

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 REGIONAL SETTING

The project site is located in the Santa Maria Valley, in northern Santa Barbara County. The Santa Maria Valley is bounded by the Nipomo Mesa and Sierra Madre Mountains on the north and east, by the Solomon Hills and Casmalia Hills on the south, and by the Guadalupe Dunes and Pacific Ocean on the west.

The Santa Maria Valley is primarily a flat coastal plain. Native vegetation consists largely of coastal dune sage; the edges of the valley are characterized by rolling hills with oak woodlands, native and nonnative grasses, and chaparral. The predominant urban areas are located between Highway 101 on the east and Blosser Road on the west. Much of the rest of the Santa Maria Valley is rural and semi-rural, characterized by such uses as grazing, crude oil production, open space, and cultivated agriculture. The valley is well suited to cultivation given its fertile alluvial soils and exceptional climate for crop production.

Important water features in the Santa Maria Valley include Twitchell Reservoir, Betteravia Lakes (also known as Guadalupe Lake), the Santa Maria River, and Orcutt/Solomon, Pine, Graciosa, and San Antonio Canyon Creeks. The Santa Maria River is the principal drainage for the Valley. It is formed at the confluence of the Cuyama and Sisquoc Rivers and ultimately drains into the Pacific Ocean near the Santa Barbara County/San Luis Obispo County line.

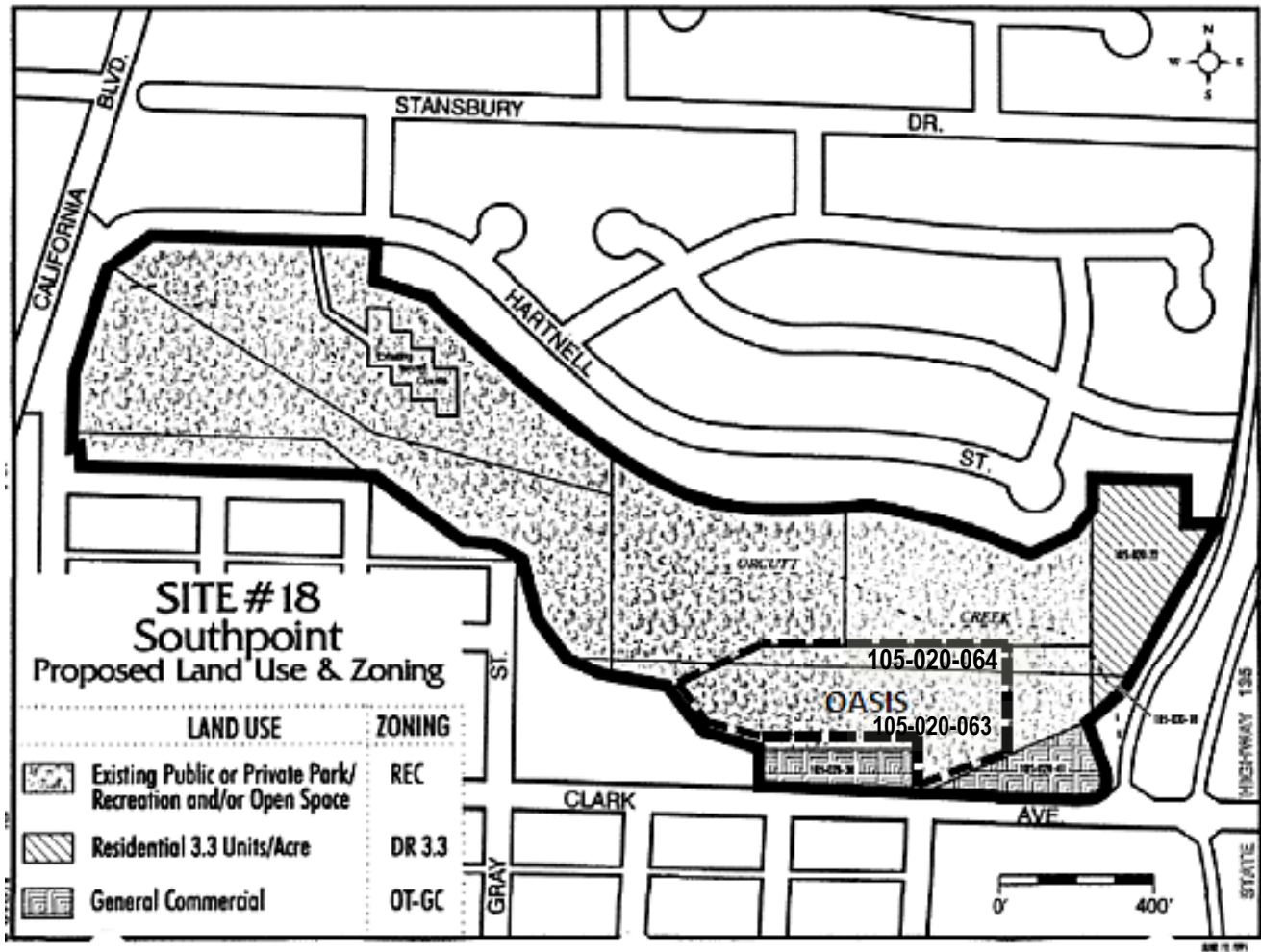
The Santa Maria Valley's Mediterranean climate is characterized by warm, dry summers and cool, damp winters with occasional rainy periods. Annual rainfall typically ranges from about 13 to 18 inches, with nearly all precipitation occurring between October and April. Light to moderate sea breezes generally predominate during the day, while land breezes from the east dominate during night and early morning hours.

The project is located in the Orcutt area, which is in the southern end of the Santa Maria Valley (see Figures 2-1, Regional Location and 2-2, Project Vicinity Map).

3.2 PROJECT SETTING

(KS18) is comprised of 15 APNs, totaling approximately 39.73 acres. The OASIS property is located on APNs 105-020-063 and -064 (together one legal parcel) and comprises 5.28 acres.

Figure 3-1 OCP Key Site 18/Southpoint Land Uses and Zoning
(OCP Figure KS18-2 with OASIS Property and APNs Identified)



Existing Development

The project site is vacant. The majority of KS18 is undeveloped, with the exception of a homesite in the northeast corner, the Southpoint Estates recreational complex with three tennis courts and a picnic area near the northwest corner, and a large in-stream retention basin constructed by the County Flood Control District at the west end, near California Boulevard. There is no existing development on the OASIS portion of KS18. An existing dirt road across the LeBard commercial property currently provides access to the OASIS site from Foxenwood Lane.

Topography

With the exception of the steep slope north of Clark Avenue, the project site is mostly flat with 0 to 2% slopes. KS18 is basin-shaped with level topography along Orcutt Creek and steep slopes near the northern and southern boundaries of the property and on either side of the existing dirt road from Foxenwood Lane. In the southeast corner of KS18, and west along Clark Avenue, is a thin level area at the top of the slope. (see Figure 2-39, Topographic Map).

Noise

According to the OCP, vehicle noise from Highway 135 and surrounding streets is the primary noise source affecting the project site and KS18. Areas closest to Highway 135 and Clark Avenue are exposed to noise levels potentially exceeding 65 dBA CNEL. Noise levels drop off away from these roadways. Based on 2016 noise measurements (D. Lord, 45dB.com 2016 Sound Level Assessment for OASIS Meeting Center), ambient noise levels at the OASIS property line are below 60 dBA, (24-hour, averaged, Community Noise Equivalent Level, CNEL) and range from 45 to 54 dBA CNEL at the proposed main building. Noise generated from the open space areas onsite, including the OASIS property is limited to intermittent maintenance activities along Orcutt Creek, performed by the County Flood Control District and Laguna County Sanitation District.

Surface Water Bodies

Orcutt Creek and its associated floodplain extend across KS18 from east to west. The floodplain covers a significant portion of the western half of KS18. On the OASIS property, mapped flood zone is limited to a very small area in the northeast corner of the property. The OASIS development footprint is setback from both the top of bank and riparian canopy of the creek.

Biological Resources

The OASIS project site is located in the eastern portion of KS18, south of Orcutt Creek. No rare, threatened or endangered species of plants or wildlife have been identified onsite. KS18 includes riparian habitat associated with Orcutt Creek, non-native grassland, scattered oak trees, and a row of eucalyptus adjacent to North Avenue. No rare, threatened, or endangered plant or wildlife species have been identified on the project site. See Section 4.3 (Biological Resources) for more detailed information, including the results of plant and wildlife surveys performed onsite, and the potential for sensitive species to occur onsite.

Soils

Soils on the project site are primarily Corralitos loamy sand. The soils underlying the majority of KS18 are sandy soils including Corralitos loamy sand, Terrace Escarpments-sandy, Marina sand, and Riverwash. Some of these soils have erosion hazards and all except Riverwash have high soil blowing hazards.

3.3 CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA (“CEQA Guidelines”, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3) addresses the analysis of cumulative impacts, including in Sections 15130, 15355 and 15065.

"Cumulative impacts" refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15355).

“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 project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(3).

An EIR shall discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable, as defined in section 15065(a)(3). 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. (CEQA Guidelines 15130(a)

An EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and thus 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 (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(3).

The discussion of cumulative impacts is not required to be provided at the same level of detail as the discussion of project-specific impacts.

A list of related or “cumulative” projects is included in Table 3-1 below and the project locations are identified on Figure 3-1. The Cumulative Projects table and figure are included to inform the public and decision-makers of the cumulative setting in which the proposed project is being evaluated.

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Table 3-1 Cumulative Projects List

Project		Location	Land Use	Size / Description	Status
1.	Addamo Winery/ Diamante (a)	129-151-042	Residential	5 Units	Approved
2.	Key Site #4 Clark Ave Commercial (b)	103-750-038	Commercial	12,900 SF	Under Construction
3.	Key Site #3 Multi-Fam Residential (c)	129-151-026	Residential	160 Units	In Dev Review
4.	Key Site #3 Mesa Neighborhood (a)	129-151-026	Residential	125 Units	In Dev Review
5.	Key Site #30 Mr. O Apartments (c)	107-250-008	Residential	69 Units	Under Construction
6.	Key Site #30 (ATE #11084)	107-250-008	Commercial	214 Units	Under Construction
7.	Neighborhood Willow Creek/Hidden Canyon (c)	113-250-015 113-250-016 113-250-017	Residential	145 Units	In Dev Review
8.	North County Jail (ATE #017714)	113-210-004 113-210-013	Institutional	Jail	Under Construction
9.	Key Site #2 Orcutt Gateway Retail Center (b)	129-280-001	Commercial	49,921 SF	In Dev Review
10.	Key Site #1 Orcutt Public Market Place (a)	129-120-024	Residential	252 Units	In Dev Review
11.	Key Site #1 Orcutt Public Market Place (b)	129-120-04	Commercial	211,264 SF	In Dev Review
12.	Orcutt Union Plaza Phase II (a)	105-091-001 105-091-006	Residential	19 Units	Approved
13.	Orcutt Union Plaza Phase II (b)	105-091-001 105-091-006	Commercial	16,880 SF	Approved
14.	Rice Ranch SP (a)	101-010-013 101-020-004 105-140-016	Residential	512 Units	Under Construction/ Occupied
15.	Terrace Villas (a)	129-300-001 to 129-300-020	Residential	16 Units	Approved
16.	LeBard Retail Commercial ©	105-020-041	Commercial	7,771 SF	Approved

(a) Trip generation based on ITE code for Single Family Dwelling (#210)

(b) Trip generation based on ITE code for Shopping Center (#820)

(c) Trip generation based on ITE code for Multi-family Housing (#220)

Section 3.0 Environmental Setting

In addition, each issue area section in Chapter 4.0 of this EIR includes a discussion of cumulative impacts associated with the OASIS project requests, taking into account the cumulative projects identified in Table 3-1, as applicable, as well as growth assumptions included in the Orcutt Community Plan. Cumulative assumptions from other planning documents are discussed for specific issue areas, where applicable (e.g., Section 4.1, Air Quality discussion of South Coast Air Basin and Clean Air Plan).

The Orcutt Community Plan (OCP) EIR evaluated cumulative impacts based on OCP buildout development assumptions. The adopted OCP EIR findings summarize conclusions regarding cumulative impacts from buildout of the OCP, as well as mitigation measures that were incorporated into the OCP, primarily as policies and development standards. The OCP EIR impacts and mitigation that are applicable to the OASIS project are summarized in each environmental issue area discussion in Section 4. The OCP, OCP EIR, and OCP findings are available for review online and at Planning and Development, as follows:

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- North County Planning & Development Office - 624 W. Foster Road, Santa Maria, CA 93455-3623, Reception (805) 934-6250
- <http://www.countyofsb.org/plndev/projects/oasiscenter.sbc>