. The frequency components are centered primarily in the 100, 250 and 500 Hz octave bands.

Existing Noise Exposures

To evaluate the noise exposure impacts to the project, the DNL's for the survey locations were calculated by dB averaging of the L_{eq}'s as they apply to the various time periods of the DNL index. A 10 dB nighttime weighting factor was applied and the DNL was calculated. Adjustments were made to the measured noise levels to account for differences in distances between the measurement locations and the receptor locations using established industry methods.

Noise Measurement Location 1. The results of the calculations indicate that the noise exposures at measurement Location 1, 45 feet from the centerline of North Street and 308 feet from the railroad tracks, were 55 dB DNL on the first day (no trains) and 56 dB DNL on the second day (two trains). Of the 56 dB DNL on the second day, 43 dB DNL was due to North Street traffic, 50 dB DNL was due to rail operations and 54 dB was due to background noise, such as normal neighborhood noise, wildlife (particularly crickets) and distant traffic and commercial/industrial noise.

Noise Measurement Location 2. The noise exposures at measurement Location 2, 130 feet from the centerline of the railroad tracks, were 53 dB DNL on the first day (no trains) and 51 dB DNL on the second day (two trains).

Noise Measurement Location 3. The noise exposures at measurement Location 3 and the planned minimum lot line setback from the railroad, 86 feet from the centerline of the railroad tracks, were 58 dB DNL on the first day (no trains) and 61 dB DNL on the second day (two trains). The noise exposure due to rail operations alone was calculated to be 60 dB DNL.

Noise Measurement Location 4. The noise exposures at measurement Location 4 at the northwesterly corner of the site were 51 dB DNL on the first day and 44 dB DNL on the second day.

Noise Measurement Location 5. The noise exposure at measurement Location 5 performed for the North Street/Buena Vista Road connector noise study was 58 dB DNL at a distance of 50 feet from the centerline of the road.

Existing Vibration Levels

The Federal Transit Administration guidelines use the dB scale to quantify railroad-induced ground-borne vibration levels. Vibration levels are expressed in units of dB re: 1 x 10-6 inches per sec (peak velocity). The human response to vibration can vary within wide limits, as it depends on the position and inherent motion of the person perceiving the vibration, as well as the physical and psychological makeup of the particular person.

To determine the levels of railroad induced ground vibration, vibration level measurements were made at a location 86 feet from the center of the nearest track. The measurements were made on June 5, 2014.

During the measurement period one railroad freight train passed by the site in the southerly direction. The train consisted of two engines coupled together and 12 cars over a 12 second passby time. The speed was estimated to be 25 mph. The railroad-induced ground-borne vibration level was measured to be 76 dB of vibration (VdB) at 86 feet from the tracks, corresponding to the planned lot lines of the single-family homes closest to the tracks.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Federal Transit Administration. Federal Transit Administration guidelines state that for residences near rail lines that carry more than 70 trains per day, which is considered frequent, a limit of 72 VdB inside the dwelling is recommended. For rail lines that carry between 30 and 70 trains per day, the administration recommends a limit of 75 VdB at the floors of residential buildings. For rail lines that carry fewer than 30 trains per day (infrequent), the administration recommends a limit of 80 VdB. The guidelines provide adjustment methodologies to vacant site vibration levels to determine the approximate vibration levels in various floor elevations of residential and other structures.

State

California Code of Regulations, Title 24. Title 24 of the State of California Code of Regulations (California Building Code), Ref. (b), uses the noise standard descriptor of the local jurisdiction, in this case the DNL, and specifies that when the exterior noise exposures at the building facades of multi-family housing exceed 60 dB DNL, an acoustical analysis must be performed. The noise analysis must provide the noise mitigation measures necessary to limit the interior noise exposures to 45 dB DNL or lower. Title 24 applies only to multi-family housing.

Regional

Airport Land Use Commission. As adopted by the Council of San Benito County Governments acting in its capacity as the Airport Land Use Commission for San Benito County, the basic function of the Hollister Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Airport Land Use Commission 2012) (hereinafter "airport land use compatibility plan") is to promote compatibility between Hollister Municipal Airport and the land uses surrounding it to the extent

that these areas have not already been devoted to incompatible uses. The airport land use compatibility plan accomplishes this function through establishment of a set of compatibility criteria applicable to new development around the airport. The land use commission does not have authority over existing land uses or over operation of the airport.

Geographically, the airport land use compatibility plan pertains to lands within the jurisdictions of the City of Hollister and the County San Benito. Any city, special district, community college district, or school district that exists or may be established or expanded into the Hollister Municipal Airport Influence Area defined by this airport land use compatibility plan are also subject to the provisions of the plan. The authority of the land use commission does not extend to state, federal, or tribal lands.

City of Hollister General Plan

The Health and Safety Element contains goals and policies that establish limits on noise increases and overall noise exposure limits for various land uses based on the Land Use Compatibility Chart contained in the State of California Guidelines for the Preparation of a Noise Element. The land use compatibility chart identifies ranges for "Normally Acceptable," "Conditionally Acceptable," "Normally Unacceptable" and "Clearly Unacceptable" noise exposures for various land uses. The Normally Acceptable noise limits for residential land uses are: 60 dB Day-Night Level (DNL) for single-family and 65 dB DNL for multi-family. The traffic study uses the 60 dB DNL and the 65 dB DNL noise limits as criteria for single-family and multi-family residences of the project as the basis for determining noise impacts to the project, as directed by policy HS3.2. Although not specifically stated, the Guidelines refer to applying an interior noise limit of 45 dB DNL to be consistent with the standards of Title 24.

> **HS3.1 Protection of Residential Areas from Unacceptable Noise Levels.** Protect the noise environment in existing residential areas, requiring the evaluation of mitigation measures for projects under the following circumstances: (a) the project would cause the Ldn to increase 3 dB(A) or more; (b) any increase would result in an Ldn greater than 60 dB(A); (c) the Ldn already exceeds 60 dB(A); and (d) the project has the potential to generate significant adverse community response.
>
> **HS3.2 Noise Source Control.** Work with property owners to control noise at its source, maintaining existing noise levels and ensuring that noise levels do not exceed acceptable noise standards as established in the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines.
>
> **HS3.3 Construction Noise**. Regulate construction activity to reduce noise between 7:00 pm and 7:00 am.

HS3.4 Vehicle Noise. Strive to reduce traffic noise levels, especially as they impact residential areas, and continue enforcement of vehicle noise standards through noise readings and enforcement actions. In particular, strive to minimize truck traffic in residential areas and ensure enforcement of Vehicle Code provisions which prohibit alteration of vehicular exhaust systems in a way that increases noise emissions

HS3.6 Noise Standards Enforcement. Administer the policies identified in the Noise Element and comply with State requirements for certain other noise control programs through specific local enforcement programs.

City of Hollister Noise Ordinance

The city's Noise Ordinance (Title 8, Health and Safety, Chapter 8.28) identifies prohibitions and noise standards intended to protect citizens from unnecessary and unusually loud noises that could adversely affect the peace, health, and safety of community residents. For noise sources affecting residential districts, noise levels may not exceed 55 dBA L_{eq} during daylight hours and 50 dBA L_{eq} after sunset.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

The following significance thresholds used for the assessment of noise-related impacts are based on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and County noise standards. Noise impacts resulting from implementation of the proposed project would be considered significant if the project would cause:

- 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;
- Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels;
- A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project;
- A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project;

- Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport; and
- Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip.

For purposes of this analysis, the following thresholds are used to determine whether noise increases would be treated as "substantial," thereby causing a significant impact.

Short-Term Noise Impacts

For short-term construction noise impacts significant noise impacts would result from construction if noise levels are sufficiently high to interfere with speech, sleep, or other normal residential activities during the more noise-sensitive evening and nighttime hours (i.e., 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.).

Long Term Noise Impacts

For long-term transportation-related noise impacts, consistent with the city's general plan policy HS3.1, a substantial increase is defined as:

- The project would cause the L_{dn} to increase 3 dB(A) or more;
- Any increase would result in an L_{dn} greater than 60 dB(A); or
- The L_{dn} already exceeds 60 dB(A); and (d) the project has the potential to generate significant adverse community response.

Exterior Noise Exposure

For purposes of assessing compatibility of proposed land uses with projected noise levels, the project's impact would be considered substantial if it exceeded city's general plan health and safety element noise limit of up to 60 dB DNL ("normally acceptable") for single-family residences, and up to 65 dB DNL ("normally acceptable") for multi-family residences.

Interior Noise Exposure

For purposes of assessing interior noise exposures in the most impacted living spaces of the single-family and multi-family projects, noise would be considered substantial if it exceeded city's general plan noise element and Title 24 noise limit of up to 45 dB DNL.

Vibration

For impacts related to groundborne vibration, excessive vibration would be defined as levels that exceed the vibration impact thresholds as set forth in the FTA Guidelines. A significant impact would occur if the vibration levels inside the dwelling unit would exceed the 80 VdB vibration limit of the FTA for infrequent rail operations.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN THE 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?

Short Term Construction Noise Impacts

Construction noise would result in a short-term increase in ambient noise levels. Noise impacts from construction activities associated with the proposed project would be a function of the noise generated by the construction equipment, equipment location, sensitivity of nearby land uses, and the timing and duration of the construction activities.

As identified in the noise report, short-term construction impacts may be created during construction of the development, particularly during the construction at Lots 46-52, 144 and 145. Construction equipment generates noise levels in the range of 68 to 96 dBA at a 50 feet distance from the source, and has a potential to disturb existing residences to the south and east.

The highest noise levels at the residential property boundaries will be up to approximately 82 to 102 dBA at the residences closest to the project site. Hourly average noise levels will range from 70 to 85 dBA L_{eq} with the highest noise levels occurring during grading of the site near the residences. The noise exposures are likely to be up to 75 dB DNL on the noisiest days. Typical noise exposures from construction will be 60-70 dB DNL. Pile driving and other high noise and vibration level equipment are not expected to be used for the construction of these projects.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Exposure to High Noise Levels During Construction Activity): Construction activities associated with the proposed project may expose persons at the residences closest to the project site to noise levels up to 102 dBA, with typical construction noise ranging from 60 to70 dB DNL which exceeds the 60 dBA exterior limit for residential uses specified in the city's Municipal Code. This is considered a significant adverse impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure

N-1. During all project construction activities, the following mitigation measures shall be incorporated into construction documents and shall be implemented by the project developer:

a. Properly maintain all construction equipment and equip all internal combustion engine driven machinery with intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition and recommended by the vehicle manufacturer.

b. Stationary equipment, such as compressor and generators shall be housed in acoustical enclosures and placed as far from sensitive receptors as feasible.

c. Use wheeled earth moving equipment rather than track equipment.

d. Provide a noise disturbance coordinator with a phone number and email address so that the nearby residents have a contact person is case of a noise problem.

e. Keep vehicles routes clean and smooth both on site and off site to minimize noise and vibration from vehicles rolling over rough surfaces.

f. Nail guns should be used where possible as they are less noisy than manual hammering.

g. Stationary equipment, such as compressor and generators shall be housed in acoustical enclosures and placed as far from sensitive receptors as feasible.

h. Restrict noise-generating activities at the construction site or in areas adjacent to the construction site to the hours of 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday through Friday and 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Saturday, consistent with the City of Hollister Municipal Code. Construction-related noise-generating activities shall be prohibited on Sundays.

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce construction-related noise levels during the day, and would prohibit construction activities during the more noise-sensitive nighttime hours. In addition, requirements for equipment condition and usage will minimize noise created by faulty or poorly maintained engine, drive-train and other components or excessive usage.

Although construction of the proposed project would generate noise levels higher than the 60 dBA exterior limit for residential uses specified in the Municipal Code, construction-related noise is intermittent in nature and would not generate continuous noise levels above the Municipal Code standards. Project construction would only occur between the hours of 7:00

AM and 6:00 PM Mondays through Fridays, and 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Saturday, and would not occur on Sundays. Implementation of mitigation N-1 would reduce construction noise to the extent feasible. Therefore, with mitigation the impacts would be less than significant.

Long-Term Transportation Related Noise Impacts

The proposed project would generate transportation-related noise as a result of project-related vehicular traffic, particularly along Buena Vista Road, North Street, and the other roadway segments identified in Section 3.16 Traffic and Circulation of this EIR. Ambient noise levels would increase as a result of this additional traffic. To determine the level of noise impacts of this additional project-related traffic, the noise report compared project traffic volumes to existing traffic volumes using information provided by the traffic consultant (Hexagon Transportation Consultants). The traffic report, and consequently, estimates of mobil-source noise emissions discussed in this section, are based on future development of the project site with 450 dwelling units. The proposed project has since been revised to address seismic hazards on the site and as a result, future development would consist of 343 dwelling units, 107 fewer dwelling units than originally proposed. This reduction in dwelling units would also result in fewer vehicle trips. A reduction in project-related traffic volumes would also result less noise generated by project traffic and studied in this section.

For transportation noise sources, the city's general plan identifies an exterior noise standard of 60 dBA L_{dn} for residential land uses. Noise mitigation measures are required for projects that would result in a substantial increase (i.e., three dBA, or greater) in ambient noise levels that exceed the city's exterior noise level of 60 dBA Ld_n at existing residential land uses.

As identified in the noise report, the traffic noise increases due to the project would be less than significant along all analyzed roadways with the exception of Buena Vista Road between Westside Drive and the site, and between San Benito Road and the site. One home at the corner of North Street and Thompson Street is within the future 60 dB DNL noise contour by four feet.

The traffic volume on Buena Vista Road between Westside Drive and Line Street is expected to cause a noise exposure increase of up to four dB over the existing noise exposure. The traffic volume on Buena Vista Road between Line Street and Locust Street is expected to cause a noise exposure increase of up to five dB over the existing noise exposure. However, as North Street will be connected to Buena Vista Road, traffic not associated with the project will use Buena Vista Road. The increases in traffic noise along Buena Vista Road due to non-project traffic will be significant, as identified in the road connection analysis conducted as part of the future North Street extension. The North Street extension project has already been approved and will be constructed by the city under its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which is expected to be completed concurrent with the project by 2020. The proposed project assumes completion of the

North Street roadway extension prior to development. As the area builds out, the proposed project's traffic noise contribution would be an increases of 0-1 dB along these sections of Buena Vista Road. The increases due to the project would ultimately be less than significant

The increase in traffic noise along North Street west of San Benito Road would be up to 13 dB, which would be significant under existing conditions. Currently, North Street ends at the project site and this section of the road serves five businesses and 11 homes. This area is also accessible via 1st Street. Although project traffic will increase the total traffic volumes, non-project traffic would redirect to other roadways once North Street is connected to Buena Vista Road. As the area builds project-related traffic would contribute a two dB increase in the noise environment. The future 60 dB DNL noise contour will be 44 feet from the centerline of North Street. One existing home at the corner of North Street and Thompson Street is within the 60 dB DNL noise contour by four feet.

Noise impacts to community in the vicinity of the project will be due to a combination of project traffic and the connection of Buena Vista Road to North Street. The road connection study conducted as part of the city's North Street extension project identified the severity of noise impacts due to the roadway improvement program. That study provided noise mitigation measures for the roadway project and affected homes along the road. The noise mitigation measures outlined in the road connection study will reduce traffic noise impacts from both the project and the road improvement to levels less than significant. These mitigation measures are the responsibility of the city and required to be implemented as a component of the project under the city's CIP program. As the city's North Street extension project will implement mitigation measures that will reduce noise impacts from traffic along North Street/Buena Vista Road to a less than significant level, and development of the project would not contribute traffic that would result in additional significant long term traffic-related noise impacts to the future roadway, no additional mitigation is necessary

Less-than-Significant Impact (Long-term Traffic Noise Levels): The city's North Street extension project requires mitigation measures that will reduce noise levels from traffic along North Street/Buena Vista Road to at or below the city's exterior noise standard of 60 dBA, and the project traffic volume will contribute a two dB increase in the noise environment, which is less than the city's threshold of 3 dB increase.

Compatibility of Proposed Land Uses with Projected Noise Levels

The City of Hollister General Plan specifies land use compatibility guidelines for residential land uses. The "Normally Acceptable" exterior noise exposure standard is 60 dB DNL. Although not specifically stated, the city's general plan guidelines refer to applying an interior noise limit of 45 dB DNL to be consistent with the standards of Title 24.

As identified in the noise report, the noise exposures at the most impacted lot lines/exterior areas and building setbacks will be within the 60 dB DNL limit of the City of Hollister Health and Safety Element for single-family residences and within the 65 dB DNL limit of the City of Hollister Health and Safety Element for multi-family residences. Interior noise exposures in the most impacted living spaces of the single-family and multi-family projects will be within the 45 dB DNL limits of the City of Hollister Noise Element and Title 24. As the exterior and interior noise exposure at the project will be within the limits of the standards, the impact is less than significant.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Long-term Noise Exposure): Predicted exterior noise levels at the proposed residences would be within the 60 dB DNL limit of the City of Hollister Health and Safety Element for single-family residences and within the 65 dB DNL limit of the City of Hollister Health and Safety Element for multi-family residences.

WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN THE EXPOSURE OF PERSONS TO OR GENERATION OF EXCESSIVE GROUNDBORNE VIBRATION OR GROUNDBORNE NOISE LEVELS?

To determine the levels of vibration in the project structures, the noise report utilized the Federal Transportation Administration methodologies use factors for coupling loss or the way the house or structure is tied to the ground. The administration's guidelines provide the foundation response or coupling loss in dB of vibration for different types of buildings. A coupling loss factor of negative 5 dB was applied to the ground level vibration level at the building setback for one- to two- story light frame construction.

In addition to coupling loss, walls and floors resonate, which increases the sensation on vibration within the dwelling units. Typically, 6 dB of vibration is added to the total vibration level at each floor elevation. Also, as vibrational energy transmits through the building, some energy is lost. The FTA convention recommends a 2 dB reduction for each floor elevation up to five floors in height.

The vibration levels identified in the noise report are considered worst-case as they were calculated for the minimum planned building setback. The net result of the vibration analysis reveals total vibration levels of 74 VdB at the first floors and 72 VdB at the second floors of the most impacted homes closest to the railroad tracks.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Long-term Railroad Groundborne Vibration): Predicted rail-operation vibration levels at the proposed residences would be 74 VdB or less which is within the 80 VdB vibration limit of the Federal Transportation Administration for infrequent rail operations.

WOULD THE PROJECT EXPOSE PEOPLE RESIDING OR WORKING IN THE PROJECT AREA TO EXCESSIVE NOISE LEVELS FOR A PROJECT LOCATED WITHIN AN AIRPORT LAND USE PLAN OR, WHERE SUCH A PLAN HAS NOT BEEN ADOPTED, WITHIN TWO MILES OF A PUBLIC AIRPORT OR PUBLIC USE AIRPORT?

The project site is within two miles of the Hollister Municipal Airport, and is identified as being within the airport influence area in the city's airport land use plan (Aries Consultants, LTD., 2001) and the airport land use compatibility plan (San Benito County Airport Land Use Commission 2012). However, according to both documents, the project is outside the projected noise contour zones of the airport.

As discussed in section 3.9 of this EIR (Hazards and Hazardous Materials) due to the projects location in the airport influence area and a portion of the site being within the routine overflight zone, the project will be subject to standard disclosure documentation regarding annoyances or inconveniences associated with proximity to airport operations. Annoyances or inconveniences may include noise and/or vibration). The project site is not within the projected noise contour zones of the Hollister Municipal Airport as identified in the city's airport land use plan and the airport land use compatibility plan and will therefore not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive air operation noise levels.

Less-than-Significant (Expose Persons to Excessive Noise due to being Located within an Airport Land Use Plan): The project site is within an airport land use plan and will result in exposure of people residing and working in the area to air operation noise; however, the site is not within the established airport land use plan noise contours and therefore is not anticipated to expose persons to excessive noise exposure.

3.12 PARKS AND RECREATION

This section is based upon information contained in the plan for services (Kimley-Horn 2014), the city's general plan (2005a) and general plan EIR (2005b), the City of Hollister Park Facility Master Plan (2002), and the San Benito County General Plan. Comments on the NOP were related to the payment of impact fees to fund buildout of Vista Hill Park, which is adjacent to the project site.

Environmental Setting

The city maintains nine public park facilities within its jurisdictional limits to serve the needs of city residents. Parks that are located on or adjacent to school facilities are maintained by the Hollister School District. Maintenance of all other city parks and recreational facilities, as well as over 9,000 street trees, all public medians, city buildings and greenways, is provided by the Hollister Division of Parks, which is managed by the Director of the Community Services Department. Staffing includes full-time and seasonal employees.

The project site is undeveloped and does not contain parks or recreational facilities. The public park nearest to the project site is Vista Hill Park, which consists of a softball field, playground and barbecue facilities that overlook the downtown Hollister area.

Regulatory Setting

Hollister General Plan

The following policies and implementing actions of the general plan are applicable to the proposed project.

Policies

> **LU2.2 Fiscally Sound Development.** Evaluate the fiscal impact of projects as part of the development review process to assure that new development does not reduce standards or unduly increase the burden on existing residents.
>
> **CSF1.1 Adequate Capabilities and Capacity of Local Public Services.** Ensure that future growth does not exceed the capabilities and capacity of local public services such as wastewater collection and treatment, local water supply systems, fire and police protection, maintenance of streets and roads, local school systems, parks and recreational facilities, and landfill capacity, and ensure that public services meet Federal and State standards and are available in a timely fashion.
>
> **CSF1.2 New Development Requirements for Public Services.** Require new development applications to identify the impacts that the proposed development would have on the provision of public services, and approve those applications that can mitigate impacts or contribute a proportional fair share so that local public services can be maintained at an acceptable level.

CSF1.3 Performance Standards. Require all applicants proposing development projects within the Hollister Planning Area to meet performance standards for community services and facilities to be established in the Performance Standards Ordinance. Once adopted, require applications for new development to provide evidence that such development will meet all performance standards prior to approval, as provided by the Performance Standards Ordinance.

CSF1.4 Coordinate Facilities and Services Planning. Cooperate and coordinate with the County of San Benito, LAFCO and other local agencies in the provision of infrastructure and services within the Hollister Planning Area.

CSF1.6 Other Infrastructure Planning. Require the preparation of infrastructure master plans in areas outside the designated Sphere of Influence as a prerequisite to annexation. Such plans shall contain, but not be limited to, plans for sewer services, water service, storm drainage, traffic circulation, recreation facilities, school facilities and funding alternatives for police and fire services.

CSF1.7.3 Development Review Criteria for Public Services. Prior to granting approval, evaluate each new development in terms of whether the proposed development be located within the existing service areas of local service providers (fire protection, police protection, solid waste disposal, schools, etc.), and not result in a reduction in their current capabilities.

CSF4.4 Park and Recreation Standards. Provide for high-quality neighborhood and community parks to meet the recreational, open space, leisure and play needs and desire of existing and future residents. Coordinate efforts with the County of San Benito to provide an average of four acres of developed parks and recreational facilities for every 1,000 residents within the Hollister Planning Area.

Implementing Actions

CSF.D.5 Adopt a performance standards ordinance. Adopt a Performance Standards Ordinance that will include specific requirements that will be applied to all proposed development projects. As part of the ordinance, establish procedures for the review and referral of applications. The proposed development will either result in no impact

on local parks and recreational facilities or the applicant will provide the resources required to mitigate the impacts associated with the proposed development.

CSF.BB Implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. CSF.BB Implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Develop parks and recreational facilities in a manner consistent with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Park Facilities Master Plan

The following Park Facilities Master Plan policies and corresponding implementing actions are relevant to the proposed project.

Policy 1.1-Parkland Requirements. Encourage a parkland provision standard of four acres of public park space per 1,000 residents for residential development projects.

Policy 1.2–Mini-Parks. The development of additional mini-parks within Hollister shall be discouraged. The City shall not accept any offers for dedication of parklands of less than 3 acres in size, unless location is appropriate to expand the site through acquisition, to a full neighborhood park.

Policy 1.3–Neighborhood Parks. Larger neighborhood parks (3-5 acres+) shall be developed based on the standards established in this Plan as new residential areas develop.

2.2–New Neighborhood Parks in Future Residential Areas. New neighborhood parks shall be acquired and developed in locations within and accessible to those portions of the community which receive new residential growth. Neighborhood parks should ideally serve 3,000–5,000 residents within a 1/2 mile radius.

Hollister Municipal Code

Hollister Municipal Code Section 16.16.030 requires the provision of adequate open space to maintain residential densities for phased development. Facilities and amenities shall be included with the initial increment or increments to insure an appropriate environmental quality even if subsequent increments are not developed.

Hollister Municipal Code Chapter 16.55, Park and Recreation Area Dedication and Fees, requires land dedication, payment of fees in lieu of dedicating land, or a combination of both, at the option of the city, for park or recreation purposes as a condition of approval of a final map. Parks or "recreation purposes" include neighborhood parks, community parks, and open space in accord with the principles and standards of the Hollister general plan and the Hollister park facility master plan, and the land, fees, or combination thereof are to be used only for the purpose of acquiring land and developing new or rehabilitating existing neighborhood or community parks or recreational facilities, including open space, to serve the subdivision. The chapter also provides a formula for calculating required land dedications based on the type of residential development and the parkland standard. The amount of land required for single-family residential development is 0.01408 acres per unit. The amount of land required for multifamily residential development is 0.01380 acres per unit.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G indicates that a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- Require new or altered park facilities or services, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives;
- 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; or
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Would The Project Result in a Need for New or Altered Park Facilities or Services, the Construction of Which Could Cause Significant Environmental impacts, in Order to Maintain Acceptable Service Ratios or other Performance Objectives?

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?

Would the Project Include Recreational Facilities or Require the Construction or Expansion of Recreational Facilities, which Might have an Adverse Physical Effect on the Environment?

Future development of the project site would include the construction of 343 new residences (283 single-family units and up to 60 multi-family dwelling units) which would result in additional demand for park and recreational facilities. Additional demands for these facilities could lead to accelerated physical deterioration of existing facilities or require the provision of new park and recreation facilities to accommodate the increased demand. Based on an average household size of 3.61 persons per household (California Department of Finance 2015b), the maximum allowable development proposed by the project of 343 dwelling units could generate an estimated 1,238 new residents. Per the parkland dedication formula set forth in Municipal Code Chapter 16.55, the parkland requirement for the proposed project is approximately 4.8 acres (3.98 acres for the single-family residential uses and 0.83 acres for multifamily residential uses).

As shown on the vesting tentative map, presented earlier (Figure 8), and Figure 19, Open Space and Trail Corridors, the proposed project includes the provision of 25.52 acres of open space. Approximately 16.51 acres of this land area consists of existing sloped areas of the site upon which no development is proposed. For open space areas, the Park Facilities Master Plan notes that, due to their limited active recreation use, parklands which remain in substantially natural conditions may be valued as a percentage of their total acreage when calculating parkland dedications. The vesting tentative map also identifies 4.47 acres of park and trails; 0.94 of which is a PG&E easement, and 3.53 acres of which may be developed. Per Municipal Code Chapter 16.55, credit towards meeting the parkland requirement may be considered in the city's final determination if a project developer includes parkland development as part of a proposed subdivision.

As noted in the plan for services (p. 16), the extent of parkland for which the project would be responsible would be determined by the city and finalized as a condition of vesting tentative map approval. The city may ensure the provision of required parkland dedications and/or fees through an annexation agreement with the owners of the project site. The proposed project is anticipated to be developed in four phases as illustrated on Figure 10, Phasing Plan; future developers of the project site would be responsible for meeting the 4.8-acre parkland requirement as a condition of tentative map approval, in conformance with the provisions of Municipal Code Section 16.16.030 and Municipal Code Chapter 16.55.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Need for New Park or Recreational Facilities or Services, or Deterioration of Existing Recreational Facilities): The proposed project would increase the demand for parks and recreation facilities; however, the project would comply with requirements to meet the city's parkland dedication and/or fee requirements to ensure adequate recreational facilities are provided and the impact is less-than-significant.

The proposed project is subject to compliance with the parkland provisions of the general plan policies, programs, and municipal code. Compliance with existing policy and municipal code requirements would further reduce the effect of an increased demand on existing parks and recreation resources. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to these resources.

3.13 POLICE SERVICES

The discussion in this section is based upon information contained in the *Plan For Services North Street Residential Project City of Hollister/County of San Benito, CA* (Kimley-Horn 2014) (plan for services), information contained in the city's general plan and general plan EIR, and supplemented by interviews with relevant city staff. LAFCO comments on the NOP requested analysis of police services.

Environmental Setting

Police protection within the Hollister area is the responsibility of the Hollister Police Department within the city limits, and the San Benito County Sheriff's Department in the unincorporated areas of the county. The police department business office is located at 395 Apollo Way. According to the police chief, the existing facility was designed to accommodate staff levels to serve the city's population under buildout conditions of the general plan (David Westrick, email correspondence, March 9, 2015). The Sheriff's department is headquartered at 451 Fourth Street. The project site is contiguous to the city limit; the service area of the police department. Once annexed to the city, law enforcement at the site would be provided by the police department.

According to the police department's administrative supervisor, the staffing standard for the department is 1.5 sworn officer per 1,000 residents; however, the department currently funds positions for 26 sworn police officers and eight non-sworn personnel including animal control services (Eva Foster, telephone interview, March 9, 2015). As of this date, two sworn officer positions are currently unfilled. This equates to approximately 0.65 police officers per 1,000 residents based on a total population of 36,676 people (DOF 2015b). When fully staffed, the department provides 0.71 officers per 1,000 residents.

Source: DeNova Homes 2013

Figure 19

Open Space and Trail Corridors

North Street Subdivision EIR

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The general plan notes that in addition to law enforcement services, the police department administers and participates in a number of programs and partnerships that support crime prevention. These include a "Volunteer in Policing" (V.I.P.) program, which is composed of citizens of Hollister who are familiar with, live, or work in the City of Hollister, and an "at-risk" youth early intervention/community service program (Juvenile Impact Program) in partnership with the San Benito County Probation Department, San Benito High School, San Andreas School, Pinnacles Opportunity School, Rancho San Justo School, and Marguerite Maze Middle School. The program is designed to both effect behavioral change and to impose consequences on first-time offenders.

Regulatory Setting

Hollister General Plan

The following general plan policies and implementing actions are applicable to the proposed project.

Policies

LU2.2 Fiscally Sound Development. Evaluate the fiscal impact of projects as part of the development review process to assure that new development does not reduce standards or unduly increase the burden on existing residents.

CSF1.1 Adequate Capabilities and Capacity of Local Public Services. Ensure that future growth does not exceed the capabilities and capacity of local public services such as wastewater collection and treatment, local water supply systems, fire and police protection, maintenance of streets and roads, local school systems, parks and recreational facilities, and landfill capacity, and ensure that public services meet Federal and State standards and are available in a timely fashion.

CSF1.2 New Development Requirements for Public Services. Require new development applications to identify the impacts that the proposed development would have on the provision of public services, and approve those applications that can mitigate impacts or contribute a proportional fair share so that local public services can be maintained at an acceptable level.

CSF1.3 Performance Standards. Require all applicants proposing development projects within the Hollister Planning Area to meet

performance standards for community services and facilities to be established in the Performance Standards Ordinance. Once adopted, require applications for new development to provide evidence that such development will meet all performance standards prior to approval, as provided by the Performance Standards Ordinance.

CSF1.4 Coordinate Facilities and Services Planning. Cooperate and coordinate with the County of San Benito, LAFCO and other local agencies in the provision of infrastructure and services within the Hollister Planning Area.

CSF1.6 Other Infrastructure Planning. Require the preparation of infrastructure master plans in areas outside the designated Sphere of Influence as a prerequisite to annexation. Such plans shall contain, but not be limited to, plans for sewer services, water service, storm drainage, traffic circulation, recreation facilities, school facilities and funding alternatives for police and fire services.

CSF1.7.3 Development Review Criteria for Public Services. Prior to granting approval, evaluate each new development in terms of whether the proposed development be located within the existing service areas of local service providers (fire protection, police protection, solid waste disposal, schools, etc.), and not result in a reduction in their current capabilities.

CSF4.7 Police Services. CSF4.7 Police Services. Ensure that development within the Hollister Planning Area does not exceed the capability of the Hollister Police Department and the San Benito County Sheriff's Department to provide an adequate level of police protection.

Implementing Actions

LU.W Promote improvements during design review. The design review process includes discretionary review of development projects based on consideration of General Plan objectives and policies. Reviewers should also use city zoning and subdivision ordinances and other regulations and adopted ordinances as criteria to evaluate applications. The design review process also includes administrative review of projects to verify compliance with building codes, fire codes, engineering standards, and other regulations and ordinances.

CSF.D.4 Adopt a performance standards ordinance. As part of the ordinance, establish procedures for the review and referral of applications to ensure that an adequate level of police protection can be provided for the proposed development.

CSF.KK Require law enforcement review. Require the appropriate law enforcement agency to review all development proposals within the Hollister Planning Area to ensure that crime prevention concerns are considered.

Hollister Municipal Code

Municipal Code Chapter 3.16, Police and Fire Protection Impact Fees, sets forth provisions for police protection impact fees used to offset the costs of additional manpower and equipment demands due to the development and growth of new residential areas. Fees are set by the City Council resolution and payment is required prior to the issuance of a building permit or the filing of a parcel or final map, whichever occurs first. Revenues are dedicated for the hiring of new personnel and procurement of equipment associated with new personnel.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that a project may result in a significant effect on the environment if the project would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of or 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 services.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

Police Protection Services. Development of the project site would occur in phases and individual development projects would increase the city's population, and also, would include additional roadways that would affect traffic enforcement and collision investigation responsibilities. Additionally, the proposed project would increase the population of the site by approximately 1,238 persons based on the most recent population growth rate for Hollister reported by the Department of Finance (2015b).

Using the service standard ratio of 1.5 officers per 1,000 residents, proposed project would require an additional two officers to maintain service provision at the current staffing rate. The

annexation and development of the site would not create the need for new or physically altered police facilities. As noted in the plan for services, the incremental increase in police service would be financed by the imposition of a Mello-Roos Community Facilities public safety tax (p. 5). Per Municipal Code Chapter 3.16, project-related incremental increases in capital equipment needs would be financed through police impact fees collected at the time of building permit issuance or filing of the final map. The purpose of these impact fees is to mitigate the cumulative effect on police facilities from build-out of the general plan.

Future developers of the project site would be required to pay the applicable law enforcement impact fee for residential uses and the proposed project is subject to compliance with general plan policies and programs. Payment of required fees and compliance with the general plan policies would further reduce the direct impact of a project-related increase in service demand.

The proposed project will result in increased demand for police services and require an additional two officers to maintain service provision at the current staffing rate. This incremental increase in police staffing would not require any new or expanded police facilities; and therefore would not result in a substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of, or need for, new or physically altered police facilities. Therefore, there would be no environmental impact associated with the provision of police services.

3.14 SCHOOLS

The discussion in this section is based upon information contained in the city's general plan and general plan EIR, and supplemented by interviews with relevant Hollister School District staff. Comments on the NOP made by the Hollister School District included concerns of the impact to school facilities resulting from additional students.

Environmental Setting

The project would be served by two school districts: the Hollister School District for students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade and the San Benito High School District for students in grades nine through 12.

The Hollister School District serves a student population of about 5,500 students and operates a total of eight elementary schools within six elementary school campuses, and two middle schools. The elementary schools include two magnet schools located within the Gabilan Hills Elementary School and Ladd Lane Elementary School campuses. Of the six non-magnet elementary schools, five serve students in grades kindergarten through fifth, and one serves grades kindergarten through eighth. The magnet schools include a Dual Language Immersion Academy (grades kindergarten through sixth, Spanish/English), and an Accelerated

Achievement Academy (grades fourth through eighth). One of the middle schools, Marguerite Maze Middle School, serves grades sixth through eighth; the other middle school, Rancho San Justo Middle School, serves grades seventh and eighth. The Hollister School District employs more than 560 staff members, including certificated and classified employees, substitutes and others (Hollister School District, 2014). The San Benito High School District has one school, San Benito High School, employed 114 teachers in the 2013-14 school year (San Benito High School 2014). The current high school enrollment is 2,853 students (San Benito High School 2015).

The closest public elementary schools to the project site are Calaveras Elementary School located at 1151 Buena Vista Road approximately one-half mile west of the site, and R.O Hardin Elementary School located at 881 Line Street approximately three-quarters of a mile southwest of the site. Marguerite Maze Middle School is located at 900 Meridian Street, east of the project site, and Rancho San Justo Middle School is located at 1201 Rancho Drive, southeast of the project site. The two middle schools are both located approximately one mile from the project site. San Benito High School is located at 1220 Monterey Street in Hollister, approximately 1.5 miles south of the project site. Each of these schools and their location in relation to the project site is illustrated on Figure 20, Public Schools in Proximity of the Project Site.

Table 21, School District Facility Enrollment and Average Student Capacity (2014-2015), presents current school enrollment and capacity for the school year for the facilities that would serve school-aged children generated by the proposed project.

Table 21 School District Facility Enrollment and Average Student Capacity (2014-2015)

School	2014-2015 Enrollment	Average Student Capacity	% of Capacity
Hollister School District			
Calaveras Elementary (K-8)	644	650	99
R.O. Hardin Elementary (K-5)	450	675	67
Marguerite Maze Middle School (6-8)	697	1075	65
Rancho San Justo Middle School (7-8)	870	1050	83
San Benito High School District			
San Benito High School (9-12)	2,903	2,853	102

Source: Hollister School District (2015), California Department of EducationSan Benito High School District (2011).

As of the 2014-2015 school year, all elementary and middle school facilities were operating with surplus capacity. However, enrollment at Calaveras Elementary School is nearing student capacity with approximately six seats available. R.O Hardin Elementary School is under capacity with approximately 225 seats available. Likewise, both Hollister School District middle schools are operating under capacity with approximately 180 to 378 seats available. According to the most recent information available from the San Benito High School District, student enrollment at San Benito High School for the current school year is 2,903 students, with a student capacity of 2853 students.

Regulatory Setting

School Facilities Act of 1998

The School Facilities Act of 1998, also known as SB 50, provides state funding for new school construction projects that can satisfy criteria for such funding, including eligibility due to growth, Division of State Architect plan approval, and California Department of Education site approval. However, the Act limits the maximum amount of impact fees that can be charged by school districts or imposed by local jurisdictions as mitigation for school impacts resulting from new residential, commercial, and industrial development. The Act also prohibits local agencies from denying a development application on the basis of the applicant's refusal to provide school facilities mitigation that exceeds the fee amount and prohibits local agencies from refusing to approve any legislative or adjudicative act on the basis that school facilities are inadequate.

Hollister General Plan

> **CSF1.1 Adequate Capabilities and Capacity of Local Public Services.** Ensure that future growth does not exceed the capabilities and capacity of local public services such as wastewater collection and treatment, local water supply systems, fire and police protection, maintenance of streets and roads, local school systems, parks and recreational facilities, and landfill capacity, and ensure that public services meet Federal and State standards and are available in a timely fashion.
>
> **CSF1.6 Other Infrastructure Planning.** Require the preparation of infrastructure master plans in areas outside the designated Sphere of Influence as a prerequisite to annexation. Such plans shall contain, but not be limited to, plans for sewer services, water service, storm drainage, traffic circulation, recreation facilities, school facilities and funding alternatives for police and fire services.

Project Boundary Public Schools

0 1500 feet

Source: San Benito County 2015, Esri 2015

Figure 20

Public Schools in Proximity of the Project Site

North Street Subdivision EIR

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CSF1.7.3 Development Review Criteria for Public Services. Prior to granting approval, evaluate each new development in terms of whether the proposed development be located within the existing service areas of local service providers (fire protection, police protection, solid waste disposal, schools, etc.), and not result in a reduction in their current capabilities.

CSF4.1 Providing Quality Education. Maintain a close, collaborative relationship with the school districts to maximize public benefit, and collaborate with schools, from preschools to the college level, in fostering educational programs to benefit the community.

CSF4.2 Community Use of School Facilities. Collaborate with schools to provide access to school facilities for neighborhood and community activities, and encourage joint planning with local school districts in determining the location of educational facilities. All new development shall be required to mitigate its fair share of the impact of such development on school facilities to the maximum extent permitted under state law.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

As indicated by Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a proposed project may result in significant impacts associated with provision of or need for new or physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN THAT WOULD REQUIRE NEW SCHOOL FACILITIES OR AN EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS?

As discussed above, the project would be served by two school districts: the Hollister School District for students in grades kindergarten through eighth and the San Benito High School District for students in grades nine through twelfth. The proposed project would generate new students that would require school services from each district.

According to John J. Teliha, Director of Facilities for the Hollister School District, the student yield factor used in enrollment projections are 0.378 for kindergarten through sixth grade and

0.187 for grades seventh through eighth for all types of residential development. Student yield factors for grades kindergarten through eighth 0.565 (Hollister School District 2015). The Student generation rates and school capacity information for current conditions in San Benito High School District was not available. The student generation rate for grades nine through twelve is 0.190 (EMC Planning Group 2012).

Using these rates, the proposed project is anticipated to generate a total of 261 school-aged children: 130 kindergarten through sixth grade students, 65 seventh through eighth grade students, and 66 high school students as presented in Table 22, Student Generation, below.

Table 22 Student Generation

Grade Level	Generation Rate	Students
Elementary School (K-6)	0.378	130
Middle School (7-8)	0.187	65
High School (9-12)[1]	0.190-	66
Total		261

Source: Teliha, John J. Director of Facilities for the Hollister School District. Email communication with Consultant, 19 March 2015 and EMC Planning Group 2012))

Note: 1. This information is taken from the Fairview Corners Residential Specific Plan EIR certified by the San Benito County Board of Supervisors in 2012.

It is anticipated that students from the project would attend existing public schools in the area. The estimated 130 kindergarten through sixth grade school-aged students generated by the proposed project would attend either Calaveras Elementary School, located at 1151 Buena Vista Road, approximately one-half mile west of the project site, or R.O Hardin Elementary School located at 881 Line Street approximately three-quarters of a mile southwest of the site. Although Calaveras Elementary School is at or near capacity, the R.O Hardin Elementary School currently has capacity to serve the elementary students generated by the proposed project. The two middle schools have a combined seventh and eighth grade capacity of 558 available seats, which is sufficient student capacity to serve the 131 middle school-age students generated by the proposed project. San Benito High School is currently operating at 102 percent capacity. The addition of project-related students cause the school to operate at 104 percent of student capacity, which, in the near term would likely be accommodated by increasing classroom size.

The project's proposed residential development would be subject to the applicable school impact fees as calculated by the school districts, per statute, and consistent with Hollister' General Plan policy CSF4.2, and due prior to issuance of occupancy permits. The developer would be required to pay the applicable school impact fees, which would ultimately be programmed by the

school districts, in combination with fees collected from other projects, to improve or expand school facilities. The payment of school district fees would mitigate the impacts of the proposed project's contribution to the need for expanded facilities.

Specific improvements as a result of the construction of a new school project, however, have not been identified; therefore, environmental analysis of specific potential impacts associated with development of any future facilities would be speculative at this time. However, it is anticipated that a range of environmental impacts would be required to be analyzed, including those typically associated with the construction and operation of school facilities. Examples of these impacts include traffic generation, noise and air quality. It also is anticipated that any school facilities proposed in the future would be required to undergo separate environmental analysis within their physical environmental contexts, during which specific impacts would be identified and mitigated based on project plans.

Less-than-Significant Impact (New or Expanded School Facilities): The proposed project would increase the demand for school facilities which may result in the need for new or expanded facilities; however, the project would comply with requirements to pay applicable school impact fees. The purpose of these impact fees is to mitigate the cumulative effect on school facilities from build-out of the general plan. Therefore, the payment of fees would ensure that the impacts of the proposed project are less-than-significant.

3.15 SOLID WASTE

This section of the EIR presents the existing public services and facilities for solid waste disposal for the City of Hollister and evaluates the potential environmental impacts associated with permitted landfill capacity, and compliance with solid waste regulations that may be caused by implementation of the proposed project.

This analysis is based on information contained in the city's general plan, the project's application materials, and information supplied by solid waste service providers.

Environmental Setting

Recology San Benito County provides garbage collection and recycling service in Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, and the unincorporated area of San Benito County. The collection program includes curbside recycling, garbage, yard waste, used motor oil, and used oil filters. Solid waste is taken to the John Smith Road Landfill, a county-owned facility located

approximately five miles southeast of the project site on John Smith Road. According to the Jurisdiction Diversion/Disposal Rate Detail summary prepared by the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle 2013b), approximately 45,263 tons of solid waste was disposed of at this landfill by county residents (incorporated cities and unincorporated areas) in 2013.

Landfill Capacity

According to CalRecycle (2013a), the John Smith Road Landfill has a cease operation date of January 1, 2032. Total capacity of the landfill is 9.3 million cubic yards. The remaining capacity, as of November 30, 2012, was 4.6 million cubic yards. The maximum tonnage per day the landfill is permitted is 1,000 tons.

Waste Generation Rates

According to the Jurisdiction Diversion/Disposal Rate Detail summary prepared by CalRecycle the generation rate for county residents is 2013 was 4.4 pound of solid waste per person, per day (2013b).

Regulatory Setting

State

California Integrated Waste Management Act. To minimize the amount of solid waste that must be disposed of by transformation and land disposal, the State Legislature passed the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939), effective January 1990. According to AB 939, all cities and counties were required to divert 25 percent of all solid waste from landfill facilities by January 1, 1995 and 50 percent by January 1, 2000.

AB 939 further requires every city and county to prepare two documents to demonstrate how the mandated rates of diversion would be achieved. The first document is the Source Reduction and Recycling (Element describing the chief source of the jurisdiction's waste, the existing diversion programs, and the current rates of waste diversion and new or expanded diversion programs intended to implement the Act's mandate. The second document is the Household Hazardous Waste Element, which describes what each jurisdiction must do to ensure that household hazardous wastes are not mixed with regular non-hazardous solid waste and deposited at a landfill.

Regional

San Benito County Integrated Waste Management Regional Agency. The Integrated Waste Management Department is responsible for oversight of landfill operations and the county refuse/recycling contract. In addition, this department serves as lead agency for the San Benito County Integrated Waste Management Regional Agency, which consists of the unincorporated county and cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista and is responsible for compliance with State of California mandated waste diversion goals of 50 percent (AB 939). This department also implements the county-wide Household Hazardous Waste program and Small Quantity Generator program for qualifying business hazardous waste.

The San Benito County Integrated Waste Management Regional Agency is primarily responsible for ensuring compliance with federal and state mandated regulations that ensure public health and safety related to refuse and household hazardous waste.

Activities consist of the following:

- Landfill operations oversight and regulatory compliance;
- Refuse and recycling contract oversight;
- Household Hazardous Waste program;
- Small Quantity Generator program; and
- Public education on waste diversion and household hazardous waste.

City of Hollister General Plan

> **CSF4.10 Solid Waste Management.** Coordinate with the County of San Benito in addressing solid waste management needs consistent with the Hollister General Plan.
>
> **CSF 4.11 Waste Reduction and Recycling**. Encourage efforts to promote recycling, such as encouraging businesses to recycle building and other materials, promoting composting by restaurants, institutions and residences, and supporting programs to promote recycling. Encourage residential, commercial and industrial concerns to evaluate and reduce their waste streams and to participate in waste exchanges and used goods resale programs.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G indicates that a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- Be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs (cause the landfill's permitted daily capacity of 1,000 tons to be exceeded); and
- Would not comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Analysis, Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Consideration

Compliance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. As mandated by the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, 50 percent of all solid waste must be diverted from landfills. As of 2007, with the passage of SB 1016, the Per Capita Disposal Measurement System, jurisdictional diversion rates were no longer utilized and only per capita disposal rates are measured. The new per capita disposal and goal measurement system moves the emphasis from an estimated diversion measurement number to using an actual disposal measurement number as a factor, along with evaluating program implementation efforts. These two factors help determine each jurisdiction's progress toward achieving its Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939) diversion goals. The 50 percent diversion requirement is now being measured in terms of per-capita disposal expressed as pounds per person per day.

According to the Jurisdiction Diversion/Disposal Rate Detail summary prepared by CalRecycle, in 2013 the per capita Calculated Disposal Rate (pounds/day/person) target was 5.1 and the Calculated Disposal Rate for county residents is 2013 was 4.4 (2013b). Therefore, San Benito County achieved its per capita Calculated Disposal Rate (pounds/day/person) target. The county also achieved its target in 2012.

The Disposal Rate is one factor in determining a jurisdiction's compliance with the intent of AB 939. It is conservatively assumed that under the waste requirements set by San Benito County Integrated Waste Management, waste generated by the proposed project would not result in the county exceeding its per capita Disposal Rate target. Therefore, the proposed project would not affect the current compliance with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989.

The proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable regulations and therefore, would have no impact associated with compliance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

WOULD THE PROJECT BE SERVED BY A LANDFILL WITH SUFFICIENT PERMITTED CAPACITY TO ACCOMMODATE THE PROJECT'S SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL NEEDS?

As discussed above, the projected remaining capacity of the John Smith Road Landfill as of November 30, 2012, was 4.6 million cubic yards (CalRecycle 2013). The maximum tonnage per day the landfill is permitted is 1,000 tons.

Based on the solid waste generation rates discussed above, it is estimated that county residents (including residents in incorporated cities and unincorporated areas) produce approximately 4.4 pounds of solid waste per person, per day.

Using an average household size of 3.61 persons per household (California Department of Finance 2015b), development proposed by the project of 450 dwelling units could generate an estimated 1,238 new residents. Therefore, the project would generate approximately 5,447 pounds (approximately 2.7 tons) of solid waste per day (1,238 residents x 4.4 pounds of solid waste per person, per day).

Approximately 248,016 pounds (approximately 124 tons) of solid waste per day as disposed of at John Smith Road Landfill by county residents in 2013 (90,526,000 pounds per day divided by 365 days in a year). The addition of the projected solid waste of the proposed project would result in the disposal of approximately 253,463 pounds (approximately 126.7 tons) of solid waste per day at the landfill.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Landfill Capacity): The project would increase the amount of solid waste at the John Smith Road Landfill by approximately 5,447 pounds (approximately 2.7 tons) per day to a total daily disposal rate of approximately 253,463 pounds (approximately 126.7 tons); this would not exceed the landfill's permitted 1,000 tons per day; therefore the impact is less than significant.

The addition of solid waste to the landfill resulting from the project would not increase the tonnage beyond the landfill's permitted amount that could result in the closure of the landfill prior to the anticipated 2032 date. The impact is less than significant.

3.16 Traffic and Circulation

This section of the Draft EIR examines potential traffic and circulation impacts resulting from the proposed project. Comment letters on the NOP cited concerns of project-related impacts due to traffic and circulation. The comments cited concerns regarding consistency with the airport land use plan, safe routes to schools, sidewalks, pedestrian circulation, bicycle circulation, public transit, increases in traffic volume, increases in traffic speed (including consideration of traffic calming measures), intersection impacts, parking, and the project's connection to the planned North Street extension. NOP comment letters are included in Appendix A.

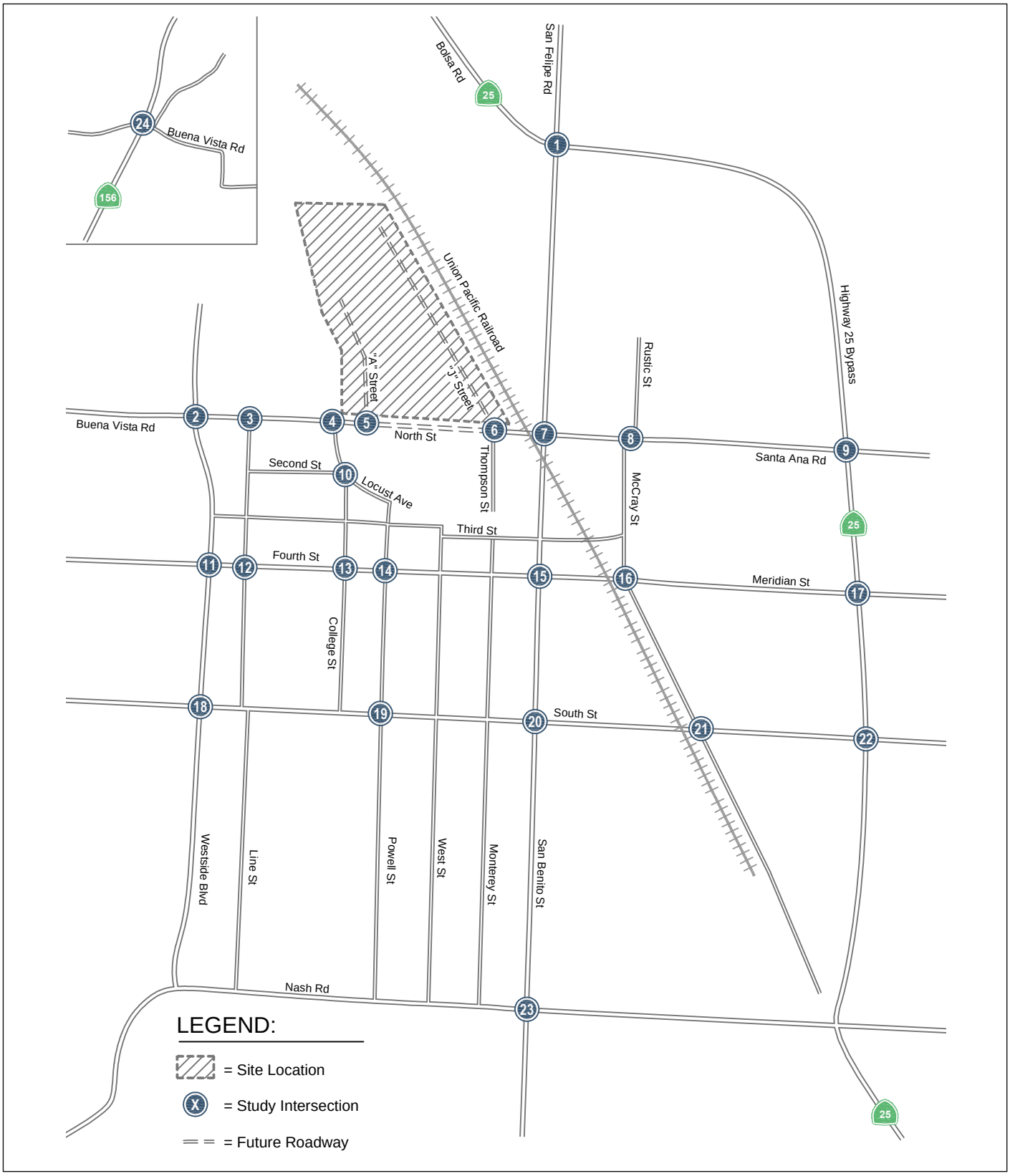
This analysis contained in this section is based on the *North Street Transportation Impact Analysis* prepared by Hexagon Transportation Consultants, dated February 12, 2015 (hereinafter "traffic report"). The traffic report is based on a larger project size of 450 dwelling units; therefore the traffic volumes and project-related LOS reported in this section are overestimated. According traffic consultant, the proposed project (343 dwelling units) would result in similar impacts as the larger project and would not change the impact and mitigation conclusions of the traffic report (Del Rio, pers. com. December 7, 2015). The traffic reports included as Appendix I of this Draft EIR.

Environmental Setting

The project site is located west of the intersection of North Street and the Southern Pacific Railroad, approximately 11 miles east of U.S. Highway 101. Regional access to the site is provided by State Route 25 and State Route 156 while local access to the project area is provided by a variety of local streets in the study area. These facilities are described below and shown on Figure 21, Area Roadways.

Highways

State Route 25. State Route 25 is a two-lane highway that carries regional traffic between Gilroy and Hollister. This route begins at its junction with U.S. Highway 101 in Gilroy and extends south through Hollister towards Paicines, traversing the entire length of San Benito County southbound through Tres Pinos, Paicines and to the southern county boundary at the junction of State Route 198 near King City. In Hollister, State Route 25 includes Airline Highway and Bolsa Road. Caltrans classifies this route as a minor arterial, and the route is primarily a rural, two-lane facility, except for a three-mile section that runs through the City of Hollister, where it is six and four lanes. A portion of State Route 25 between State Route 198 (south) and State Route 156 is eligible for designation as a State Scenic Route. State Route 25 is the primary commuter route between Hollister and Gilroy and through Hollister. Within the City of Hollister, State Route 25 runs in a generally north-south direction from the intersection of Sunnyslope Road to San Felipe Road and the State Route 156 Bypass north of the City.



not to scale

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2015

Figure 21

Area Roadways

North Street Subdivision EIR

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State Route 156. State Route 156 is a two-lane highway that carries regional traffic between U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 152. State Route 156 is a major roadway for trucks traveling between U.S. Highway 101 and Interstate 5. State Route 156 traverses northern San Benito County in an easterly direction from U.S. Highway 101 (west) through San Juan Bautista and Hollister before turning northeast to the San Benito-Santa Clara County line where it connects with State Route 152. From U.S. Highway 101 to The Alameda (intersection with 3rd Street at San Juan Bautista), State Route 156 is a four-lane expressway, before it narrows into a conventional two-lane rural highway toward Hollister. In the Hollister area, State Route 156 becomes a two-lane expressway as it bypasses Hollister and maintains that configuration to the San Benito-Santa Clara County line. The State Route 156 Bypass is aligned to the east of downtown Hollister.

Streets

San Benito Street. San Benito Street is a two-lane, north-south arterial roadway that makes a transition from San Felipe Road in the north part of Hollister and extends southward through downtown Hollister to Union Road.

Buena Vista Road. Buena Vista Road is a two-lane east-west collector street that begins at State Route 156 and extends eastward to Locust Avenue. With the planned extension of North Street, a continuous connection between Buena Vista Road and Santa Ana Road will be provided. In the vicinity of the project site, the posted speed limit along Buena Vista Road is 30 miles per hour.

North Street. North Street currently consists of a short undeveloped roadway segment between Monterey Street and San Benito Street, east of the project site. Construction of the two-lane extension of North Street, between Locust Avenue and Monterey Street, is planned to occur concurrently with the proposed project. This extension of North Street is not part of the proposed project, but a funded improvement that will be completed in conjunction with the development of the adjacent undeveloped areas, which include the project site. North Street changes name designation west of Locust Avenue to Buena Vista Road and east of San Benito Street to Santa Ana Road. With the planned extension, a continuous roadway would be provided connecting Buena Vista Road and Santa Ana Road.

Santa Ana Road. Santa Ana Road is an east-west collector that extends from just east of Fairview Road westward to San Benito Street, where it changes name designation to North Street. Santa Ana Road is mainly a two-lane roadway.

Meridian Street. Meridian Street is an east-west arterial that extends from Clearview Drive westward to McCray Street, where it changes name designation to Sally Street/4th Street. West of Clearview Drive, Meridian Street has four travel lanes.

Westside Boulevard. Westside Boulevard is a two-lane north-south collector street that is located west of the project site and stretches from Nash Road in the south to Buena Vista Road in the north. North of Buena Vista Road, it becomes Westside Road. Westside Boulevard has class II bike facilities throughout most of its entire length. Access to the project site would be provided by Buena Vista Road.

Line Street. Line Street is a two-lane north-south collector street that begins at Nash Road and extends northward to Buena Vista Road.

Locust Avenue/Powell Street. Locust Avenue/Powell Street is a two-lane north-south collector street that extends between Nash Road in the south and Buena Vista Road in the north. North of Fourth Street it changes names to Locust Avenue. Locust Avenue provides access to the project site via Buena Vista Road.

San Juan Road/Fourth Street. San Juan Road/Fourth Street is an east/west two-lane major collector street that begins to the west at its intersection with State Route 156 and extends eastward transitioning into Fourth Street at Westside Boulevard. Fourth Street again changes designation to Meridian Street at its intersection with McCray Street, east of San Benito Street. Fourth Street provides access to Buena Vista Road through Locust Avenue, College Street, Line Street, and Westside Boulevard.

Intersections and Roadway Segments

The intersections and roadway segments studied in the traffic report were selected for evaluation by the project traffic engineer in consultation with the City of Hollister Public Works Department. The study included an analysis of 12 signalized intersections, 11 unsignalized intersections, one future intersection, five highway segments, six roadway segments, and operations at one freeway interchange as follows:

Intersections. The study intersections are listed below and shown in Figure 21, Area Roadways, presented earlier.

1. San Felipe Road and State Route 25/Bolsa Road[CT] (signalized)
2. Westside Boulevard and Buena Vista Road (unsignalized)
3. Line Street and Buena Vista Road (unsignalized)
4. Locust Avenue and Buena Vista Road (unsignalized)
5. "A" Street and North Street (future)
6. Thompson Street/"J" Street and North Street (unsignalized)

7. San Benito Street and North Street/Santa Ana Road (signalized)
8. McCray Street/Rustic Street and Santa Ana Road (signalized)
9. State Route 25 and Santa Ana Road[CT] (signalized)
10. Locust Avenue/College Street and Second Street (unsignalized)
11. Westside Boulevard and Fourth Street (signalized)
12. Line Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)
13. College Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)
14. Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)
15. San Benito Street and Fourth Street (signalized)
16. McCray Street and Fourth Street/Meridian Street (signalized)
17. State Route 25 and Meridian Street[CT] (signalized)
18. Westside Boulevard and South Street (unsignalized)
19. Powell Street and South Street (unsignalized)
20. San Benito Street and South Street (signalized)
21. McCray Street and South Street/Hillcrest Road (signalized)
22. State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road[CT] (signalized)
23. San Benito Street and Nash Road (signalized)
24. State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road[CT] (unsignalized)

Intersections denoted with the superscript "[CT]" are currently under the jurisdiction of Caltrans.

Roadway Segments. The study roadway segments are listed below and the roadways are identified on Figure 21, Area Roadways, presented earlier.

1. College Street, between 5th Street and 6th Street
2. College Street, between Central Avenue and Canal Alley
3. Line Street, between Wentz Avenue and 7th Street
4. Powell Street, between 5th Street and 6th Street

5. Line Street, between Central Avenue and Canal Alley

6. Locust Avenue, between College Street and Powell Street

Highway Segments. The study highway segments are listed below and the highways are identified on Figure 21, Area Roadways, presented earlier.

1. State Route 25, San Felipe Road/San Benito Street to State Route 156

2. State Route 25, State Route 156 to U.S. Highway 101

3. State Route 156, The Alameda to Union Road

4. State Route 156, Union Road to Buena Vista Road

5. State Route 156, Buena Vista Road to State Route 25

Existing Traffic Levels of Service

Intersection and roadway/highway segment operations were evaluated in accordance with the standards set forth by the City of Hollister, and Caltrans. The traffic study was prepared using methodologies outlined in the Caltrans' *Guidelines for the Preparation of Traffic Studies,* the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual*, and the *2012 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.*

Traffic conditions were analyzed for the weekday AM and PM peak hours. The weekday AM peak-hour of traffic generally falls within the 7:00 to 9:00 AM period and the weekday PM peak-hour is typically in the 4:00 to 6:00 PM period. It is during these times that the most congested traffic conditions occur on an average day. Existing weekday AM and PM peak-hour traffic volumes were obtained from new intersection turning movement counts mainly conducted in 2013 and 2014. The existing peak-hour intersection volumes are shown on Figure 6 of the traffic report in Appendix F.

Existing Intersection Level of Service Operations. Level of Service (LOS) ratings are qualitative descriptions of intersection operations and are reported using an "A" through "F" letter rating system to describe travel delay and congestion, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions, and LOS F the worst. The level of service standard for intersections under the jurisdictions of the City of Hollister and Caltrans is LOS C. There are no study intersections under the jurisdiction of San Benito County.

The results of the intersection level of service and signal warrant analyses under existing conditions are summarized in Table 3 of the traffic report. The results indicate that the following study intersections currently operate at an unacceptable LOS D or worse during at least one of the peak hours:

12. Line Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

13. College Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

14. Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

15. San Benito Street and Fourth Street (signal)

24. State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road [CT] (two-way stop) (signal warranted)

The remaining study intersections currently operate at an acceptable LOS C or better conditions during both the AM and PM peak hours. Intersection locations are shown on Figure 21, Area Roadways, presented earlier.

The signal warrant analysis results under existing conditions indicate that the intersection of State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road currently has volumes that meet the threshold that warrants signalization. All of the remaining unsignalized study intersections currently have traffic conditions that fall below the thresholds that warrant signalization, including those that are currently operating at LOS D (listed above). The intersection level of service calculation sheets are included in Appendix C of the traffic report.

Existing Roadway Segment Level of Service Operations. Twenty-four-hour tube counts conducted in March 2013 and May 2014 revealed that all study roadways currently carry no more than approximately 1,650 daily vehicles (both directions combined), with the exception of the segment of Powell Street between Fifth Street and Sixth Street, which currently carries just over 2,000 vehicles daily. Based on City of Hollister traffic volume thresholds for residential streets of 5,000 vehicles per day, the daily traffic volumes along the study roadway segments are within the acceptable roadway capacity ranges.

Speed surveys also were conducted along the study roadway segments. All roadway segments currently have a posted speed limit of 25 miles per hour (mph). The speed surveys revealed the 85th percentile speeds along four of the six study roadway segments exceed the posted speed limit by at least 5 mph during at least one of the peak hours (speeds within 5 mph of the posted speed limits are considered reasonable). Travel speeds along College Street, between Central Avenue and Canal Alley, and Locust Avenue, between College Street and Powell Street, are within the speed limit.

Existing Highway Segment Level of Service Operations. Traffic volumes on the study highway segments were derived from the new intersection turn-movement counts conducted at the intersections of State Route 25 and State Route 156 and Union Road and State Route 156. Roadway characteristics, such as lane width, shoulder width, terrain type, segment length, number of access points, and percent of no passing zone were obtained from observations in the field and/or aerial images. Default truck and recreational vehicle percentages for rural areas were utilized in the traffic report analysis.

The level of service standard for Caltrans' facilities is LOS C or better. All highway segments studied currently operate at an unacceptable LOS D or E during the peak hours, with the exception of the westbound segment on State Route 156 between Buena Vista Road and State Route 25, which operates at an acceptable LOS C during the AM peak-hour (LOS D during the PM peak-hour).

The results of the highway segments level of service analysis under existing conditions are summarized in Table 4 of the traffic report.

Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle facilities are divided into three classes of relative significance. Class I bikeways are bike paths that are physically separated from motor vehicles and offer two-way bicycle travel on a separate path. Class II bikeways are striped bike lanes on roadways that are marked by signage and pavement markings. Class III bikeways are bike routes and only have signs to help guide bicyclists on recommended routes to certain locations. The locations of existing bicycle facilities are show on Figure 22, Existing Bicycle Facilities.

Currently the project site is not served directly by any bicycle facilities. The nearest class II bike lanes are provided on Westside Boulevard and the State Route 25 Bypass. The City of Hollister 2005 General Plan indicates that most bicycling within the city is done on roadway shoulders.

Sidewalks are found along most developed areas in the vicinity of the project site. Residential neighborhoods west, south, and east of the project site have sidewalks along both sides of the street. Sidewalks are missing along all undeveloped areas, mainly along North Street, Monterey Street, and Locust Avenue. The north side of Buena Vista Road, including the areas adjacent to the project frontage, does not have sidewalks. The south side of Buena Vista Road has sidewalks from Calaveras Elementary School to Locust Avenue.

Transit Service

Transit service to the project area is provided by County Express Transit System. The transit services provided in the city include local bus service (County Express bus lines), dial-a-ride service, and inter-county service (service to the Gilroy Transit Center and Gavilan Community College).

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Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2015

Figure 22

Existing Bicycle Facilities

North Street Subdivision EIR

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Regulatory Setting

Regional Transportation Planning

Council of San Benito County Governments. The San Benito Council of Governments (COG) is an association of city and county governments created to address regional transportation issues. Its member agencies include the County of San Benito and the two incorporated cities within the county, the cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista. As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization and the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency for San Benito County, the San Benito COG is responsible for developing and updating a variety of transportation plans and for allocating the federal and state funds to implement them. Acting in this capacity, the San Benito COG is responsible for developing and adopting several transportation planning documents and studies, including the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is a long-term (20+year) blueprint for the region's transportation network, and encompasses projects for all types of travel, including aviation and freight movement. The RTP identifies and analyzes transportation needs of the metropolitan region and creates a framework for project priorities.

Development projects within San Benito County, including incorporated cities, are required to pay traffic impact fees into the Hollister/San Benito County Regional Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) program. The San Benito COG administers the TIF program as authorized by the RTP. The purpose of the TIF program is to implement city and county roadway improvement projects identified in the San Benito County Traffic Mitigation Fee Study, based on anticipated regional development identified in the county's and the cities' general plans (San Benito COG 2014).

The San Benito COG and its member entities (San Benito County, the City of Hollister, and the City of San Juan Bautista) have recently completed the process of updating the TIF program to ensure that the projects identified therein accurately represent the needs of the community and that the established fees are appropriate to fund the identified improvement projects, and to determine if new improvements are necessary (San Benito COG 2014).

Airport Land Use Commission

As adopted by the Council of San Benito County Governments acting in its capacity as the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for San Benito County, the basic function of the *Hollister Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan* (Airport Land Use Commission 2012) (hereinafter "airport land use compatibility plan") is to promote compatibility between Hollister Municipal Airport and the land uses surrounding it to the extent that these areas have not already been devoted to incompatible uses. The airport land use compatibility plan accomplishes

this function through establishment of a set of compatibility criteria applicable to new development around the airport. Neither the airport land use compatibility plan nor the ALUC have authority over existing land uses or over operation of the airport.

Geographically, the airport land use compatibility plan pertains to lands within the jurisdictions of the City of Hollister and the County of San Benito. Any city, special district, community college district, or school district that exists or may be established or expanded into the Hollister Municipal Airport Influence Area defined by this airport land use compatibility plan are also subject to the provisions of the plan. The authority of the ALUC does not extend to state, federal, or tribal lands.

City of Hollister General Plan

The following City of Hollister General Plan goals and policies are relevant to the proposed project regarding transportation and circulation impacts:

> **Goal C1.** Design and implement the City's circulation system to serve the planned residential and economic growth specified in the General Plan.
>
> **Policy C1.1 LOS C or Better Arterial Roads.** Ensure, to the maximum extent feasible, that the designated arterial roadway system is planned to operate at Level of Service (LOS) C or better during peak and off-peak hours as of the horizon year of the adopted General Plan.
>
> **Policy C1.2 Sub-Standard Roads.** Determine the most practical (cost effective) means for bringing segments/intersections into compliance with the LOS standard when it has been determined that one more segments/ intersections along the designated arterial system is operating at LOS D or worse (below the City standard).
>
> **Goal C2**. Provide a variety of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to promote safe and efficient non-motorized vehicle circulation in Downtown and throughout Hollister. Facilities should accommodate recreational and commuter circulation patterns.
>
> **Policy C2.1 Bicycle Facilities.** Cooperatively work with COG, Caltrans, and San Benito County to develop, implement and maintain bicycle facilities providing direct access to major public facilities, schools and employment centers as described in the San Benito County Bicycle Master Plan.

Policy C2.2 "Safe Routes to School Program." Work cooperatively with local school districts to develop, implement and maintain the "Safe Routes to School" program.

Policy C2.3 Pedestrian Connections. Work with local businesses, private developers, and public agencies to ensure provision of safe pedestrian pathways to major public facilities, schools and employment centers. Require new developments to provide internal pedestrian connections and linkages to adjacent neighborhoods and community facilities.

Goal C3. Cooperate with Caltrans, the Council of San Benito County Governments (COG), the County of San Benito and any other regional transportation authorities to ensure the funding and implementation of the transportation improvements specified in the San Benito County Regional Transportation Plan.

Policy C3.1 Regional Transportation Measures. Continue to collect traffic impact fees and require other site related transportation improvements from private developers to ensure implementation of transportation system improvements to local and regional facilities attributable to proposed development.

Policy C3.2 Rail Corridor Planning. The City will coordinate with appropriate agencies to assure that development projects planned adjacent to or near the rail corridor will be planned with safety of the rail corridor in mind.

Goal C4. Continue to implement a uniform set of standards for Hollister's transportation system including standard rights-of-way and typical sections. These standards may be amended as necessary in response to changes in technology and industry design standards.

Policy C4.2 Public Transit. Cooperatively work with COG, Caltrans, and San Benito County to develop, implement and maintain public transit services

Goal CSF4. Provide for an adequate level of community services and facilities to ensure the continued health, education, welfare and safety of all residents and businesses.

Policy CSF 4.12 Requirements for Fire Safety. Ensure that all new development will be adequately designed to minimize risks to life and property through the implementation of the Fire Protection Master Plan. New development will be protected from fire hazards through the provision of peak load water supply systems capable of providing the flow required for fire suppression, through the design of roads with adequate widths and turning radii, and through adequate separation between buildings, prior to project approval.

Goal LU4. Ensure that Hollister has well-maintained, safe and functional streets, parking areas and pedestrian walkways.

Policy LU4.3 Building Frontages. Encourage building frontages that are safe and interesting for pedestrians. Require setbacks or 15' of less Downtown, and follow the prevalent existing setback pattern in medium density residential areas**.**

Policy LU4.4 Streets, Paths and Bikeways. Ensure that streets, paths and bikeways contribute to the system of a fully connected transportation network.

Policy LU4.5 Lighting and Furniture. Require compatible pedestrian and bicycle pathways and automobile routes with design elements that use buildings, trees, lighting and street furniture to define spaces for travelers.

Policy LU4.8 Pedestrian Environment. Design safe, accessible, convenient, comfortable and functional pedestrian crossings, intersections, sidewalks, street plantings, street furniture and traffic signals.

HS1.11 Airport Safety. Avoid residential dwellings in the Aircraft Flight Zones and establish compatible land use zones around the Airport consistent with Hollister Municipal Airport planning.

HS2.4 Access for Emergency Vehicles. Provide adequate access for emergency vehicles and equipment, including providing a second means of ingress and egress to all development.

City of Hollister Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Municipal Airport

In 2001, the City of Hollister adopted the *Comprehensive Land Use Plan Hollister Municipal Airport* (Aries Consultants, LTD. 2001) (herein after referred to as the "airport land use plan"). The airport land use plan identifies both an inner and outer safety zone with restrictions on residential uses and an influence area. The city's general plan recommends that all development within the identified influence areas be reviewed for compatibility with the 2001 airport land use plan or its subsequent updates during the development review process. Although the city's general plan identifies that the northern portion of the site is within the outer safety zone (map 16), the airport land use plan itself identifies that the project site is outside the airport safety zone and is outside the traffic pattern zone (figure 6). However, the site is located within the airport influence area (figure 7).

San Benito County General Plan

The following policies from the adopted 2035 San Benito County General Plan ("county general plan"), Circulation Element and Land Use Element, are being considered in this EIR because for the evaluation of certain impacts, the traffic report considers standards set forth by the county for the project (e.g. roadway design, access, walkways, pedestrian access) given the proximity of the project to county areas and facilities.

Circulation Element

> **Policy 3.** Improvements to road systems needed to accommodate traffic generated by new development shall be funded by that development.
>
> **Policy 4.** A level of service of C shall be used for the accepted minimum standard of operation for intersections and roadways.
>
> **Policy 5.** New road development and design (private or public) shall conform to County standards.
>
> **Policy 7.** To preserve the capacity of existing and future arterial and state highways in the County, access to these major roads shall be limited to collectors, arterials and state highways intersecting the roadways. Exceptions may be allowed only in cases where there is not an existing major road within a quarter mile.
>
> **Policy 8.** New subdivisions/developments shall be designed to utilize existing roads and minimize the construction of new driveways onto those roads.

Policy 9. Measures shall be taken to discourage inter-neighborhood and through traffic movement on non-arterial streets through street alignment and intersection design.

Policy 15. New development at urban density shall be required to dedicate funding for transit stops and signage and design subdivisions to allow easy access to public transit where service is available.

Policy 16. All new development proposals/subdivisions shall be consistent with and implement policies regarding transit in the San Benito County Regional Transportation Plan.

Policy 19. Improve the efficiency of road networks by increasing the number of occupants per car and promoting alternative modes of transportation.

Policy 20. Support the development of mixed land uses to reduce vehicle trips on collectors and arterials.

Policy 23. Bicycle use shall be encouraged within the county for commuting and recreational uses.

Policy 24. Require dedication and construction of walkways for through safe pedestrian traffic and internal pedestrian circulation in new large scale developments or within the vicinity of concentrations of population.

Policy 25. Encourage clustered land use to encourage pedestrian and combined pedestrian and transit use.

Safety Element

Policy 1. Roads should be of adequate capacity for use in times of emergency.

a. In accordance with Government Code Section 65302(i), the County hereby establishes a minimum all weather road width for private driveways serving two or more units as 16 feet.

Policy 3. It will be the County's policy to require that lands which are subdivided and developed in the future to residential or commercial uses be designed and constructed in such a manner that […] [r]oads which are suitable for safe passage for emergency vehicles, legible street name signs and two means of access to all parcels except on those with cul-de-sacs 600 feet or less.

a. The County will adopt minimum street standards in the subdivision ordinance which will provide a 16-foot all weather road width for private driveways.

San Benito County 2035 General Plan

San Benito County is in the process of updating their general plan. On May 6, 2014, the County Board of Supervisors accepted the *San Benito County 2035 General Plan May 5, 2014 BOS-Accepted Draft* ("draft county general plan") for consideration. Until such time the draft county general plan is adopted by the county board of supervisors, the 2035 San Benito County General Plan referenced above, remains the guiding document for the county. Relevant new or revised draft policies from the draft county general plan are listed here for informational purposes:

Circulation Element

C-1.7 Consistency with City Standards. The County shall require the street network for development proposals within the Sphere of- Influence of the cities of Hollister or San Juan Bautista to be built to applicable city standards.

C-1.12 Level of Service (LOS) Standard. The County shall endeavor to maintain a General Plan target goal of LOS D at all locations. If a transportation facility is already operating at an LOS D or E, the existing LOS should be maintained. Exceptions should be considered where achievement of these levels of service would cause unacceptable impacts to other modes of transportation, the environment, or private property.

C-2.2 Pedestrian and Bike Path Construction. The County shall plan, design, and construct pedestrian routes and bikeways consistent with the 2009 County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan or its succeeding plan. Priority shall be given to bicycle commuting routes, routes to schools, bike lanes on all new streets classified as arterials or collectors, and bike lanes on or adjacent to existing heavily traveled roads.

C-2.6 Development Along Planned Bikeways. The County shall require project applicants of new developments adjacent to designated bikeways to provide the portion of the planned bikeway within the development, including rights-of-way dedication and/or construction when (1) a nexus can be established between the proposed development and the dedication and/or construction; and (2) the dedication and/or construction would be roughly proportional to the development's impacts.

C-2.8 Sidewalks or Pedestrian Paths in Subdivisions. The County shall encourage project applicants to provide sidewalks or pedestrian paths, or other safe and convenient accommodations for pedestrians (e.g., shared-space streets) on all new roads or modifications to existing roads, as appropriate to the context, in accordance with County roadway design standards.

San Benito County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan

The San Benito COG and the County Board of Supervisors adopted the 2009 update to the *San Benito County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan* ("bikeway and pedestrian master plan"), which guides the future development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the County. The bikeway master plan provides a broad vision, strategies, and actions for the improvement of bicycle and walking opportunities in the San Benito County region. The purpose of this plan is to expand the existing networks, connect gaps, address constrained areas, provide greater connectivity, educate, encourage, and maximize funding sources, as well as satisfy requirements of the California Bicycle Transportation Account and other state and federal funding programs that Caltrans oversees and reviews. This plan outlines recommended bikeway improvement projects, which are organized into Countywide, unincorporated, and incorporated areas (San Benito COG 2009).

The county's bikeway and pedestrian master plan indicates that class II bike lanes are planned for Buena Vista Road and North Street, including in front of the project site.

The north side of Buena Vista Road currently does not have sidewalks. North Street along the property frontage is currently undeveloped. The south side of Buena Vista Road has sidewalks from Calaveras Elementary School to Locust Avenue. East of the project site, sidewalks are missing along both sides of North Street between the project site and San Benito Street. The bikeway and pedestrian master plan also includes a list of priority sidewalk gap improvement projects within the City of Hollister, which include various segments on Buena Vista Road, west of the project site. These improvements are not funded but can be capital projects or installed with roadway improvement projects or development/redevelopment of the adjacent properties.

The following bikeway and pedestrian master plan goals and policies are relevant to the proposed project.

Goal 1. Increase Bicycle and Pedestrian Access

Objective 1-2. Expand bicycle and pedestrian facilities and access in and between neighborhoods, employment centers, shopping areas, schools, and recreational sites, in pursuit of the San Benito County Council of Governments General Plan and Regional Transportation Plan policies of encouraging bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Objective 1-3. Consider bicycle and pedestrian facilities in all projects (e.g., . . . development . . .).

Goal 4. Increase Bicycle and Pedestrian Trips

Objective 4-3. Complete a network of bikeways and walkways that are feasible, fundable, and that serve bicyclists' and pedestrians' needs, especially for travel to employment centers, schools, commercial districts, transit stations, institutions and recreational destinations.

Objective 4-4. Maintain and improve the quality, operation and integrity of bikeway and walkway network facilities.

Objective 4-6. Provide short- and long-term bicycle parking in employment and commercial areas, in multifamily housing, at schools, and at recreation and transit facilities.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

The following thresholds for evaluating the significance of a project's environmental impacts are based on the State CEQA Guidelines and applicable standards recognized by the City of Hollister, County of San Benito, or Caltrans. For the purposes of this EIR, impacts are considered significant if any of the following would result from implementation of the proposed 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 (see Level of Service threshold discussion below);
- Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways;
- Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks;
- Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment);

- Result in inadequate emergency access; and
- Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.

To evaluate project-level and cumulative impacts at study intersections and highway segments, the following specific thresholds were used in this Draft EIR. The project would create a significant traffic impact if, as a result of the addition of project traffic:

Signalized Intersections Thresholds

None of the study intersections are under the jurisdiction of the county. Both the City of Hollister and Caltrans identify a level of service standard of LOS C for their respective facilities. Neither agency has specific criteria for determining project impacts at intersections. For the purpose of this traffic analysis, the project is said to create a significant adverse impact on traffic conditions at an intersection if:

- In either peak hour, the level of service (LOS) at an intersection degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under project or cumulative conditions; or
- In either peak hour, the LOS at an intersection is an unacceptable LOS D or worse under baseline conditions and the addition of project trips causes the average intersection delay to increase by five (5) or more seconds.

Unsignalized Intersections Thresholds

None of the study intersections are under the jurisdiction of the county. For unsignalized intersections under the jurisdiction of the City of Hollister and Caltrans, the project is said to create a significant adverse impact on traffic conditions at the intersection if:

- **All-way stop:** For either the AM or PM peak hour, the addition of project traffic causes the average overall level of service at the intersection to degrade from an acceptable LOS C or better under conditions without the project to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under project conditions; or
- **All-way stop**: The average overall intersection level of service is already at an unacceptable LOS D or worse without the project and the addition of project traffic causes the average overall delay to increase five (5) or more seconds; or
- **One- or two-way stop**: The delay on the worst approach at a one- or two-way stop-controlled intersection degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under conditions

without the project to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under project conditions and the traffic volumes at the intersection under project conditions are high enough to satisfy the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant adopted by Caltrans; or

- **One- or two-way stop**: The delay on the worst approach at a one- or two-way stop-controlled intersection is already at an unacceptable LOS D or worse without the project and the traffic volumes at the intersection under project conditions are high enough to satisfy the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant adopted by Caltrans, and the addition of project traffic causes the delay on the worst stop-controlled approach to increase beyond what it was without the project.

Roadway Segment Thresholds

Based on the street classification described in the City of Hollister General Plan, all study roadway segments are classified as residential streets.

Unlike the intersection level of service analysis methodology, which has established impact thresholds, there are no adopted analysis methodologies or impact thresholds for the evaluation of residential streets or neighborhood traffic issues. Therefore, the analysis is based on approximate volume ranges for specific roadway types, as prescribed in the City of Hollister General Plan. According to the description of residential streets presented in the City of Hollister General Plan, the primary function of a residential street is to provide direct access from collector streets to residential, industrial, and mixed-used properties. Its secondary function is to provide access to alternative collectors during high traffic periods. The General Plan further describes residential facilities as having posted speed limits generally ranging between 25 and 30 mph, with traffic volumes generally less than 5,000 vehicles per day (also referred to as average daily traffic (ADT) volumes) but can vary depending on available right-of-way and the adjacent land uses.

Highway Segments Thresholds

Caltrans identifies a level of service standard of LOS C for their facilities, including highway segments. Based on Caltrans level of service impact criteria for highways, the project is said to create a significant adverse impact on traffic conditions at a study highway segment if:

- In either peak hour, the LOS on a two-lane highway degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under project conditions and cumulative; or

- The LOS on a two-lane highway is an unacceptable LOS D or worse under baseline conditions, and the addition of project traffic results in the addition of trips.

Freeway Interchange Thresholds

Caltrans identifies a level of service standard of LOS C for their facilities, including freeway interchanges. Based on Caltrans level of service impact criteria, the project is said to create a significant adverse impact on traffic conditions at a study interchange intersection if:

- In either peak hour, the LOS on a two-lane highway degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under project conditions and cumulative; or
- The intersection is already operating at an unacceptable LOS D or worse under baseline conditions, and the addition of project traffic results in the addition of trips.

Methodology

The proposed project assumes future development of the site with 343 dwelling units as shown on the vesting tentative map (DeNova Homes 2015a), presented earlier in this Draft EIR. The following traffic impact evaluation is based on the traffic report prepared by Hexagon Transportation Consultants dated February 12, 2015; this report is included as Appendix F. Hexagon prepared an analysis based upon previously proposed development of the project site with 450 residential units.

The potential impacts of the project were evaluated in accordance with the standards set forth by the City of Hollister, San Benito County, and Caltrans. The traffic study was prepared using methodologies outlined in the Caltrans' *Guidelines for the Preparation of Traffic Studies,* the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual*, and the *2012 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.*

Traffic conditions were analyzed for the weekday AM and PM peak hours. The weekday AM peak-hour of traffic generally falls within the 7:00 to 9:00 AM period and the weekday PM peak-hour is typically in the 4:00 to 6:00 PM period. It is during these times that the most congested traffic conditions occur on an average day.

Study Scenarios

Traffic conditions were evaluated for the following five study scenarios:

Scenario 1: Existing Conditions. Existing conditions were represented by existing peak-hour traffic volumes on the existing roadway network. Existing traffic volumes were obtained from traffic counts in 2013 and 2014.

Scenario 2: Existing plus Project Conditions. Existing plus project conditions were represented by traffic volumes, with the project, on the existing roadway network. Traffic volumes with the project were estimated by adding to existing traffic volumes the traffic generated by the proposed project. Existing plus project conditions were evaluated relative to existing conditions in order to determine potential project impacts.

Scenario 3: Background Conditions. Background conditions were represented by adding trips from approved development projects to existing peak-hour traffic volumes.

Scenario 4: Background plus Project Conditions. Background plus project conditions were represented by traffic volumes, with the project, on the existing roadway network. Traffic volumes with the project were estimated by adding the traffic generated by the project to existing traffic volumes and trips from approved developments. Background plus project conditions were evaluated relative to background conditions in order to determine potential project impacts.

Scenario 5: Cumulative Conditions. Cumulative conditions represent future traffic volumes on the long-range future transportation network that would result from traffic growth projected to occur due to proposed but not yet approved (pending) development projects, in addition to trips from approved project trips and the proposed project.

Project Traffic Estimates

As noted in Section 2, Project Description, the proposed project was revised from 450 dwelling units to 343 dwelling units based on geologic and seismic site constraints. As a result the traffic modeling is based on a larger driver population, and overestimates project-related traffic volumes and their effrects to area roadways and intersections. According to the traffic consultant, the revised proposed project would not result in a substantial reduction in project-related traffic to the extent that the original impact determinations would change (Del Rio, pers. com. December 7, 2015).

The amount of traffic produced by a new development and the locations where that traffic will occur are estimated based on three factors: (1) trip generation, (2) trip distribution, and (3) trip assignment. These factors are described more fully below.

Trip Generation. The traffic report estimated the magnitude of traffic generated by the proposed project by applying to the size of the project the appropriate trip generation rates, as published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). The trip generation estimates for the project are based on ITE trip generation rates for single-family homes (9.52 trips per day) and apartments (6.65 trips per day).

Based on the applicable trip rate, the project would generate 3,753 daily trips, with 293 trips occurring during the AM peak hour and 380 trips occurring during the PM peak hour (Hexagon 2015). The trip generation for the proposed project based upon the development of 265 single-family homes and 185 apartment residences is presented in Table 23, Trip Generation.

Table 23 Trip Generation

Land Use (Units)	Trip Rate	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour Trips In	AM Peak Hour Peak Trips Out	PM Peak Hour Trips In	PM Peak Hour Trips Out
Single Family (265)	9.52	2,523	50	149	167	98
Apartment (185)	6.65	1,230	19	75	75	40
Total		**3,753**	**69**	**224**	**242**	**138**

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. (2015)

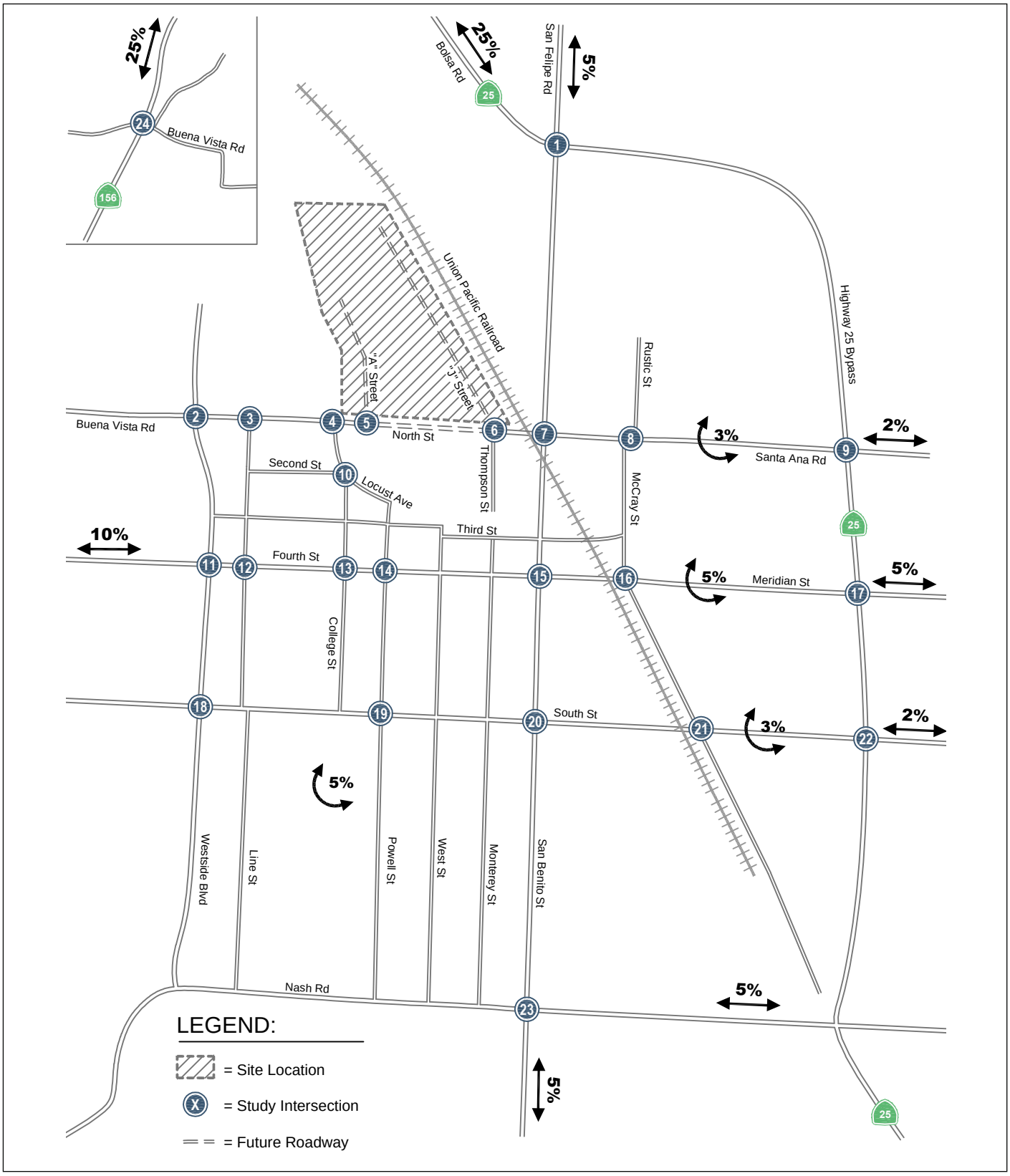
Note: ITE Use Code 210 – Single-Family Housing (265 units)
ITE Use Code 220 – Apartment (185 units)

Trip Distribution. The trip distribution pattern for project-generated traffic was estimated based on existing traffic patterns in the study area and on the locations of complementary land uses. The project trip distribution pattern for the project is shown graphically in Figure 23, Project Trip Distribution Pattern.

Trip Assignment. The peak-hour vehicle trips associated with the proposed project were added to the transportation network in accordance with the project trip distribution pattern discussed above. The assignment of project trips is presented graphically in Figure 24, Project Trip Assignment.

Transportation Network Under Project Conditions

A reassignment of existing traffic was conducted to account for the expected change in travel patterns in the project area associated with the planned extension of North Street, which will provide an alternative travel route between State Route 156 and Hollister. The reassignment of existing traffic and the proposed project trips were added to existing traffic volumes to obtain existing plus project traffic volumes.



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Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2015

Figure 23

Project Trip Distribution

North Street Subdivision EIR

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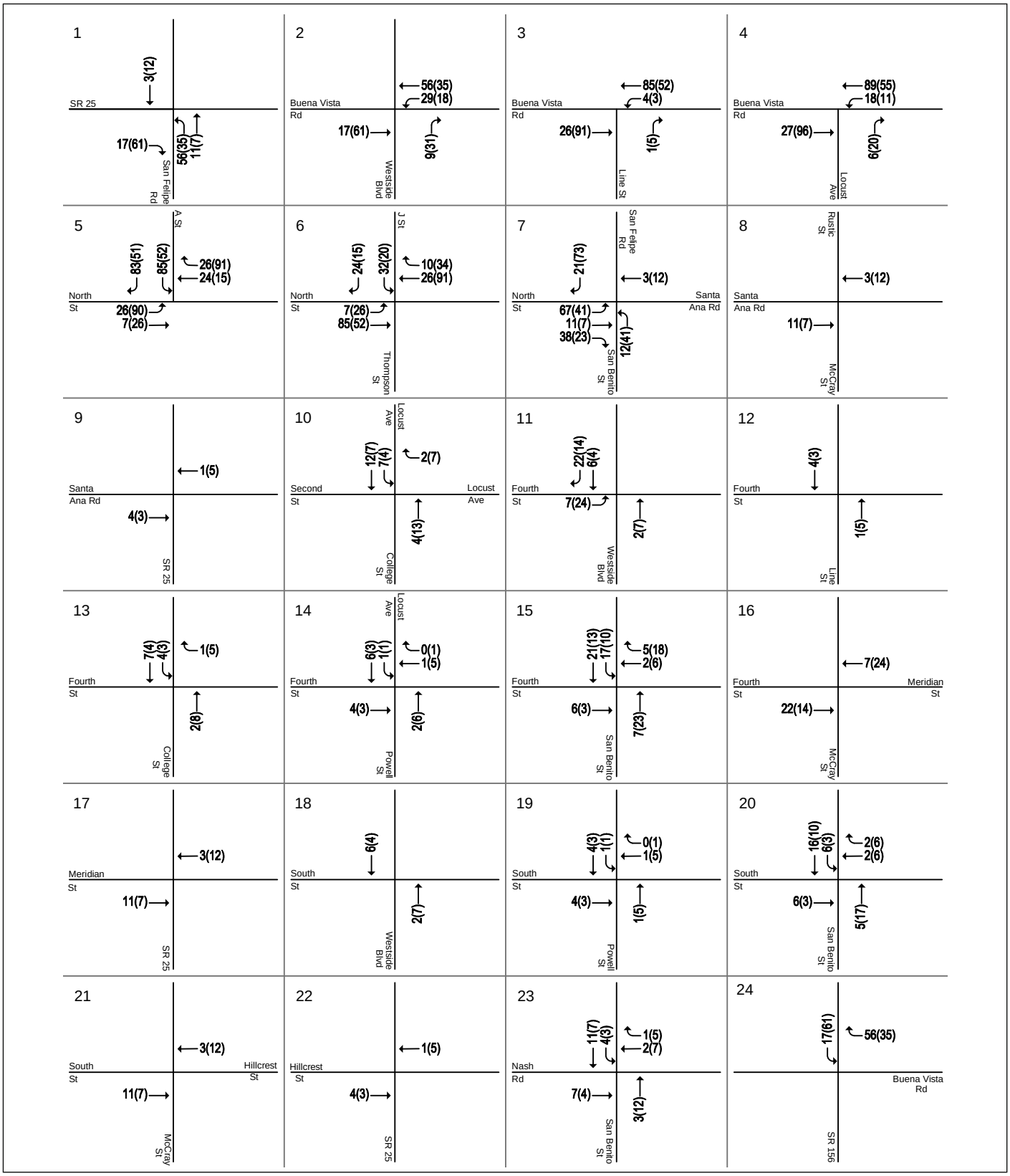

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Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2015

Figure 24

Project Trip Assignment

North Street Subdivision EIR

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Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

WOULD THE PROJECT CONFLICT WITH 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?

Study Intersections

As discussed above, the traffic analysis evaluated the effects of project traffic at 24 study intersections. Project trips, as represented in the project trip assignments, were added to existing traffic volumes at the study intersections to obtain existing with-project traffic volumes.

The North Street (Buena Vista Road) gap closure along the project frontage is assumed under existing plus project conditions. The construction of the two-lane extension of North Street, between Locust Avenue and Monterey Street, is planned to occur concurrently with the proposed project. This extension of North Street is not part of the proposed project, but a funded improvement that will be completed in conjunction with the development of the adjacent undeveloped areas, which include the project site. The planned North Street extension would provide direct access to the project site and adjacent undeveloped parcels on the south side. With the planned extension, a continuous roadway would be provided connecting Buena Vista Road and Santa Ana Road. As part of the North Street extension the lane geometry configurations at the Locust Avenue and Buena Vista Road would be changed with the addition of a new east approach to the intersection.

The traffic volumes under existing with-project conditions are shown in Figure 25, Existing With-Project Traffic Volumes. The results of the intersection LOS analysis under existing with-project conditions are summarized in Table 24, Project Intersection Levels of Service. The intersection LOS calculation sheets are included in the traffic report appendices.

Table 24 Project Intersection Levels of Service

			Existing		Existing With-Project		
Intersection	**Ex Int Control[1]**	**Peak Hour**	**Avg. Delay**	**LOS**	**Avg. Delay**	**LOS**	**Change in Delay [2]**
San Felipe Road and State Route 25/Bolsa Road	Signal	AM	24.3	C	24.3	C	+0.0
		PM	27.4	C	28.1	C	+0.7
Westside Boulevard and Buena Vista Road	Two-Way	AM	11.1	B	13.8	B	+2.7
		PM	10.0	B	12.3	B	+2.3
Line Street and Buena Vista Road	One-Way	AM	9.4	A	11.2	B	+1.8
		PM	9.0	A	10.3	B	+1.3
Locust Avenue and Buena Vista Road (unsignalized)	All-Way	AM	7.1	A	8.3	A	+1.2
		PM	7.0	A	8.3	A	+1.3
"A" Street and North Street (future)	Future	AM	..[3]	..[3]	10.9	B	..
		PM	..[3]	..[3]	11.3	B	..
Thompson Street/"J" Street and North Street (unsignalized)	Yield	AM	0.0	A	10.6	B	+10.6
		PM	0.0	A	11.0	B	+11.0
San Benito Street and North Street/Santa Ana Road	Signal	AM	18.0	B	19.9	B	+1.9
		PM	15.5	B	17.5	B	+2.0
McCray Street/Rustic Street and Santa Ana Road	Signal	AM	8.6	A	8.5	A	-0.1
		PM	12.0	B	11.9	B	-0.1
State Route 25 and Santa Ana Road	Signal	AM	25.1	C	25.1	C	0.0
		PM	22.9	C	23.0	C	+0.1
Locust Avenue/College Street and Second Street (unsignalized)	All-Way Stop	AM	7.3	A	7.2	A	-0.1
		PM	7.2	A	7.1	A	-0.1
Westside Boulevard and Fourth Street	Signal	AM	17.9	B	18.6	B	+0.7
		PM	13.9	B	14.4	B	+0.5
Line Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)	Two Way Stop	AM	18.4	C	17.0	C	-1.4
		PM	**31.9**	**D**	**27.5**	**D**	**-4.4**
College Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)	Two Way Stop	AM	23.6	C	22.0	C	-1.6
		PM	**33.3**	**D**	**30.0**	**D**	**-3.3**

			Existing		Existing With-Project		
Intersection	**Ex Int Control[1]**	**Peak Hour**	**Avg. Delay**	**LOS**	**Avg. Delay**	**LOS**	**Change in Delay [2]**
Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)	Two Way Stop	AM	24.8	C	22.9	C	-1.9
		PM	**27.7**	**D**	**28.4**	**D**	**+0.7**
San Benito Street and Fourth Street	Signal	**AM**	**36.7**	**D**	**36.7**	**D**	**0.0**
		PM	**37.7**	**D**	**37.7**	**D**	**0.0**
McCray Street and Fourth Street/Meridian Street	Signal	AM	15.3	B	15.1	B	-0.2
		PM	26.1	C	25.8	C	-0.3
State Route 25 and Meridian Street	Signal	AM	22.5	C	22.6	C	+0.1
		PM	20.0	B	20.1	C	+0.1
Westside Boulevard and South Street (unsignalized)	All Way Stop	AM	10.8	B	10.9	B	+0.1
		PM	10.2	B	10.3	B	+0.1
Powell Street and South Street (unsignalized)	All Way Stop	AM	8.0	A	8.1	A	+0.1
		PM	8.3	A	8.3	A	0.0
San Benito Street and South Street	Signal	AM	11.2	B	11.3	B	+0.1
		PM	9.1	A	9.3	A	+0.2
McCray Street and South Street/Hillcrest Road	Signal	AM	17.8	B	17.9	B	+0.1
		PM	24.6	C	24.6	C	0.0
State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road	Signal	AM	18.6	B	18.6	B	0.0
		PM	27.3	C	27.3	C	0.0
San Benito Street and Nash Road	Signal	AM	27.0	C	27.3	C	+0.3
		PM	18.9	B	19.3	B	+0.4
State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road	Two Way Stop	AM	15.0	C	16.2	C	1.2
		PM	40.5	E	86.3	F	45.8

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. (2015)

Note:

1. The reported delay and corresponding level of service for all-way stop-controlled intersections represents the average delay for all approaches at the intersection. The reported delay and corresponding level of service for one- and two-way stop-controlled intersections are based on the stop-controlled approach with the highest delay.
2. Change in delay is measured relative to background conditions for the analysis of project conditions impacts. Delay is in seconds.
3. LOS for future intersections are only applicable with the project scenarios.

Entries denoted in bold indicate conditions that exceed the current level of service standard.

As shown above in Table 24, Project Intersection Level of Service, the results indicate that the same five study intersections that were found to operate at an unacceptable LOS D or worse under existing conditions (see setting discussion presented earlier) would continue to operate at LOS D or worse under existing plus project conditions during at least one of the peak hours:

12. Line Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

13. College Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

14. Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

15. San Benito Street and Fourth Street (signal)

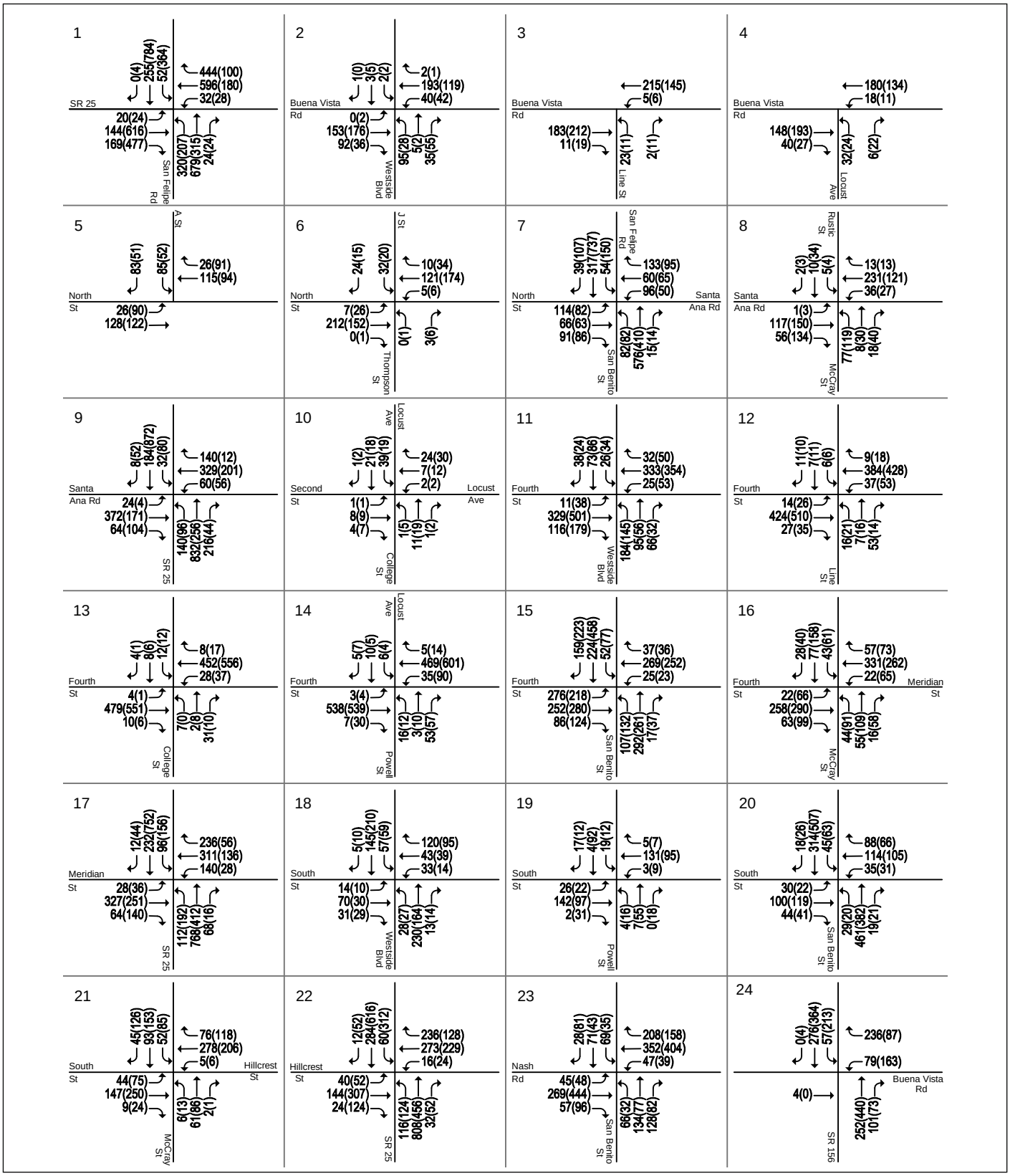
24. State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road (two-way stop) (signal warranted)

Significant and Potentially Unavoidable Impact (State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road): The addition of project traffic to existing traffic volumes would cause the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection to deteriorate from unacceptable LOS E to unacceptable LOS F, with a 45.8-second increase in delay during the PM peak hour.

The traffic volumes at the intersection of State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road under existing and existing plus project conditions would increase the delay by 45.8 seconds and satisfies the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant. Therefore, the project will result in a significant impact at the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection based on applicable significance criteria.

The TIF program identifies improvement of 12 specific intersections. The TIF also allows for the improvement of five additional intersections that are not identified. They are considered "floater" intersections. According to Robert Del Rio, Hexagon Transportation Consultants, as part of other traffic studies for development projects along Buena Vista, the city's public works staff has indicated that the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection will be added to the list of TIF intersections using the available "floater" intersections (pers. comm. March 2015).

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would mitigate the proposed project's impact to a less than significant level if the improvement is implemented prior to project implementation.



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Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2015

Figure 25

Existing With-Project Traffic Volumes

North Street Subdivision EIR

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Mitigation Measure

T-1. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall pay the applicable TIF fee for the signalization of the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection.

With the implementation of mitigation measure T-1, the project's impact to State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection would be mitigated to the extent feasible. However, because the identified improvements for signalization of the intersection would also fall within the responsibility and jurisdiction of Caltrans and the County of San Benito, timely construction of the identified improvements to mitigate the project impact is not guaranteed.

Payment of a fee alone, as required by mitigation measure T-1, will not guarantee the timely construction of the identified improvements to mitigate the project impact. As the applicant is required to make a fair-share contribution in the form of fee payment rather than constructing the improvement, this impact is significant and unavoidable.

The addition of project traffic at the remaining study intersections would not significantly increase delay or cause the signal warrant to be met at unsignalized intersections. The intersection delay at three of the study intersections is projected to decrease as a result of the change in travel patterns in the area projected to occur with the extension of North Street. Therefore, the proposed project would cause a beneficial impact at these intersections.

The remaining study intersections would continue to operate at an acceptable LOS C or better conditions during both the AM and PM peak hours under existing plus project conditions.

Less-than-Significant Impact (All other Study Intersections). The addition of project traffic at all other study intersections would be less than significant.

Study Roadway Segments

Based on the street classification described in the City of Hollister General Plan, all study roadway segments are classified as residential streets. According to the description of residential streets presented in the City of Hollister General Plan, the primary function of a residential street is to provide direct access from collector streets to residential, industrial, and mixed-used properties. Its secondary function is to provide access to alternative collectors during high traffic periods. The General Plan further describes residential facilities as having posted speed limits generally ranging between 25 and 30 mph, with traffic volumes generally less than 5,000 vehicles per day (also referred to as average daily traffic (ADT) volumes) but can vary depending on available right-of-way and the adjacent land uses.

Unlike the intersection level of service analysis methodology, which has established impact thresholds, there are no adopted analysis methodologies or impact thresholds for the evaluation of neighborhood traffic issues. Therefore, the analysis is based on approximate volume ranges for specific roadway types, as prescribed in the City of Hollister General Plan. The analysis provides an indication of operational and/or safety issues that may arise due to a traffic volume increases as a result of the proposed project.

Neighborhood traffic issues are evaluated below under the subheading "Hazardous Design Features (Neighborhood Street Operations/Traffic Calming)."

Study Highway Segments

The LOS for peak-hour highway segments was evaluated for the section of State Route 25 between U.S. 101 and State Route 156 and the section of State Route 156 between Union Road and The Alameda. The project peak-hour LOS results for the study highway segments are summarized in Table 25, Highway Level of Service Results. The two-lane highway LOS calculation sheets are included in the traffic report appendices.

As identified in Table 25, Highway Segment Level of Service Results, all highway segments studied currently operate at an unacceptable LOS D or E during the peak hours, with the exception of the westbound segment on State Route 156 between Buena Vista Road and State Route 25, which operates at an acceptable LOS C during the AM peak-hour (LOS D during the PM peak-hour).

The proposed project would result in the addition of peak-hour trips to those highway segments projected to operate at unacceptable levels of service. As illustrated by Table 25, Highway Segment Level of Service Results, the proposed project would contribute to the existing deficiency of each study highway segments for at least one of the peak hours (AM or PM) evaluated by increasing the percent time-spent-following on these roadways. Therefore, the proposed project would have a significant impact at all highway segments studied, based on the Caltrans impact criteria for highways.

Significant and Unavoidable Impact (Segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156): The addition of project traffic to existing traffic volumes project would result in additional trips to segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156 which operate at unacceptable levels of service (LOS D) during at least one of the peak hours.

Mitigation for the identified highway segment project impacts would require widening of the highways to maintain LOS C operations. It is not known whether sufficient right-of-way is available for such widening. Even if right-of-way is available, improvements of this magnitude would be financially infeasible for any single development project to implement.

Table 25 Highway Segment Level of Service Results

Segment	Peak Hour/ Direction	Existing Conditions		Existing Plus Project	
		% Time-Spent-Following	LOS	% Time-Spent-Following	LOS
State Route 25 - between San Felipe Road/San Benito Street and State Route 156	AM/NB	**96.4%**	**E**	**96.9%**	**E**
	AM/SB	**56.9%**	**D**	**58.1%**	**D**
	PM/NB	**69.5%**	**D**	**71.1%**	**E**
	PM/SB	**89.6%**	**E**	**90.3%**	**E**
State Route 25 – between State Route 156 and U.S. Highway 101	AM/NB	**96.2%**	**E**	**96.3%**	**E**
	AM/SB	**61.2%**	**E**	**63.6%**	**E**
	PM/NB	**72.2%**	**E**	**75.8%**	**E**
	PM/SB	**92.7%**	**E**	**94.5%**	**E**
State Route 156 – between The Alameda and Union Road	AM/NB	**76.3%**	**E**	**76.8%**	**E**
	AM/SB	**92.2%**	**E**	**91.9%**	**E**
	PM/NB	**89.5%**	**E**	**89.7%**	**E**
	PM/SB	**86.3%**	**E**	**87.0%**	**E**
State Route 156 – between Union Road and Buena Vista Road	AM/EB	**69.6%**	**D**	**69.5%**	**D**
	AM/WB	**83.6%**	**E**	**83.6%**	**E**
	PM/EB	**88.1%**	**E**	**88.5%**	**E**
	PM/WB	**77.6%**	**D**	**77.9%**	**D**
State Route 156 - Buena Vista Road and State Route 25	AM/EB	**70.2%**	**D**	**73.7%**	**D**
	AM/WB	58.5%	C	58.7%	C
	PM/EB	**62.2%**	**D**	**64.9%**	**D**
	PM/WB	**76.5%**	**D**	**79.2%**	**D**

Source: Hexagon Traffic Consultants 2015

Notes: Entries denoted in **bold** indicate conditions that exceed Caltrans' current level of service standard.

NB= North Bound; SB = South Bound; EB = East Bound; WB = West Bound

A TIF program has been established for the transportation system within San Benito County. TIF fees may be used towards improvements identified as part of the TIF program and mitigate project impacts. The San Benito COG implements the fee program as authorized by the RTP. Given the regional significance of these improvements, associated pre-planning, design and

implementation of necessary acquisition of adjacent lands by Caltrans, as well as the substantial costs associated with them, the TIF study included the improvements to State Route 156 and State Route 25 as identified in the 2010 RTP. However, only widening of State Route 156 between Union Road and the Alameda at San Juan Bautista are included in the current TIF program (as authorized by the 2014 RTP). The remainder of the improvements to State Route 25 and State Route 156 are not included in the current TIF program (as authorized by the 2014 RTP). The following mitigation measure shall be required:

Mitigation Measure

T-2. At the issuance of building permit, if the identified widening improvements to State Route 25 and State Route 156 are expressly covered in the then-current or future TIF program, then the developer's payment of the applicable TIF shall constitute a fair share contribution toward improvements along the highway segments.

Should the widening of the highways be deemed infeasible or not part of the TIF program at the issuance of building permit, the impacts to the segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156 would be considered significant and unavoidable.

If this mitigation measure T-2 is implemented, the project's impacts would be mitigated to the extent feasible. However, even if implemented, the mitigation cannot guarantee the timely construction of the required improvements, when they are warranted, to mitigate the project's impacts. Accordingly, with or without mitigation, the project's impacts to segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156 would be considered significant and unavoidable.

Highway Interchange Level of Service

The results of the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 interchange analysis under existing plus project conditions are summarized in Table 26, Freeway Interchange Analysis Results.

The results of the interchange analysis, as illustrated in Table 26, Freeway Interchange Analysis Results, indicate that the proposed project would result in the addition of peak-hour trips to both intersections of the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 interchange, which currently operate at unacceptable levels of service during at least one of the peak hours. Therefore, the proposed project would have a significant impact at the U.S. Highway 101 and the State Route 25 interchange, based on the Caltrans impact criteria.

Table 26 Freeway Interchange Analysis Results

			Existing		Existing With-Project		
Intersection	**Ex Int Control**	**Peak Hour**	**Avg. Delay**	**LOS**	**Avg. Delay[1]**	**LOS**	**Change in Delay [2]**
U.S. Highway 101 South Bound Ramps and State Route 25	One-Way Stop	AM	48.7	E	**66.7**	F	**+18.0**
		PM	[3]	F	[3]	F	---
U.S. Highway 101North Bound Ramps and State Route 25	One-Way Stop	AM	15.3	C	16.6	C	+1.3
		PM	93.1	F	**166.2**	**F**	**+73.1**

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. (2015)

Note:

1. The reported delay and corresponding level of service for signalized and all-way stop-controlled intersections represents the average delay for all approaches at the intersection.
2. Change in delay is measured relative to background conditions for the analysis of project conditions impacts.
3. Lane configuration and volume conditions exceed the bounds of the unsignalized level of service methodology. The intersection is over capacity. An accurate delay value cannot be established.

Entries denoted in bold indicate unacceptable LOS and/or or signal warrant met. Bold and shaded indicates a significant impact.

Significant and Unavoidable Impact (Both Intersections of the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 Interchange): The addition of project traffic to existing traffic volumes project would result in additional trips to the U.S. Highway and State Route 25 interchange, which currently operate at unacceptable levels of service (LOS E or F) during at least one of the peak hours.

The Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Santa Clara County's Congestion Management Agency, in its Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2035 document has identified improvements at the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 interchange, which include the construction of a full interchange and the widening of U.S. Highway 101 between Monterey Highway and State Route 25 and a new roadway extension to Santa Teresa Boulevard. However, funding for the interchange improvements is currently not available. Since it is not feasible for an individual development project to bear responsibility for implementing such extensive transportation system improvements due to constraints in acquisition and cost of right-of-way, the significant impact at the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 interchange must be considered significant and unavoidable. There is no feasible mitigation available to reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

WOULD THE PROJECT SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE HAZARDS DUE TO A DESIGN FEATURE (E.G., SHARP CURVES OR DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS) OR INCOMPATIBLE USES (E.G., FARM EQUIPMENT)?

Hazardous Design Features (Site Distance)

A review of the project site plan was performed as part of the traffic analysis to determine if the project would substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses.

Access to the project site would be provided by two new roadways that intersect with the planned North Street extension. The first roadway (referred to as "A" Street on the site plan) would be located near the western site boundary and would form a new T-intersection with North Street. The second roadway (referred to as "J" Street on the site plan) would be located along the eastern site boundary and would form the north leg of the Thompson Street/North Street intersection. The "A" Street intersection with North Street is shown on the site plan to be within a horizontal curve along North Street. Horizontal curves, if not planned correctly, can limit the sight distance for vehicles traveling along the curve and/or on the intersecting roadway.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Limited Sight Distance at North Street and A Street): The proposed project's "A" Street intersection with North Street is shown on the site plan to be within a horizontal curve along North Street which may increase hazards as a result of limited site distance for vehicles traveling along the curve and/or on the intersecting roadway. This would be considered a significant adverse impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure

T-3. Prior to approval of the improvement plans, consistent with sight distance analysis submitted by the project applicant, the City shall verify that an adequate sight distance is provided for both the traffic traveling along North Street and traffic entering/exiting "A" Street. Final development plans submitted for city review shall identify that project plans meet or exceed city roadway and site design standards.

Implementation of mitigation measure T-3 will ensure that potential project design hazards are reduced to a less-than-significant level by requiring that adequate site distance is provided for the planned "A" Street intersection with North Street and that final improvement plans are consistent with city roadway and site design standards. Therefore, with mitigation the proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due to project design.

Hazardous Design Features (Vehicular On-Site Circulation)

A series of new access roadways/residential streets would be constructed within the project site providing continuous traffic circulation within the site. Narrow roadways are shown to provide access off of "J" Street to all residential units located on the east side of the project site. These roadways are shown to dead-end on the west side of "J" Street.

Although not specified on the site plan, all internal roadways must be designed following the standards and guidelines of the City of Hollister. In addition to providing access to the proposed residential units, all new access roadways must be designed to provide adequate width and turn-radii in order to provide continuous unimpeded circulation through the site for emergency vehicles and large trucks, such as garbage trucks. The final design must be approved by the City of Hollister. The current plan does not specifically identify compliance with city on site circulation standards, including standards for adequate turning width and turn-radii.

Less-than-Significant with Mitigation (Design Hazard due to Inadequate On-Site Circulation): The current vesting tentative map does not specify that all internal roadways are designed following the standards and guidelines of the City of Hollister, including standards for adequate width and turn-radii in order to provide continuous unimpeded circulation through the site for emergency vehicles and large trucks (such as garbage trucks).

Mitigation Measure

T-4. At the time of improvement plan submittal, the applicant shall identify that project plans meet or exceed city roadway and site design standards. Specifically, development plans will be evaluated for conformance with city roadway and site design standards including but not limited to standards for site circulation, roadway width, and turning-radii.

Implementation of mitigation measure T-4 will ensure that potential design hazards are reduced to a less-than-significant level by requiring that final improvement plans are consistent with city roadway and site design standards including, but not limited to, designs for adequate turn-around space, and adequate roadways for large design vehicles such as garbage trucks and fire trucks. Future development on the project site would be subject to approval by the City of Hollister public works and planning departments and the Hollister Fire Department, which would ensure that future development is adequately designed to minimize hazards associated with on-site design. Therefore, with mitigation the proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due on-site vehicular circulation due to project design.

Hazardous Design Features (Neighborhood Street Operations/Traffic Calming)

Based on the street classification described in the City of Hollister General Plan, all study roadway segments are classified as residential streets. The general plan further describes residential facilities as having posted speed limits generally ranging between 25 and 30 mph, with traffic volumes generally less than 5,000 vehicles per day (also referred to as average daily traffic (ADT) volumes) but can vary depending on available right-of-way and the adjacent land uses.

The proposed project would add the greatest amount of daily traffic to the study roadway segment of College Street, between Central Avenue and Canal Alley (approximately 198 daily trips representing an increase of 37 percent when compared to existing daily traffic volumes). However, even with the addition of project traffic, traffic volumes along this roadway segment would continue to be well within the acceptable daily traffic threshold of 5,000 vehicles per day identified in the City of Hollister General Plan. The addition of project traffic on the remaining study roadway segments would represent no more than an 11 percent increase in daily traffic on each of the roadways. Daily traffic volumes along all study roadway segments, with the addition of project traffic, would continue to be within the acceptable daily volume thresholds identified in the City of Hollister General Plan.

Though the traffic report's evaluation of the effects of project traffic on surrounding residential streets identified no direct impacts, the report did find that it was evident that existing travel speeds along several of the studied street segments exceed the posted speed limits.

The City of Hollister has a Neighborhood Traffic Management Program ("traffic management program") that was adopted in 2003. The program provides a traffic calming policy for streets within residential neighborhoods. The primary purpose of the traffic management program is to reduce vehicle speeds and traffic flow within neighborhood areas. The program provides a mechanism for city staff and residents to work cooperatively to identify and implement traffic calming measures. The program encourages the use of enforcement solutions for identified problems. If enforcement is deemed ineffective, the traffic management program provides a process by which specific neighborhood traffic issues are reviewed to determine the need for further measures.

The city's traffic management program identifies several traffic calming measures that can be considered for implementation by the city. The project could make a fair-share contribution toward the future installation of traffic calming measures or the preparation of a neighborhood traffic calming study if deemed necessary by the city. However, the project's impacts would be less than significant.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Design Hazard due to Neighborhood Street Operations): The proposed project would add additional trips to neighborhood streets on which existing travel speeds exceed the posted speed limits.

Hazardous Design Features (Increased Pedestrian and Bicycle School Traffic)

The City of Hollister City Council, at a regular meeting held on April 21, 2014, adopted the Safe Routes to R.O. Hardin and Calaveras Elementary Schools Implementation Plan ("safe to routes to schools program"). The safe routes to school program is described in the report entitled *Calaveras Elementary and R.O. Hardin Elementary Safe Routes to School Needs Assessment and Preliminary Recommendations* (Alta Planning and Design 2014). The Safe Routes to School program is designed to create safe and convenient opportunities to access schools, other than by automobile, such as walking, biking, carpooling, and taking public transportation. The report identifies five key components to the success of the program:

1. Engineering – provide an adequate pedestrian network, which include bicycle facilities, bicycle parking, sidewalks, signage, and maintenance;
2. Education – provide programs to improve safety and awareness;
3. Encouragement – provide suggested routes to school maps and create events that reward current walkers/bicyclists and motivate more people to try walking/biking, such as walk/bike to school days;
4. Enforcement – create programs that reinforce safe walking/biking; and
5. Evaluation – monitor the program.

The adopted Safe Routes to School program to Calaveras and R.O. Hardin Elementary schools includes a list of recommended engineering improvements specific to each school area. Calaveras Elementary School is located on Buena Vista Road, approximately half a mile west of the project site. Some improvements include:

- Installing missing sidewalks along the south side of Buena Vista Road, west of the school;
- Construct curb extensions and stripe high visibility yellow crosswalks at Miller Road/Buena Vista Road and Westside Boulevard/Buena Vista Road;
- Conduct a stop sign warrant analysis. Possible curb extensions, pedestrian warning signage, and stripe high visibility yellow crosswalks at Westside Boulevard and Central Avenue; and
- Stripe bike lanes all along Buena Vista Road.

Other recommended improvements include enforcement by the City of Hollister Police Department to reduce observed driver violations, such as driving over 25 mph within a school zone, use of cell phones while driving, not coming to a complete stop at stop-controlled intersections, and not using turn signals, among others.

The project would add people walking to the existing school. The north side of Buena Vista Road currently does not have sidewalks. North Street is currently undeveloped. The south side of Buena Vista Road has sidewalks from Calaveras Elementary School to Locust Avenue. East of the project site, sidewalks are missing along both sides of North Street between the project site and San Benito Street. The 2009 San Benito County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan includes a list of priority sidewalk gap improvement projects within the City of Hollister, which include various segments on Buena Vista Road, west of the project site. These improvements are not funded but can be capital projects or installed with roadway improvement projects or development/redevelopment of the adjacent properties.

The existing transportation network in the study area currently includes many areas with undeveloped roadway frontages, which result in missing sidewalk segments and lack of pedestrian connectivity. The sidewalk gaps in the area create a discontinuous pedestrian network which does not support pedestrian travel between the project site and other pedestrian destinations, such as schools and transit stops.

The current project site plan shows that sidewalks will be built along both sides of all new streets within the project site. In addition, new sidewalks would be installed along the project frontage on North Street. However, even with the proposed project sidewalks along the north side of North Street, sidewalks would continue to be missing along some segments of Buena Vista Road and North Street. Pedestrians would be forced to walk along the edge of the roadway on segments with missing sidewalks.

Goal C2 of the City of Hollister General Plan is to "provide a variety of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to promote safe and efficient non-motorized vehicle circulation in Downtown and throughout Hollister." The General Plan policies further emphasize pedestrian connectivity by working with local businesses, private developers, and public agencies to ensure provision of safe pedestrian pathways to major public facilities, schools, and employment centers.

Less-than-Significant with Mitigation (Design Hazard due to Increased Pedestrian and Bicycle Traffic in a School Zone): The proposed project is located approximately one half mile from the Calaveras Elementary School and would add pedestrian and bicycle traffic to inadequate or non-continuous pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the existing school zone.

Mitigation Measure

T-5. Prior to approval of final improvement plans, the project applicant shall ensure that the following features are identified and incorporated:

a. The project applicant shall build a sidewalk on the north side of Buena Vista Road/North Street and south side frontage improvements including curb, gutter, and sidewalk, to connect to adjacent pedestrian facilities. This would provide a continuous sidewalk connection from every proposed residential unit within the project site to existing and planned pedestrian facilities within the study area such as the nearby Calaveras Elementary School

b. The project applicant shall design project frontage improvements on Buena Vista Road/North Street to City of Hollister and San Benito County roadway design standards and guidelines. Project frontage improvements shall be designed to accommodate the future installation of a Class II bike lane along Buena Vista Road/North Street.

c. The project applicant shall adhere to city roadway design standards and guidelines when designing roadway widths and turn radii.

The developer shall be reimbursed for all costs associated with these improvements and all improvements made to the North Street extension project required to be made by the developer beyond its fair share contribution (including costs for design, permitting and construction). Such reimbursement shall be made either through credit against TIF credit or reimbursement from TIF, or some other method of reimbursement.

Implementation of mitigation measure T-5 will ensure that potential design hazards are reduced to a less-than-significant level by requiring that final improvement plans include adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and safety features (particularly between the residences and the school). In addition, it is recommended that the developers would work with the city to contribute to the implementation of any improvements that would help enhance pedestrian/bicycle circulation in the study area, including the improvements identified above and within the adopted Safe to School Routes document. With mitigation the proposed project would not substantially increase hazards associated with from increased pedestrian and bicycle travel.

WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN INADEQUATE EMERGENCY ACCESS?

Access to the project site would be provided by two new roadways that intersect with the planned North Street extension (referred to as "A" Street and "J Street" on the site plan). As

discussed above, these roadways would provide access to all residential units within the site. Based on the site layout, vehicular access to/from the project site will be adequate. Also, with the proposed roadway connectivity and adherence to city roadway design standards and guidelines (see mitigation measure T-4, above), emergency vehicle access and circulation within the project site would be adequate. Future development on the project site would be subject to the California Building Code and review and approval by the Hollister Fire Department, which would ensure that future development is adequately designed to minimize risks associated with fire consistent with the city's general plan policies CSF 4.12 and HS2.4.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Inadequate Access for Emergency Vehicles): New roadways provide access to the project site; however, the current vesting tentative map does not specify that all internal roadways are designed following the standards for adequate width and turn-radii in order to provide continuous unimpeded circulation through the site for emergency vehicles.

Mitigation Measure

See mitigation measure T-4 above.

Implementation of mitigation measure T-4 will ensure that all internal roadways are designed following the standards for adequate width and turn-radii for emergency vehicles by requiring that final improvement plans are consistent with city roadway and site design standards including, but not limited to, designs for adequate turn-around space, and adequate roadways for large design vehicles such as fire trucks. Future development on the project site would be subject to approval by the city and by the Hollister Fire Department, which would ensure that future development is adequately designed to minimize hazards associated with on-site design. Therefore, with mitigation, the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access.

WOULD THE PROJECT CONFLICT WITH ADOPTED POLICIES, PLANS, OR PROGRAMS REGARDING PUBLIC TRANSIT, BICYCLE, OR PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES, OR OTHERWISE DECREASE THE PERFORMANCE OR SAFETY OF SUCH FACILITIES?

Transit Facilities

There are currently three County Express bus lines (Blue Line, Green Line, and Red Line) which operate within the vicinity of the project. The nearest bus stops are located within an approximately 0.5-mile walking distance of the project site (on Fourth Street at College Street for

the Blue and Green Lines and on Maple Street west of North Sally Street and on San Felipe Road south of Flora Avenue for the Red Line). All three bus lines also have stops at the intersection of San Benito Street and 4th Street.

Although no reduction to the project trip generation estimates was applied due to transit services, it can be assumed that some of the new project development residents could utilize public transportation. Applying an estimated three percent transit mode share, equates to approximately nine new transit riders during the AM peak-hour and 12 new transit riders during the PM peak-hour. Assuming the existing transit service would remain unchanged, the estimated number of new transit riders using the bus services near the project site would equate to approximately three to four riders per bus line during the AM and PM peak hours. Therefore, the additional transit demand generated by the project would not be great enough to justify adding additional transit services in the study area.

However, the existing transportation network in the study area currently includes many areas with undeveloped roadway frontages, which result in missing sidewalk segments and lack of pedestrian connectivity between the project site and the existing transit stops. It is recommended that project frontage improvements be designed with the potential future extension of transit services onto Buena Vista Road in mind. Those improvements on Buena Vista Road would be designed to City of Hollister and San Benito County roadway design standards to accommodate transit vehicles, as necessary in the future. Overall, the project's impact on transit service would be less than significant.

Less-than-Significant (Additional Transit Demand): The proposed project would add a minimal amount of transit demand that would not significantly impact the performance of transit facilities in the study area.

Adopted Bicycle Master Plan

The project would create additional demand for bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the study area. Currently, the project site is not served directly by any bicycle facilities. The nearest Class II bike lanes are provided along Westside Boulevard. The City of Hollister 2005 General Plan indicates that most bicycling within the city is done on roadway shoulders. The 2009 San Benito County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan indicates that class II bike lanes are planned for Buena Vista Road and North Street, including in front of the project site.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Additional Bicycle Facilities Demand Which Conflicts with the Bicycle Master Plan): The project would create additional demand for bicycle facilities in the study area which, without mitigation, would conflict with the County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Mitigation Measures

The improvements on Buena Vista Road/North Street will be designed to be consistent with County and City roadway design standards (mitigation measure T-5). Project frontage improvements would be designed to accommodate the future installation of a bike lane along Buena Vista Road North Street (mitigation measure T-5). In addition, the following mitigation measure shall be required:

T-6. Prior to the approval of final improvement plans, the project applicant shall contribute to the completion of planned bicycle facilities along Buena Vista Road/North Street, if a funding mechanism has been established for these improvements. The contribution shall be determined by the City of Hollister/San Benito County and it shall be based on the project's contribution to the total projected growth in the study area. The developer shall be reimbursed for all costs associated with these improvements and all improvements made to the North Street extension project required to be made by the developer beyond its fair share contribution (including costs for design, permitting and construction). Such reimbursement shall be made either through credit against TIF credit or reimbursement from TIF, or some other method of reimbursement.

Implementation of mitigation measure T-6, together with mitigation measure T-5, would reduce impacts on bicycle and pedestrian circulation to less than significant by planning and designing for future facilities. If a funding mechanism has not been established for these improvements, the city would need to require an equivalent mitigation measure to reduce these impacts to less than significant.

Adopted Safe to School Route Program or Plan

With the development of the proposed project, there will be an increase in non-vehicular travel to/from land uses surrounding the project, including Calaveras Elementary School. This will increase the need for a complete pedestrian network. Therefore, as required by mitigation measure T-4, above, the proposed project will work with the City of Hollister to contribute to the implementation of any improvements that would help enhance pedestrian circulation in the study area, including the improvements identified in the adopted Safe to School Routes document. With implementation of mitigation measure T-4, the potential to conflict with the city-adopted Safe Routes to R.O. Hardin and Calaveras Elementary Schools Implementation Plan is less than significant.

Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation (Increase in Non-Vehicular Travel Conflicts with the City-Adopted Safe Routes to Schools): The project would create an increase in non-vehicular travel to/from land uses surrounding the project, including Calaveras Elementary School which, without mitigation, could conflict with the city adopted Safe Routes to R.O. Hardin and Calaveras Elementary Schools Implementation Plan.

Mitigation Measure

See mitigation measure T-5 above.

Implementation of mitigation measure T-5 will ensure that the project would not conflict with the city-adopted Safe Routes to R.O. Hardin and Calaveras Elementary Schools Implementation Plan by requiring that final improvement plans include adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and safety features (particularly between the residences and the school). In addition, it is recommended that the developers would work with the city to contribute to the implementation of any improvements that would help enhance pedestrian/bicycle circulation in the study area, including applicable improvements identified within the adopted Safe to School Routes document. With mitigation the proposed project would not city-adopted Safe Routes to R.O. Hardin and Calaveras Elementary Schools Implementation Plan.

3.17 WASTEWATER SERVICE

This section of the Draft EIR addresses the project's potential environmental impacts associated with wastewater service and facilities. The discussion in this section is based on information found in the *City of Hollister General Plan* (2005), the *Hollister Urban Area Water and Wastewater Master Plan* (HDR Consultants 2008) (hereinafter referred to as the "water and wastewater master plan"), the *Utility Report, North Street Property, Hollister, CA* (Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2013) (hereinafter "utility report"), the utility plan for the project (refer to sheets 9-11 of the vesting tentative map included as Appendix B of this EIR), other technical information, and project application materials.

Environmental Setting

Project Site

No public sanitary sewer system currently serves the project site. The existing wastewater infrastructure closest to the project site includes a six-inch sanitary sewer along the eastern portion North Street. The North Street improvement project (planned as part of the city's CIP

program) includes the replacement of North Street sewer line from just west of Monterey Street to the existing system in Thompson Street. The existing downstream system is an eight-inch sewer pipeline that collects wastewater just west of Westside Boulevard (Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2013). The existing eight-inch sewer pipeline connects to the city trunk main in San Juan Hollister Road and continues to the west and conveys wastewater flows to the city's domestic wastewater treatment plant.

Wastewater Facilities

The City of Hollister operates operates an industrial wastewater treatment plant and a domestic wastewater treatment plant. The industrial wastewater treatment plant primarily treats seasonal industrial waste from the tomato cannery located in the city. It also collects a portion of the city's storm water runoff (HDR Consultants 2008). The domestic wastewater treatment plant treats domestic, commercial and industrial wastewater in the city and produces Title 22 reclaimed water for irrigating parks and airport landscaping, and ground water recharge (City of Hollister Community Services 2014).

Wastewater from the project site would be conveyed to the domestic wastewater treatment plant, which is located south of the San Benito River on San Juan Road, less than two miles west of the project site. The domestic wastewater treatment plant was built in 1979 and became operational in 1980 to treat the city's domestic wastewater, consisting predominantly of residential and commercial customers within the domestic wastewater treatment plant s service area (HDR Consultants 2008). At that time, the domestic wastewater treatment plant consisted of a primary and secondary pond system with percolation beds. In 2003, the city completed interim improvements at the domestic wastewater treatment plant to improve treatment and disposal quality and efficiency until the completion of the expansion. These improvements introduced significant changes to the treatment process by converting to a dual-powered multi-cellular process to improve efficiency. In addition to the treatment process changes, a new influent lift station was constructed to control odors and improve flow measurement.

In 2008, the domestic wastewater treatment plant was completed (now referred to as the Water Reclamation Facility). According to the water and wastewater master plan, the facility's hydraulic capacity (pumps, tanks, blowers, etc.) is approximately 5.0 million gallons per day (mgd). The treatment capacity (membrane) is currently permitted at approximately 4.0 mgd. In 2008 the city treated approximately 2.7 mgd (HDR Consultants 2008, p. 3-7). Wastewater system improvements identified in the water and wastewater master plan have been planned to ensure that the domestic wastewater treatment plant is capable of treating 5.0 mgd by 2023, which has been identified as sufficient to serve all of the contemplated growth within the Hollister Urban Area, including the project site (pp. 4-15). Currently, treated water (at Title 22 standards) is reused at the Hollister Municipal Airport, a future park site, and via 11 on-site percolation/storage ponds (City of Hollister 2005a).

Regulatory Setting

City of Hollister General Plan

Policy CSF1.7: Development Review Criteria for Public Services. Prior to granting approval, evaluate each new development in terms of the following criteria:

1. Would the proposed development share a common border with a property that has already been developed?

2. Would the proposed development be adequately served by infrastructure (water, sewer, streets, schools, parks, etc.), which is already in place or mitigated?

3. Would the proposed development be located within the existing service areas of local service providers (fire protection, police protection, solid waste disposal, schools, etc.), and not result in a reduction in their current capabilities?

Policy CSF2.1: Sewer and Water Facilities. Coordinate with responsible districts and agencies to assure that sewer and water facility expansion and/or improvements meet Federal and State standards and occur in a timely manner.

Policy CSF2.5: Costs of New Development. Ensure that the cost of providing sewer and water service to new development proposed outside existing service areas should be borne solely by those proposing the development, thus eliminating any financial burden to existing customers for any required expansion of the sewer and water system network to serve such development.

Hollister Urban Area Water and Wastewater Master Plan

The city's water and wastewater master plan provides a long-term vision to guide water and wastewater improvements in the Hollister Urban Area, which includes the City of Hollister and adjacent unincorporated areas of the county designated for urban development, including the project site (HDR Consultants 2008, fig. 2-1). The water and wastewater master plan addresses water quality, water supply reliability, as well as water and wastewater system improvements within the Hollister Urban Area. Among other things, the water and wastewater master plan also provides a comprehensive plan describing the capacity and estimated cost of physical

facilities and an implementation program including institutional arrangements, engineering, CEQA compliance, permitting, financing, coordination with ongoing projects and programs, stakeholder outreach, and scheduling. The water and wastewater master plan designates the city's domestic wastewater treatment plant as the regional wastewater treatment provider.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G indicates that a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- Require or result in the construction of new wastewater facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; or
- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

WOULD THE PROJECT REQUIRE OR RESULT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WASTEWATER FACILITIES OR EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS?

Currently the project site is undeveloped and does not receive wastewater services. Future maximum allowable development of 343 residential units would generate domestic wastewater that would require collection, treatment, and disposal. The proposed project would connect to the existing city infrastructure and convey wastewater to the existing downstream system.

On-site sanitary sewer infrastructure will be constructed with the residential development. As identified in the utility report prepared for the project, the sanitary sewer infrastructure is designed in accordance with the city's design standards (Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2013). The infrastructure is designed with a minimum slope of 0.5 percent and is a network of eight-inch sewer pipelines. The system is separated into four main "sewersheds". Three of the four sewersheds flow to the northeast corner of the site to a pump station located near the proposed retention basin. The sanitary sewer is then pumped from this location through a force main to connect to the southeast sewershed at the intersection of A Street and F Street. The southeast sewershed continues out to North Street. The proposed sewer infrastructure continues westerly in North Street to Buena Vista Road and Westside Boulevard and connects to the existing sewer manhole at this intersection. The existing downstream system is an eight-inch sewer pipeline that collects wastewater just west of Westside Boulevard. The existing eight-inch sewer pipeline

connects to the city trunk main in San Juan Hollister Road and continues to the west to the city's domestic wastewater treatment plant. The project applicant would be required to fund the installment of sewer lines from the main transmission line to all the proposed facilities within the proposed development to city standards.

Using information regarding population and projected wastewater flows through the year 2013 found in the water and wastewater master plan (HDR Consultants 2008, Table 4-2 and Table 4-4), the wastewater generation rate for the City of Hollister's Urban Growth Area is approximately 0.00008 mgd per person.

Based on an average household size of 3.61 persons per household (California Department of Finance 2015b), the proposed project would generate an estimated 1,238 new residents (343 homes multiplied by 3.61 persons per household). Therefore, the proposed project would generate 0.10 mgd of wastewater. The existing and proposed wastewater generation is presented in Table 27. As discussed above, in 2008, the city treated approximately 2.7 mgd at the the domestic wastewater treatment plant and the plant has a planned total capacity of five mgd per day, which is sufficient to accommodate the wastewater needs of the Hollister Urban Area, including the project site, through 2023.

Table 27 Existing and Proposed Wastewater Generation

Land Use	Wastewater Generation
Dry Farming (Existing)	0
Residential (Proposed)	0.10 mgd

Source: Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. and HDR Consultants

The project would increase demand for wastewater collection and treatment, but not beyond the planned capacity of the city's domestic wastewater treatment plant. The project site is located within the city's general plan planning area and within the Hollister Urban Area as identified in the city's water and wastewater master plan for wastewater service from the domestic wastewater treatment plant. A sewer impact fee would be assessed at the time of building permit issuance for the use in future sanitary sewer capital improvement projects. Therefore, the payment of this fee would mitigate the project's contribution to the future development and expansion of sanitary sewer facilities when needed, and the impact is considered to be a less-than-significant impact.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Existing Wastewater Facilities): The proposed project would generate approximately 0.10 mgd of wastewater. The city's domestic wastewater treatment plant has a planned total capacity of five mgd per day, which is sufficient to accommodate the wastewater needs of the Hollister Urban Area, including the project site; therefore, the proposed project would not result in a need for new or expanded wastewater facilities and the impact to the wastewater treatment plant is less than significant.

In summary, the proposed project would not require an expansion of the city's domestic wastewater treatment plant beyond current planned improvements but would require the construction of a new sewer line to connect the project site to the nearest point of connection with adequate conveyance capacity (at the sewer manhole located at the Buena Vista Road and Westside Boulevard intersection). It is anticipated that the sewer line extension would be constructed along with the city's North Street Extension project (approved as part of the city's CIP); however, the project applicant would be required to fund the installment of sewer lines.

WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN A DETERMINATION BY THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROVIDER WHICH SERVES THE PROJECT THAT IT HAS INADEQUATE CAPACITY TO SERVE THE PROJECT'S PROJECTED DEMAND IN ADDITION TO THE PROVIDER'S EXISTING COMMITMENTS?

The proposed project site is defined by a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Hollister, County of San Benito and the San Benito County Water District as properties that will be served by the Hollister Wastewater Treatment facility. According to the Will Serve Letter for Water and Sewer Service to Properties Identified as APN's: 053-320-002, 053-330-002, 019-130-120 and 053-370-002, provided by the City of Hollister Engineering Division and dated May 15, 2008, the City has adequate sewer service capacity to serve the development of the residential uses permitted in the current San Benito County and/or City of Hollister General Plans and zoning up to a maximum density of 24 dwelling units per acre (Kimley-Horn & Associates 2014, p. 8). The development density is higher than what is proposed, therefore the city, as the wastewater service provider for the site, has determined that it has adequate capacity to serve the project and the project would not result in a determination that there is inadequate capacity to service the project; therefore the impact to wastewater services is less than significant.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Wastewater Service Capacity): The city, as the wastewater service provider, has determined that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's wastewater needs; therefore, the impact to wastewater services is less than significant.

3.18 WATER SUPPLIES AND FACILITIES

This section of the Draft EIR addresses the project's potential environmental impacts associated with groundwater, water supplies and facilities. The discussion in this section is based on information found in the *City of Hollister General Plan* (2005), the *Hollister Urban Area Water and Wastewater Master Plan* (HDR Consultants 2008) (hereinafter referred to as the "water and wastewater master plan"), the draft *2010 Hollister Urban Area Urban Water Management Plan,* (Todd Engineers 2011) (hereinafter referred to as the "urban water management plan"), the *Plan for Services Report: North Street Residential Project City of Hollister/County of San Benito, CA* (Kimley-Horn & Associates 2014) (hereinafter Plan for Services), the *Utility Report, North Street Property, Hollister, CA* (Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc.2013), the utility plan for the project (refer to sheets 9-11 of the vesting tentative map included as Appendix B of this EIR), other technical information, and project application materials.

Environmental Setting

Project Site

The 81-acre site consists of agricultural dry farm hay and undeveloped land, and contains no permanent structures. There is currently no potable water service to the site and agricultural areas are dry farmed (non-irrigated). The site is within the Hollister Urban Area, the planning area for current and future water service as defined by the city's urban water management plan.

On-site water infrastructure consists of an agricultural irrigation well/pump motor on the eastern portion of the subject property; however, the well is not in use and there is no ascertainable information when it was used in the past (AEI Consultants 2012). The well will not be used for the proposed project and will be properly decommissioned according to local regulatory agency guidelines. In terms of potable water distribution systems, there is an existing 12-inch water main that runs along Buena Vista Road west of the site. The North Street improvement project (planned as part of the city's CIP program) includes extension of this 12-inch potable along the North Street realignment and to the existing 12-inch water line from the storage tank south of the site.

Project Vicinity: Water Supplies

Water supply in the Hollister Planning Area for agricultural, municipal and industrial uses comes from several sources: local groundwater, local surface water, and surface water purchased from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Central Valley Project (referred to hereinafter as the "central valley project") and imported to the county via the San Felipe project. The San Benito County Water District (SBCWD) is responsible for the management of the groundwater basins in much of San Benito County.

During the year 2013, the City of Hollister obtained 82 percent of its potable drinking water from its six active deep groundwater wells located throughout the city and Cienega Valley, ten percent from San Felipe surface water, treated at the Lessalt Water Treatment Plant, and eight percent of groundwater from the Sunnyslope County Water District wells (City of Hollister Community Services, Utility Division 2014).

Groundwater. The Hollister Planning Area overlies the Gilroy-Hollister basin, which is delineated into eight sub-basins. The SBCWD provides active management of the Gilroy-Hollister Basin. The Hollister Urban Area overlies the Hollister East, Hollister West, and Tres Pinos sub-basins.

The *2014 San Benito County Water District Annual Groundwater Report* (SBCWD 2014) ("2014 groundwater report") describes groundwater conditions in the San Benito County portion of the Gilroy-Hollister groundwater basin. It documents water supply sources and uses, groundwater levels and storage, and management activities for water year 2014. Recommendations are provided with regard to groundwater replenishment, groundwater pumping, and the amount of water to import for water year 2015.

According to the 2014 groundwater report, groundwater levels were 10 to 20 feet lower in October 2014 than they were in October 2013. In 2012, the basin had relatively high water levels and steady groundwater storage; however, the basin has now sustained two years of decreasing groundwater elevations (2013 and 2014). The 2014 groundwater report notes that sufficient storage remains in the basin to accommodate additional dry conditions with limited imported water availability. However, if drought conditions persist, avoidance of significant impacts will require delivery of alternative supplies to sensitive areas or more rigorous water demand management (p. 22). Water table elevations do show a continued decrease in water year 2014, consistent with the increased pumping and decreased storage; however, overall groundwater elevations do not indicate overdraft conditions as of 2014 (p. 25). Current groundwater storage is sufficient to accommodate water demand in the short term with negative water budgets, and the capacity for groundwater recovery in subsequent wet years is sufficient to balance moderate increases in groundwater pumping without causing long-term overdraft (p. 39).

According to the city's urban water management plan, water levels continue to remain generally near their historical highs in most parts of the basin and based on these water levels and the stable management of the basin, overdraft is unlikely to occur in the near future (Todd Engineers 2011).

The groundwater storage capacity of the San Benito County portion of the Gilroy-Hollister Groundwater Basin is approximately 500,000 acre-feet within 200 feet of the ground surface (Todd Engineers 2011). Previous estimates of the average annual safe groundwater yield range from 40,000 to 54,000 acre-feet per year (p. 4-7). However, the city's urban water management

plan utilizes a more conservative sustainable groundwater yield amount based on historic annual water budgets. The total groundwater outflow in the Hollister Urban Area subbasins (Hollister East, Hollister West, and Tres Pinos) for water years 2006 through 2008 averaged 17,852 acre-feet per year. During these years, the average total change in storage in these subbasins was relatively small: a decrease of 1,116 acre-feet per year, generally indicating equilibrium. Given the water balance findings, a value of 16,000 acre-feet per year was used as the sustainable groundwater yield or groundwater production for the urban water management plan, which approximates the pumping that occurred in the 1990s. Hollister is not the only user of the three subbasins. The portion of the sustainable yield that will be available to Hollister and Sunnyslope in the future is 9,950 acre-feet per year (p. 4-8).

Local Surface Water. As identified in the water and wastewater master plan (HDR Consultants 2008, p. 2-6 through 2-7), the primary sources of local surface water supply are Hernandez Reservoir and Paicines Reservoir. Both of these reservoirs are owned and operated by the SBCWD. Hernandez Reservoir has a capacity of 17,200 acre-feet and is located on the San Benito River, 43 miles southeast of Hollister, and stores runoff from the upper San Benito River watershed.

The Hernandez Reservoir is designed and operated to supplement the groundwater supply in northern San Benito County. Paicines Reservoir, with a capacity of 2,870 acre-feet, is an off-stream reservoir between the San Benito River and Tres Pinos Creek approximately five miles south of Tres Pinos. It is filled by water diverted from the San Benito River, with some of the diversions consisting of natural runoff and some consisting of re-division of water stores and released from Hernandez Reservoir. The stored water is released for percolation to Tres Pinos Creek and the San Benito River to provide additional groundwater recharge during the dry season.

Imported Surface Water. The central valley project is one of the nation's major water systems, covering the entire Central Valley and portions of California's mountain ranges. Central valley project water brought into San Benito County is stored in San Justo Reservoir. The SBCWD has a 40-year contract (extending to 2027) for a maximum of 8,250 acre-feet per year of municipal and industrial water and 35,550 acre-feet per year of agricultural water. The City of Hollister purchases central valley project water directly from the SBCWD. The direct use of central valley project water is limited by the available treatment capacity of the Lessalt Water Treatment Plant, which provides treatment for local municipal uses (Kimley-Horn & Associates 2014).

Future Water Sources (Recycled Water). Recycled water is currently being used for irrigation at two sites within the Hollister Urban Area and plans for increased use are ongoing. The water purveyors in the Hollister Urban Area continue to pursue recycled water as an additional water supply, potentially as much as 4,000 acre-feet per year.

Water Facilities

The City of Hollister pumps directly from the groundwater basin in order to meet water demands. The city has eight groundwater wells within the city and Cienega Valley. Only six of the eight groundwater wells are currently active (Kimley-Horn & Associates 2014 page 12).

The Lessalt Water Treatment Plant, a jointly-owned facility between the city and the Sunnyslope County Water District was put into operation in January 2003. The plant was designed to treat imported central valley project water using microfiltration and chlorine disinfection. The treated water is distributed to both city and Sunnyslope County Water District customers. The plant was designed with a rated capacity of 3.0 million gallons per a day capable of treating 3,360 acre-feet of imported central valley project water annually (Todd Engineers 2011, p. 4-2).

The city has four storage reservoirs for a total capacity of 8.2 million gallons of water (p. 12). The city also has two pressure reducing pressure sustaining stations that are used to maintain water pressure for supplemental flows during periods of peak demand. Together the city and the Sunnyslope County Water District have over 128 miles of water mains for transmission and distribution. Most of these pipelines were installed in the 1960s. The city and the Sunnyslope County Water District maintain a close interrelationship due to service area proximity and configuration of the low and middle pressure zones.

Water Service

The Hollister Planning Area has two independent water suppliers: Sunnyslope County Water District and the City of Hollister. The City of Hollister would be responsible for supplying water to the project site.

Regulatory Setting

State

California Urban Water Management Planning Act. The Urban Water Management Planning Act (Cal. Water Code §§ 10610-10656) requires that all urban water suppliers with at least 3,000 customers prepare urban water management plans and update them every five years. The Act requires that urban water management plans include a description of water management tools and options used by that entity that will maximize resources and minimize the need to import water from other regions. Specifically, urban water management plans must:

- Provide current and projected population, climate, land, and other demographic factors affecting the supplier's water management planning;

- Identify and quantify, to the extent practicable, the existing and planned sources of water available to the supplier;
- Describe the reliability of the water supply and vulnerability to seasonal or climatic shortage;
- Describe plans to supplement or replace that source with alternative sources of water demand management measures;
- Describe the opportunities for exchanges or transfers of water on a short-term or long-term basis (associated with systems that use surface water);
- Quantify past and current water use;
- Provide a description of the supplier's water demand management measures, including a schedule of implementation, a program to evaluate the effectiveness of measures, and anticipated water demand reductions associated with the measures; and
- Assessment of the water supply reliability.

Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. The Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance prepared by the state Department of Water Resources was adopted by the Office of Administrative Law in September 2009 and requires local agencies to implement water efficiency measures as part of its review of landscaping plans. Local agencies can either adopt the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance or incorporate provisions of the ordinance into code requirements for landscaping. For new landscaping projects of 2,500 square feet or more that require a discretionary or ministerial approval, the applicant is required to submit a detailed "Landscape Documentation Package" that discusses water efficiency, soil management, and landscape design elements.

SB 610 Water Supply Assessment. Senate Bill 610 added Section 21151.9 to the Public Resources Code requiring that certain "projects," as that term is defined in Section 10912 of the Water Code, comply with Water Code Section 10910 *et seq*. Commonly referred to as a "SB 610 Water Supply Assessment," Water Code Section 10910 outlines the necessary information and analysis that must be included in an environmental document prepared under CEQA in connection with developments meeting certain specified criteria to evaluate the sufficiency of water supplies to serve the "project" as well as other existing and planned water demands over a 20-year projection. SB 610 requires that CEQA review for larger projects include a water supply assessment. A water supply assessment is required for proposed residential projects with 500 or more units, proposed shopping center or business establishment employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space, or commercial office building employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space. The North Street Subdivision project does not meet the definition of a "project" for purposes of triggering the need to prepare a water supply assessment.

City of Hollister General Plan

Policy LU6.2: Phasing Strategy. Limit future development in accordance with the phasing concept to allow the logical extension of water services and other infrastructure improvements.

Policy H1.4: Timing of Housing and Infrastructure. Continue to support the timing of new housing with needed infrastructure improvements.

Policy H2.4: Resource Conservation. Promote development and construction standards that provide resource conservation by encouraging housing types and designs that use cost effective energy conservation measures and fewer resources (water, electricity, etc.) and therefore cost less to operate over time, supporting long term housing affordability.

Policy CSF1.1: Adequate Capabilities and Capacity of Local Public Services. Ensure that future growth does not exceed the capabilities and capacity of local public services such as wastewater collection and treatment, local water supply systems, fire and police protection, maintenance of streets and roads, local school systems, parks and recreational facilities, and landfill capacity, and ensure that public services meet Federal and State standards and are available in a timely fashion.

Policy CSF1.7: Development Review Criteria for Public Services. Prior to granting approval, evaluate each new development in terms of the following criteria:

1. Would the proposed development share a common border with a property that has already been developed?

2. Would the proposed development be adequately served by infrastructure (water, sewer, streets, schools, parks, etc.), which is already in place or mitigated?

3. Would the proposed development be located within the existing service areas of local service providers (fire protection, police protection, solid waste disposal, schools, etc.), and not result in a reduction in their current capabilities?

Policy CSF2.1: Sewer and Water Facilities. Coordinate with responsible districts and agencies to assure that sewer and water facility expansion and/or improvements meet Federal and State standards and occur in a timely manner.

Policy CSF2.4: Local Water Supply System. Encourage development in those portions of the Hollister Planning Area which are already served by the local water supply systems or to which water supply systems can reasonably be extended.

Policy CSF2.5: Costs of New Development. Ensure that the cost of providing sewer and water service to new development proposed outside existing service areas should be borne solely by those proposing the development, thus eliminating any financial burden to existing customers for any required expansion of the sewer and water system network to serve such development.

Policy CSF2.6: Provision of Water Service to New Development. Require developers who will require water service for their project to apply to the City of Hollister, the Sunnyslope County Water District and the San Benito County Water District, in that order, for service. Only if the proposed development is denied service by all three agencies can it then be allowed to use groundwater as a source of water.

Policy CSF2.7: Water Conservation Measures. Encourage water-conserving practices and features in the design of structures and landscaping, and in the operation of businesses, homes and institutions, and increase the use of recycled water.

2010 Hollister Urban Area and Urban Water Management Plan

The urban water management plan was prepared as a collaborative effort between the SBCWD, Sunnyslope County Water District, and the City of Hollister in accordance with the Urban Water Management Planning Act and guidelines prepared by the Department of Water Resources. The urban water management plan is intended to help guide the area's future water management efforts to the year 2030.

Future water demand was calculated based on future population and the future per capita water use. It should be noted that the gross per capita use is the average amount of water used by Hollister Urban Area residents each year. This includes not only direct residential water use, but also indirect water uses that benefit residents such as firefighting, park and school irrigation, commercial and industrial uses, and other municipal uses.

Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G indicates that a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- 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;
- Require or result in the construction of new water facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; or
- Would not have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, and would require new or expanded entitlements.

Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

WOULD THE PROJECT SUBSTANTIALLY DEPLETE GROUNDWATER SUPPLIES SUCH THAT THERE WOULD BE A NET DEFICIT IN AQUIFER VOLUME OR A LOWERING OF THE LOCAL GROUNDWATER TABLE LEVEL?

WOULD THE PROJECT 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?

WOULD THE PROJECT HAVE SUFFICIENT WATER SUPPLIES AVAILABLE FROM EXISTING ENTITLEMENTS AND RESOURCES, AND WOULD REQUIRE NEW OR EXPANDED ENTITLEMENTS?

Groundwater Supply

Currently the project site is undeveloped and does not utilize potable water or other water for irrigation. Therefore, the site is considered to currently have no water demand.

The project site is within the Hollister Urban Area. The city's urban water management plan (Todd Engineers 2011) analyzed historic water usage and the sufficiency of water supplies (including groundwater) to meet projected water demands of the existing and planned uses within the Hollister Urban Area through 2030. Table 28, Hollister Urban Area Water Use and Water Supply (Acre-Feet per Year), below summarizes water use and supply in the year 2010 and projected through the year 2030 as identified in the city's urban water management plan.

Table 28 Hollister Urban Area Water Use and Water Supply (Acre-Feet per Year)

Water Source	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Water Demand					
Hollister	2,859	4,185	4,481	5,829	6,838
Sunnyslope	2,424	3,707	3,579	3,864	3,988
Additional Water Uses and Losses[1]	573	552	564	678	758
Total	**5,856**	**8,444**	**8,624**	**10,371**	**11,583**
Water Supply					
Groundwater	4,098	4,004	4,004	4,004	4,004
Imported	1,510	8,250	8,250	8,250	8,250
Recycled	203	1,170	1,170	1,170	1,170
Total	**5,811**	**13,424**	**13,424**	**13,424**	**13,424**

Source: Todd Engineers 2011, Tables 3-12, 3-13, 4-7, 4-8 and 4-9

Notes: 1. Saline Barriers, Groundwater Recharge, Conjunctive Use, Raw Water, Recycled Water, System Losses

As identified in the Table 28, the total water demand within the city in 2010 was approximately 2,859 acre-feet per year (average of 2.6 million gallons per day). Groundwater supplied most of this water demand.

The per capita water use for the city (which includes not only direct residential water use, but also indirect water uses that benefit residents such as irrigation, commercial uses, industrial uses, and other municipal uses) is 149 gallons per day (Todd Engineers, Table 3-6.a). Based on an average household size of 3.61 persons per household (California Department of Finance 2015b), the maximum allowable development proposed by the project of 343 dwelling units could generate an estimated 1,238 new residents. Therefore, the future development of the project site consistent with the vesting tentativem map would increase water demand of the site 184,462 gallons per day (206.62 acre-feet per year), based on a rate of 149 gallons per day per person. Water use is presented in Table 29, Existing and Proposed Water Use.

Water demand of the Hollister Urban Area, including development of the project site with high density residential development, was evaluated in the city's urban water management plan. According to the urban water management plan, water demand for the city's entire urban area in 2030 is 11,583 acre-feet per year (Hollister's demand is 6,838 acre-feet per year) and the underlying sustainable yield of the aquifers is 16,000 acre-feet per year. The portion of the sustainable yield that will be available to Hollister and Sunnyslope in the future is 9,950 acre-feet per year.

Table 29 Existing and Proposed Water Use

Land Use	Water Use (gallons per day)	Water Use (acre feet per year)
Dry Farmed (Existing)	0	0
Residential (Proposed)	184,462 gpd	206.62 afy

Source: AEI Consultants, Todd Engineers

The proposed project water demand would be served by city's existing and planned levels of groundwater extraction, as identified in Table 28, Hollister Urban Area Water Use and Water Supply, and would not cause groundwater levels to drop to the extent that a net deficit in the 16,000 acre-feet per year sustainable capacity of area groundwater aquifers, or the 9,950 acre-feet per year available to Hollister and Sunnyslope in the future would occur.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Groundwater Supply): The project would require approximately 184,462 gallons per day (206.62 acre-feet per year). This water demand would be served by the city's existing and planned levels of groundwater extraction, and would not cause groundwater levels to drop to the extent that a net deficit in the 16,000 acre-feet per year sustainable capacity of area groundwater aquifers, or the 9,950 acre-feet per year sustainable capacity available to Hollister and Sunnyslope in the future would occur. Therefore, the groundwater supply impact is less than significant.

Considering the proposed project water quality/retention basin system, along with the urban water management plan's determination that the groundwater basin has sufficient levels of storage, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on groundwater supplies and would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies.

Groundwater Recharge (Placeholder)

The proposed project would create impervious surface areas such as roadways, driveways, and residential structures. Rainfall runoff would be directed into the proposed 4.5-AF capacity water quality/retention basin system. which would include an infiltration basin and sedimentation basin to capture storm water from the 81-acre site (refer to Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality). Captured runoff would percolate through the soils and provide some groundwater recharge on the site. The design of the proposed storm water retention basin system is based on an average annual precipitation of 16 inches and percolation rate of 144 inches per hour. Additional information is provided in Section 3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality.

Water Entitlements/Resources

As discussed above, the future proposed development is anticipated to have a water demand of 184,462 gallons per day, based on a rate of 149 gallons per day per person.

As identified in Table 25, Hollister Urban Area Water Use and Water Supply (Acre-Feet per Year) above, the urban water management plan anticipates the annual water demand for the city will increase with buildout of the Hollister Urban Area. Buildout of the Hollister Urban Area was evaluated in the urban water management plan and includes development of the project site with high density residential development. Table 23 also identifies that available water resources, including a combination of groundwater, imported water and recycled growth are adequate to meet the projected growth needs.

The proposed development with primarily medium density uses is less water intensive than what was anticipated in the urban water management plan. Therefore, there are adequate water resources to serve the project.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Available Water Resources): The project would increase the amount water demand at the project site by approximately 184,462 gallons per day; which would be a significant impact if there is not enough available water to serve the project. The city's urban water management plan has anticipated residential growth of the city, including development of the project site and has identified that there is adequate water resources to provide service to the Hollister Urban Area, including the project site through 2030; therefore, there are available eater resources available to serve the project and the impact is less-than-significant.

WOULD THE PROJECT REQUIRE OR RESULT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WATER FACILITIES OR EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS?

The proposed project would obtain domestic water service from the city. The city currently operates six groundwater wells with a combined capacity of 8.5 million gallons per day. The city also co-operates the Lessalt Water Treatment Plant with Sunnyslope County Water District, which treats water imported from the central valley project for domestic use. The Lessalt design capacity is approximately 3.0 million gallons per day. The city operates four storage reservoirs with an approximate capacity of 8.2 million gallons in order to pressurize the system and provide emergency and operational storage.

The proposed project does not include groundwater wells. It would connect to the city's system via the future 12-inch potable waterline from west of the project along North Street to the existing 12-inch waterline from the storage tank, included in the North Street extension and re-alignment project (planned as part of the city's CIP program).

An on-site potable water system infrastructure will be constructed with individual developments in accordance with the City of Hollister's Design Standards. The water system is designed with a minimum 8-inch pipe size (Carlson, Barbee & Gibson, Inc. 2013). The project applicant would be required to fund the installment of water lines to all the residential facilities within the development to city standards.

The water system infrastructure would connect to the proposed 12-inch waterline in North Street at A Street and J Street. The proposed project would be supplied by the city's existing two million gallon storage tank just south of the site (p. 5-5). The water tank is at 390.4 feet above mean sea level with a reservoir elevation of 425.0 feet. With the highest pad of the site being 358.5, it is estimated that a booster pump will be needed for the higher plateau system. A possible location for the booster pump is in the northwest corner of A Street and North Street. A pressure reducing valve station is proposed where the upper plateau system connects with the lower plateau system. A possible site for the pressure reducing valve station is off of C Street east of A Street. Refer to the sheets 9-11 of the vesting tentative map included as Appendix B of this draft EIR.

As identified in the Plan for Services, according to the Will Serve Letter for Water and Sewer Service to Properties Identified as APN's: 053-320-002, 053-330-002, 019-130-120 and 053-370-002, provided by the City of Hollister Engineering Division and dated May 15, 2008, the city has adequate water service facilities to serve the development of the residential uses permitted in the current county and city general plans and zoning up to a maximum density of 24 dwelling units per acre within the 53 acres of the project area outside the current city limits.

It is not anticipated that development of the proposed project would trigger the need for additional, unplanned offsite improvements to the existing distribution system. A water impact fee would be assessed at the time of building permit issuance for use in any future water capital improvement project. The purpose of these impact fees is to mitigate the cumulative effect on water facilities from build-out of the general plan. Therefore, the payment of this fee would mitigate the project's contribution to the future development and expansion water facilities when needed. Therefore, impacts to existing water facilities would be less than significant.

Less-than-Significant Impact (Existing Water Facilities): The proposed project would increase the amount water demand at the project site by approximately 184,462 gallons per day (206.62 acre-feet per year). The proposed project can be served by the city's existing water facilities including the city's groundwater wells, the Lessalt Water Treatment Plant, and water storage facilities; therefore the impact to the city's water facilities is less than significant.

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4.0
OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This section of the EIR discusses additional environmental implications of the proposed project as required by CEQA. The topics discussed in this section include growth-inducing impacts, significant unavoidable environmental effects, and energy demand.

4.1 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

CEQA Requirements

Public Resources Code Section 21100(b) (5) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) require a discussion in the EIR of the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed project. The EIR must discuss the ways in which the project may directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth or additional housing in the surrounding environment, remove obstacles to growth, tax existing community services facilities, or encourage or facilitate other activities that cause significant environmental effects, either individually or cumulatively. Direct growth-inducing impacts result when the development associated with a project directly induces population growth or the construction of other development within the same geographic area. The analysis of potential growth-inducing impacts includes a determination of whether a project would remove physical obstacles to population growth. This often occurs with the extension of infrastructure facilities that can provide services to new development. In addition to direct growth-inducing impacts, an EIR must also discuss growth-inducing effects that will result indirectly from the project, by serving as catalysts for future unrelated development in an area. Development of public institutions and the introduction of employment opportunities within the same geographic area are examples of projects that may result in growth-inducing impacts.

An EIR's discussion of growth-inducing effects should not assume that growth is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment. An EIR is required to discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster growth.

Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G indicates that a project may have significant growth-inducing impacts if the project would induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure).

Growth-Inducing Impact Analysis

Precedent for Future Development

The approval of the proposed project would not represent a new commitment of land for urban development. Urban development of the project site has been envisioned by the city since at least ten years, with the city's adoption of *City of Hollister General Plan* (City of Hollister 2005a). As identified in the general plan, the entire project site is within the city's Planning Area, and is designated for physical development with high density residential use as shown on Map 5, Land Use Plan (p. 2.5). The southern half of the project site, which is located within the city's sphere of influence, is identified as priority infill area on Map 5, Infill Development Strategy (p.2.19) and as "vacant High Density Residential land" in the Vacant Land Inventory of the general plan (Appendix B). Priority infill areas are areas where the city would like to see development occur first. The northern half of the project site is identified as a "Phase 1 addition to the sphere of influence" on general plan Map 6, Phasing Strategy (p. 2.21). The general plan designates this land as appropriate for urban development due to its location contiguous with other existing and planned urban uses, the relative lack of natural resources or environmental hazards that could otherwise constrain development, and the opportunities it presents for higher density development.

Therefore, approval of the project would not represent the first decision to plan for extending urban development into this non-urbanized area. Development of the project site represents a logical expansion of city growth consistent with the planning area identified in the general plan. Development of the site may be a precedent for future growth in the undeveloped areas to the north and west. However, these areas are also in the city's planning area and have been identified for future development. Development of the site would not induce growth in areas not already anticipated for residential development in the city's general plan.

Growth Induced By Increased Infrastructure Capacity and Extension of Infrastructure (Water)

As discussed in Section 3.17, Water Supplies and Facilities, the project would connect to the city's system via the future 12-inch potable waterline from west of the project along North Street to the existing 12-inch waterline from the storage tank, included in the North Street Extension project and re-alignment project (planned as part of the city's CIP program). Water infrastructure would be sized to serve the project only. Therefore, the project's proposed water infrastructure would not induce growth since it is not extending infrastructure beyond the project site nor is it sizing the infrastructure beyond what is needed to serve the project.

Growth Induced By Increased Infrastructure Capacity and Extension of Infrastructure (Wastewater)

As discussed in Section 3.18 of this EIR, the proposed project would not require an expansion of the city's domestic wastewater treatment plant beyond current planned improvements. The project site is located within the city's general plan planning area and within the Hollister Urban Area as identified in the city's water and wastewater master plan for wastewater service from the domestic wastewater treatment plant. A sewer impact fee would be assessed at the time of building permit issuance for the use in future sanitary sewer capital improvement projects. Therefore, the payment of this fee would mitigate the project's contribution to the future development and expansion of sanitary sewer facilities when needed.

The project would require the construction of a new sewer line to connect the project site to the nearest point of connection with adequate conveyance capacity (at the sewer manhole located at the Buena Vista Road and Westside Boulevard intersection). It is anticipated that the sewer line extension would be constructed along with the city's North Street Extension project (approved as part of the city's CIP); however, the project applicant would be required to fund the installment of sewer lines. The project's proposed water infrastructure would not induce growth since it is not extending infrastructure beyond the project site nor is it sizing the infrastructure beyond what is needed to serve the project.

Growth Induced By Increased Infrastructure Capacity and Extension of Infrastructure (Roads)

The project includes internal neighborhood streets and access to the site would be provided from the planned North Street Extension, a two-lane extension of North Street, between Locust Avenue and Monterey Street, which is anticipated to occur concurrently with the proposed project. This extension of North Street is not part of the proposed project, but a city-funded improvement that will be completed in conjunction with the development of the adjacent

undeveloped areas, which include the project site. The planned North Street Extension project would provide direct access to the project site and adjacent undeveloped parcels on the south side. With the planned extension, a continuous roadway would be provided connecting Buena Vista Road and Santa Ana Road.

Although the North Street Extension would enable growth on the site and the adjacent vacant parcels, it is not part of the proposed project and would not remove potential obstacles to growth that have not already been anticipated by the City of Hollister general plan.

Stimulus for Economic Growth

The proposed project is a residential project. Residential uses are typically not associated with direct economic growth because these uses do not create new permanent employment opportunities, as compared with industrial or commercial uses. Residential development is generally considered a product rather than a cause of economic growth. However, during the construction phase, temporary jobs would be created and others supported through the purchase of materials. The residential uses would also have a minor secondary economic effect resulting from the anticipated consumer demand for goods and services by project residents.

Population and Housing Growth

According to the Monterey Bay Area 2014 Regional Forecast (AMBAG 2014), the city's population was 34,928 in 2010. The estimated population for 2020 is anticipated to be 39,975 people, and for 2025 is 41,704. The 2014 AMBAG population projections are based upon an anticipated 1.05 percent annual growth rate.

The AMBAG forecast reported that the housing unit requirements for the city in 2010 were 10,401. Projected housing units requirements were expected to be 11,176 in 2020, and the anticipated number of housing units necessary to accommodate expected population growth in 2025 is 11,534.

More recent demographic data is available from the California Department of Finance, which maintains general inventories of housing stock and population data based upon U.S. Census data. The Department of Finance Table E-1 reports that in 2014, the population of the City of Hollister was 36,370 persons, a 0.1 percent decrease from the 2013 population of 36,676 (California Department of Finance 2015a). According to the Department of Finance Table E-5, as of January 1, 2014, the city's existing housing stock consists of 10,647 total housing units with 10,092 units occupied and an average of 3.61 persons per household (California Department of Finance 2015b). Both the most recent growth rate and the 2014 population reported by the Department of Finance are below the AMBAG projections for the year 2020.

The city's general plan population and housing projections are based on AMBAG projections as well as policies included in the general plan to address the city's regional housing needs. As identified in the general plan, population estimate for the city in 2010 was 44,790 persons, the estimated population for 2020 is 53,330 people, and for 2023 is 55,192 people. Projected housing units requirements were expected to be 12,797 in 2010 (base year), and the anticipated number of housing units to accommodate expected population growth in 2020 is 15,237. The general plan anticipates that 15,769 housing units will be necessary to accommodate the city's forecasted population in 2023.

Future development of the project site consistent with the vesting tentative map includes 343 housing units and a population increase of up to approximately 1,238 persons (based on 3.61 persons per household, California Department of Finance 2015b). Using the Department of Finance 2014 population estimate of 36,370 persons, the increase in total population resulting from development of the proposed project (37,370 persons) would be less than the city's general plan and AMBAG projections. Therefore, the proposed project's individual and cumulative contribution to population growth is consistent with the forecast and the proposed project would not result in population growth that exceeds regional population forecasts for the city.

4.2 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

CEQA Requirements

A significant adverse unavoidable environmental impact is a significant adverse impact that cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures. CEQA Guidelines section 15093 requires that a lead agency make findings of overriding considerations for unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts before approving a project.

CEQA Guidelines section 15093(a) requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable." CEQA Guidelines section 15093(b) states that when the lead agency approves a project which will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.

Impact Analysis

Based on the environmental analysis provided in Chapter 3.0 and 5.0 of this EIR, most of the potential impacts associated with the proposed project can be avoided or reduced to a level of insignificance through the imposition of mitigation measures. However, the project would result in significant unavoidable impacts to agricultural resources and to traffic and circulation as summarized below.

Aesthetics

The project would change the visual character of the project site from rural to urban and would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings when viewed from Vista Hill Park, which is a public vantage point. The existing view of the rural undeveloped site from Vista Hill Park may be of value to the public and future development of the site would result in a significant change in the quality and nature of the view. For this reason, the impacts to the visual quality of the project site and its surroundings that would occur as a result of changing the rural nature of the site to urban uses would be significant. There is no feasible mitigation available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. The proposed project would contribute to cumulative impacts of urban development to the visual quality of the surroundings. Additional discussion is found in Section 3.1, Aesthetics and Section 5.0, Cumulative Impacts.

Agricultural Resources

The proposed project would convert 15.29 acres of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses. The city's general plan EIR identified the loss of Prime Farmland due to buildout of the general plan as a significant cumulative impact to agricultural activity within the county. The proposed project would individually and cumulatively contribute to this impact. There is no feasible mitigation available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. Please see Section 3.2, Agricultural Resources, and Section 5.0, Cumulative Impacts for additional discussion of these impacts.

Traffic and Circulation

A number of roadway intersections and two highway segments within the Hollister area will be impacted by the proposed project. Most of these intersections and the two highway segments will be improved using traffic impact fees collected from the project. Because improvements to these intersections and highway segments may not be implemented in time to mitigate the immediate project impacts to these intersections, however, project impacts must be considered to be significant and unavoidable. In addition, the project will have a significant impact on the U.S.

Highway 101 and State Route 25 interchange. There is no feasible mitigation available to reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Please see Section 3.16, Traffic and Circulation, and Section 5.0, Cumulative Impacts, for additional discussion of these impacts.

4.3 ENERGY DEMAND

State CEQA Guidelines Appendix F describes the types of information and analyses related to energy conservation to be included in an EIR. Energy conservation is described in terms of decreased per capita energy consumption, decreased reliance on natural gas and oil, and increased reliance on renewable energy sources. To assure that energy implications are considered in project decisions, EIRs must include a discussion of the potentially significant energy impacts of proposed projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

Energy production and usage results in environmental impacts including depletion of nonrenewable resources (e.g., oil, natural gas, coal, etc.) and emission of pollutants during both production and consumption phases. Energy usage is typically quantified using the British Thermal Unit (BTU). The BTU is the amount of energy that is required to raise the temperature of one pound of water by one degree Fahrenheit. As points of reference, the approximate amount of energy contained in a gallon of gasoline, a 100 cubic feet (one therm) of natural gas, and a kilowatt hour (kWhr) of electricity are 123,000 BTUs, 100,000 BTUs, and 3,400 BTUs, respectively.

PG&E, one of the five largest utilities in the state, is the purveyor of electricity and natural gas in the city. Through PG&E, the city receives electricity from power generating facilities located at various locations within the state. The state's electric grid also has interties to other western states, so some electricity used within California is generated outside the state. Electrical energy is generated by a number of means, including thermal power plants using natural gas, coal, fuel oil, and/or used tires as fuel; wind turbines; hydroelectric facilities; biomass plants; and large- and small-scale solar installations. Natural gas used in California originates from basins in California, other western states, and Canada. According to the California Energy Commission's Energy Almanac (California Energy Commission 2014), California imports 90 percent of its natural gas from outside the state.

Population growth is a key driver for increasing residential and commercial energy demands and for water pumping and other energy-intensive services. The city's population and energy demand will continue to grow. In order to minimize the need for additional electricity generation facilities, both the state and regional energy purveyors have focused investments on energy conservation and efficiency over the past decades. PG&E has been involved in developing renewable energy projects, such as photovoltaic solar power, as a way to meet increasing energy demands within the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard.

Regulatory Setting

Energy conservation is embodied in many federal, state, and local statutes and policies. At the federal level, energy standards apply to numerous products (e.g., the EnergyStar™ program) and transportation (e.g., vehicle fuel efficiency standards). At the state level, Title 24 of the California Administrative Code sets energy standards for buildings, rebates/tax credits are provided for installation of renewable energy systems, and the Flex Your Power program promotes conservation in multiple areas.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission reviews proposals to build liquefied natural gas terminals and interstate natural gas pipelines; it also licenses hydropower projects. Licensing of hydroelectric under the authority of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission includes input from state and federal energy, environmental protection, fish and wildlife, and water quality agencies.

National Energy Policy

The National Energy Policy, established in 2001 by the National Energy Policy Development Group, is designed to help the private sector and state and local governments promote dependable, affordable, and environmentally sound production and distribution of energy for the future (National Energy Policy Development Group 2001). Key issues addressed by the energy policy are energy conservation, repair, and expansion of energy infrastructure, and ways of increasing energy supplies while protecting the environment.

California Energy Commission

The California Energy Commission is California's primary energy policy and energy planning agency. Created by the California Legislature in 1974, the California Energy Commission has five major responsibilities: 1) forecasting future energy needs and keeping historical energy data; 2) licensing thermal power plants 50 megawatts or larger; 3) promoting energy efficiency through appliance and building standards; 4) developing energy technologies and supporting renewable energy; and 5) planning for and directing state response to energy emergencies. Under the requirements of the California Public Resources Code, the California Energy Commission, in conjunction with the Department of Commerce's Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources, is required to assess electricity and natural gas resources on an annual basis or as necessary. The Systems Assessment and Facilities Siting Division of the California Energy Commission provides coordination to ensure that needed energy facilities are authorized in an expeditious, safe, and environmentally acceptable manner.

California Public Utilities Commission

The California Public Utilities Commission is a state agency created by constitutional amendment to regulate privately owned telecommunications, electric, natural gas, water, railroad, rail transit, passenger transportation, and in-state moving companies. The California Public Utilities Commission is responsible for assuring California utility customers have safe, reliable utility services at reasonable rates while protecting utility customers from fraud. The California Public Utilities Commission regulates the planning and approval for the physical construction of electric generation, transmission, or distribution facilities; and local distribution pipelines of natural gas (California Public Utilities Commission Decision 95-08-038).

California 2008 Energy Action Plan Update

The state adopted the Energy Action Plan in 2003, followed by the Energy Action Plan II in 2005. The current plan, the California 2008 Energy Action Plan Update, is California's principal energy planning and policy document. The updated document examines the state's ongoing actions in the context of global climate change, describes a coordinated implementation plan for state energy policies, and identifies specific action areas to ensure that California's energy resources are adequate, affordable, technologically advanced, and environmentally sound. The California 2008 Energy Action Plan Update establishes energy efficiency and demand response (i.e., reduction of customer energy usage during peak periods) as the first-priority actions to address California's increasing energy demands. Additional priorities include the use of renewable sources of power and distributed generation (i.e., the use of relatively small power plants near or at centers of high demand). To the extent that these actions are unable to satisfy the increasing energy demand and transmission capacity needs, clean and efficient fossil-fired generation is supported. The California 2008 Energy Action Plan Update examines policy changes in the areas of energy efficiency, demand response, renewable energy, electricity reliability and infrastructure, electricity market structure, natural gas supply and infrastructure, research and development, and climate change.

California Building Codes

California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) were first established in 1978 to reduce California's energy consumption. The standards were most recently updated in January 2013. Energy efficient buildings require less electricity, natural gas, and other fuels, the use of which creates GHG emissions.

The Green Building Standards Code (also known as CALGreen), which requires all new buildings in the state to be more energy efficient and environmentally responsible, took effect in

January 2011 and were most recently updated in January 2013. These comprehensive regulations are intended to achieve major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, and water use.

Energy Efficiency Act of 2006 (AB 2021)

This bill encourages all investor-owned and municipal utilities to aggressively invest in all achievable, cost-effective energy efficiency programs in their service territories. The results of this bill are expected to reduce forecasted electricity demand by 10 percent over 10 years from 2006 through 2016, offsetting the projected need to build 11 new major power plants.

City of Hollister General Plan

> **LU9.2 Energy Efficiency.** Integrate good design with the use of energy efficient techniques and equipment and with materials and construction practices that minimize adverse environmental effects.
>
> **H2.4 Resource Conservation.** Promote development and construction standards that provide resource conservation by encouraging housing types and designs that use cost effective energy conservation measures and fewer resources (water, electricity, etc.) and therefore cost less to operate over time, supporting long-term housing affordability.
>
> **H2.5 Renewable Energy.** Technologies Promote the use of renewable energy technologies (such as solar and wind) in new and rehabilitated housing when possible.

Impact Analysis

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Appendix F, this analysis considers impacts to be significant if implementation of a proposed project would directly or indirectly result in inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

Data prepared by the California Energy Commission indicates that the average household within the PG&E service area uses about 7,250 kilowatt hours (kwh) of electricity and 483 therms of natural gas each year (California Energy Commission 2013).

According to the Department of Finance Table E-5, as of January 1, 2014, the city's existing housing stock consists of 10,647 total housing units (Department of Finance 2015b). The general plan anticipates that 15,769 housing units will be necessary to accommodate the city's forecasted population in 2023. Given the average household usage rate, existing residences use

approximately 77,190 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity and 5,142,501 therms of natural gas each year. At general plan buildout, residences are anticipated to use approximately 114,325 MWh of electricity and 7,616,427 therms of natural gas each year.

The proposed project is anticipated to use approximately 2,526,744 kwh of electricity and 10,853,590,000 BTU (British Thermal Units) of natural gas each year. One therm is equivalent to 100,000 BTU. Thus, total natural gas consumption would equal 10,853 therms per year. These values are taken from sections 5.2 and 5.3 of the CalEEMod model results included in Appendix C of this EIR.

As identified in the city's general plan, PG&E has continued with a policy of upgrading its energy distribution system throughout the area, and will provide in-place infrastructure capacity suitable for expected future growth (City of Hollister 201b, 4.5-18). PG&E expects that the relatively gradual residential and commercial growth projections for Hollister would not cause a significant impact on PG&E's ability to provide service. New development within the project site will be required to comply with state energy efficiency legislation and regulations such as CALGreen and Title 24 that would result in reduced electricity and natural gas consumption relative to existing residential development in the city and county. Therefore, development consistent with the draft general plan would not be expected to result in the use of large amounts of additional fuel or energy (p. 4.5-19)

As identified in the city general plan, based on the county traffic projections for 2023, vehicle-miles of travel within San Benito County would increase by approximately 48-51 percent from year 2004 to the year 2023 (p. 4.2-17). Gasoline consumption for automobile travel would also increase. The proposed project is estimated to result in 10,708,902 annual vehicle miles traveled as identified in section 4.2 of the CalEEMod results. The additional vehicle travel would result in increased fuel consumption. However, state regulatory requirements for improved fuel efficiency such as the Pavley standards and for increased use of non-fossil fuel powered vehicles such as the Advanced Clean Car standards will result in a relative reduction in the volume of gasoline consumed per mile of travel in the state, including from vehicle trips associated with the proposed project. In addition, a shift in travel mode share is predicted as alternative transportation options (public transit, biking, and walking) become more viable and convenient through implementation of the general plan's mix of new land uses. Further, development consistent with the city's general plan would include infill and mixed use development, which would result in reduced vehicle trip numbers and lengths and a corresponding reduction in transportation fuel demand relative to non-infill development.

The proposed project is characteristic of typical residential development types in the city. It does not involve uses or activities that are excessive sources of electricity, natural gas, or gasoline/diesel fuel consumption. Required compliance with state energy legislation and regulations would ensure that the proposed project does not result directly or indirectly result in inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

4.4 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(2)(B) requires an EIR to include a detailed statement setting forth any significant effects on the environment that would be irreversible if a proposed project is implemented. Examples of irreversible environmental changes, as set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c), include the following:

- The proposed project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources such that removal or nonuse thereafter is unlikely;
- The primary and secondary impacts of a proposed project would generally commit future generations to similar uses (e.g., a highway providing access to a previously inaccessible area); or
- The proposed project involves uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the proposed project.

Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Analysis

Future development consistent with the vesting tentative map would include the consumption of non-renewable building materials and energy resources during the construction phase, as well as the ongoing consumption of energy for lighting, air conditioning, space and water heating, and travel to and from the site during the life of the project. However, the consumption of such resources is typical of this type of development and would and would not result in an irreversible commitment of natural resources for construction or operation.

Future development consistent with the vesting tentative map would permanently alter the rural visual character of the project site by replacing the natural landscape with urban development and would commit the use of existing agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. Once developed, agricultural uses would not return to the site in the foreseeable future. The construction of the proposed uses, including the residential areas and the project infrastructure would also represent permanent changes to the site.

The proposed project, as a typical residential development, does not involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project.

5.0
CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

5.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15130 requires a discussion of cumulative impacts when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable, as defined in section 15065(a)(3), which states, "The project has possible environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulative considerable. Cumulatively considerable means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects."

Where a lead agency is examining a project with an incremental effect that is not "cumulatively considerable," a lead agency need not consider that effect significant, but shall briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable. A cumulative impact consists of an impact that is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts. An EIR should not discuss impacts that do not result in part from the project evaluated in the EIR. When the combined cumulative impacts associated with the project's incremental effect and the effects of other projects is not significant, the EIR shall briefly indicate why the cumulative impact is not significant and is not discussed in further detail in the EIR. A lead agency shall identify facts and analysis supporting its conclusion that the cumulative impact is less than significant.

A lead agency may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and therefore, is not significant. A project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact. The lead agency shall identify facts and analysis supporting its conclusion that the contribution will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable.

The discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the other identified projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact.

CEQA requires a cumulative development scenario to consist of either a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency, or, a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.

5.2 CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

CEQA requires a cumulative development scenario to consist of either 1) a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency or 2) a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document that has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.

For this EIR, the evaluation of cumulative impacts is based on implementation of the proposed project when considered in conjunction with development forecasts based on the buildout of City of Hollister General Plan. It is noted that a broader regional cumulative development scenario is used in some analyses within which the effects of cumulative development are normally managed. For example, the air basin is used in the cumulative air quality analysis.

The city's general plan growth projections are presented in Table 30, City of Hollister Growth Projections through 2023, below.

The city's general plan used the city's employment, housing units and population counts as of the 2000 Census and projected values for each category in for years 2010, 2020 and 2023. By the end of the general plan's planning horizon (2023), the general plan anticipated that the city's population will increase from 34,413 to a projected 55,192 residents.

Table 30 City of Hollister Growth Projections through 2023

Projection Type	2000 (actual)	2010	2020	2023
Population	34,413	44,790	53,330	55,192
Housing Units	9,924	12,797	15,237	15,769
Employment	13,234	16,355	21,034	22,204

Source: City of Hollister 2005 General Plan

Table 31, Land Use Calculations, presented below, identifies the amount of land designated for each use on the general plan land use plan. In addition to calling out land use quantities, the table highlights the range of acceptable land use densities with a given designation where applicable.

Table 31 Land Use Calculations

Land Use Designations		Designated Acres	% of Total Acres	Maximum Permitted Intensity
RR	Residential Estate	1,419	14.7%	1 du / 5 ac
LDR	Low Density Residential	3,235	33.6%	1 to 8 du/ac
MDR	Medium Density Residential	326.3	3.4%	8 to 12 du/ac
HDR	High Density Residential	375.5	3.9%	12 to 35 du/ac
MU	Mixed-Use Commercial and Residential	137	1.42%	25 to 40 du/ac
D-MU	Downtown Commercial and Mixed-Use	53	0.6%	25 to 45 du/ac
HO	Home Office	39	0.4%	8 to 12 du/ac
WG	West Gateway Commercial and Mixed-Use	57	0.6%	20 to 35 du/ac
NG	North Gateway Commercial	250	2.6%	2.0 FAR
GC	General Commercial	145	1.5%	2.0 FAR
I/AS	Industrial/Airport Support	1,664	17.3%	1.0 FAR
A	Airport	319	3.3%	N/A
P	Public	457	4.7%	1.0 FAR
OS	Open Space	586	6.12%	.01 FAR
AG	Agriculture	562	5.8%	N/A
Total Acres		**9,625**	**100%**	

Source: City of Hollister 2005 General Plan

5.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND THE PROPOSED PROJECT'S CONTRIBUTION

Aesthetics

The city's general plan EIR concluded that buildout of the general plan would result in significant impacts to the visual setting and character of the city, but the impact would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of the applicable goals, policies, and actions in the general plan (City of Hollister 2005b, p. 2-13). The general plan EIR also determined that buildout of the general plan would not result in significant impacts due to nighttime lighting and glare with implementation of the applicable goals, policies, and actions in the general plan and additional mitigation measures requiring the development of guidelines for the preparation of lighting plans that included specific guidelines for reducing light and glare (City of Hollister 2005b, p. 2-13 through 2-19).

Future development consistent with the vesting tentative map would contribute to the impacts identified in the general plan EIR. Compliance with general plan policies, actions and code provisions identified in Section 3.1, Aesthetics, would ensure that new development would be consistent with existing neighborhood and community character. Additionally, developers of the project site are required to implement a performance agreement, which would ensure that the proposed project would comply with these policies and programs. However, the proposed project would eventually replace the rural character of the site (all agricultural fields, all trees, etc.) with urban uses (homes, apartments, streets, and open space) and contribute to degradation of existing visual character and quality of the site and its surroundings when viewed from Vista Hill Park, a public vantage point.

Compliance with general plan policies and implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-1, will further ensure that the overall design of the project would be of high quality and blend into the existing environment as feasible. However, even with implementation of this mitigation measure, the project site's contribution to the overall aesthetic conversion from rural visual character to urban visual character as seen from the existing the public viewpoint of Vista Hill Park would be cumulatively considerable. Consequently, its conversion would substantially contribute to the loss of the remaining views of open agricultural landscapes within the City's general plan planning area in the vicinity of the project site when viewed from Vista Hill Park. The proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts to scenic resources (resulting from its conversion) is considerable and the cumulative impact is significant and unavoidable.

Agricultural Resources

The city's general plan EIR identified the loss of Prime Farmland due to buildout of the general plan as a significant cumulative impact to agricultural activity within the county. According to the city's general plan, the planning area includes 9,625 acres: 562 of these acres are designated Agriculture (p. 2.6, Table LU2) The remaining acreage is designated for non-agricultural land uses. The city's general plan EIR indicates that about 50 percent of the city's planning area is designated Prime Farmland (p. 4.11-1), which includes the 15.29 acres of Prime Farmland on the project site. Therefore, for the purposes of this discussion it is inferred that build-out of the general plan would result in the loss of approximately 4,250 acres of Prime Farmland (9,625 acres minus 562 acres of agriculturally-designated land divided by two). The proposed project would convert 15.29 acres of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses, which is a cumulatively considerable contribution to this significant and unavoidable cumulative effect.

As discussed in Section 3.2 of this EIR there are no mitigation measures that would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level, individually or cumulatively. Therefore the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative loss of Prime Farmland (resulting from its conversion) is significant and unavoidable.

Air Quality

For cumulative impacts, the air district recommends that projects be assessed for consistency with the air quality management plan. The proposed project was evaluated for consistency with the air quality management plan using the air district's *Consistency Determination Procedure for Residential Development Projects* (2011). The proposed project was evaluated using an anticipated buildout/occupancy year of 2020. The results of the evaluation process are included as Appendix D. The evaluation determined that the proposed project would be consistent with air quality management plan at 2020 and later time periods.

Impacts on regional air quality can also be considered a cumulative impact. Under cumulative conditions, there could be an increase in short-term construction emissions, including reactive organic gases (ROG), nitrogen oxides (NOx), particulate matter (PM10), and localized carbon monoxide (CO). Future development of the project site consistent with the vesting tentative map would result in criteria pollutant emissions of ozone precursors and PM_{10} that exceed air district standards and for which the air basin is in nonattainment. Therefore, the proposed project impact would be cumulatively considerable and the cumulative impact would be significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 – AQ 6 (Section 3.3 Air Quality) would reduce the individual impacts to a less-than-significant level. The proposed project's contribution to regional air quality impacts would be less than significant.

For these reasons the proposed project would not result in significant cumulative air quality impacts.

Biological Resources

The city's general plan identified that a number of federal or state listed plant and animal species and sensitive natural communities could be affected by buildout of the general plan either directly through incidental take or indirectly through habitat destruction (City of Hollister 2005b, p. 4.8-6 - 9). The city's general plan EIR determined that buildout of general plan land use designations would result in significant impacts on biological resources within the general plan planning area, which includes the project site, mainly associated with impacts to or loss of habitat. (pp. 4.8-6 – 4.8-12). The city's general plan EIR also found that compliance with general plan policies and implementing actions, in addition to compliance with state and federal wetlands protection regulation would reduce potential impacts to biological resources associated with buildout to less than significant.

As identified in Section 3.4., Biological Resources, of this EIR, there are no wetlands/waterways or riparian habitats on the site; however, future development of the site could result in impacts to several special-status species (burrowing owl, American badger, San Joaquin whipsnake, bats and nesting birds) through habitat modification or disturbance during construction, and to city-regulated street trees. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO1 – BIO5, and mitigation measure BIO-6 address actions needed to avoid or reduce impacts on special-status wildlife species and regulated trees to less than significant such that the contribution of the project to cumulative impacts would be less than considerable and the cumulative impact would be less than significant.

Cultural Resources

The city's general plan EIR identified that development consistent with the general plan has the potential to result in the disturbance of subsurface archaeological and prehistoric resources (p. 4.6-7). As of 2005, less than 10 percent of the city's planning area had been surveyed for the presence of archaeological resources (p. 4.6-1). Nevertheless, the literature reveals that three prehistoric sites have been found in the Hollister planning area to date. These sites are suggestive of one or more village sites in the planning area vicinity and point toward the need for project-level archaeological investigations. An archaeological inventory prepared for the general plan EIR mapped areas of archaeological sensitivity within the planning area (p. 4.6-2, figure 15). The areas noted in the figure represent the general vicinity in which archaeological resources are likely to exist based on topography and location of natural resources such as water. The map indicates that a large percentage of the city's planning area contains archaeologically sensitive areas. The general plan EIR concluded that potential impacts to subsurface archaeological and prehistoric resources can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by compliance with city procedures that require project-specific studies and implement mitigation as needed when

individual projects are considered. The policies and programs as outlined in the general plan and implemented through an ordinance supporting this approach. In regards to historic resources, the general plan EIR concluded that with implementation of the general plan, city policies would be in-place to assure that potential impacts are addressed.

The project site is not within an historic district (p. 4.6-4, figure 16) and there are no structures on the project site that could potentially be historic. However, the site is identified as being within an archaeologically sensitive area (p. 4.6-2, figure 15). An archaeological reconnassiance prepared for the proposed project concluded that there was no evidence of cultural resources on the project site. The potential that unknown buried cultural resources (including paleontological resources and human remains) could be disturbed during construction would mitigated by implementation of mitigation measures CR-1 - CR-3 (refer to Section 3.5). Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative loss of cultural or paleontological resources would be less than considerable and the cumulative impact would be less than significant.

Fire Services

The project site is not located in an area identified by CalFire as prone to wildland fire or excessive fuel loading; therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Future development of the project site would contribute to an increase in demand for fire department services in the planning area. As noted in Section 3.6, Fire Services. Future development would be adequately served from the existing fire station and would not adversely affect existing levels of service. Therefore no new fire department facilities would be required. The payment of development impact fees mitigate the cumulative effect on fire facilities from build-out of the general plan, and payment of these fees by future developers of the site would offset the costs of additional equipment necessary to maintain adequate fire response across the City. As mitigated, the proposed project's impact on fire protection services would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

Geology and Soils

The geographic context for the analysis of impacts resulting from geologic hazards generally is site-specific rather than cumulative in nature, because each project site has a different set of geologic considerations that would be subject to uniform site development and construction standards. As such, the potential for cumulative impacts to occur is limited. The city's general plan EIR identified significant unavoidable impacts related to risks of seismic hazards in the Hollister Planning Area that will expose people and structures to potential, substantial adverse seismic effects including groundshaking and ground failure, (pp. 4.9-2 – 4.9-6).

Trace faults are present on the project site and future development of the project site consistent with the vesting tentative map would contribute to the significant unavoidable seismic impacts identified in the general plan EIR. Proposed project impacts related to geology and soils are described in Section 3.7, Geology and Soils, of this EIR. Buildout of the project site would have several related potential impacts including exposure of people and structures to seismic shaking and potentially to liquefaction hazard. These impacts are reduced to less than significant through conformance with uniform development regulations and standards and through implementation of mitigation measure GEO-1 and GEO-2 regarding project specific analysis of ground rupture, ground shaking and ground failure hazards and hazard reduction for development within Parcel C and the southeastern portion of the site. These actions would assure that the project contribution to cumulative impacts is less than considerable and that the cumulative impact is less than significant.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The city's general plan EIR did not evaluate greenhouse gas emissions or climate change impacts. Because climate change is a global phenomenon, it is highly unlikely that any one development project located anywhere in the world would have a significant individual impact on climate change. It is the sum total of contributions of development around the world that contribute to the problem. Hence, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions leading to global climate change are inherently a cumulative effect. The individual contribution of a project to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere can generally be quantified in terms of volume of GHG emissions that it generates as converted to CO_2e. However, the precise indirect effects of that contribution are difficult if not impossible to identify due to the complexity of local, regional, and global atmospheric dynamics and to the broad scale at which global warming impacts such as sea level rise, increase in weather intensity, decrease in snowpack, etc. are known to occur. Because the potential impacts of the proposed project are inherently considered in a cumulative context, the analysis in Section 3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions is a cumulative impact assessment.

The proposed project would generate annual operational GHG emissions of 4.43 MT/service population which is lower than the SLO air district threshold of significance of 4.9 MT/service population by 0.47 MT or about nine percent. Consequently, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact from generation of GHG emissions; therefore, since this analysis also represents the cumulative scenario, the proposed project would have a less than significant cumulative GHG impact.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The cumulative effects of hazards and hazardous materials due to buildout consistent with general plan land use designations were studied in the city's general plan EIR. There are a wide variety of agricultural and industrial hazardous materials that are handled and stored within the general plan planning area (4.5-11). There are also numerous underground storage tanks containing petroleum products. Improper handling of these materials or disturbance of storage containers could lead to the release of hazardous materials into the environment. The EIR also determined that build-out of the general plan would result in cumulative impacts on the environment due to the conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses, and the storage, use and disposal of household hazardous chemicals. The proposed project includes land conversion and residential uses that would contribute to this cumulative impact. Even though each residence typically would only have a small influence, the increase in handling, disposal, and possible human exposure to household hazardous materials would be proportional to the number of dwelling units built in the horizon of the plan. The general plan EIR concluded that compliance with city regulations, enforcement of standards, and implementation of the policies, standards and programs contained in the general plan (health and safety element) would reduce the cumulative impacts from the release of hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level (p. 4.5-12).

The project site is not currently included on any list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5, or other hazardous materials sites as identified by the Department of Toxic Substances Control. Future development of the project site is subject to compliance with general plan policies and other state and local regulations for the treatment of hazardous materials. Implementation of mitigation measure HAZ-1 would further reduce project-related hazards to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment to a less-than-significant level. The proposed project site would be developed in the future with residential uses, which would not routinely involve the use or transportation of hazardous materials and would not create or result in a significant threat of upset and/or accidental release of such materials that would be hazardous to the public or the environment. For these reasons, the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact of an increased risk of hazardous materials releases would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The city's general plan EIR identified that development of general plan land uses would have a significant impact on water quality due to an increase in the loading of petrochemical contaminants, heavy metals and pesticide, and herbicide residues to natural and artificial

drainage-ways and could contribute to groundwater quality degradation and/or contamination within the planning area (p. 4.10-20). The general plan EIR concluded that compliance with state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to water quality, mitigation measures addressed in project-specific analysis, active city participation in countywide programs, and implementation of general plan policies, as well as required mitigation for refinement of city Program CSF.F related to water and wastewater master planning would ensure that cumulative water quality impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level (p. 4-10-21).

The proposed project would contribute to the water quality impacts identified in the general plan EIR. However, implementation of mitigation measures HYD-1 – HYD-3 in addition to compliance with NPDES permit and city policies and requirements, would reduce the proposed project's contribution to cumulative water quality impacts to less than significant. These mitigation measures ensure that measures, including BMPs and LID measures will be implemented during and post construction on the project site. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative water quality impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

The general plan EIR also found that development associated with buildout of the general plan would result in infill or redevelopment of undeveloped areas, leading to incremental increases in project-induced erosion and sedimentation, flood risks and flood exposures. Construction could disrupt soil surfaces, alter local drainage patterns and potentially cause downstream siltation and flooding. The proposed project would contribute to these cumulative impacts.

The EIR determined that future development consistent with the general plan land use designations would be concentrated in existing urbanized portions of the San Rafael watersheds, which would not be expected to result in quantifiable increases in peak flow rates, and no significant flood risks would occur. The EIR also found that compliance with general plan policies and standard city practices and regulations would reduce erosion and downstream sedimentation impacts resulting from buildout to a less-than-significant level.

For these reasons, the proposed project's contributions to cumulative flooding, erosion and siltation impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Noise

The general plan EIR identified that with buildout of the general plan, existing noise sensitive land uses would be exposed to minor increases in ambient noise levels from traffic, roadway improvement projects, stationary noise sources and construction. The general plan EIR concluded that compliance with city regulations and general plan policies and programs would reduce these noise impacts to a less-than-significant level (p. 4.4-7 – 4.4-9).

The proposed project would contribute to the cumulative increase in ambient noise levels identified in the general plan EIR. The noise assessment prepared for the project (Edward L. Pack Associates, Inc. 2014) determined that the potential project-related operational noise impacts associated with increased traffic, stationary noise, and rail and airport noise exposures would be less than significant. Implementation of mitigation measure N-1 would reduce future construction noise impacts to less than significant. Additionally, compliance with the city's noise ordinance and standard conditions of project approval would reduce the project's construction noise impacts to less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative increases in ambient noise levels within the general plan planning area would be less than significant.

Parks and Recreation

The city's general plan EIR found that buildout of the general plan pland uses would increase the demand for parks and recreational facilities and services, but concluded that the increase in demand for park and recreation facilities and recreation services associated with general plan buildout would be a less than significant impact (p 4.5-16). Implementation of the Park Facility Master Plan, parkland provision requirements and other policies and programs contained in the general plan, and the maintenance of adequate staffing levels consistent with population growth can reduce these potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

The proposed project would include the construction of 343 new residences (283 single-family units and 60 multi-family dwelling units) which would result in additional demand for park and recreational facilities. The 343 dwelling units proposed by the project could generate an estimated 1,238 new residents based on an average household size of 3.61 persons per household (California Department of Finance 2015b. Per the parkland dedication formula set forth in city's Municipal Code Chapter 16.55, the parkland requirement for the proposed project is approximately 4.8 acres (3.98 acres for the single-family residential uses and 0.83 acres for multifamily residential uses).

The vesting tentative map also identifies 4.47 acres of park and trails; 3.53 acres of which, may be developed. Per Municipal Code Chapter 16.55, credit towards meeting the parkland requirement may be considered in the city's final determination if a project developer includes parkland development as part of a proposed subdivision. Future developers of the project site would be responsible for meeting the 4.8-acre parkland requirement as a condition of tentative map approval, in conformance with the provisions of Municipal Code Section 16.16.030 and Municipal Code Chapter 16.55. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact of an increase in demand for parks and recreation facilities and services is less-than-cumulatively-considerable.

Police Services

The general plan EIR identified that development consistent with the general plan would generate demand for additional police services; however, this would not result in significant impacts to police services with implementation of the applicable goals, policies, and actions in the general plan (p. 4.5-12).

Future development of the project site would contribute to an increase in demand for fire department services in northern Hollister. The proposed project's impact on fire protection services would be cumulatively considerable. Development of the project site consistent with the conceptual development plans would be adequately served from the existing fire stations and would not adversely affect existing levels of service. No new fire department facilities would be required. However, site-specific design issues could affect the provision of services within the project site., As identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR, using the service standard ratio of 1.5 officers per 1,000 residents, proposed project would require an additional two officers to maintain service provision at the current staffing rate. The annexation and development of the site would not create the need for new or physically altered police facilities. The payment of development impact fees as noted in Section 3.13 Police Services, would offset the costs of additional equipment necessary to maintain adequate fire response across the City, and would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. Payment of required fees and compliance with the general plan policies would further reduce the direct impact of a project-related increase in service demand. As mitigated, the proposed project's impact on fire protection services would be less-than-cumulatively considerable.

Schools

The city's general plan EIR identified that future development consistent general plan land use designations would generate demand for school facilities and personnel to accommodate an increase in student population; however, the implementation of policies and programs contained in the general plan to coordinate with the various school districts as development occurs and the maintenance of school facilities and staffing levels consistent with population growth can reduce these potential impacts to a less-than-significant level (p. 4.5-14).

The proposed project would contribute to the cumulative increase in the demand for school facilities identified in the general plan EIR. The proposed project would contribute 261 school children within the service boundaries of the Hollister Unified School District and the San Benito High School District, which may result in the need for new or expanded facilities; however, the project would comply with requirements to pay applicable school impact fees. Payment of the school impact fee would mitigate the cumulative effect to school facilities from

an increase in school-age children generated by build-out of the general plan. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact to schools is less-than-cumulatively considerable.

Solid Waste

The city's general plan EIR identified that development consistent with the general plan would result in a significant impact unless mitigated (4.5-17), based on estimates of sufficient landfill capacity only until approximately 2016. Policies and programs contained in the general plan, including the addition of the mitigation proposed in the general plan EIR, called for coordination with San Benito County to reduce long-term impacts on landfill capacity by assuring appropriate planning for and construction of adequate solid waste facilities, can reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level.

Based on the solid waste generation rates discussed in Section 3.15 of this EIR, it is estimated that county residents (including residents in incorporated cities and unincorporated areas) produce approximately 4.4 pounds of solid waste per person, per day. The city's general plan estimates that buildout of the general plan would result in a population of 55,192 residents by the year 2023 (p. 2.4). Using the solid waste generation rate above, buildout of the general plan would result in a total disposal rate at the landfill of 242,845 pounds (approximately 621.4 tons) per day. The proposed project would contribute 5,477 pounds per day (1,238 persons x 4.4 pounds per day)

Since preparation of the general plan, the capacity at the John Smith Road Landfill has been increased. According to CalRecycle (2013a), the John Smith Road Landfill has a cease operation date of January 1, 2032. Total capacity of the landfill is 9.3 million cubic yards. The remaining capacity, as of November 30, 2012, was 4.6 million cubic yards. The maximum tonnage per day the landfill is permitted is 1,000 tons. Therefore, the total disposal rate of approximately 621.4 tons associated with buildout of the general plan would not exceed the landfill's permitted 1,000 tons per day. The addition of solid waste to the landfill resulting from general plan would not increase the tonnage beyond the landfill's permitted amount that could result in the closure of the landfill prior to the anticipated 2032 date.

The proposed project would contribute to the cumulative increase in demand for landfill capacity. However, there is sufficient capacity at the landfill to accommodate demand from general plan buildout (including this project). Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact to landfill capacity is less-than-cumulatively considerable.

Traffic and Circulation

Cumulative conditions represent future traffic volumes on the long-range future transportation network that would result from traffic growth projected to occur due to proposed but not yet approved (pending) development projects, in addition to trips from approved, but not yet developed projects, and the proposed project. The roadway network under cumulative conditions would be the same as the existing and background roadway network with the planned North Street extension.

Cumulative peak-hour traffic volumes were calculated by adding to background (approved development projects) plus project volumes the estimated traffic from the proposed but not yet approved (pending) development projects, as well as the reassigned background traffic associated with the planned North Street extension project. The traffic added to the study intersections from pending developments was estimated by distributing and assigning trips generated by these developments to the roadway network. The process of trip generation, distribution, and assignment is described in chapter 3 of the traffic report (included as Appendix H). Cumulative traffic volumes are shown on figure 12 of the traffic report.

Table 32, Pending Development Projects, lists the proposed but not yet approved (pending) development projects in the City of Hollister, which would add traffic to the roadway network under cumulative conditions.

To evaluate cumulative impacts at study intersections and highway segments, the following specific thresholds were used in this Draft EIR. The project would create a significant cumulative traffic impact if, as a result of the addition of project traffic:

- **Signalized and unsignalized intersection**: For either the AM or PM peak hour, the level of service (LOS) at an intersection degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under cumulative conditions; or in either peak hour, the LOS at an intersection is an unacceptable LOS D or worse under baseline conditions and the addition of project trips causes the average intersection delay to increase by five (5) or more seconds.

- **All-way stop:** For either the AM or PM peak hour, the level of service (LOS) at an intersection degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under cumulative conditions; or the average overall intersection level of service is already at an unacceptable LOS D or worse without the project and the addition of project traffic causes the average overall delay to increase five (5) or more seconds.

Table 32 Pending Development Projects

Applicant/Owner/ Project Name	Address/Location	Proposed Project Description
Chaney	Union Road at Calistoga Drive	46 Multi-family homes
West Gateway Mixed Use	Gateway Drive	19,163 square feet commercial building
Buena Vista Apartments	Buena Vista Road Between Westside Boulevard and Locust Street	80 Apartments
Apricot Lane	Westside Boulevard between Steinbeck Drive and Apricot Lane	173 Homes
Rakovich/Ivancovich	Buena Vista Road/Miller Road	103 Homes
Gonzalez	Buena Vista Road/Miller Road	92 Homes
King	Memorial Drive South of Sunset Drive	Eight Homes
KT Orchard Park	Buena Vista Road to Central Avenue	91 Small Lots
Roberts Ranch	Enterprise Road/Airline Highway	206 Residential Lots
Ladd Ranch	San Benito Street and Cienega Road	82 Homes
Pivetti	Valley View Road between Sunnyslope Road and Sunset Drive	24 Apartments
Saroyan/Howard	San Juan Road between Graf Road and Miller Road	97 Condos
Sywak	Westside Boulevard/South Street	Eight Homes
Dike	Westside Boulevard/South Street	39 Homes
Thorning	4th Street between Westside Boulevard and Rakovich Way	Ten Row Houses74 Apartments
Total	**242**	**138**

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. (2015)

- **One- or two-way stop**: The delay on the worst approach at a one- or two-way stop-controlled intersection degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under cumulative conditions and the traffic volumes at the intersection under project conditions are high enough to satisfy the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant adopted by Caltrans; or the delay on the worst approach at a one- or two-way stop-controlled intersection is already at an unacceptable LOS D or worse and the cumulative traffic volumes at the intersection under project conditions are high enough to satisfy the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant adopted by Caltrans, and the delay on the worst stop-controlled approach is increased.

- **Highway segments:** Based on Caltrans level of service impact criteria for highways, the project is said to create a significant adverse impact on traffic conditions at a study highway segment if in either peak hour, the LOS on a two-lane highway degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under cumulative conditions or the LOS on a two-lane highway is an unacceptable LOS D or worse under baseline conditions, and the addition of project traffic results in the addition of trips.

- **Freeway interchanges.** Based on Caltrans level of service impact criteria, the project is said to create a significant adverse impact on traffic conditions at a study interchange intersection if in either peak hour, the LOS on a two-lane highway degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under cumulative conditions or the intersection is already operating at an unacceptable LOS D or worse under baseline conditions, and the addition of project traffic results in the addition of trips.

Study Intersections

A comparison of the results of the intersection LOS and signal warrant analyses under existing, existing plus project, background, back ground plus project and cumulative conditions is presented in the traffic report Table ES-1 (Appendix #). The results of the cumulative analysis are summarized in Table 33, Cumulative Intersection Levels of Service and Signal Warrant Analyses.

The traffic report found that six study intersections are projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS D or worse under cumulative conditions during at least one of the peak hours:

12. Line Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

13. College Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

14. Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street (two-way stop)

15. San Benito Street and Fourth Street (signal)

22. State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road (signal)

24. State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road (two-way stop)

The traffic volumes at the intersection of SR 156 and Buena Vista Road under cumulative conditions are large enough to satisfy the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant. All of the remaining unsignalized study intersections are projected to have traffic conditions that fall below the thresholds that warrant signalization.

Table 33 Cumulative Intersection Levels of Service and Signal Warrant Analyses

	Intersection	Existing Intersection Control[1]	Jurisdiction	Peak Hour	Delay	LOS	Warrant met?[2]
1.	San Felipe Road and State Route 25/Bolsa Road	Signal	**Caltrans**	AM	25.0	C	--
				PM	30.5	C	---
2.	Westside Boulevard and Buena Vista Road	Two-Way	City	AM	18.7	C	No
				PM	15.0	C	No
3.	Line Street and Buena Vista Road	One-Way	City	AM	13.3	B	No
				PM	11.9	B	No
4.	Locust Avenue and Buena Vista Road (unsignalized)	All-Way	City	AM	9.1	A	No
				PM	9.3	A	No
5.	"A" Street and North Street (future)	Future	City	AM	12.0	B	No
				PM	13.0	B	No
6.	Thompson Street/"J" Street and North Street (unsignalized)	Yield	City	AM	11.7	B	No
				PM	12.7	B	No
7.	San Benito Street and North Street/Santa Ana Road	Signal	City	AM	21.2	C	--
				PM	19.8	B	--
8.	McCray Street/Rustic Street and Santa Ana Road	Signal	City	AM	7.9	A	--
				PM	11.1	B	--

	Intersection	Existing Intersection Control[1]	Jurisdiction	Peak Hour	Delay	LOS	Warrant met?[2]
9.	State Route 25 and Santa Ana Road	Signal	Caltrans	AM	31.3	C	--
				PM	26.9	C	--
10.	Locust Avenue/College Street and Second Street (unsignalized)	All-Way Stop	City	AM	7.2	A	No
				PM	7.1	A	No
11.	Westside Boulevard and Fourth Street	Signal	City	AM	20.0	B	No
				PM	18.0	B	No
12.	Line Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)	Two Way Stop	City	AM	24.6	C	No
				PM	**55.6**	**F**	No
13.	College Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)	Two Way Stop	City	AM	**31.4**	**D**	No
				PM	**53.2**	**F**	No
14.	Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street (unsignalized)	Two Way Stop	City	AM	**32.6**	**D**	No
				PM	**51.2**	**F**	No
15.	San Benito Street and Fourth Street	Signal	City	AM	**40.8**	**D**	No
				PM	**49.9**	**D**	No
16.	McCray Street and Fourth Street/Meridian Street	Signal	City	AM	15.2	B	No
				PM	24.6	C	No
17.	State Route 25 and Meridian Street	Signal	Caltrans	AM	25.6	C	No
				PM	23.4	C	No

	Intersection	Existing Intersection Control[1]	Jurisdiction	Peak Hour	Delay	LOS	Warrant met?[2]
18.	Westside Boulevard and South Street (unsignalized)	All Way Stop	City	AM	14.8	B	No
			City	PM	16.3	C	No
19.	Powell Street and South Street (unsignalized)	All Way Stop	City	AM	9.1	B	No
				PM	10.1	B	No
20.	San Benito Street and South Street	Signal	City	AM	13.0	B	---
				PM	12.0	B	--
21.	McCray Street and South Street/Hillcrest Road	Signal	City	AM	20.6	C	--
				PM	29.5	C	--
22.	State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road	Signal	Caltrans	AM	26.8	C	--
				PM	**48.8**	**D**	--
23.	San Benito Street and Nash Road	Signal	City	AM	28.2	C	--
				PM	21.7	C	--
24.	State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road	Two Way Stop	Caltrans	AM	18.2	C	**Yes**
				PM	**195.4**	**F**	**Yes**

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. (2015)

***Note*:**

1. The reported delay and corresponding level of service for all-way stop-controlled intersections represents the average delay for all approaches at the intersection. The reported delay and corresponding level of service for one- and two-way stop-controlled intersections are based on the stop-controlled approach with the highest delay.
2. Signal warrant analysis is not applicable to signalized intersections

Entries denoted in bold indicate conditions that exceed the current level of service standard.

Five other study intersections (two signalized intersections and three unsignalized intersections) are projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS D or worse under cumulative conditions during at least one of the peak hours. At the three unsignalized intersections (intersections 12, 13, and 14), the highest-delay stop-controlled approach would operate with unacceptable delays. However, the volume of traffic on the busiest stop-controlled approach at all three intersections is relatively low (less than 100 vehicles during the highest peak-hour at each intersection) and the intersections would have traffic conditions that fall below the thresholds that warrant signalization under cumulative conditions. Therefore, no additional improvements are recommended at the three remaining unsignalized intersection locations.

The remaining study intersections are projected to operate at an acceptable LOS C or better during both the AM and PM peak hours under cumulative conditions.

San Benito Street and Fourth Street (Signal). During the AM and PM peak hours, the LOS at the intersection of San Benito Street and Fourth Street operates at an unacceptable LOS D under baseline (existing) conditions (refer to Table 33, Cumulative Intersection Levels of Service and Signal Warrant Analyses). The addition of cumulative trips would cause the average intersection delay to increase from 36.7 seconds (AM) and 37.7 seconds (PM) under existing conditions to 40.8 (AM) and 49.9 (PM) under cumulative conditions. This equates to a12.1 second increase in the average intersection delay during the PM hour that exceeds the minimum five second increase in delay threshold which is a significant cumulative impact. The proposed project generates traffic that contributes to this significant cumulative impact and is therefore cumulatively considerable.

Significant and Unavoidable Cumulative Impact – Signalized Intersection (San Benito Street and Fourth Street): The proposed project would generate cumulatively considerable traffic that would contribute to cumulative intersection delay during the PM peak hour.

The proposed project would generate cumulatively considerable traffic to the already congested intersection of San Benito Street and Fourth Street that would contribute to the 12.1-second increase in delay at this intersection during the PM peak hour. However; there are no feasible improvements that can be implemented at this intersection due to right-of-way restrictions. Physical improvements would entail removal of on-street parking and/or sidewalk narrowing within the downtown area that is not considered feasible. As such, there are no feasible mitigation measures and the impact is significant and unavoidable.

State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road (Signal). The LOS at the intersection of State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road operates at an acceptable LOS B (AM) and C (PM) under existing conditions (refer to Table 33, Cumulative Intersection Levels of Service and Signal Warrant Analyses). The addition of cumulative trips would cause the intersection LOS deteriorate to an unacceptable D

during the PM peak hour and increase the average intersection delay from 27.3 seconds to 48.8 seconds. This is a 21.5 second increase of the average intersection delay which exceeds the five second or more impact threshold.

Significant and Potentially Unavoidable Cumulative Impact – Signalized Intersection (State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road): The addition of cumulative traffic to baseline (existing) traffic volumes would cause the State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road intersection to deteriorate from an acceptable LOS C to an unacceptable LOS D and increase the average delay 21.5 seconds during the peak PM hour which exceeds the five second or more impact; this is, therefore, a significant cumulative impact.

The additional traffic volumes at the intersection of State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road under cumulative conditions would cause the intersection to degrade from an acceptable LOS C to an unacceptable LOS D during the peak PM hour and also cause an increase in the delay of the intersection by more than five seconds, which is a significant impact. According to the traffic report the improvements needed to restore the intersection LOS to acceptable levels under cumulative conditions consists of the addition of a second westbound through lane, and second left-turn lanes in both northbound and southbound directions.

As noted in Section 3.16, Transportation and Traffic, development projects within San Benito County, including incorporated cities, are required to pay traffic impact fees into the Hollister/San Benito County Regional Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) program. The San Benito COG administers the TIF program as authorized by the Regional Transportation Plan. The purpose of the TIF program is to implement city and county roadway improvement projects identified in the San Benito County Traffic Mitigation Fee Study, based on anticipated regional development identified in the county's and the cities' general plans. According to city engineering staff, the TIF is being revised to specifically address concerns regarding development project impacts to state highways and payment of the TIF fee is considered adequate mitigation to reduce project impacts to a less than significant level (David Rubcic pers. com. September 2015). Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact.

Mitigation Measure

T-7. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant and/or project site developers shall pay the project's applicable fair-share TIF fee, as determined by the City of Hollister, toward improvement costs at the intersection of State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road, which is under Caltrans jurisdiction. Improvements could consist of an additional through-lane and second left-turn lanes in the northbound and southbound legs of the intersection.

Payment of the traffic impact fee would act as mitigation for the proposed project's contribution toward cumulative traffic impacts to this intersection. However, improvements to the State Route 25 and Hillcrest Road intersection are the responsibility of Caltrans and the City has no authority to require Caltrans to implement the improvement. Although payment of the TIF fee alone would not guarantee the timely construction of the identified improvement to immediately mitigate the project impact by the time the project is fully occupied, improvements to the State Highway are outside of local control; therefore, the payment of local fees toward future improvements is the only feasible mitigation available for this project. Nevertheless, because the identified improvements would fall within the responsibility and jurisdiction of Caltrans, timely implementation of Mitigation Measure T-7 cannot be guaranteed and the the project's cumulative impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

Line Street and Fourth Street, College Street and Fourth Street Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street (Unsignalized Intersections). All unsignalized study intersections (with the exception of State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road), are projected to have traffic conditions that fall below the thresholds that warrant signalization. At these three unsignalized intersections (Line Street and Fourth Street, College Street and Fourth Street, Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street), the highest-delay stop-controlled approach would operate with unacceptable delays. However, the volume of traffic on the busiest stop-controlled approach at all three intersections is relatively low (less than 100 vehicles during the highest peak hour at each intersection) and the intersections would have traffic conditions that fall below the thresholds that warrant signalization under cumulative conditions. Therefore, these three study intersections are projected to operate at an acceptable LOS C or better during both the AM and PM peak hours under cumulative conditions and no additional improvements are recommended.

The remaining study intersections are projected to operate at an acceptable LOS C or better during both the AM and PM peak hours under cumulative conditions.

Less-than-Significant Cumulative Impact (Line Street and Fourth Street, College Street and Fourth Street Locust Avenue/Powell Street and Fourth Street). The addition of project traffic at all other study intersections would be less than significant.

State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road (Unsignalized). The traffic volumes at the intersection of State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road under baseline (existing) conditions are large enough to satisfy the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant (refer to Table 33, Cumulative Intersection Levels of Service and Signal Warrant Analyses). This was identified as a significant and potentially unavoidable impact of the project (refer to Section 3.16 of this EIR).

The traffic volumes at the intersection of State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road under cumulative conditions are also large enough to satisfy the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant. The addition of cumulative traffic to this intersection would cause a significant LOS impact by causing the average delay to increase by 154.9 seconds over existing conditions, which exceeds the five second or more impact threshold and exacerbates an already unacceptable LOS.

Significant and Potentially Unavoidable Cumulative Impact – Unsignalized Intersection (State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road): The addition of cumulative traffic to baseline (existing) traffic volumes would cause the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection to deteriorate from unacceptable LOS E under baseline conditions to unacceptable LOS F, with a 154.9-second increase in delay during the PM peak hour under cumulative conditions.

The traffic volumes at the intersection of State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road under cumulative conditions would increase the delay by 154.9 seconds over existing conditions and also satisfy the peak-hour volume traffic signal warrant. Therefore, the project would result in a significant cumulative impact at the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection based on applicable significance criteria.

As discussed in Section 3.16 of this EIR, the TIF program identifies improvement of 12 specific intersections. The TIF also allows for the improvement of five additional intersections that are not identified. They are considered "floater" intersections. According to Robert Del Rio, Hexagon Transportation Consultants, as part of other traffic studies for development projects along Buena Vista, the city's public works staff has indicated that the State Route 156 and Buena Vista Road intersection will be added to the list of TIF intersections using the available "floater" intersections (pers. comm. March 2015).

Implementation of the mitigation measure T-1 presented in Section 3.16 of this EIR would mitigate the cumulative impact to a less than significant level if the improvement is constructed prior to project implementation. However, because the identified improvements for signalization of the intersection would also fall within the responsibility and jurisdiction of Caltrans and the County of San Benito, timely construction of the identified improvements to mitigate the project impact is not guaranteed. Also, payment of a fee, alone, as required by mitigation measure T-1, will not guarantee the timely construction of the identified improvements to mitigate the project impact. As the applicant is required to make a fair-share contribution in the form of fee payment rather than constructing the improvement, this impact is significant and unavoidable.

Study Highway Segments

All highway segments studied in the traffic report are projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS D or worse during both peak hours under cumulative conditions (refer to Table 34 Cumulative Highway Segment Level of Service Results, below).

Table 34 Cumulative Highway Segment Level of Service Results

Segment	Peak Hour/ Direction	Existing Conditions		Cumulative	
		% Time-Spent-Following	LOS	% Time-Spent-Following	LOS
State Route 25 - between San Felipe Road/San Benito Street and State Route 156	AM/NB	96.4%	E	97.9%	E
	AM/SB	56.9%	D	69.4%	E
	PM/NB	69.5%	D	84.8%	E
	PM/SB	89.6%	E	96.6%	E
State Route 25 – between State Route 156 and U.S. Highway 101	AM/NB	96.2%	E	100.0%	F
	AM/SB	61.2%	E	74.5%	F
	PM/NB	72.2%	E	88.4%	F
	PM/SB	92.7%	E	100.0%	F
State Route 156 – between The Alameda and Union Road	AM/NB	76.3%	E	79.6%	E
	AM/SB	92.2%	E	94.3%	E
	PM/NB	89.5%	E	92.6%	E
	PM/SB	86.3%	E	89.3%	E
State Route 156 – between Union Road and Buena Vista Road	AM/EB	69.6%	D	70.5%	D
	AM/WB	83.6%	E	85.7%	E
	PM/EB	88.1%	E	89.7%	E
	PM/WB	77.6%	D	79.8%	E
State Route 156 - Buena Vista Road and State Route 25	AM/EB	70.2%	D	77.3%	D
	AM/WB	58.5%	C	60.8%	D
	PM/EB	62.2%	D	69.0%	D
	PM/WB	76.5%	D	82.7%	E

Source: Hexagon Traffic Consultants 2015

Notes: NB= North Bound; SB = South Bound; EB = East Bound; WB = West Bound

The proposed project would result in the addition of peak-hour trips to those highway segments projected to operate at unacceptable levels of service. The addition of approved and pending project traffic also would contribute to the deterioration of the highway segments' level of service. Therefore, the proposed project would have a significant cumulative impact at all highway segments studied, based on the Caltrans impact criteria for highways.

Significant and Unavoidable Cumulative Impact (Segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156): The addition of project traffic would add peak hour trips to segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156 which operate at unacceptable levels of service (LOS D) during at least one of the peak hours, which is a significant cumulative impact.

As discussed in Section 3.16 of this EIR, mitigation for the identified highway segment project impacts would require widening of the highways to maintain LOS C operations. It is not known whether sufficient right-of-way is available for such widening. Even if right-of-way is available, improvements of this magnitude would be financially infeasible for any single development project to implement.

A TIF program has been established for the transportation system within San Benito County. TIF fees may be used towards improvements identified as part of the TIF program and mitigate project impacts. The San Benito COG implements the fee program as authorized by the RTP. Given the regional significance of these improvements, associated pre-planning, design and implementation of necessary acquisition of adjacent lands by Caltrans, as well as the substantial costs associated with them, the TIF study included the improvements to State Route 156 and State Route 25 as identified in the 2010 RTP. However these improvements are not included in the current TIF program (as authorized by the 2014 RTP).

Implementation of the mitigation measure T-2 presented in Section 3.16 of this EIR requiring payment of the applicable TIF at issuance of building permit (should the widening improvements to State Route 25 and State Route 156 be covered in the then-current TIF program) would be required.

Mitigation Measure. See Mitigation Measures T-2 in Section 3.16 of this EIR. Should the widening of the highways be deemed infeasible or not part of the TIF program at the issuance of building permit, the cumulative impacts to the segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156 would be considered significant and unavoidable.

If this mitigation measure T-2 is implemented, the cumulative impacts would be mitigated to the extent feasible. However, even if implemented, the mitigation cannot guarantee the timely construction of the required improvements, when they are warranted, to mitigate the project's impacts. Accordingly, with or without mitigation, the cumulative impacts to segments of State Route 25 and State Route 156 would be considered significant and unavoidable.

Highway Interchange Level of Service

The results of the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 interchange analysis under cumulative conditions are summarized in Table 35, Cumulative Freeway Interchange Analysis Results, below.

Table 35 Cumulative Freeway Interchange Analysis Results

			Cumulative		
Intersection	**Ex Int Control**	**Peak Hour**	**Avg. Delay[1]**	**LOS**	**Warrant Met**
U.S. Highway 101 South Bound Ramps and State Route 25	One-Way Stop	AM	**557.5**	**F**	**No**
		PM	**2**	**F**	**Yes**
U.S. Highway South Bound Ramps and State Route 25	One-Way Stop	AM	**25.3**	**D**	**+1.3**
		PM	**1,390.6**	**F**	**+73.1**

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. (2015)

Note:

1. The reported delay and corresponding level of service for signalized and all-way stop-controlled intersections represents the average delay for all approaches at the intersection.
2. Lane configuration and volume conditions exceed the bounds of the unsignalized level of service methodology. The intersection is over capacity. An accurate delay value cannot be established.

Entries denoted in bold indicate unacceptable LOS and/or or signal warrant met. Bold and shaded indicates a significant impact.

The results indicate that both intersections of the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 interchange are projected to operate at unacceptable levels of service during both peak hours under cumulative conditions. The proposed project is projected to add traffic to both interchange intersections during the peak hours. Therefore, the proposed project would have a cumulative impact at the U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 25 interchange, based on the Caltrans impact criteria.

As discussed in Section 3.16 of this EIR, the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Santa Clara County's Congestion Management Agency, in its Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2035 document has identified improvements at the U.S. Highway and State Route 25 interchange, which include the construction of a full interchange and the widening of U.S. Highway between Monterey Highway and State Route 25 and a new roadway extension to Santa Teresa Boulevard. However, funding for the interchange improvements is currently not available. Since

it is not feasible for an individual development project to bear responsibility for implementing such extensive transportation system improvements due to constraints in acquisition and cost of right-of-way, the significant impact at the U.S. Highway and State Route 25 interchange must be considered significant and unavoidable. There is no feasible mitigation available to reduce the cumulative impact to a less than significant level..

Wastewater

The general plan EIR determined that increased demand for wastewater demand associated with buildout of the general plan could be significant. However, the general plan EIR noted that the planned treatment capacity of the City of Hollister Wastewater Treatment Plant would be consistent with the development projections under the general plan, and therefore adequate capacity would be provided as the city develops. Implementation of the general plan policies and programs related to water and wastewater, with the additional mitigation measure proposed in the EIR requiring master planning for wastewater and water supplies in coordination with the San Benito County Water District and San Benito, would result in a less-than-significant impact wastewater treatment capacity (p. 4.10-13).

The city's wastewater master plan (HDR Consultants 2008) anticipates the annual wastewater treatment capacity demand for the city will increase with buildout of the Hollister Urban Area (which is consistent with the general plan planning area). Buildout of the Hollister Urban Area was evaluated in the wastewater master plan, which included development of the project site with high density residential development. In 2008, the city treated approximately 2.7 mgd at the domestic wastewater treatment plant and the plant has a planned total capacity of five mgd per day, which, as identified in the wastewater master plan, is sufficient to accommodate the wastewater needs of the Hollister Urban Area, including the project site, through 2023.

The proposed project would contribute to an increase in wastewater treatment and disposal services identified in the general plan EIR. As discussed in Section 3.17 of this EIR, the proposed project would generate 0.10 mgd of wastewater. Future development of the project site would include up to 343 residential units, which are substantially fewer units than could otherwise be potentially developed consistent with the general plan High Density Residential land use designation's maximum density of 12-35 dwelling units per acre on the approximately 81-acre site. As such, the proposed project would generate less wastewater than was anticipated by buildout of the general plan, and studied in the general plan EIR. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts that are greater than those studied and addressed by the general plan EIR and anticipated in the city's wastewater master plan. For these reasons, the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact to wastewater treatment capacity and treatment is less-than-cumulatively considerable.

Water Supplies

The city's general plan EIR identified significant impacts to water supply due to an increase in demand resulting from buildout of general plan land use designations within the planning area (p. 4.10-18). The general plan EIR concluded that implementation of general plan policies and programs related to water supply and required master planning with the San Benito County Water District and the county for wastewater and water supplies would reduce the impact to regional water supply to a less-than significant level.

The water demand anticipated in the city's general plan (11,465 acre-feet per year in year 2023) is consistent with the city's current urban water management plan (Todd Engineers 2011) water demand estimate of 11,583 acre-feet per year for buildout of the Urban Area (within which the project site is located and similar to the general plan planning area boundary) in 2030. Hollister's portion of this demand is 6,838 acre-feet per year. The estimated underlying sustainable yield of the aquifers is 16,000 acre-feet per year with 9,950 acre-feet per year available to Hollister and Sunnyslope.

As identified in Table 28, Hollister Urban Area Water Use and Water Supply (Acre-Feet per Year), presented in Section 3.18 of this EIR, the urban water management plan also anticipates the annual water demand for the city will increase with buildout of the Hollister Urban Area. Buildout of the Hollister Urban Area was evaluated in the urban water management plan and includes development of the project site with high density residential development. Table 25 also identifies that available water resources, including a combination of groundwater, imported water and recycled growth are adequate to meet the projected growth needs.

As noted above in the discussion of wastewater treatment and disposal capacity, future development consistent with the vesting tentative map would result in fewer residences and correspondingly less water demand than could otherwise occur if the site were developed to the maximum density allowed by the general plan High Density Residential land use designation. As such future development of the site would require less water than anticipated by buildout of the general plan, and studied in the general plan EIR. Therefore the proposed project's contribution to a cumulative increase in water demand would not result in impacts that are greater than those studied and addressed by the general plan EIR and city's urban water master plan. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impact to water supply is less-than-cumulatively considerable.

6.0
ALTERNATIVES

6.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(a) requires a description of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project which could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. It also requires an evaluation of the comparative merits of the alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project, but must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision-making and public participation. CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(b) further requires that the discussion of alternatives focus on those alternatives capable of eliminating any significant adverse environmental impacts or reducing them to a level of insignificance, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly. CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6 (e) stipulates that a no project alternative be evaluated along with its impacts.

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(d) requires the EIR to present enough information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis and comparison with the proposed project. If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed. CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(e) requires the identification of an environmentally superior alternative. If the "No Project" alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, then the environmentally superior alternative amongst the remaining alternatives must be identified.

6.2 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6 (e) requires the "no project" alternative be evaluated along with its impacts. The "no project" alternative analysis must discuss the existing conditions, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services (Title 14 CCR §15126.6(e)). If disapproval would result in predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project, the "no project" consequence should be discussed. In certain instances, the no project alternative means "no build" wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained. However, where failure to proceed with the proposed project would not result in preservation of existing environmental conditions, the analysis should identify the practical result of the project's non-approval.

There are two "no project" alternatives: No Project (A) is a no-build scenario that assumes no development would occur on the project site; No Project (B) assumes a scenario consistent with what is allowed by existing city land use designations and zoning within the city limit.

The following alternatives to the project are considered:

- Alternative 1: No Project (A)
- Alternative 2: No Project (B)

Each of these alternatives is described below.

No Project (A) Description

The No Project (A) alternative assumes that the project site would remain vacant. The general plan amendment, prezone, vesting tentative map, SOI amendment and annexation would not be approved and that no new development would occur on the project site. For this analysis the existing development and land use on each parcel is assumed to continue unchanged for at least 20 years. Development within Hollister would continue within the existing city limit and SOI, or potentially within new additions to the SOI in other parts of the City, thus resulting in a variety of potential environmental impacts in those locations. However, this analysis focuses on the environmental effects within the project site under a no build scenario. The No Project (A) alternative does not achieve project objectives.

No Project (B) Description

The No Project (B) alternative assumes a scenario consistent with development allowed by existing City of Hollister High Density Residential land use designations and zoning. This

alternative assumes future development on only the approximately 23 acres that are currently within the city limits. The No Project (B) alternative would not require a general plan amendment or prezone and would not require SOI amendment and annexation approval by LAFCO. The No Project (B) alternative assumes that future development of the 23 acres would include 603 high density residential uses consistent with the maximum density allowed by the general plan HDR land use designation (35 du/ac), less an assumed 25 percent reduction in land area for infrastructure, open space, parks etc.(804 – 201 = 603). Assuming 3.61 persons per household, this alternative would provide housing for approximately 2,176 persons.

6.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED, BUT NOT SELECTED

Maximum Density Consistent With General Plan

An alternative that assumed the eventual development of the site consistent with the maximum density of 35 dwelling units per acre allowed by the general plan High Density Residential land use designation was initially considered but rejected from further discussion. This alternative assumed that the proposed project would not be implemented, but development of the site could occur sometime in the future based on the existing general plan land use designations. Under this alternative, the project site would eventually be developed with up to 35 dwelling units per acre less an assumed overall 25 percent reduction for infrastructure, open space, parks, etc. Under this alternative, 2,126 high density dwelling units would be constructed (2,835 – 709 = 2,126). Assuming an average of 3.61 persons per household, this alternative would provide housing for approximately 7,675 persons. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would also need a general plan amendment and prezone as well as LAFCO approval of an SOI amendment and annexation.

This alternative was dismissed from further consideration due to the presence of physical site constraints and as it would not eliminate or avoid the significant and unavoidable individual and cumulative impacts to visual character, agriculture, regional air and water quality, and traffic of the proposed project. As with the proposed project, the presence of geologic (slopes and landslide potential) and seismic (earthquake faults) characteristics constrain the development opportunities available on the site, which would otherwise provide enough land area, for diverse housing options/products at the maximum densities identified in the general plan. However, even if this higher density housing could be achieved given the site constraints, this alternative would result in impacts of greater intensity to aesthetics, traffic, and air and water quality, and GHG emissions than are discussed under the Increased Density Alternative and analyzed for the proposed project. For these reasons, this alternative is eliminated from further consideration.

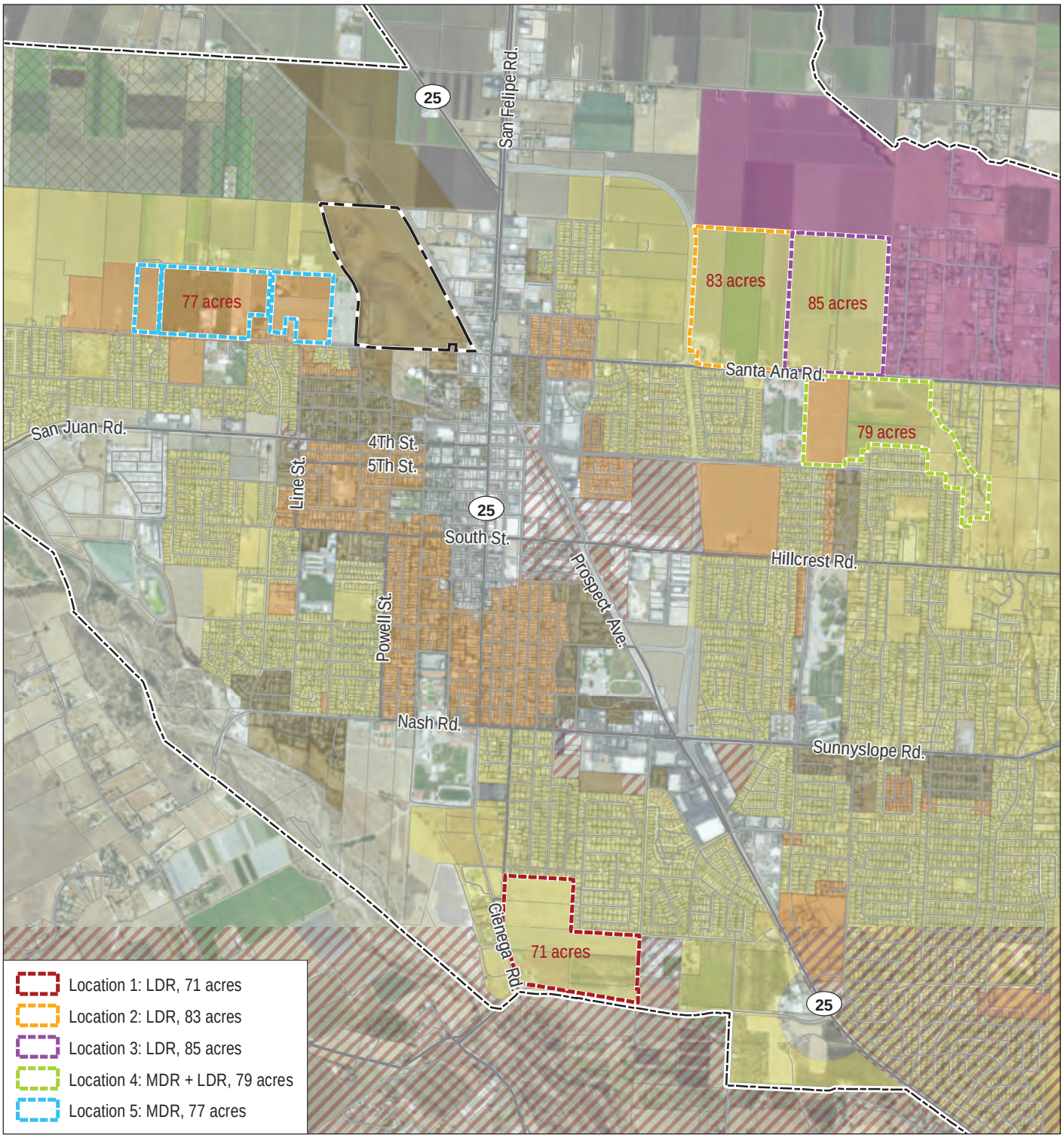
Increased Density Alternative

A similar, but larger, project was originally proposed on the project site. The Increased Density alternative assumes future development of the project site with 450 dwelling units. This alternative meets the minimum density (12 dwelling units/acre) allowed under the general plan High Density Residential land use designation. However, as with the proposed project and the Maximum Density Alternative, the presence of geologic (slopes and landslide potential) and seismic (earthquake faults) characteristics on the site also limit the development opportunities available for diverse housing options/types consistent with the general plan High Density Residential land use designation. Under this alternative, future development of the project site would consist of up to 390 single-family dwelling units and a minimum of 60 multi-family dwelling units (on Parcel C). This alternative would result in similar impacts as the proposed project although with higher residential densities across the site. Increasing the residential densities would affect lot sizes and configuration and also the type and configuration of small lot single-family residential uses on the site, which may not fully meet the project objective to "provide a mix of housing types to serve the housing needs of the city". Residential development under this alternative would provide housing for approximately 1,625 persons (450 x 3.61). Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would also need a general plan amendment and prezone as well as LAFCO approval of an SOI amendment and annexation.

Although this alternative would better meet the residential densities identified for this site in the general plan, implementation of the Increased Density Alternative was dismissed from further consideration. The alternative would increase risks of harm and property damage due to seismic hazards, but otherwise would result in environmental effects similar to those of the proposed project and would not eliminate the significant and unavoidable impacts of the proposed project. For these reasons, this alternative is eliminated from further consideration.

Alternative Location

Several alternative locations within the city's planning area were identified but eliminated from further consideration. Figure 26, Potential Alternative Locations, shows the location/boundaries of these considered, but rejected alternative locations. There are no areas of comparable size within the city's SOI which would feasibly meet the objectives of the proposed project.



Source: San Benito County 2015, Esri 2015

Figure 26

Possible Alternative Locations

North Street Subdivision EIR

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Location 1: This location consists of 71 acres designated as Low Density Residential (1-8 dwelling units per acre) in the general plan that are partially located within the SOI, south of the city limit, north of State Route 25 and east of Cienega Road. Adjacent land uses include low-density residential uses to the west and north, a school to the east, and rural residential uses in unincorporated San Benito County to the south. Unlike the project site, this alternative location is not located adjacent to services and commercial areas. A portion of site adjacent to State Route 25 is also identified as a potential specific plan area. This alternative was considered, but rejected for several reasons: the city is currently processing applications for residential development on the northern on-third of this site (approximately 24 acres); barring any site-specific constraints up to approximately 280 single-family residential units could be developed on the remainder of the site consistent with the Low Density Residential land use designation, although preparation of and city approval of a specific plan would also be required; as with the proposed project, the site contains Prime Farmland (Department of Conservation 2010); similar to the proposed project, a general plan amendment, and LAFCO approval of an SOI amendment and annexation would be required for this site; this site is not under the control of the project applicants; this alternative location would not meet the objectives of the proposed project, including the provision of up to 20 acres of parkland and open space on the site and, in particular, to provide diverse housing types on a site identified as a Phase I infill site in the general plan, and would not include participation in the North Street ROW extension.

Location 2: This location consists of 83 acres located outside the SOI, is designated by the Hollister general plan as Residential Estate (1-5 dwelling units per acre), and is located north of Santa Ana Road, east of the State Route 25 Bypass. Adjacent land uses include agriculture to the west, north and east, and low-density residential uses to the south. Unlike the project site, this alternative location is not located adjacent to services and commercial areas. This site is currently being used for agriculture and consists primarily of Prime Farmland (Department of Conservation 2010). Future development of this site with medium- to high-density residential uses would require a general plan amendment, prezone, LAFCO approval of annexation and SOI amendments, in addition to the extension of infrastructure to accommodate development. Medium- to high-density residential uses would not likely be compatible with the existing rural character in this area of unincorporated San Benito County, and would result in the premature conversion of a greater amount of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses than would the proposed project. Barring any site-specific constraints, development consistent with the existing general plan Residential Estate land use designation could include up to approximately 311 single-family dwelling units. This site also is not under the control of the project applicants and its development would not meet the objectives of the proposed project, in particular, to provide diverse housing types on a site identified as a Phase I infill site in the general plan, and would not include participation in the North Street ROW extension.

Location 3: This location consists of 85 acres outside the SOI and east of Location 2, north of Santa Ana Road. Adjacent land uses include agriculture to the west, north and south, and very low-density residential uses to the east. This site is currently being used for agriculture and consists primarily of Prime Farmland (Department of Conservation 2010) and the general plan land use designation is Residential Estate (1-5 dwelling units per acre). Future development of this site with medium- to high-density Residential uses would require a general plan amendment, prezone, LAFCO approval of annexation and SOI amendments, and the extension of infrastructure to accommodate development. This site is further east from existing services near the city core. High density residential uses also would not likely be compatible with the existing rural character in this area of unincorporated San Benito County, and development of this site would result in the premature conversion of a greater amount of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses than would the proposed project. Barring any site-specific constraints, development consistent with the existing general plan Residential Estate land use designation could include up to approximately 319 single-family dwelling units. This site also is not under the control of the project applicants and its development would not meet the objectives of the proposed project, in particular, to provide diverse housing types on a site identified as a Phase I infill site in the general plan, and would not include participation in the North Street ROW extension.

Location 4: This location is a 71-acre site located south of Santa Ana Road and south of Location 3. Adjacent land uses include agriculture and very low-density residential uses to the north and east, low-density residential uses to the south, agriculture and low-density residential uses to the west. Unlike the project site, this alternative location is not located adjacent to services and commercial areas. A portion of this site is identified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance (Department of Conservation 2010). A creek runs generally northwest-southeast through much of the eastern portion of the site. Another portion of this site is the subject of a pending SOI amendment, annexation and future single-family residential development currently in process with the city. Pending application approval the site is currently being used for agriculture. Future development of the remainder of the site (approximately 60 acres) with medium- to high-density residential uses would require a general plan amendment, prezone, LAFCO approval of annexation and SOI amendments, and the extension of infrastructure to accommodate development. Medium- to high-density residential uses would not likely be compatible with existing and pending low-density uses or rural character in this area of unincorporated San Benito County. Development of the site would result in the premature conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural uses. Barring any site-specific constraints, development consistent with the existing general plan Low Density Residential land use designation could include up to approximately 355 single-family dwelling units. The remainder of the site may not be under the control of the project

applicants and its development would not meet the objectives of the proposed project, including the provision of up to 20 acres of parkland and open space on the site and, in particular, to provide diverse housing types on a site identified as a Phase I infill site in the general plan, and would not include participation in the North Street ROW extension.

Location 5: This location is a 77-acre site north of Buena Vista Road and east of the project site. This potential site is located outside the city's SOI and is designated by the Hollister general plan as Medium Density Residential (8-12 dwelling units per acre). Adjacent land uses include low-density residential uses to the south, agriculture to the west and north and the cemetery to the east. This site is currently being used for agriculture and consists primarily of Prime Farmland (Department of Conservation 2010). Development of this site would result in the premature conversion of a greater amount of Prime Farmland than would the proposed project. Future development of this site with high-density residential uses would require a general plan amendment, prezone, LAFCO approval of annexation and SOI amendments. Unlike the project site, this alternative location is not located adjacent to services and commercial areas. Any development of the site would convert Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses. Barring any site-specific constraints, development consistent with the existing general plan Medium Density Residential land use designation could include up to approximately 693 single- and multi-family dwelling units. However, the site is currently under active agricultural production and is not under the control of the project applicants. Further, the development of this site would not meet the objectives of the proposed project, in particular, to provide diverse housing types on a site identified as a Phase I infill site in the general plan.

6.4 ALTERNATIVE 1, NO PROJECT (A)

No Project (A) Alternative Analysis

Aesthetics

The No Project (A) alternative would not result in new development within the project site. Therefore, no adverse visual impacts would occur within the project site. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Agricultural Resources

The No Project (A) alternative would not convert the 15.49 acres of Prime Farmland on the project site to urban uses. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Air Quality

New air pollutant emissions from wood burning appliances and vehicle trips originating on the project site or from construction within the project site would not occur. New land uses would not be constructed in proximity to toxic air contaminant sources near the project site. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Biological Resources

The No Project (A) alternative would not affect biological resources within the project site. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Cultural Resources

The No Project (A) alternative would not affect cultural or paleontological resources within the project site. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Geology and Soils

The No Project (A) alternative would not result in development within the project site, including locations subject to fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, slope failure or on expansive soils. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The No Project (A) alternative would not result in new GHG emissions associated with construction and operations of new development within the project site. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The No Project (A) alternative would not expose future residents on the project site to pesticide residues. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The No Project (A) alternative would not change on-site water drainages and would not result in erosion, siltation, or flooding on or off the site. The No Project (A) alternative would not require additional water or generate new sources of wastewater discharges. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Noise

The No Project (A) alternative would not create new noise sources that would increase ambient noise levels or expose receptors to new stationary or mobile sources of noise. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Fire Protection

The No Project (A) alternative would not increase demand for fire protection services or require the development of new fire department facilities or expansion of fire services to meet increased demands. The fire department's service area would not expand. The No Project (A) would be similar to the proposed project for fire protection services.

Police Protection

The No Project (A) alternative would not require the development of police department facilities or expansion of police services to meet increased demands. The No Project (A) would be similar to the proposed project for police protection services.

Schools

The No Project (A) alternative would not add more students to the local schools, nor result in environmental effects related to the provision of new schools. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Parks

The No Project (A) alternative would not result in environmental effects related to the provision of park facilities. No parkland dedications would be required or in-lieu fees paid. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Water Service

The No Project (A) alternative would not require the development of new water service facilities, and would not result in environmental effects related to provision of those facilities. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Wastewater Service

The No Project (A) alternative would not require the development of new wastewater service facilities and would not result in environmental effects related to provision of those facilities. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Storm Drainage Facilities

The No Project (A) alternative would not require the development of new storm drainage facilities and would not result in environmental effects related to provision of those facilities. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Transportation and Traffic

The No Project (A) alternative would not result in new vehicular trips originating within the project site, and would not result in traffic congestions at intersections near the project site. The No Project (A) alternative would be superior to the proposed project.

Comparison of No Project (A) Alternative with Proposed Project Objectives

The following objectives, as prepared by the applicant, outline the underlying purpose of the proposed project. The objectives of the proposed project are to:

- Develop a residential project that is consistent with the city's general plan intentions for the site;
- Create a residential community consisting of 343 lots to allow 60 multi-family units and 283 single-family units;
- Improve an underutilized vacant 81-acre site identified in the city's general plan as "Vacant Land Inventory - High Density Residential," "Infill Development Strategy: Priority Infill" and "Phasing Strategy: Phase 1;"
- Provide a mix of housing types to serve the housing needs of the city;

- Participate in the completion of the needed connection from North Street to Buena Vista Road; and
- Provide a minimum of 20 acres of open/undeveloped area consisting of a meandering walking path integrated with an outdoor exercise track (parcourse), tot lot, picnic area, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking, and other associated improvements to serve the residents of the project and city.

The No Project (A) alternative would not meet any of the project objectives.

6.5 ALTERNATIVE 2: NO PROJECT (B)

No Project (A) Alternative Analysis

The environmental effects of the No Project (B) alternative with reference to the proposed project are summarized by topic area below.

Aesthetics

The No Project (B) alternative would result in development of high-density residential uses on approximately 23 acres within the city's SOI. This portion of the project site is located within the foreground of available views north from Vista Hill Park, and, similar to the proposed project, development would also occur on the sloped areas adjacent to the park. As with the proposed project, a portion of the 23-acre site is obscured from view from this vantage point. However, development of the site under this alternative would permanently replace the rural visual character of foreground views with high-density urban visual characteristics of linear roof shapes, multiple storied building lines and facades, and other urbanized elements. This alternative would maintain the existing visual character of the area between the 23-acre site and Highway 25 to the north. Although the No Project (B) alternative would result in the conversion of a smaller area than the proposed project, the overall impact to the rural visual character would be significant and similar to the proposed project when observed from vista Hill Park. The No Project (B) The No Project (B) alternative would be environmentally similar to the proposed project.

Agricultural Resources

The No Project (B) alternative would not convert Prime Farmland to non-agricultural use (refer to Figure 13, Important Farmlands Map). There is no Prime Farmland within the boundary of the 23-acre No Project (B) alternative site. The No Project (B) alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Air Quality-Construction

The No Project (B) alternative may generate more construction emissions related to building construction due to an increased number of residential units; however, construction would occur on a much smaller site and fewer dust and construction equipment exhaust emissions would be generated by grading and other site preparation activities. The increase in population with the No Project (B) alternative would generate more operational (area and mobile-source) emissions than the proposed project. Further, as with the proposed project, construction activities would occur adjacent to existing sensitive receptors south of the project site. The No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Biological Resources

This alternative would not prevent grading and development of currently vacant land, and similar to the proposed project, would result in potential impacts to special-status species (burrowing owl, American badger, San Joaquin whipsnake, special-status bats, and nesting birds). Therefore, the impacts of the No Project (A) alternative on biological resources would be similar to those identified for the proposed project and would require the same mitigation. However, as the No Project (B) alternative would convert less overall area from vacant to residential use, potential impacts of this alternative would be less in magnitude than for the proposed project. The No Project (B) alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Cultural Resources

Similar to the proposed project, the No Project (B) alternative has the potential to result in impacts to unknown buried cultural and/or paleontological resources, and mitigation measures would be required to ensure that the potential impacts should they occur, are reduced to less than significant. Consequently, the proposed project and the No Project (B) alternative have the same potential for impact and would require the same mitigation. The No Project (B) alternative would be environmentally similar to the proposed project.

Fire Services

No significant environmental impacts associated with the provision of fire services for the proposed project are identified. The No Project (B) alternative would generate more residents than the proposed project and therefore would result in a greater demand for fire protection services. However, as with the project site, this 23-acre site is located within the existing service area and, as reported in Section 3.6, Fire Services, can be reached within acceptable response times. Therefore, development under this alternative would not require the construction of new

facilities. Similar to the proposed project, developers of the NO Project (B) alternative would be responsible for the payment of development impact fees, which would mitigate the costs of new equipment and or infrastructure needs to maintain acceptable response times. Although the potential impacts are slightly greater under this alternative, the No Project (B) alternative would be environmentally similar to the proposed project.

Geology and Soils

The No Project (B) alternative would establish more residential units, resulting in more residents, than the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would result in the exposure of people and structures to potential geologic and soils impacts. However, the same site constraints (slope setbacks, building exclusion zones) would be applicable to development under this alternative as with the proposed project, to ensure that risks of geologic and seismic hazards exposures are reduced. This alternative would result in an increased risk of exposure due to a greater potential onsite population than the proposed project, and would be subject to similar mitigation measures to reduce these risks. The No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The No Project (B) alternative would generate more GHG emissions than the proposed project both during its operations phase, based on a greater number of residential units and related traffic. This alternative would develop 603 residential units on the site, 260 residential units more than the proposed project (343). Although the overall density of the project would increase, the increase in units and corresponding increase in traffic would likely generate greater mobile and area source GHG emissions than the proposed project. Construction GHG emissions would likely be reduced due to the reduced construction area. Overall GHG emissions are expected to be greater with this alternative and could exceed the service population threshold for GHG emissions. Therefore, unlike the proposed project, this alternative would result in potentially significant impacts related to GHG emissions. The No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The No Project (B) alternative, like the proposed project, has the potential to result in the release of hazardous materials resulting from disturbance of undocumented buried storage containers or contaminated soils during construction. Consequently, the proposed project and the No Project (B) alternative have the same potential for impact and would require the same mitigation. Thus, the impacts would be similar. The No Project (B) alternative would be environmentally similar to the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Construction of the No Project (B) alternative would disturb soils, increase erosion potential, and lead to an increase in post-construction runoff from paved surfaces and other impermeable areas on the site. However, development under this alternative would not be as extensive as the proposed project based on the reduced total project site area. The No Project (B) alternative would be subject to the same storm water retention, percolation, treatment, and discharge requirements as the proposed project. As discussed in Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, development would be subject to compliance with City of Hollister Best Management Practices and standards established for compliance with non-point discharge emissions for storm water and adequate drainage facilities. Therefore, it is assumed that, like the proposed project, storm water detention facilities would need to be constructed under this alternative, but on a smaller scale and therefore the impacts to hydrology and water quality resulting from this alternative would be less than the proposed project. The No Project (B) alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Noise

Under this alternative, development density would be increased compared to the proposed project, which would correspond with a permanent increase in ambient noise levels from traffic noise. Temporary noise impacts due to construction activities would also be increased in intensity and duration. Therefore, the noise impacts of the No Project (B) alternative would be greater than those of the proposed project. The No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Parks and Recreation

The No Project (B) alternative would generate more residents than the proposed project and, therefore, would result in a greater demand for park and recreation services and may require the provision of additional on- and off-site park facilities, the construction of which could result in physical environmental effects. Development under this alternative would require approximately eight (8) acres of parkland per Hollister Municipal Code Chapter 16.55, which is a greater amount than required or proposed by the proposed project. The No Project (B) alternative would be subject to compliance with the city's parkland provision requirements and may also be responsible for the payment of in-lieu fees to satisfy this requirement. Therefore, potential impacts to parks and recreational services are greater under this alternative. The No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Police Services

No significant environmental impacts associated with the provision of police services for the proposed project were identified. The No Project (B) alternative would generate more residents than the proposed project and; therefore, would result in a greater demand for police services, which, similar to the proposed project would require additional personnel to meet service thresholds. The No Project (B) alternative would require 3 additional officers to maintain acceptable service ratios. However, as with the project site, this 23-acre site is located within the existing service area and, as reported in Section 3.13, Police Services, can be reached within acceptable response times. Therefore, development under this alternative would not require the construction of new facilities. Similar to the proposed project, developers of the NO Project (B) alternative would be responsible for the payment of development impact fees, which would mitigate the costs of new equipment and or infrastructure needs to maintain acceptable response times. Although the potential impacts are slightly greater under this alternative, the No Project (B) alternative would be environmentally similar to the proposed project.

Schools

Environmental impacts associated with the provision of school services for the proposed project were determined to be less than significant, with the payment of applicable school impact fees. However, the No Project (B) alternative would provide more housing units and generate 556 school-age children, a significantly greater number than the proposed project (261). Although sufficient capacity exists for the kindergarten through grade eight children at existing elementary and middle schools, development under this alternative would contribute 115 high school students to the at-capacity San Benito High School. This alternative would contribute 49 more high school students than the proposed project, which would result in a greater demand for high school services and may require the provision of additional school facilities. Therefore, the potential impacts to the San Benito High School District are greater under this alternative. The No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Solid Waste

However, future development of residential units consistent with the No Project (B) alternative would result in more residents than the proposed project and, therefore, greater generation of solid waste and demand for landfill space than development proposed by the project. Although development under the No Project (B) alternative would be subject to the same waste diversion and solid waste recycling policies, future development of the site with a greater number of residential units would result in greater waste generation than the proposed project. Therefore the demand for landfill capacity would be greater under this alternative. The No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Traffic and Circulation

The traffic report estimated the magnitude of traffic generated by the proposed project by applying to the size of the project the appropriate trip generation rates, as published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). The trip generation estimates for the project are based on ITE trip generation rates for single-family homes (9.52 trips per day) and apartments (6.65 trips per day). Based on the applicable trip rate, the proposed project would generate 3,093 daily trips and the No Project (B) alternative would generate approximately 4,010 daily trips (with all units as apartments). With this increase in traffic volume on area roadways, the potential for traffic and circulation impacts under this alternative would be greater than the proposed project. Therefore, the No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Wastewater Service

The No Project (B) alternative would connect to existing wastewater infrastructure similar to the proposed project. Under the No Project (B) alternative the site would be developed with 603 dwelling units, 260 more units than the proposed project. The proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact on wastewater service capacity. However, future development consistent with the No Project (B) alternative would result in more residents than the proposed project and, therefore, greater demand on wastewater. Although the magnitude of impacts to wastewater service under the No Project (B) alternative would be greater than the proposed project, the impacts also would be less than significant with this alternative. Therefore, the No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Water Supplies and Facilities

The No Project (B) alternative would connect to existing water supply and treatment facility infrastructure similar to the proposed project. Under the No Project (B) alternative the site would be developed with 603 dwelling units, 260 more units than the proposed project. The proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact on water service capacity. However, future development consistent with the No Project (B) alternative would result in more residents than the proposed project and, therefore, greater demand for domestic water. Although the magnitude of impacts to water service under the No Project (B) alternative would be greater than the proposed project, the impacts also would be less than significant with this alternative. Therefore, the No Project (B) alternative would not be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Comparison of the No Project (B) Alternative With Proposed Project Objectives

A comparison of the No Project (B) Alternative with the proposed project objectives is presented in the Table 36, Comparison with Project Objectives.

Table 36 Comparison with Project Objectives

Project Objective	Consistent
Develop a residential project that is consistent with the intent of the general plan land use designations for the site;	Yes
Create a residential community consisting of 343 lots to allow 60 multi-family units and 283 single-family units;	No
Improve an underutilized vacant 81-acre site identified in the city's general plan as "Vacant Land Inventory - High Density Residential," "Infill Development Strategy: Priority Infill" and "Phasing Strategy: Phase 1;"	Partially
Provide a mix of housing types to serve the housing needs of the city;	No
Participate in the completion of the needed connection from North Street to Buena Vista Road; and	Yes
Provide a minimum of 20 acres of open/undeveloped area consisting of a meandering walking path integrated with an outdoor exercise track (parcourse), tot lot, picnic area, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking, and other associated improvements to serve the residents of the project and city.	No

Source: EMC Planning Group 2015

The No Project (B) alternative would meet the proposed project's objectives to provide development consistent with the general plan in terms of high density land uses, and participate in the development of the North Street extension. This alternative would not be consistent with objectives to provide infill residential development on an 81-acre site or to provide 20 acres of parkland and open space on the site. The No Project (B) alternative also would not fully meet project objectives to establish a mix of housing types on the site. Due to the small size of the site and the presence of geologic and seismic characteristics that further limit land area for habitable uses, the development of 35 dwelling units per acre would consist primarily of apartment complexes as opposed to small lot single-family residential uses. As a result, the No Project (B) alternative would not meet project objectives to establish a mix of housing types on the site.

6.6 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives are summarized and compared in a matrix format in Table 37, Project Alternatives Summary. Impacts are considered to be worse, similar, or better when compared to impacts associated with the proposed project. As shown in the following table, the No Project (A) alternative is the environmentally superior alternative.

As described in this section and summarized in Table 37, Project Alternatives Summary, the No Project (B) alternative would eliminate significant impacts to agriculture by avoiding the conversion of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses. However, the No Project (B) alternative would result in greater individual contributions to cumulative impacts to aesthetics, regional air and water quality, GHG emissions, and traffic.

Environmentally Superior Alternative

As displayed in Table 37 Project Alternatives Summary, the No Project (A) alternative would have no adverse environmental impacts compared to the proposed project and No Project (B) alternative, but would not meet any of the project objectives. The No Project (B) alternative would result in similar, but greater magnitude of potential adverse environmental impacts due to the larger project population when compared with the impacts of the proposed project. The No Project (B) alternative would be partially consistent with the objectives of the proposed project.

Although the environmentally superior alternative would be the No Project (B) alternative when compared to the No Project (A) alternative, this alternative would result in greater impacts than the proposed project, with the exception of agriculture.

Table 37 Project Alternatives Summary

Environmental Topic	Proposed Project Impact	No Project A Alternative	No Project B Alternative
Aesthetics	SU,M	better	worse
Agricultural Resources	SU,M	better	better
Air Quality	M	better	worse
Biological Resources	M	better	better
Cultural Resources	M	better	better
Fire Services	LTS	better	similar
Geology and Soils	M	better	worse
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LTS	better	worse
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	M	better	similar
Hydrology and Water Quality	M	better	similar
Noise	M	better	similar
Parks and Recreation	LTS	better	worse
Police Services	LTS	better	similar
Schools	LTS	better	worse
Solid Waste	LTS	better	similar
Transportation and Traffic	SU,M	better	worse
Wastewater Services	LTS	better	similar
Water Supplies and Facilities	LTS	better	similar
Primary Project Objectives	-	Not Consistent	Partially Consistent

Source: EMC Planning Group, 2015

Note: The table compares each alternative to the proposed project. M = Mitigated, SU =Significant and Unavoidable, LTS = Less than Significant

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7.0
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8.0
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