

3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This draft Environmental Impact Report (draft EIR) evaluates the potentially significant impacts of the Half Moon Bay Hyatt Place project (project). The project includes a proposed hotel with up to 129 guest rooms and ancillary features (bicycle rentals) on a 5-acre project site in the City of Half Moon Bay (City), San Mateo County (County). A surface parking lot for hotel guests and employees is proposed along the northern and eastern sides of the site. The guest rooms and ancillary features would be situated generally easterly on the site in a north-south direction. The western portion of the site would be maintained as open space, comprising up to 39 percent of the project site. The construction of roads, utilities, amenities (pool, fitness center, etc.), and ancillary services associated with the hotel are considered as a part of the project for the purposes of this draft EIR.

The City of Half Moon Bay is the Lead Agency for this EIR under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City has prepared this draft EIR to assess potential environmental impacts of the project pursuant to the *2019 CEQA Statute and Guidelines*. CEQA requires all state and local government agencies to consider the environmental consequences of a project over which they have discretionary authority.

The project site is within the California Coastal Commission (CCC) appeals jurisdiction. The City has an approved Local Coastal Program (LCP), a planning tool used by local governments to guide development in the coastal zone. The primary goal of the LCP is to ensure that the local government's land use plans, zoning ordinances, zoning maps, and implementation actions meet the requirements, provisions and policies of the California Coastal Act. The LCP allows the City to grant development permits and other planning approvals within the coastal zone. However, individual project approvals may be appealed to the CCC, depending on the type and location of the project. The Half Moon Bay Local Coastal Land Use Plan (LCLUP) and the Zoning Ordinance together constitute the City's LCP for the coastal zone. The LCLUP was updated and adopted by City Council in October 2020 and certified by the CCC in April 2021. The updated LCLUP comprises the City's re-examined and updated policy approach for implementing the Coastal Act

in a manner that addresses changed conditions since certification of the 1996 LCLUP. Project consistency with the current LCLUP are discussed in each resource chapter of this draft EIR.

3.1.1 LOCATION AND SETTING

Regional Setting

As shown in **Figure 3-1**, the project site is in the San Francisco Bay Area, on the western (ocean) side of the San Francisco Bay Peninsula. There are several large, regional open spaces to the east of Half Moon Bay, including Rancho Corral de Tierra and Miramontes Ridge Open Space Preserve. The City is within the jurisdiction of the CCC due to its proximity to the Pacific Ocean.

Study Area Setting

The triangular project site is located at the southern entrance to Downtown Half Moon Bay along State Route 1 (SR-1). The project site is bordered by Main Street to the east; the intersection of Main Street, Higgins Canyon Road and SR-1 to the south; SR-1 to the west; and the James Ford Auto Dealership on the adjacent parcel to the north (see **Figure 3-2**). Across SR-1, the project site vicinity includes the Wavecrest Planned Development area, which continues from SR-1 to the Pacific Ocean. Across Main Street, the project site vicinity includes the Coastside Fire Protection District Station No. 40 and training facilities, the Coastal Repertory Theater, and multifamily residential development. Farmland extends beyond this development to the east and southeast. Single-family and low-density multi-family residences extend to the north beyond the auto dealership.

The project site Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) is 065-012-030. The project site is zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD)/Commercial, and the General Plan land use designation is Commercial – General. However, the LCLUP update indicates that the site is proposed to be rezoned to Commercial – General (CG) as part of the future implementation of the LCLUP. The CG zoning standards are used as an appropriate guide for this site because they are consistent with the LCLUP land use designation, and can also be accommodated by the PUD zoning.

Surrounding zoning includes General Commercial to the north (C-G; auto dealership) followed by two-family residential (R-2), PUD and Public Service (P-S; fire district facilities) to the east, open space and PUD to the south and west, and single-family residential (R-1 B-1) to the northwest.

Vehicular Access

The project site is undeveloped and does not currently have vehicular access.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The project site does not contain bicycle or pedestrian facilities. The west side of Main Street and SR-1 do not include sidewalks or bike lanes in the vicinity of the project site.

Site Characteristics

The 5-acre project site is undeveloped and relatively flat. The site has previously been used as agricultural land, and shows signs of intermittently being mowed, disked, and row-cropped. Based on a review of historic aerial imagery, the project site has not been actively used for agricultural activities since 2013. The groundcover consists of some landscaped areas along the perimeter and southern point of the project site, ruderal¹ areas over the majority of the site, and seasonal wetlands.

There are four seasonal wetland features in the western portion of the project site. Wetland areas were determined to meet the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) three-parameter criteria for wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. These wetland features are shown on **Figure 3-3**.

There are 34 bottlebrush trees (*Callistemon* sp.) in the public right-of-way along the eastern side of the project site in a street tree planting. One Monterey cypress tree (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) is located along the northern boundary of the project site. A large Monterey cypress tree on the adjacent property to the north of the site overhangs the property.

The southern end of the project site includes the southern gateway to Downtown Half Moon Bay where SR-1 and Main Street intersect. The City recently completed work on a new traffic signal and gateway feature at this intersection with multi-modal safety features.

Views from the site include SR-1, local development and landscaping, open fields, rolling hills, ocean views, and distant ridgelines.

¹ A ruderal species is a plant species that is first to colonize disturbed lands. Disturbance is often a consequence of human activity, such as the construction of roads or the abandonment of agricultural areas.



Regional Setting

Figure

3-1

Source: Google Earth Pro, 2019



Not to scale

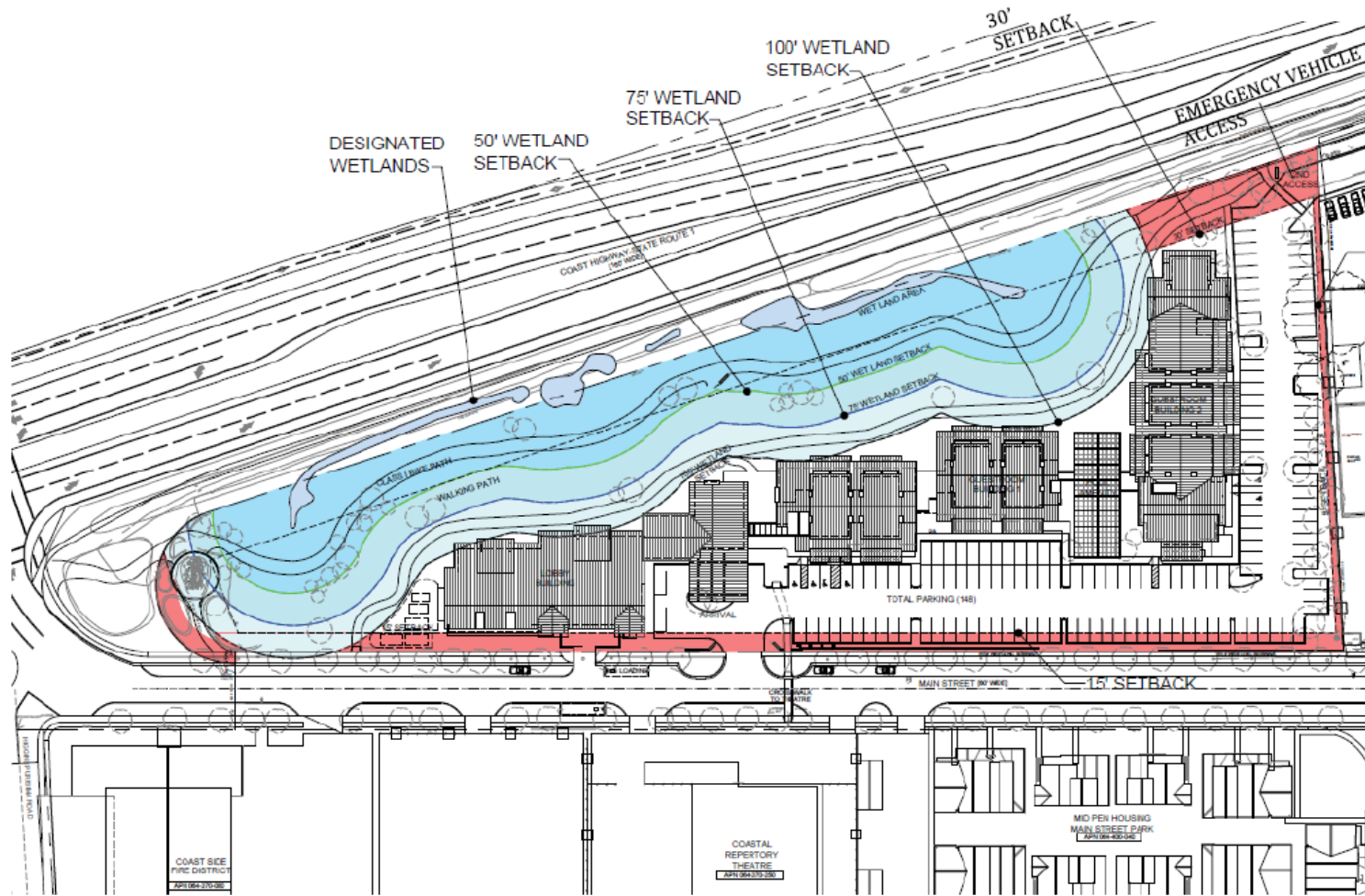


Project Site

Figure

3-2

Source: Google Earth Pro, 2019



Legend

' = feet



Not to scale

Wetland Areas

Figure

3-3

3.2 PROJECT COMPONENTS

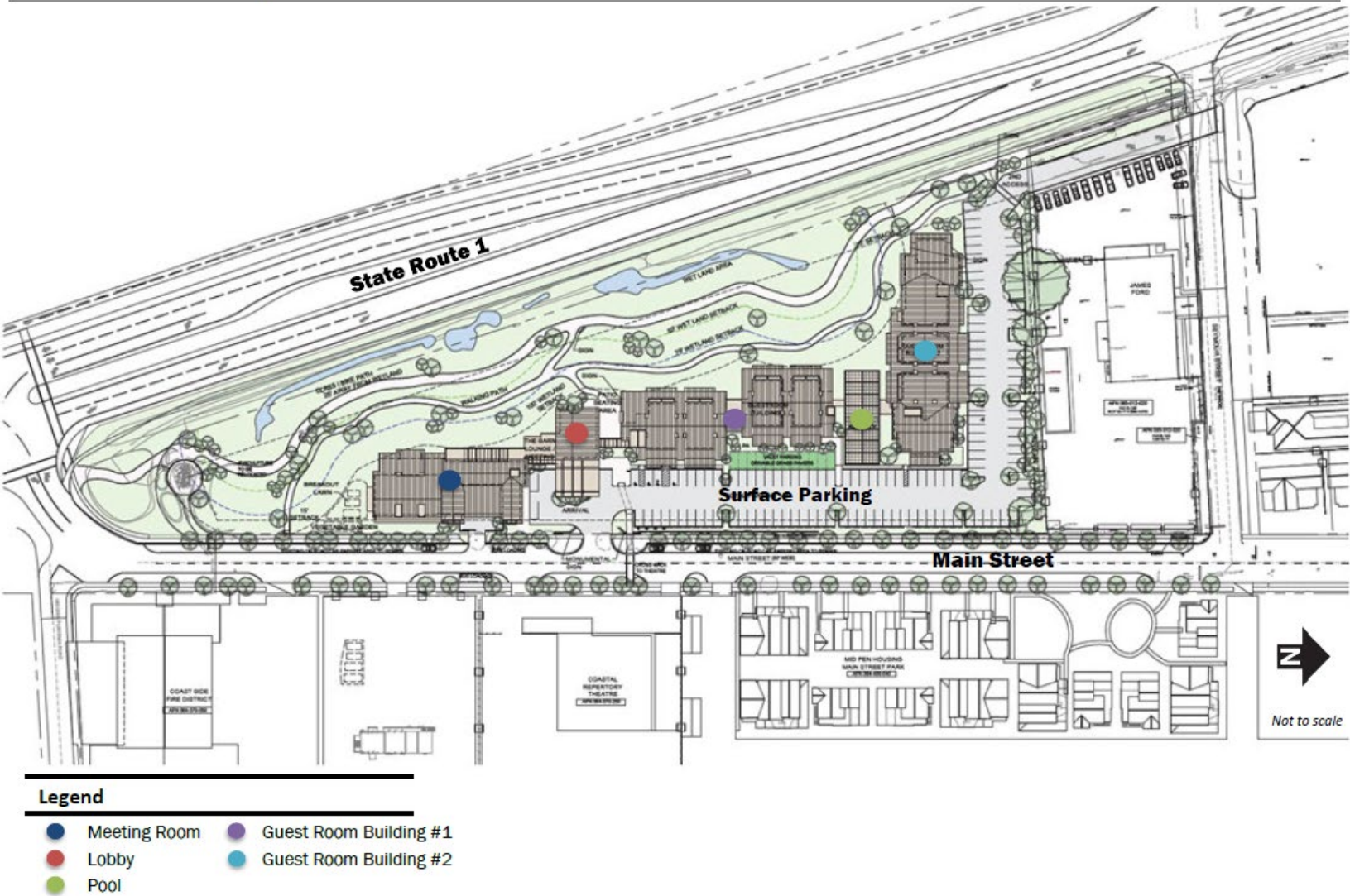
The project includes the construction of a 90,784 square-foot hotel, with varying heights of up to 35 feet. The hotel would include up to 129 guest rooms and supporting facilities such as a board room, lobby and lounge area, swimming pool, fitness area, and a meeting room/multipurpose room. Up to 148 parking spaces would be provided, with at least 129 parking spaces dedicated for hotel guests and additional parking spaces for employee use.

Development Area

As shown in **Figure 3-4**, the northern and eastern portions of the project site would be developed with surface parking and hotel buildings. Surface parking would be constructed in an “L” shape along the northern and eastern sides of the project site. To minimize the perceived height and bulk of the hotel, the hotel has been designed as a series of smaller buildings. Guest rooms would be constructed in two separate wings, and the lobby and conference areas would be in a separate building. Similarly, the indoor swimming pool and fitness center would be housed in a stand-alone structure. This arrangement of buildings would preserve limited east-west views through the project site. Example building elevations are provided in **Figure 3-5** and **Figure 3-6**.

All buildings would be connected at the ground level by interior corridors. Beginning from the northern edge of the site, built improvements would include:

- Guestroom Building #1, a three-story building oriented east-west. In addition to guest rooms, this building would include “back-of-the-house” facilities such as linen storage, housekeeping storage, and employee breakroom
- Pool and fitness center, a two-story building designed to have a similar exterior look as local greenhouses
- Guestroom Building #2, a three-story building articulated into two segments to further minimize the building’s bulk. The third floor is primarily contained within the roofline. This building would be oriented north-south and would include guestrooms and a lounge area.
- Lobby/Reception building, a two-story building which would include a business center, lounge, and an outdoor patio seating area
- Meeting Room building, a two-story building containing a pre-function and meeting room, sunroom, lounge, multi-purpose room, and “back-of-the-house” facilities including a kitchen and storage areas
- Exterior and interior path locations have been relocated to accommodate stand pipes for fire hydrants



Source: Mason Architects, 2019

Proposed Site Plan **Figure 3-4**



Exterior Elevations: East and West

Figure

3-5

Hyatt Place Half Moon Bay Project



Exterior Elevations: North and South

Figure

3-6

Source: Mason Architects, 2019

Open Space Area

The western portion of the project site is to be maintained as open space. The open space area would comprise up to 38.9 percent of the total project site and would preserve existing wetland areas while allowing for future wetland enhancement. All hotel structures would be located outside of the open space area and would be a minimum of 100 feet from wetland areas. A Class I multi-use path is proposed to be constructed from the southern boundary of the project site and connect to Seymour Street to the north. The multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path would be a minimum of 25 feet east of the wetland areas. Park benches and educational signage describing features of the area would be installed along the multi-use path. Landscaping east of the multi-use path would contain native plantings and bioswales designed to integrate with the wetlands. This area would include a walking path comprised of pervious surface materials which would provide connections to the bicycle and pedestrian path and provide access allowing for maintenance of this area.

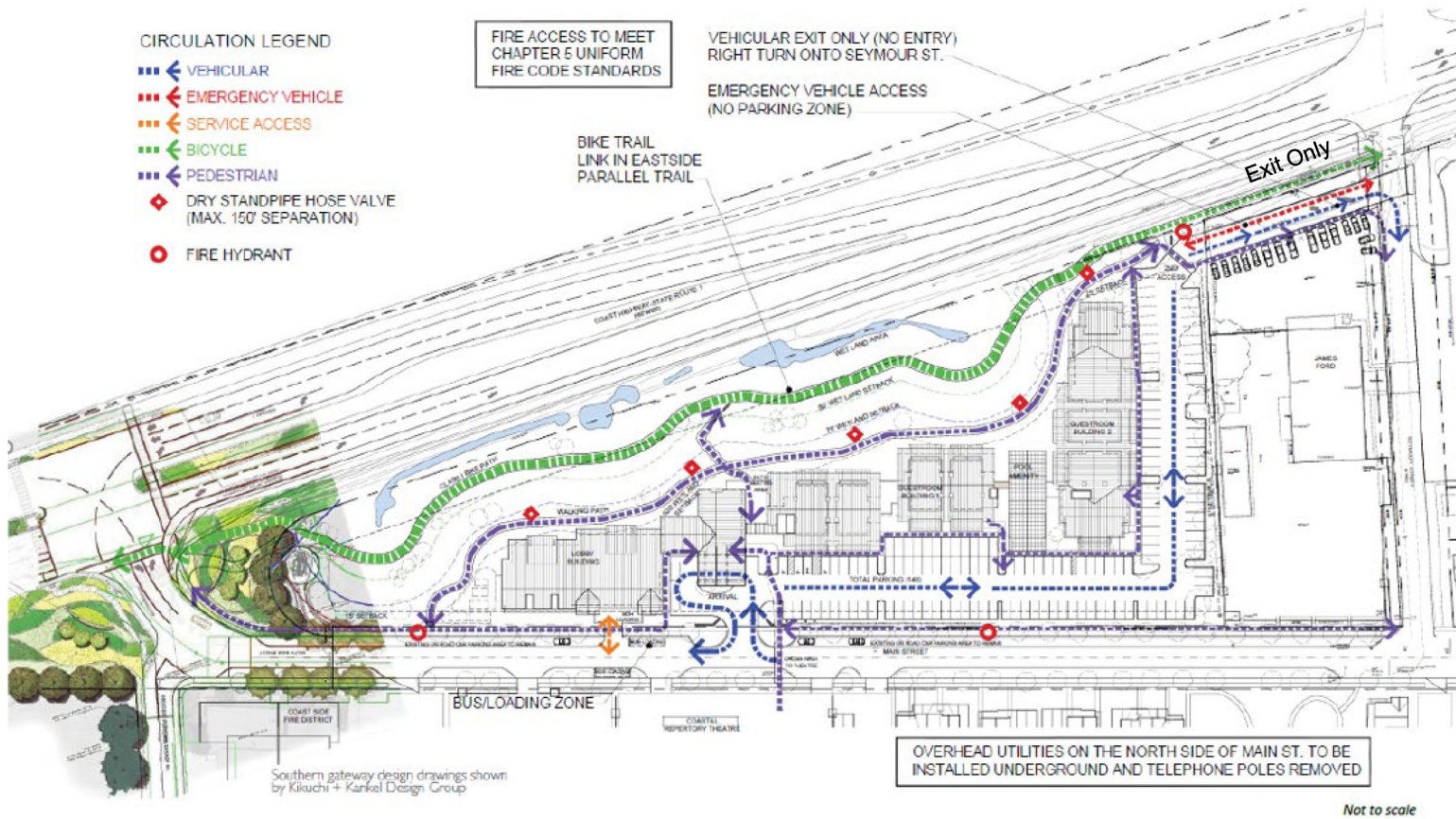
The City of Half Moon Bay recently completed installing new amenities including landscaping and signage in conjunction with a signalization project at Main Street, Higgins Canyon Road and SR-1. The City's signalization project is immediately adjacent to the southern tip of the project site. For additional information about the Highway 1 South Signalization project, see the City's website at: <https://www.half-moon-bay.ca.us/579/Highway-1-Safety---South>.

Circulation and Traffic

Primary vehicular access to the project site would be from a two-way curb cut along Main Street, opposite the Coastal Repertory Theater (see **Figure 3-7**). Vehicles would enter and exit the site at this location to access the parking lot and hotel porte cochere.² Service access for hotel deliveries would be provided at a separate curb cut along Main Street, just south of the primary vehicle access. A truck loading zone would be provided at the main entrance in addition to another loading zone space. A bus loading zone is proposed on Main Street south of the driveway. The design and location will be subject to SamTrans review and approval.

² A porte cochere is a roofed structure extending from the entrance of a building over an adjacent driveway and sheltering those getting in or out of vehicles.

Hyatt Place Half Moon Bay Project



Source: Mason Architects, 2019

Site Circulation

Figure

3-7

Emergency vehicle access is proposed at the south end of the project site. In addition, an emergency egress is planned along a paved alley between the auto dealership and SR-1 which would exit as a right-turn only onto eastbound Seymour Street, as shown on **Figure 3-7**.

Dedicated access for pedestrians would be provided along Main Street, including the addition of a new sidewalk. Pedestrian access from the site to Main Street would be adjacent to the vehicular access, nearest to the hotel lobby. A new pedestrian crossing along Main Street is proposed just north of the main vehicular entrance, adjacent to the Coastal Repertory Theater. In addition to this primary access, pedestrian circulation around the project site would be provided through interior walking paths and sidewalks.

The proposed Class I multi-use path would be accessible from the intersection of Main Street and SR-1, continuing north to Seymour Street. Within the project site, bicycles and facilities would be provided. Bicycles would access the hotel buildings from the multi-use path via a connection to the western area of the parking lot.

The project applicant also proposes to provide shuttle service for hotel guests as part of the transportation demand management (TDM) measures recommended for the project. Shuttle service would connect the hotel with local beaches, points of interest, and downtown areas. The frequency of shuttle service and precise destinations have not yet been determined. In addition to the shuttle service, other TDM measures would be applied for guests and employees of the hotel. TDM measures are discussed further in **Section 4.15, Transportation and Traffic**.

Sustainable Design

Implementation of the project would comply with the most recent Energy Efficiency Standards of Title 24 by incorporating 'green building' and energy saving measures, specifically under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) checklist. Green Building and energy saving measures include use or features that reduce energy and water usage and can include but are not limited to: the use of sunlight as an energy and light source, low water-use landscaping and water fixtures, building insulation and energy efficient building surfaces. These types of measures will be evaluated for incorporation to the project design and may be used individually or in combination to meet green building standards and applicable codes at the time of the building application review.

Utilities and Service Systems

The project would be served by extending existing utilities from the adjacent public streets abutting the project site. Coastside County Water District would deliver water to the project. Sewer Authority Mid-Coastside would provide sewer services. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) would provide gas and Peninsula Clean Energy (PCE) would provide electricity. Garbage and recycling services would be provided by Republic Services. A full discussion of these services can be found in **Section 4.16, Utilities and Service Systems**.

All new installations and extensions of utilities for electrical power, street lighting, and communications are required to be installed underground as described in the City's municipal code, Section 12.20, Underground Utilities. This requirement excludes some equipment such as transformers, junction boxes, and disconnect switches, provided that a location is available that is hidden from public view.

3.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The City's primary project objectives are as follows:

- Implement the California Coastal Act, including protecting coastal resources such as wetlands and providing coastal zone priority uses such as restaurants and accommodations geared towards visitors, especially lower cost coastal access provisions including lower cost accommodations on or off-site and/or public access and recreation benefits such as airport shuttles, bicycle rentals, or trail connections. Conform with the Local Coastal Program, including promotion of bicycle and pedestrian trails, such as along SR-1 and the Downtown area.
- Enhance Half Moon Bay's southern Downtown gateway to the City by:
 - Providing connectivity to local trails and the downtown core
 - Supporting the City's plans to highlight access to Main Street, Historic Downtown, and the commercial core
 - Providing a development that is aesthetically pleasing by balancing the urban landscape with natural elements of the coast
 - Integrating the artisanal culture of the City into the design theme of the development and the project site
 - Enhancing access to and patronage of the adjacent theater
- Be designed as contextually appropriate for the City of Half Moon Bay and provide compatibility with both the Downtown and the adjacent

residential neighborhood with building massing reflective of the City's traditional development and scale and providing maintenance of adequate views.

- Be designed to be compatible with and enhance the aesthetic of the south entry to the city.
- Be served by existing public infrastructure including water supply, sewer and roadway capacity and through on-site provision of green infrastructure for storm water management.
- Support Downtown vitality, central core focus and the City's economic development goals.
- Meet the demand for branded and reasonably affordable hotel rooms to support Half Moon Bay's growing local tourist and agribusiness economies.
- Establish a higher level of use on an underused parcel in the City's downtown core area.
- Support the local job market by providing new employment opportunities.
- Provide an opportunity for the City to increase revenue stream.

The project applicant's objectives for the project are as follows:

- Develop a mid-range hotel to fill a gap in the market.
- Provide a conference and wedding venue primarily for hotel guests.
- Provide service sector employment opportunities for Half Moon Bay residents.
- Provide public recreational opportunities through a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian path, which will become part of the City's circulation plan.
- Provide shuttle transportation for hotel guests to beaches, harbor points of interest and downtown areas.
- Create a destination at the southern end of Main Street which will indirectly support the existing retail, hospitality, restaurants and entertainment venues in the downtown area.
- Encourage pedestrian use of the southern portion of Main Street by providing infrastructure improvements including installing a curb, gutters, sidewalk, and landscaping between Seymour Street and the SR-1/Main Street intersection.

3.4 CONSTRUCTION

The project would be constructed in a single phase. Because the project site is currently undeveloped, no demolition activities would be required. Construction activities would not occur within wetland areas. Project construction would begin with clearing and grubbing to remove existing vegetation in areas where new buildings, parking, and bicycle and pedestrian circulation would be constructed. Construction is anticipated to require earthwork up to 4 feet deep, measured from the current grade. A list of anticipated construction activities and durations are provided in **Table 3-1** below, generally presented in chronological order.

Table 3-1 Construction Activities

Activity Name	Duration
Demolition	1 day
Site Preparation	5 days
Grading and Excavation	10 days
Utility Trenching	20 days
Building Construction – Exterior	335 days
Building Construction – Interior	175 days
Paving	20 days

Source: Mason Architects and BKF Engineering, 2019.

For the purposes of this draft EIR, project construction is assumed to occur over an 18-month period, including all activities listed above.

Grading

Project construction would involve earthmoving activities such as excavation (cut), grading, soil stockpiling, and filling. Cut material would be redistributed onsite to provide fill material as needed. However, it is anticipated that approximately 380 cubic yards of fill material would be imported to the project site to meet the grading needs of the project.

Hauling Routes

Construction of the project would generate materials that would need to be hauled to off-site disposal areas. The haul route would be mostly confined to

SR-1, with Main Street and Poplar being used to access the areas between the project site and SR-1. While Main Street would be used as an intermediary connection between the project site and SR-1, it would not be used as a bypass for SR-1 during hauling operations.

Drainage

The existing topography of the project site gently slopes downward toward the northwest. Stormwater flows overland across the site as sheet flow to a drainage channel at the northwest corner of the project site, along SR-1. The majority of the project site is pervious material, with the small exception of the sculpture foundation at the southern corner of the site.

The project would result in up to 120,000 square feet of impervious area onsite, including the multi-use path and emergency vehicle access routes. The project design would direct stormwater runoff from the hotel building and parking lot into treatment areas. The project would include a dual treatment system of self-retaining landscape areas and bioretention areas to capture stormwater. The majority of stormwater would be collected and treated on site, then allowed to evaporate or percolate into the ground. Some stormwater would be treated onsite and then allowed to flow overland into wetland areas.

Landscaping and Tree Removal

The existing Monterey cypress tree would be preserved, along with a majority of the bottlebrush trees. Some bottlebrush trees would be removed to allow for new vehicular access to the site. Based on preliminary plans, it is estimated that four bottlebrush trees would be removed. The four bottlebrush trees are located on Main Street and as such are considered heritage trees as defined in Policy 7.40.020, and would therefore be subject to the tree replacement program included in the landscape plan.

The dominant component of the project's landscaping will be plant materials consistent with the wetlands restoration and expansion proposed along the western and southern portions of the property, as well as within the bioswale areas. The project would include the addition of new trees and landscaping, including six strawberry trees and ten New Zealand Christmas trees along the Main Street entrance of the site, as well as a mix of ornamental grass and shrubs throughout the site.

3.5 INTENDED USES OF THIS EIR

CEQA requires the Lead Agency to consider the information contained in the EIR prior to taking any discretionary action. The draft EIR is intended to inform decision makers, responsible and trustee agencies, and the public of the potential environmental consequences of implementing the project. This draft EIR provides a project-level analysis, discloses significant environmental impacts, and identifies: 1) mitigation measures to avoid or reduce impacts, 2) significant impacts that cannot be avoided, 3) growth-inducing impacts, 4) effects found not to be significant, and 5) cumulative impacts of the project in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. This draft EIR also addresses alternatives that were considered but rejected, as well as alternatives that may avoid or substantially lessen potential environmental impacts, and recommends a Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA).

It is not the purpose of an EIR to recommend approval or denial of a project. In accordance with CEQA Section 15090, the Lead Agency must certify the EIR was prepared in compliance with CEQA prior to taking action to approve the project. The City is the Lead Agency under CEQA and is responsible for review and certification of this EIR.

3.6 APPROVALS AND ENTITLEMENTS

This draft EIR has been prepared to cover all of the anticipated actions associated with the planning application PDP 072-13 for a proposed hotel facility. The approvals and actions anticipated for the project are listed below.

- Coastal Development Permit
- Parking Exception for Tandem Parking
- Use Permit to develop in the PUD Zoning District³
- Architectural and Site/Design Review
- Tentative Parcel Map (if needed to implement easements, etc.)
- Public Access and Conservation Easements
- Tree Removal Permit
- Section 404 Permit and Section 401 Certification, if jurisdictional area of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is impacted

³ Currently, the project site is zoned as PUD with the assumption that the site will be rezoned to CG per the LCLUP. Therefore, a Use Permit is required until the Zoning District is officially rezoned to CG.