

DRAFT

Initial Study/Environmental Assessment  
for the  
Hemet Retail Center Project

*Prepared for:*

**Riverside County Planning Department**

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FEBRUARY 2021

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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| <b><u>SECTION</u></b>                                    | <b><u>PAGE NO.</u></b> |
|--|------------------------|
| I. Project Information.....                              | 1                      |
| li. Applicable General Plan and Zoning Regulations ..... | 2                      |
| lii. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected.....     | 15                     |
| Iv. Determination .....                                  | 15                     |
| V. Environmental Issues Assessment .....                 | 17                     |
| Aesthetics .....   | 17                     |
| Agriculture and Forest Resources .....                   | 27                     |
| Air Quality .....  | 28                     |
| Biological Resources.....                                | 35                     |
| Cultural Resources.....                                  | 41                     |
| Energy.....  | 44                     |
| Geology and Soils .....                                  | 48                     |
| Greenhouse Gas Emissions.....                            | 54                     |
| Hazards and Hazardous Materials .....                    | 56                     |
| Hydrology and Water Quality.....                         | 59                     |
| Land Use/Planning.....                                   | 62                     |
| Mineral Resources .....                                  | 64                     |
| Noise.....   | 64                     |
| Paleontological Resources .....                          | 73                     |
| Population and Housing .....                             | 73                     |
| Public Services.....                                     | 74                     |
| Recreation.....  | 77                     |
| Transportation .....                                     | 78                     |
| Utilities and Service Systems .....                      | 89                     |
| Wildfire .....   | 94                     |
| Mandatory Findings Of Significance .....                 | 95                     |
| Vi. Earlier Analyses.....                                | 97                     |
| Vii. References .....                                    | 99                     |

## APPENDICES

|   |   |
|---|---|
| A | Air Quality Technical Memo                                    |
| B | Biological Resources Literature and Records Search            |
| C | Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment for CUP No. 3479 (2008) |
| D | Noise Technical Memorandum                                    |
| E | Traffic Impact Assessment                                     |

## FIGURES

|           |  |    |
|-----------|--|----|
| Figure 1  | Project Location .....                   | 7  |
| Figure 2  | Site Plan.....                           | 9  |
| Figure 3  | Zoning Designations .....                | 11 |
| Figure 4  | General Plan Land Use Designations ..... | 13 |
| Figure 5a | Elevations – East and South.....         | 21 |
| Figure 5b | Elevations – West and North .....        | 23 |
| Figure 6  | Photometric Study .....                  | 25 |
| Figure 7  | Noise Measurement Locations .....        | 71 |
| Figure 8  | Study Area Intersections.....            | 85 |

## TABLES

|           |  |    |
|-----------|--|----|
| Table 1.  | Estimated Maximum Daily Construction Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions .....                        | 31 |
| Table 2.  | Estimated Maximum Daily Operational Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions .....                         | 31 |
| Table 3.  | Localized Significance Thresholds Analysis.....  | 33 |
| Table 4.  | Special Status Wildlife Species Potential to Occur .....   | 37 |
| Table 5.  | Construction Equipment Diesel Demand .....   | 46 |
| Table 6.  | Construction Worker, Vendor, and Haul Truck Petroleum Demand.....                                  | 46 |
| Table 7.  | Project Operations – Petroleum Consumption.....  | 47 |
| Table 8.  | Estimated Annual Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions.....  | 54 |
| Table 9.  | Estimated Annual Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions.....   | 55 |
| Table 10. | Typical Construction Equipment Maximum Noise Levels.....   | 66 |
| Table 11. | Estimated Distances between Construction Activities and the Nearest Noise-sensitive Receptors..... | 66 |
| Table 12. | Predicted Construction Noise Levels per Activity Phase .....                                       | 67 |
| Table 13. | Roadway Segment ADT Volumes .....  | 68 |
| Table 14. | Roadway Traffic Noise Modeling Results .....   | 69 |
| Table 15. | Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project Intersection Operations .....                                   | 79 |
| Table 16. | Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project Plus Cumulative Intersection Operations .....                   | 80 |

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| AB                  | Assembly Bill   |
| AFY                 | acre feet per year  |
| ALUC                | Airport Land Use Commission   |
| AQMP                | Air Quality Management Plan   |
| BMP                 | Best Management Practice  |
| CAAQS               | California Ambient Air Quality Standards                            |
| CALGREEN            | California Green Building Standards                                 |
| CAP                 | Climate Action Plan   |
| CBC                 | California Building Code  |
| CEQA                | California Environmental Quality Act                                |
| CH <sub>4</sub>     | Methane   |
| CO                  | Carbon Monoxide   |
| CO <sub>2</sub>     | Carbon Dioxide  |
| CUP                 | Conditional Use Permit  |
| DTSC                | California Department of Toxic Substance Control                    |
| EA                  | Environmental Assessment  |
| ECHO                | Enforcement and Compliance History Online                           |
| EMWD                | Eastern Municipal Water District                                    |
| EPA                 | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency                                |
| EV                  | Electric Vehicle  |
| FEMA                | Federal Emergency Management Agency                                 |
| FIRM                | Flood Insurance Rate Map  |
| GHG                 | Greenhouse Gas  |
| LHMWD               | Lake Hemet Municipal Water District                                 |
| LID                 | Low impact development  |
| LOS                 | Level of Service  |
| LUST                | Leaking Underground Storage Tank                                    |
| mgd                 | Million gallons per day   |
| MLD                 | Most Likely Descendent  |
| MPO                 | Metropolitan Planning Organization                                  |
| MRZ                 | Mineral Resource Zone   |
| MSHCP               | Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan |
| MT CO <sub>2e</sub> | Metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent                               |
| NAAQS               | National Ambient Air Quality Standards                              |
| NAHC                | Native American Heritage Commission                                 |
| N <sub>2</sub> O    | Nitrous Oxide   |
| NO <sub>2</sub>     | Nitrogen Dioxide  |
| NO <sub>x</sub>     | Oxides of nitrogen  |
| NPDES               | National Pollution Discharge Elimination System                     |
| O <sub>3</sub>      | Ozone   |
| OSHA                | Occupational Safety and Health Administration                       |
| PM <sub>10</sub>    | particulate matter with diameter less than or equal to 10 microns   |
| PM <sub>2.5</sub>   | particulate matter with diameter less than or equal to 2.5 microns  |
| ppm                 | Parts per million   |
| RTP                 | Regional Transportation Plan  |
| RWRF                | Regional Water Reclamation Facility                                 |
| RWQCB               | Regional Water Quality Control Board                                |
| SB                  | Senate Bill   |

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| SCAB            | South Coast Air Basin                          |
| SCAG            | Southern California Association of Governments |
| SCAQMD          | South Coast Air Quality Management District    |
| SCE             | Southern California Edison                     |
| SCS             | Sustainable Communities Strategy               |
| SO <sub>2</sub> | Sulfur Dioxide                                 |
| SO <sub>x</sub> | Sulfur oxides                                  |
| SoCal Gas       | Southern California Gas Company                |
| SR-             | State Route                                    |
| SSC             | Species of Special Concern                     |
| SWPPP           | Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan           |
| TAC             | Toxic Air Contaminant                          |
| TIA             | Traffic Impact Analysis                        |
| UWMP            | Urban Water Management Plan                    |
| VMT             | Vehicle miles traveled                         |
| VOC             | Volatile Organic Compound                      |

# COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM: INITIAL STUDY

**Environmental Assessment (CEQ / EA) Number:** EA40473  
**Project Case Type (s) and Number(s):** PPT200023  
**Lead Agency Name:** County of Riverside Planning Department  
**Address:** 4080 Lemon Street 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, Riverside, CA 92501  
**Contact Person:** Brett Dawson, Project Planner  
**Telephone Number:** (951) 955-0972  
**Applicant's Name:** Hemet Hwy 74/79, LP  
**Applicant's Address:** PO Box 1958, Corona, California 02878

### I. PROJECT INFORMATION

#### A. Project Description:

Plot Plan No. 200023 is a proposal for the construction and operation of a total of 4,425 square feet of commercial building area on 1.22 gross acres consisting of 2,000 square foot commercial retail space and a 2,425 square foot fast food space with drive thru and 900 square foot serving area.

The project site is located in the Green Acres Community in unincorporated Riverside County, as shown on Figure 1. The project site is generally bounded by State Route (SR-) 74 to the north, SR-79/Winchester Road (SR-79) to the west, Old State Highway to the south, and a Southern California Edison substation site to the east. The 1.22-acre site is assigned Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 458-212-001 and -002. The project site is within the northeast portion of Section 15, Township 5S, Range 2W of the San Bernardino Meridian.

The project as originally proposed included a gasoline station and convenience store with a restaurant and drive thru under CUP03479. The current proposal is for a fast-food restaurant with drive-thru and retail which is permitted under a Plot Plan approval, whereby the project was changed from a Conditional Use Permit application (CUP03479) to a Plot Plan Application (PPT200023). The proposed fast-food restaurant with drive-through and a 24-hour convenience market would be developed in the western portion of the project site, within a single 4,425 square foot (sf) building. The fast-food restaurant with drive-through would encompass approximately 2,425 sf in the western portion of the building. Indoor seating would be available at the fast-food restaurant. The entrance to the drive-through lane would be east of the building and wrap around the back of the building. The drive-through lane has been designed to accommodate a que of up to nine cars at any given time. The 24-hour convenience market would encompass approximately 2,097 square feet in the eastern portion of the building. A trash enclosure structure would be installed east of the drive-through entrance. A 20-foot tall monument sign would be constructed in the southwest portion of the site. In addition, two 6.5-foot sidewalk monuments would be installed along to southern project site boundary and at the northern site access point, respectively. Proposed monument signs would include stone veneer to match the building façade. The project site plan is shown in Figure 2.

Approximately 6,550 square feet of landscaping would be installed around the proposed building, in parking areas and along the project site right-of-way (ROW). The landscaped areas would be equipped with an irrigation system. A retaining wall with height varying from one foot to six feet would be installed along the northern, western, and southern site boundary. An 8-foot-wide sidewalk is proposed along SR-74 and a 5-foot-wide sidewalk is proposed along SR-79 and Old State Highway. Thirty parking spaces would be installed on-site, including two spaces compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and three low-emitting fuel-efficient spaces. In addition, three bike racks would be installed on the west side of the proposed building.

Vehicular access to the project site would be available from two driveways. One driveway would be located in the eastern portion of the site on SR-74, allowing ingress and egress, but cars exiting the project site would only be allowed to turn right onto SR-74. The second driveway would be located on the south side of the project site, providing ingress and egress from Old State Highway. The project

applicant is also responsible for off-site roadway improvements on SR-79. A median would be installed on SR-79 from the SR-74/SR-79 intersection, south beyond Old State Highway, eliminating access to Old State Highway from southbound traffic on SR-79. Striping would be reconfigured on SR-79 to change the number and width of lanes on SR-79. Off-site roadway improvements have been designed in coordination with Caltrans.

Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to commence in 2021 and be completed in approximately 7 months.

**B. Type of Project:** Site Specific ☒; Countywide ☐; Community ☐; Policy ☐.

**C. Total Project Area:**

|                               |                |                                       |                                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Residential Acres:</b> 0   | <b>Lots:</b> 0 | <b>Units:</b> 0                       | <b>Projected No. of Residents:</b> 0 |
| <b>Commercial Acres:</b> 1.22 | <b>Lots:</b> 1 | <b>Sq. Ft. of Bldg. Area:</b> 4,522.0 | <b>Est. No. of Employees:</b> 8      |
| <b>Industrial Acres:</b> 0    | <b>Lots:</b> 0 | <b>Sq. Ft. of Bldg. Area:</b> 0       | <b>Est. No. of Employees:</b> 0      |
| <b>Other:</b>                 |                |                                       |                                      |

**D. Assessor's Parcel No(s):** 458-212-001 and 458-212-002

**E. Street References:** The project site is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Highway (Hwy) 74 (E-W) and Hwy 79 (N-S).

**F. Section, Township & Range Description or reference/attach a Legal Description:** Portion of NE ¼ of Section 15, Township 5 South, Range 2 West, San Bernardino Principal Meridian, California.

**G. Brief description of the existing environmental setting of the project site and its surroundings:** The project site currently comprises two vacant parcels. The site is highly disturbed with mostly exposed dirt and only minimal scattered vegetation and a few ornamental (non-native) trees. The site is commonly used by vehicles cutting through to avoid traffic at the intersection. The site may also have previously been used for stockpiling materials during past road construction projects.

**North:** The northern property boundary abuts Hwy 74. Undeveloped vacant land within the public right-of-way is located north of Hwy 74 and single-family residences are present further to the north, approximately 165 feet north of the project site.

**South:** The southern project site boundary abuts Old State Hwy. Existing single-family residences and intermittent vacant lots are located south of Old State Hwy, approximately 60 feet south of the project site.

**East:** The western project site boundary abuts an existing fenced electrical infrastructure site owned by Southern California Edison (SCE). Old State Hwy turns northeast of the SCE site and dead ends at Hwy 74. Existing single-family residences and intermittent vacant lots are located further to the east, approximately 500 feet east of the project site.

**West:** The western project site boundary abuts Hwy 79. A gas station and convenience store are located west of Hwy 79 and a retail structure is located west of the gas station.

## **II. APPLICABLE GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING REGULATIONS**

### **A. General Plan Elements/Policies:**

#### **1. Land Use:**

##### **Riverside County General Plan**

**Policy LU 29.1:** Accommodate the development of commercial uses in areas appropriately designated by the General Plan and area plan land use maps.

The current Riverside County General Plan (General Plan) Land Use designation for the project site is Commercial Retail (CR), which allows for the development of commercial retail uses at a neighborhood, community and regional level, as well as for professional office and tourist-oriented commercial use. The proposed project would not require an amendment to the site's General Plan Land Use designation.

**Policy LU 29.3:** *Site buildings along sidewalks, pedestrian areas, and bicycle routes and include amenities that encourage pedestrian activity.*

Existing pedestrian improvements are limited to existing development at the northwest and southwest corner of the SR-74/SR-79 intersection. There are no existing bike lanes near the project site and the Harvest Valley/Westminster Area Plan does not identify any bike paths planned within the project vicinity. In an effort to improve pedestrian circulation adjacent to the project site, the proposed project would include installation of sidewalk along the northern, western, and southern site boundaries.

**Policy LU 29.3:** Concentrate commercial uses near transportation facilities and high-density residential areas and require the incorporation of facilities to *promote* the use of public transit, such as bus turnouts.

The proposed land uses would serve nearby residences and travelers utilizing Hwy 74 and Hwy 79, adjacent to the project site. An existing bus stop is located directly adjacent to the northern project site boundary, on eastbound SR-74.

**Policy LU 29.6:** Require that commercial projects abutting residential properties protect the residential use from the impacts of noise, light, fumes, odors, vehicular traffic, parking, and operational hazards.

The nearest residential property to the project site is approximately 70 feet south of the project site, south of Old State Highway. The proposed project's potential impacts on nearby residential land uses are analyzed in Section V, Environmental Issues Assessment. The analysis concluded that all potential impacts can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

**Policy LU 29.7:** Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, and sewer facilities exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use.

The proposed project has been designed to provide adequate site access and on-site circulation. In addition, the project applicant has coordinated with the County and Caltrans to design off-site roadway improvements along the project site frontage consistent with existing roadway classifications for Hwy 74 and Hwy 79. The proposed project would connect to existing utility infrastructure adjacent to the project site, such as water and wastewater, to provide on-site utility services. Potential impacts associated with transportation and utilities are discussed in Section V, Environmental Issues Assessment.

**Policy LU 29.10:** Require that commercial development be designed to consider their surroundings and visually enhance, not degrade, the character of the surrounding area.

The proposed project has been designed consistent with applicable design standards in the County's Code of Ordinances. The proposed structure on the site would be similar in character and height as the other commercial land uses at the SR-74/SR-79 intersection. In addition, a retaining wall would be constructed along the northern, western, and southern site boundaries that would partially shield views from public roadways. Parkway improvements, including curb-and-gutter, sidewalk, and landscaping would be installed along the project frontage on SR-74, SR-79 and Old State Highway to further enhance the visual aesthetic of the site.

**Policy LU 29.11:** Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) is intended for planning purposes only. The Planning Director or his/her designee shall have the discretion to authorize the use of a FAR that is less intense in order to encourage good project design and efficient site utilization.

Permitted FAR for the CR land use designation ranges from 0.2 to 0.35. The proposed project would result in a FAR of 0.09. The reduced FAR is largely due to the required ROW dedication

along the northern, western, and southern project site to accommodate necessary roadway improvements consistent with the roadway classifications.

#### **Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan**

The Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan (HVWAP) designates the project site for CR land uses, consistent with the County's General Plan Land Use Element. The project site is within the Green Acres Policy Area. Green Acres is a rural community located at the junction of State Route 74 and 79. The intent of this policy area is to preserve the historic rural and agricultural character of this community and preserve the residents' ability to keep animals on appropriately sized lots. The proposed project would not affect parcels designated for residential land uses, and as such, would not conflict with policies to allow animal-keeping in residential areas. In addition, the project site is within the Hwy 79 Policy Area, established to address the transportation infrastructure capacity within the Policy Area. The proposed project would include off-site roadway improvements along the project site frontage on Hwy 79 and Hwy 74, consistent with the roadway classification and through extensive coordination with Caltrans.

#### **Riverside County Zoning Ordinance**

Existing Zoning designation for the project site is Scenic Highway Commercial (C-P-S). The project land uses, and development concepts would be permitted or conditionally permitted under the existing Zoning designation. The proposed project would be developed consistent with all development standards established for the C-P-S zoning designation and all applicable regulations in the County's Municipal Code, as discussed in Section V, Environmental Issues Assessment.

2. **Circulation:** The proposed project has adequate circulation to/from and within the site and is therefore consistent with the Circulation Element of the General Plan. The proposed project meets all other applicable circulation policies of the General Plan.
3. **Multipurpose Open Space:** The project site is not designated as Open Space under the General Plan or HVWAP.
4. **Safety:** The project site is not located within an Airport Compatibility Zone. The proposed project is within an area that has a low susceptibility to liquefaction and is not located within proximity of any known earthquake faults. The project site is within a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The proposed project would be constructed and developed consistent with all applicable policies and regulations to minimize wildfire risk, as discussed in Section V.
5. **Noise:** A project-specific noise technical memo was prepared for the proposed project, which concluded that the proposed project would not result in significant noise impacts. The proposed project meets all other applicable General Plan Noise Element policies.
6. **Housing:** The proposed project does not include the development of additional housing. It is not expected that the project would create a demand for housing or affordable housing beyond that projected by the County's General Plan.
7. **Air Quality:** The proposed project is in conformance with the Air Quality Element of the General Plan, as well as the standards set forth by the South Coast Air Quality District (SCAQMD). A full discussion of air quality impacts associated with the proposed projects is included in Section V.
8. **Healthy Communities:** Land use patterns are critical to the health and well-being of residents because they affect, at a minimum, levels of physical activity, access to nutritious food, and the creation and exposure to pollutants. Healthy land use patterns can be achieved by encouraging infill focusing development within mixed use districts and along major transit corridors, avoiding leap-frog development, constructing a diverse mix of uses throughout Riverside County, and encouraging land use patterns that promote walking, bicycling and transit use. The proposed project would introduce new commercial development within walking distance of nearby existing residential land uses, include sidewalk along the project frontage to encourage pedestrian circulation adjacent to the project site, and provide bike racks for use by cyclists accessing the project site. The proposed project would also

provide three on-site parking spaces for low-emitting fuel-efficient vehicles pursuant to Chapter 17.188 of the County's Municipal Code. proposed project is consistent with this element of the General Plan.

**9. Environmental Justice (After Element is Adopted): N/A**

**B. General Plan Area Plan(s):** Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan

**C. Foundation Component(s):** Community Development

**D. Land Use Designation(s):** Commercial Retail (CR) (refer to Figure 3)

**E. Overlay(s), if any:** N/A

**F. Policy Area(s), if any:** Green Acres Policy Area

**G. Adjacent and Surrounding:**

**1. General Plan Area Plan(s):** Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan

**2. Foundation Component(s):** Community Development; Rural Community

**3. Land Use Designation(s):** Commercial Retail (CR); Rural Community – Low Density Residential (RC-LDR)

**4. Overlay(s), if any:** None

**5. Policy Area(s), if any:** Green Acres Policy Area

**H. Adopted Specific Plan Information**

**1. Name and Number of Specific Plan, if any:** N/A

**2. Specific Plan Planning Area, and Policies, if any:** N/A

**I. Existing Zoning:** Scenic Highway Commercial (C-P-S) (refer to Figure 4)

**J. Proposed Zoning, if any:** N/A

**K. Adjacent and Surrounding Zoning:** C-P-S; Rural Residential (R-R)

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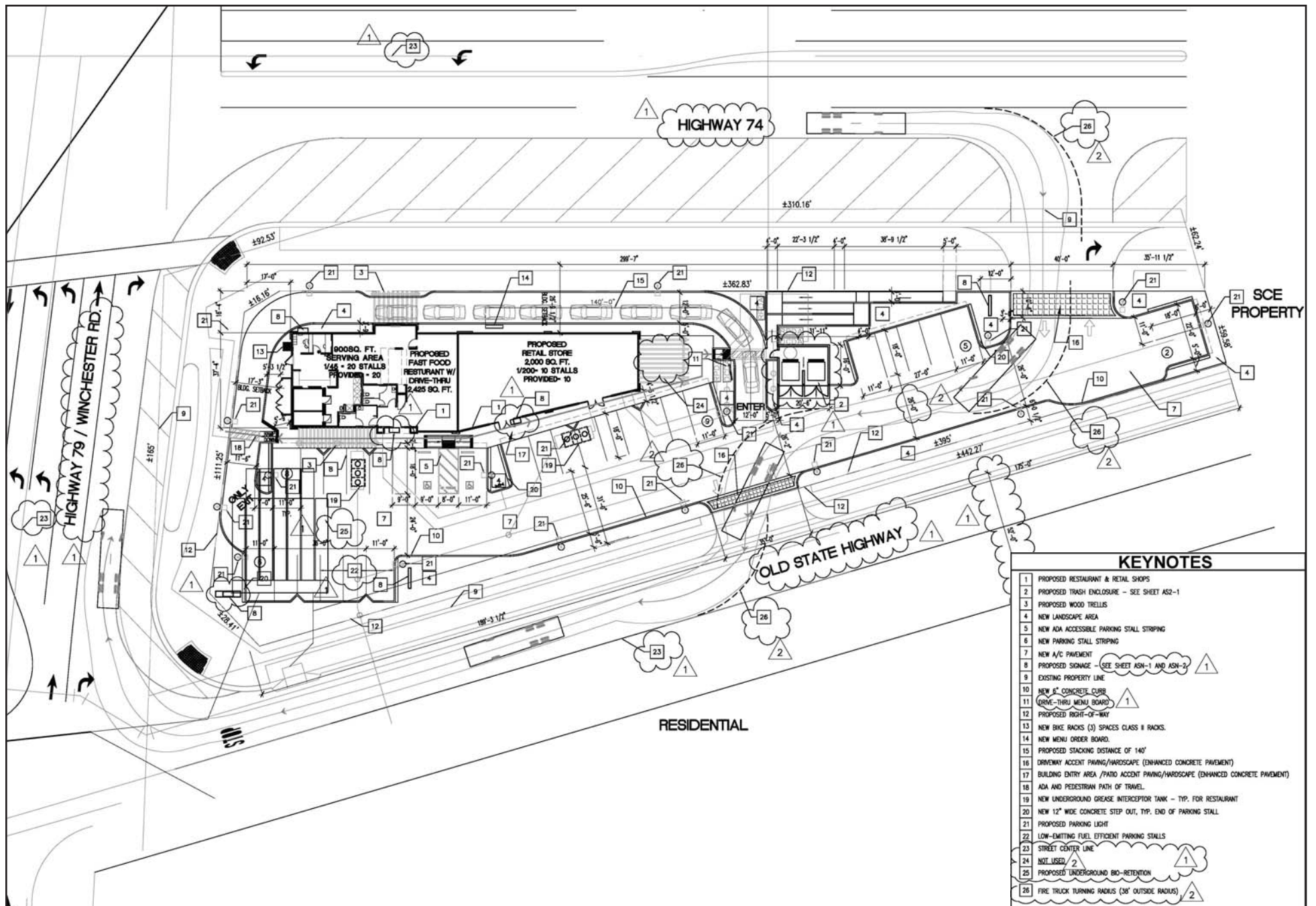


Legend

 Project Site

Source: Google Earth 2020.

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Source: Absolute Design Methods 2018.

FIGURE 2  
Project Location

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Source: Riverside County 2020.

FIGURE 3  
General Plan Land Use Designations

Hemet Retail Center Project

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Source: County of Riverside 2020.

FIGURE 4  
Zoning Designations

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### III. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below ( x ) would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials        | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture & Forest Resources  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources   | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paleontological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing                 |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions        | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                      |  |

### IV. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

#### **A PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS NOT PREPARED**

☐ I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project, described in this document, have been made or agreed to by the project proponent. **A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

#### **A PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS PREPARED**

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, **NO NEW ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIRED** because (a) all potentially significant effects of the proposed project have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable legal standards, (b) all potentially significant effects of the proposed project have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (c) the proposed project will not result in any new significant environmental effects not identified in the earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (d) the proposed project will not substantially increase the severity of the environmental effects identified in the earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (e) no considerably different mitigation measures have been identified and (f) no mitigation measures found infeasible have become feasible.

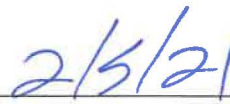
☐ I find that although all potentially significant effects have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable legal standards, some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162 exist. An **ADDENDUM** to a previously-certified EIR or Negative Declaration has been prepared and will be considered by the approving body or bodies.

☐ I find that at least one of the conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162 exist, but I further find that only minor additions or changes are necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation; therefore a **SUPPLEMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required that need only contain the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the project as revised.

☐ I find that at least one of the following conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162, exist and a **SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required: (1) Substantial

changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; (2) Substantial changes have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or (3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any the following: (A) The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration; (B) Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR or negative declaration; (C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible, and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measures or alternatives; or, (D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR or negative declaration would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measures or alternatives.

  
Signature

  
Date

  
Printed Name

For: John Earle Hildebrand III  
TLMA Deputy Director - Interim  
Planning Director

## V. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000-21178.1), this Initial Study has been prepared to analyze the proposed project to determine any potential significant impacts upon the environment that would result from construction and implementation of the project. In accordance with California Code of Regulations, Section 15063, this Initial Study is a preliminary analysis prepared by the Lead Agency, the County of Riverside, in consultation with other jurisdictional agencies, to determine whether a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or an Environmental Impact Report is required for the proposed project. The purpose of this Initial Study is to inform the decision-makers, affected agencies, and the public of potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed project.

|  | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact             |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>AESTHETICS Would the project:</b>   |                                      |  |                                       |                          |
| <b>1. Scenic Resources</b>   |                                      |  |                                       |                          |
| a) Have a substantial effect upon a scenic highway corridor within which it is located?  | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and unique or landmark features; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; or result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?   | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** Caltrans 2019; County of Riverside 2015a; County of Riverside 2016a; County of Riverside n.d.

### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site is located adjacent to SR-74. According to Caltrans, this segment of SR-74 is a State Eligible scenic highway (Caltrans 2019). Riverside County General Plan, Figure C-8 "Scenic Highways", includes the same designation for SR-74 (County of Riverside 2015a).

During construction, the presence of construction equipment would increase activity on the project site, visible from SR-74. Despite the visibility of construction equipment on the project site, these activities would be temporary, and views of the construction activities by vehicles traveling within the public right-of-way on SR-74 would be limited to a relatively brief duration. As such, views of project construction would not have a substantial effect on this scenic corridor.

Travelers on SR-74 eastbound and westbound have a view of hillsides to the north, southeast and southwest. Upon implementation of the proposed project, the structures on-site would be similar in character and scale as the existing gas station and retail development adjacent to the SR-74/SR-79 intersection. The existing commercial development adjacent to SR-74 does not

substantially obstruct the surround hillsides. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial effect on views from SR-74.

- b) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The 1.22-acre project site is currently vacant, consisting of minimal ruderal vegetation and a few ornamental trees. The project site has been previously graded and the ground surface is primarily characterized as disturbed soil. There are no visual resources, such as protected or native trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within the project site that would be impacted by development of the proposed project.

Figure 8, *Trails and Bikeway System* of the Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan identifies numerous community trails north and southeast of the project site (County of Riverside 2016a). The trails north of the project site are in an elevated area. Existing residential development lies between the trails and the project site. As such, views of the proposed project from the trails would be obstructed by existing residential structures. The trails east of the project site are located on a hillside. People using the trails would have an expansive view of the development below, including the project site. The scale and character of the proposed project is be consistent with nearby commercial land uses and applicable design standards established by the County. As such, the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing views of the project areas from trails to the east.

- c) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site consists of undeveloped disturbed land with minimal vegetation and sparsely located ornamental trees. There are currently no sidewalks, curb-and-gutter, or landscaping improvements along SR-74, SR-79, or Old State Highway within the project site or the public ROW.

The proposed project would be developed in the Green Acres community, adjacent to SR-74 and SR-79 (County of Riverside n.d.). Existing commercial land uses are located northwest and southwest of the SR-74/SR-79 intersection. Existing residential development is located north of SR-74, and south of the project site. The closest residence is located approximately 60 feet south of the project site. The proposed project would be similar, in character and design, as the gas station developed on the parcel directly to the west. The project applicant would be required to install pedestrian, storm drain, and landscape improvements within the perimeter of the site and along the frontage with SR-74, SR-79, and Old State Highway, consistent with County standard drawings and regulations. These improvements would aid in defining the roadway along the property boundary, and landscaping would improve the scenic quality of the site.

The project site has a zoning designation of C-P-S (County of Riverside n.d.). The proposed fast-food restaurant with drive-through and 24-hour convenience market at 20.2 feet in height is below the maximum permitted height of 35 feet, and no “yard setbacks” are required. In addition, the proposed structure would be similar in height as nearby commercial and residential development. Proposed building elevations are shown on Figures 5a and 5b.

The proposed fast-foot restaurant with drive-through is conditionally permitted within the C-P-S zoning designation. In compliance with the County’s Code of Ordinances, the project applicant has submitted a Plot Plan application (PPT200023) to the County, and the County will conduct discretionary review of the Plot Plan.

Upon approval of the Plot Plan, development of the proposed project would introduce land uses within the project site that are consistent with the vision of the County’s General Plan and consistent with the commercial land uses at the SR-74/SR-79 intersection. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with the zoning regulations governing scenic quality or substantially degrade the visual quality of the site.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

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**2. Mt. Palomar Observatory**

a) Interfere with the nighttime use of the Mt. Palomar Observatory, as protected through Riverside County Ordinance No. 655?

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**Source(s):** Riverside County Ord. No. 655 (Regulating Light Pollution); County of Riverside, 2016.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** As shown on the Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan, Figure 7 *Mt. Palomar Nighttime Lighting Policy Area*, the project site is located within Zone B of the Mt. Palomar Nighttime Lighting Policy Area (County of Riverside 2016a). All projects within Zone B are required to adhere to the general and Zone B lamp type and shielding requirements of Riverside County Ordinance No. 655, which regulates light pollution from outdoor lighting fixtures. More specifically, Riverside County Ordinance No. 655 regulates artificial illumination for buildings and structures, recreational facilities, parking lots, landscape, outdoor advertisements and other signs, and private street lighting and walkway lighting. The proposed project would introduce new light sources on the project site associated with exterior lighting, signage, and storefront lighting. However, the proposed project would be required to comply with Sections 6, 7, and 8 of Ordinance 655, which set requirements for lamp source, shielding, and placement and contain certain lighting prohibitions. Adherence to the applicable provisions of Ordinance No. 655 would ensure project lighting would not interfere with nighttime use of the Mt. Palomar Observatory.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

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**3. Other Lighting Issues**

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

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b) Expose residential property to unacceptable light levels?

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**Source(s):** Absolute Design Methods 2018; Riverside County Code of Ordinances.

**Findings of Fact:**

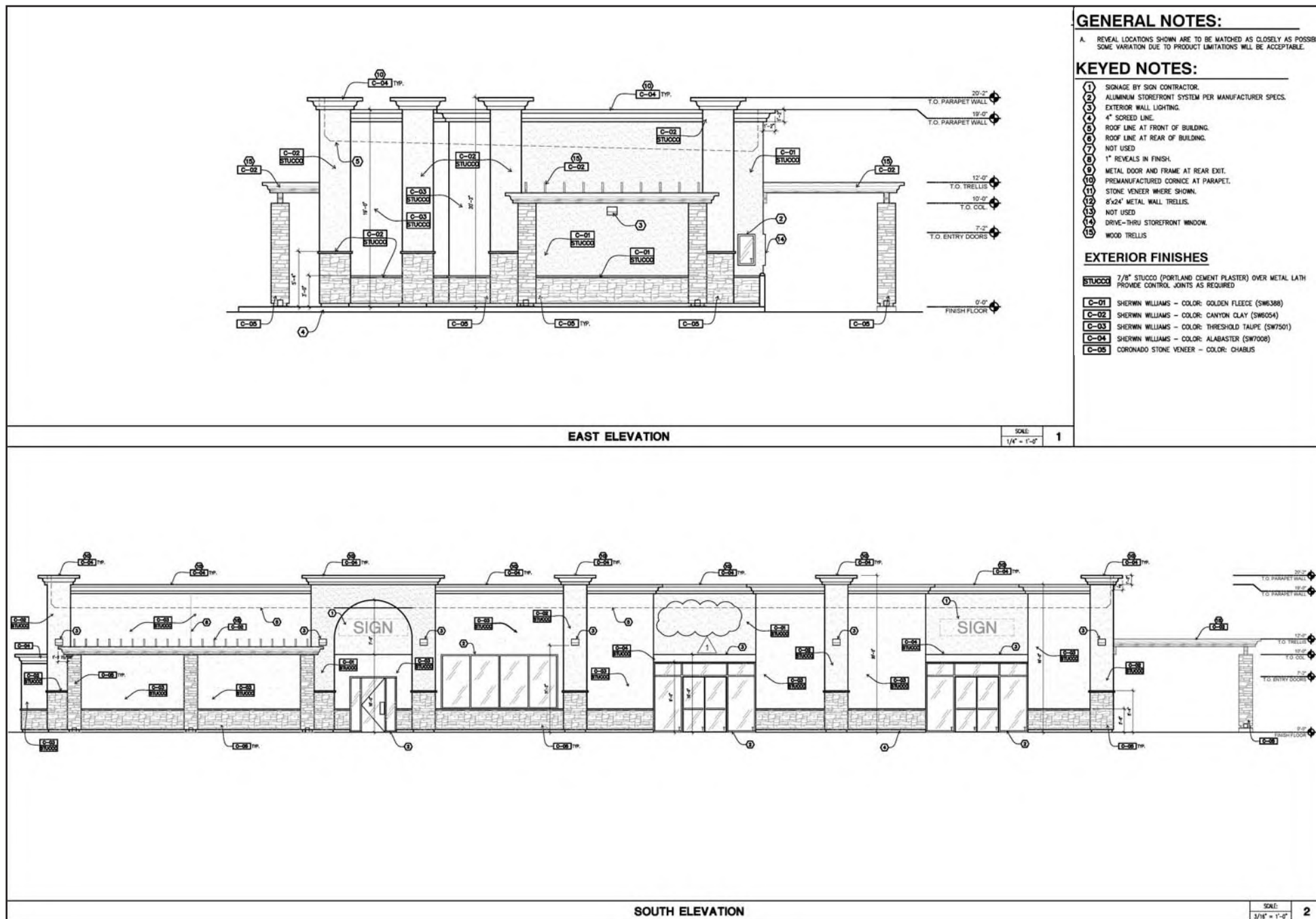
- a-b) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Existing sources of lighting in the project area are emitted from nearby commercial and residential development. New light sources associated with the proposed project could introduce light and/or glare for the nearby single-family residences along Old State Highway south of the project site. However, the twenty-eight LED luminaires proposed to provide adequate exterior lighting would be shielded and downward directed to focus lighting within desired areas and minimize light spillover onto adjacent properties. The Photometric Site Plan, included as Figure 6, shows the projected light levels from the proposed project. Considering the nearest sensitive receptors are existing single-family residences located to the south on Old State Highway, the light levels at the southern project site boundary are projected to be very low (0.0 – 0.4 maintained horizontal foot-candles). The use of shields and downward directing of lighting would also reduce opportunities for glare associated with project lighting. The proposed on-site lighting would comply with the County's Code of Ordinances, Section 8.80.050, which requires exterior lighting to be "located, adequately shielded, and directed such that no direct light falls outside the parcel of origin, or onto the public right-

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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of-way.” Compliance with applicable County ordinances would ensure new exterior light sources associated with the proposed project would be similar to existing light levels at nearby commercial development, and light spillover would be avoided at nearby residential land uses.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

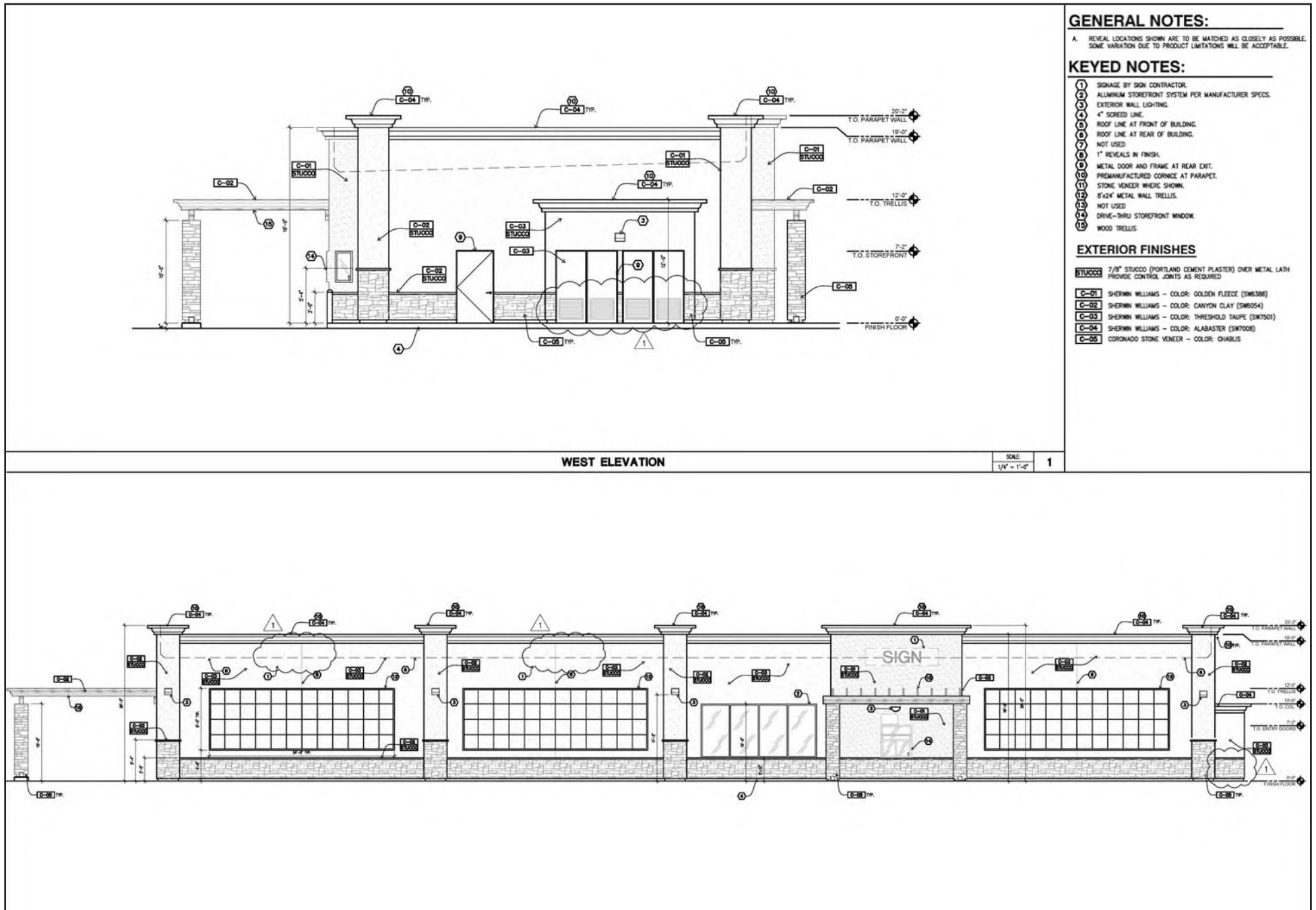
**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.



Source: Absolute Design Methods 2018.

FIGURE 5a  
Elevations - East and South

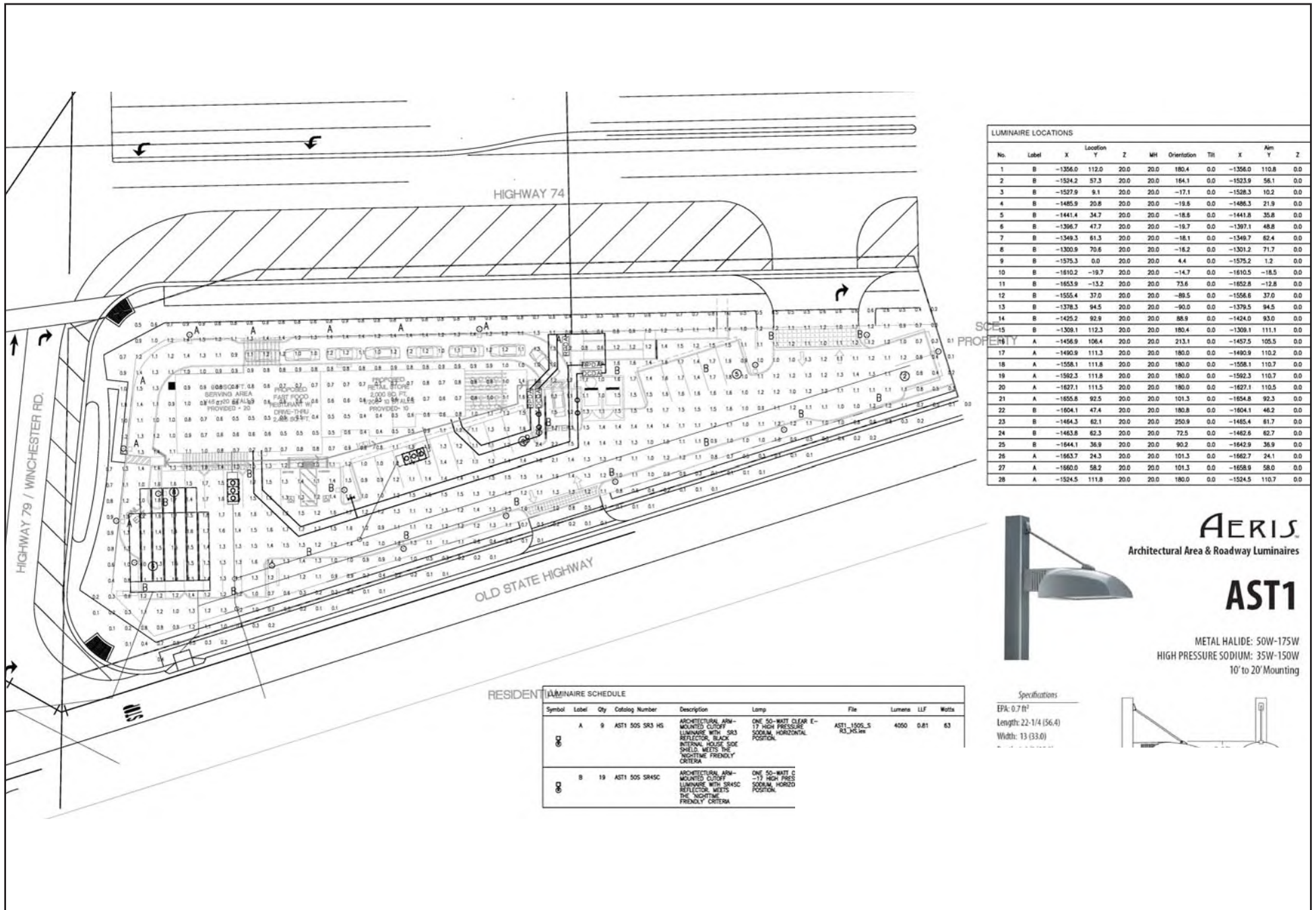
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Source: Absolute Design Methods 2018.

FIGURE 5b  
Elevations - West and North

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Source: Absolute Design Methods 2018.

FIGURE 6  
Photometric Plan

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|  | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

#### AGRICULTURE & FOREST RESOURCES Would the project:

##### 4. Agriculture

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

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b) Conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve?

☐
☐
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☒

c) Cause development of non-agricultural uses within 300 feet of agriculturally zoned property (Ordinance No. 625 "Right-to-Farm")?

☐
☐
☐
☒

d) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

☐
☐
☐
☒

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2015b; County of Riverside n.d.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** As illustrated in General Plan Figure OS-2, Agricultural Resources, the project site is not designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (County of Riverside 2015b). Therefore, the project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland). The General Plan Land Use designation of the project site is Commercial Retail (C-R) indicating the County does not intend the project site to be utilized for agricultural uses. Based on this information, the proposed project would have no impact related to conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use.
- b) **No Impact.** The project site is not located in an area zoned for agricultural use, on land subject to a Williamson Act contract, or on land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve. The project would have no impact related to conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve.
- c) **No Impact.** The project is not located within 300 feet of agriculturally zoned property (County of Riverside n.d.). The project site and vicinity can broadly be described as an area of residential development with commercial land uses and undeveloped parcels along the SR-74 corridor. The project site is within the Scenic Highway Commercial zoning designation, as shown on Figure 4. As such, the proposed project would not result in development of non-agricultural uses within 300 feet of agriculturally zoned property.
- d) **No. Impact.** As stated in Section 4(a) and 4(c) above, the proposed project would not directly result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses. The Rural Residential Zone located north, east, and south of the project site allows development and operation of various agricultural uses and grazing of farm stock not to exceed five animals, as detailed in Chapter 17.16.010(4) of the County Code of Ordinances. The proposed project would be consistent with the existing C-P-S zoning designation and the proposed land uses would be similar to existing commercial

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land uses near the intersection of SR-74 and SR-79. As such, the proposed project would not introduce land uses that would indirectly affect the operation of permitted agricultural and grazing land uses permitted within the R-R Zone.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|   |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>5. Forest</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) 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 Govt. Code section 51104(g))? |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
| b) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2015b.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is currently vacant. The project site and surrounding properties are zoned for commercial and recreational land uses, as shown on Figure 4.. The proposed project does not include or require uses or facilities that would potentially affect properties zoned for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. As such, the proposed project would have no potential to conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production.
- b-c) **No Impact.** As shown on General Plan Figure OS-3a, Forestry Resources, Western Riverside County Parks, Forests, and Recreation Areas, neither the project site nor surrounding properties are designated forest land (County of Riverside 2015b). The proposed project does not include uses or facilities that would otherwise potentially result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

| <b>AIR QUALITY Would the project:</b>  |                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>6. Air Quality Impacts</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?                                      |                          |                          |                                     |                          |
| b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non- | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|  | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact             |
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| attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?  |                                      |  |                                       |                          |
| c) Expose sensitive receptors, which are located within one (1) mile of the project site, to substantial pollutant concentrations? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?                  | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** Air Quality Technical Memo for the Hemet Retail Development Project (Appendix A).

### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site is located within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), which includes the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties and all of Orange County, and is within the jurisdictional boundaries of South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD).

SCAQMD administers SCAB's Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which is a comprehensive document outlining an air pollution control program for attaining all California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The most recent adopted AQMP for the SCAB is the 2016 AQMP, which was adopted by SCAQMD's Governing Board in March 2017. The 2016 AQMP focuses on available, proven, and cost-effective alternatives to traditional strategies while seeking to achieve multiple goals in partnership with other entities seeking to promote reductions in greenhouse gases and toxic risk, as well as efficiencies in energy use, transportation, and goods movement.

The purpose of a consistency finding with regard to the AQMP is to determine if a project is consistent with the assumptions and objectives of the regional air quality plans, and if it would interfere with the region's ability to comply with federal and state air quality standards. SCAQMD has established criteria for determining consistency with the currently applicable AQMP in Chapter 12, Sections 12.2 and 12.3 of the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook. These criteria are:

- Whether the project would result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations, cause or contribute to new violations, or delay timely attainment of the ambient air quality standards or interim emission reductions in the AQMP.
- Whether the project would exceed the assumptions in the AQMP, or increments based on the year of project buildout and phase.

To address the first criterion, project-generated criteria air pollutant emissions have been estimated and analyzed for significance and are addressed under Section 6(b) below. As presented in Section 6(b), construction and operation of the proposed project would not generate criteria air pollutant emissions that exceed SCAQMD's thresholds.

The second criterion regarding the project's potential to exceed the assumptions in the AQMP or increments based on the year of project buildout and phase is primarily assessed by determining consistency between the project's land use designations and its potential to generate population growth. In general, projects are considered consistent with, and not in conflict with or obstructing implementation of, the AQMP if the growth in socioeconomic factors is consistent with the underlying regional plans used to develop the AQMP (per Consistency Criterion No. 2 of the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook). SCAQMD primarily uses demographic growth forecasts for various socioeconomic categories (e.g., population, housing,

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employment by industry) developed by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) for its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). SCAQMD uses this document, which is based on general plans for cities and counties in the SCAB, to develop the AQMP emissions inventory. The SCAG 2016 RTP/SCS and the associated Regional Growth Forecast are generally consistent with the local plans; therefore, the 2016 AQMP is generally consistent with local government plans.

Existing zoning designation for the project site is Scenic Highway Commercial (C-P-S). The proposed land uses and development concepts would be permitted or conditionally permitted under the existing zoning designation. The proposed project would be developed consistent with all development standards established for the C-P-S zoning designation and all applicable regulations in the County's Municipal Code. As such, no change to the C-P-S zoning designation is proposed. . Accordingly, the proposed project is consistent with the SCAG RTP/SCS forecasts used in the SCAQMD AQMP development.

In summary, based on the considerations presented for the two criteria, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable AQMP.

- b) Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Construction and operation of the proposed project would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants from mobile, area, and energy sources, which could cause exceedances of CAAQS and NAAQS or contribute to existing nonattainment of ambient air quality standards. The following discussion identifies potential short-term construction and long-term operational impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed project.

#### ***Short-Term Construction Emissions***

Proposed construction activities would result in the temporary addition of pollutants to the local airshed caused by on-site sources (i.e., off-road construction equipment, soil disturbance, and VOC off-gassing) and off-site sources (i.e., on-road haul trucks, vendor trucks, and worker vehicle trips). Construction emissions can vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity; the specific type of operation; and, for particulate matter, the prevailing weather conditions. Therefore, such emission levels can only be approximately estimated.

Internal combustion engines used by construction equipment, trucks, and worker vehicles would result in emissions of VOCs, oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>), and particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions would also be generated by entrained dust, which results from the exposure of earth surfaces to wind from the direct disturbance and movement of soil. Grading would occur over the entire 1.22-acre project site and cut and fill would be balanced. As such, proposed grading activities would not require removal of excess soil or import of fill material.

The assumed construction equipment mix and estimated hours of operation per day for estimating the construction emissions of the proposed project are based on project-specific information and CalEEMod default assumptions and are shown in Table 3. For this analysis, it was assumed that heavy construction equipment would operate 5 days a week during project construction. Off-road equipment type and operating hours per day were provided by the applicant. The project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 to control dust emissions generated during any dust-generating activities. Standard construction practices that would be employed to reduce fugitive dust emissions include watering of the active dust areas two times per day, with additional watering depending on weather conditions. Internal combustion engines used by construction equipment, trucks, and worker vehicles would result

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in emissions of VOCs, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions would also be generated by entrained dust, which results from the exposure of earth surfaces to wind from the direct disturbance and movement of soil. The proposed project would also involve application of architectural coating (e.g., paint and other finishes) for the buildings. The contractor is required to procure architectural coatings from a supplier that complies with the requirements of SCAQMD's Rule 1113 (Architectural Coatings).

Table 1 presents the estimated maximum daily construction emissions generated during construction of the proposed project.

**Table 1. Estimated Maximum Daily Construction Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions**

|                            | VOC                   | NO <sub>x</sub> | CO        | SO <sub>x</sub> | PM <sub>10</sub> | PM <sub>2.5</sub> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Year                       | <i>pounds per day</i> |                 |           |                 |                  |                   |
| 2021                       | 1.67                  | 9.53            | 7.77      | 0.02            | 0.54             | 0.39              |
| <i>SCAQMD Threshold</i>    | 75                    | 100             | 550       | 150             | 150              | 55                |
| <b>Threshold Exceeded?</b> | <b>No</b>             | <b>No</b>       | <b>No</b> | <b>No</b>       | <b>No</b>        | <b>No</b>         |

**Source:** Appendix A

**Notes:** VOC = volatile organic compound; NO<sub>x</sub> = oxides of nitrogen; CO = carbon monoxide; SO<sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides; PM<sub>10</sub> = coarse particulate matter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = fine particulate matter.

As shown on Table 1, daily construction emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD significance thresholds for VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), PM<sub>10</sub>, or PM<sub>2.5</sub> during construction activities. Construction-generated emissions would be temporary and would not represent a long-term source of criteria air pollutant emissions. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

### ***Long-Term Operational Emissions***

Operation of the proposed project would produce VOCs, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, SO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from area sources, including natural gas combustion, use of consumer products, and motor vehicle trips the project site. Table 2 summarizes the operational emissions criteria pollutants that would be generated from the proposed project. Operational emissions were then compared to the SCAQMD operational thresholds.

**Table 2. Estimated Maximum Daily Operational Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions**

|                            | VOC                   | NO <sub>x</sub> | CO          | SO <sub>x</sub> | PM <sub>10</sub> | PM <sub>2.5</sub> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Emission Source            | <i>pounds per day</i> |                 |             |                 |                  |                   |
| Area                       | 0.11                  | <0.01           | <0.01       | 0.00            | <0.01            | <0.01             |
| Energy                     | 0.02                  | 0.18            | 0.15        | <0.01           | 0.01             | 0.01              |
| Mobile                     | 5.86                  | 36.36           | 41.45       | 0.16            | 8.64             | 2.39              |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>5.99</b>           | <b>36.54</b>    | <b>41.6</b> | <b>0.16</b>     | <b>8.65</b>      | <b>2.4</b>        |
| <i>SCAQMD Threshold</i>    | 55                    | 55              | 550         | 150             | 150              | 55                |
| <b>Threshold Exceeded?</b> | <b>No</b>             | <b>No</b>       | <b>No</b>   | <b>No</b>       | <b>No</b>        | <b>No</b>         |

**Source:** Appendix A

**Notes:** VOC = volatile organic compound; NO<sub>x</sub> = oxides of nitrogen; CO = carbon monoxide; SO<sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides; PM<sub>10</sub> = coarse particulate matter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = fine particulate matter; SCAQMD = South Coast Air Quality Management District; <0.01 = reported value less than 0.01.

Mobile emissions include drive-through vehicle idling, and delivery trucks, including transport refrigeration units, idling emissions.

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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As shown in Table 2, the project would not exceed SCAQMD's significance thresholds during operations.

Cumulative localized impacts would potentially occur if a project were to occur concurrently with another off-site project. Schedules for potential future projects near the project area are currently unknown; therefore, potential impacts associated with two or more simultaneous projects would be considered speculative. However, future projects would be subject to CEQA and would require air quality analysis and, where necessary, also be subject to mitigation requirements. Criteria air pollutant emissions associated with construction activity of future projects would be reduced through implementation of control measures required by the SCAQMD. Cumulative PM10 and PM2.5 emissions would be reduced because all future projects would be subject to SCAQMD Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), which sets forth general and specific requirements for all sites in the SCAQMD. In addition, other projects generating VOC emissions would be subject to SCAQMD Rule 1113 (Architectural Coatings).

Therefore, long-term impacts associated with a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in nonattainment would be less than significant.

- c) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Air quality varies as a direct function of the amount of pollutants emitted into the atmosphere, the size and topography of the air basin, and the prevailing meteorological conditions. Air quality problems arise when the rate of pollutant emissions exceeds the rate of dispersion. Reduced visibility, eye irritation, and adverse health impacts upon those persons termed "sensitive receptors" are the most serious hazards of existing air quality conditions. Sensitive receptors include residences, schools, playgrounds, child-care centers, athletic facilities, long-term health-care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes. The discussion below reviews the significance of emissions within the context of potential impacts to sensitive receptors. The closest off-site sensitive receptors (residences) to the project site include residences located approximately 60 feet south of the project site boundary.

#### **Localized Significance Thresholds**

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in temporary sources of on-site fugitive dust and construction equipment emissions. Off-site emissions from vendor trucks, haul trucks, and worker vehicle trips are not included in the localized significance threshold (LST) analysis. The maximum allowable daily emissions that would satisfy the SCAQMD localized significance criteria for Source Receptor Area 28 are presented in Table 3 and compared to the maximum daily on-site construction and operational emissions.

**Table 3. Localized Significance Thresholds Analysis**

| Year                   | NO <sub>2</sub>                 | CO   | PM <sub>10</sub> | PM <sub>2.5</sub> |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|------------------|-------------------|
|                        | <i>pounds per day (on site)</i> |      |                  |                   |
| Construction Emissions | 9.49                            | 7.29 | 0.39             | 0.35              |
| SCAQMD LST             | 162                             | 750  | 4                | 3                 |
| LST Exceeded?          | No                              | No   | No               | No                |
| Operational Emissions  | 2.00                            | 2.22 | 0.44             | 0.13              |
| SCAQMD LST             | 162                             | 750  | 1                | 1                 |
| LST Exceeded?          | No                              | No   | No               | No                |

**Source:** Appendix A

**Notes:** NO<sub>2</sub> = nitrogen dioxide; CO = carbon monoxide; PM<sub>10</sub> = particulate matter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = fine particulate matter; SCAQMD = South Coast Air Quality Management District; LST = localized significance threshold. Localized significance thresholds are shown for a 1-acre project site corresponding to a distance to a sensitive receptor of 25 meters.

The construction emission estimates reflect control of fugitive dust required by Rule 403.

As shown in Table 3, the project LST would not exceed the established localized significance thresholds, and thus, would result in a less-than-significant impact to sensitive receptors.

### **CO Hotspots**

Traffic-congested roadways and intersections have the potential to generate localized high levels of carbon monoxide (CO). Localized areas where ambient concentrations exceed federal and/or state standards for CO are termed CO “hotspots.” CO transport is extremely limited and disperses rapidly with distance from the source. Under certain extreme meteorological conditions, however, CO concentrations near a congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthy levels affecting sensitive receptors. Typically, high CO concentrations are associated with severely congested intersections operating at an unacceptable level of service (LOS) (LOS E or worse is considered unacceptable).

While project construction would involve on-road vehicle trips from trucks and workers during construction, construction activities would last approximately 7 months and would not require a project-level construction hotspot analysis.

Mobile source impacts occur on two scales of motion. Regionally, project-related travel would add to regional trip generation and increase the vehicle miles traveled within the local airshed and the SCAB. Locally, project-generated traffic would be added to the County’s roadway system near the project site.

A detailed CO analysis was conducted in the Federal Attainment Plan for Carbon Monoxide (CO Plan) for the SCAQMD’s 2003 Air Quality Management Plan. As a relative example, the Wilshire Boulevard/Veteran Avenue intersection is one of the most congested intersections in Southern California with an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of approximately 100,000 vehicles per day. The Wilshire Boulevard/Veteran Avenue intersection in Los Angeles experienced CO concentrations of 4.6 parts per million [ppm], which is still well below the 35-ppm 1-hr CO Federal standard. Accordingly, for the proposed project, CO concentrations at congested intersections would not exceed the 1-hour or 8-hour CO CAAQS unless projected daily traffic would be at least over 100,000 vehicles per day. The proposed project would not increase daily traffic volumes at any study intersection to more than 100,000 vehicles per day (Rick

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| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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Engineering 2018). Based on these considerations, the project would result in CO concentrations in excess of the CAAQS.

### **Toxic Air Contaminants**

A substance is considered toxic if it has the potential to cause adverse health effects in humans, including increasing the risk of cancer upon exposure, or acute (immediate) and/or chronic (cumulative) non-cancer health effects. A toxic substance released into the air is considered a toxic air contaminant (TAC). Adverse health effects associated with exposure to TACs may include carcinogenic (i.e., cancer-causing) and noncarcinogenic effects. Noncarcinogenic effects typically affect one or more target organ systems and may be experienced on either short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic) exposure to a given TAC. Potential short- and long-term impacts relative to TACs are discussed below.

### ***Short-Term Construction Impacts***

Project construction would result in emissions of diesel particulate from heavy construction equipment and trucks accessing the site. Diesel particulate is characterized as a TAC by the State of California. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment has identified carcinogenic and chronic noncarcinogenic effects from long-term exposure but has not identified health effects due to short-term exposure to diesel exhaust. According to the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, health risk assessments, which determine the exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic emissions, should be based on a 30-year exposure period for the maximally exposed individual resident; however, such assessments should be limited to the period/duration of activities associated with the project. Thus, the duration of the proposed construction activities would only constitute a small percentage of the total 30-year exposure period. Due to this relatively short period of exposure (7 months) and minimal particulate emissions on site, TACs generated by the project would not result in concentrations causing significant health risks. In addition, diesel equipment would also be subject to CARB's Airborne Toxic Control Measures for in-use off-road diesel fleets, which would minimize diesel particulate matter emissions.

### ***Long-Term Operational Impacts***

The health risk public-notification thresholds adopted by the SCAQMD Board is 10 excess cancer cases in a million for cancer risk and a hazard index of more than one (1.0) for non-cancer risk. The hazard index of more than 1.0 means that predicted levels of a toxic pollutant are greater than the reference exposure level; this is considered the level below which adverse health effects are not expected. Examples of projects that emit toxic pollutants include oil and gas processing, gasoline dispensing, dry cleaning, electronic and parts manufacturing, medical equipment sterilization, freeways, and rail yards.

The proposed project would emit diesel particulate matter from diesel delivery trucks, transport refrigeration units (TRUs), and diesel vehicles accessing the project site. However, based on the CARB CEQA Land Use Handbook, which recommends avoiding siting new sensitive land uses of a distribution center that accommodates more than 100 trucks per day or more than 40 transport refrigeration units per day, the proposed project would not exceed the recommended limits. Accordingly, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in emissions that would exceed the SCAQMD Board-adopted health risk notification thresholds.

- d) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The occurrence and severity of potential odor impacts depends on numerous factors. The nature, frequency, and intensity of the source; the wind speeds and

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direction; and the sensitivity of receiving location each contribute to the intensity of the impact. Although offensive odors seldom cause physical harm, they can be annoying and cause distress among the public and generate citizen complaints. Potential short- and long-term impacts relative to other emissions, such as odors, are discussed below.

### ***Short-Term Construction Impacts***

Odors would be potentially generated from vehicles and equipment exhaust emissions during construction of the proposed project. Potential odors produced during construction would be attributable to concentrations of unburned hydrocarbons from tailpipes of construction equipment and asphalt pavement application. Such odors would disperse rapidly from the project site and generally occur at magnitudes that would not affect substantial numbers of people. Therefore, short-term construction impacts associated with odors would be less than significant.

### ***Long-Term Operational Impacts***

Land uses and industrial operations associated with odor complaints include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food-processing plants, chemical plants, composting operations, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding facilities (SCAQMD 1993). The proposed project is not considered a land use associated with odor complaints; furthermore, the project commercial cooking operations and equipment, including charbroilers, would be required to comply with SCAQMD permitting and rule requirements, including Rule 402, Nuisance, and Rule 1138, Control of Emissions from Restaurant Operations. Therefore, there would be no long-term operational impacts associated with odors.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

## **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:**

### **7. Wildlife & Vegetation**

a) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

b) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any endangered, or threatened species, as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (Sections 670.2 or 670.5) or in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (Sections 17.11 or 17.12)?

☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

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

☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

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

☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

|   | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact                        |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| e) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?                            | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?   | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** Biological Resources Literature and Records Search (Appendix B); RCA 2003; RCA 2012; USDA 2020; Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 (Tree Removal).

### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** The project site and adjacent off-site roadway improvement areas are within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) area, within the Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan. The project site is not located within or adjacent to any Criteria Cells or MSHCP Conservation Areas. In addition, the project site is not located within any MSHCP-required survey areas.

Regarding the MSHCP Section 6.0 (RCA 2003), the following discussion provides information demonstrating that there are no conflicts with this Plan.

#### ***MSHCP Section 6.1.2 Riparian/Riverine Resources***

The MSHCP defines riparian/riverine areas as “lands which contain habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergent, or emergent mosses and lichens, which occur close to or which depend upon soil moisture from a nearby fresh water source; or areas with fresh water flow during all or a portion of the year.” The MSHCP further clarifies the definition of riparian/riverine areas as those “demonstrating characteristics as described above which are artificially created are not included in these definitions” (RCA 2003).

In addition, the MSHCP defines vernal pools as, “seasonal wetlands that occur in depression areas that have wetlands indicators of all three parameters (soils, vegetation and hydrology) during the wetter portion of the growing season but normally lack wetlands indicators of hydrology and/or vegetation during the drier portion of the growing season. Obligate hydrophytes and facultative wetlands plant species are normally dominant during the wetter portion of the growing season, while upland species (annuals) may be dominant during the drier portion of the growing season.” It further states that “[t]he determination that an area exhibits vernal pool characteristics, and the definition of the watershed supporting vernal pool hydrology, must be made on a case-by-case basis. Such determinations should consider the length of the time the area exhibits upland and wetland characteristics and the manner in which the area fits into the overall ecological system as a wetland.”

As detailed in sections 7(e) and 7(f) below, there are no riparian/riverine or vernal pool resources on the proposed project site. Furthermore, species associated with these resources do not occur on the site. Therefore, no impacts to Section 6.1.2 resources would occur.

### **MSHCP Section 6.1.3 Narrow Endemic Plant Species Survey Area**

The proposed project is not located with a Narrow Endemic Plant Species Survey Area.

### **MSHCP Section 6.3.2 Additional Survey Needs and Procedures**

The MSHCP establishes habitat assessment requirements for certain species of plants, birds, mammals, and amphibians depending on a project's location relative to the required survey area. The project site does not overlap any areas for required additional surveys.

### **MSHCP Section 6.1.4 Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines**

According to the MSHCP, the Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines are intended to address indirect effects associated with locating development in proximity to the MSHCP Conservation Area (County of Riverside 2003). The project site is not located within or immediately adjacent to any Criteria Cells, corridors, or linkages, nor any areas described for conservation. As such, the Urban/Wildlife Interface Guidelines do not apply to the proposed project.

In summary, the proposed project would not conflict with the provisions of the Western Riverside County MSHCP.

- b-c) Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** The project site is currently vacant other than presence of non-native grasses, ruderal vegetation and scattered ornamental trees, including Red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), and Olive Tree (*Olea europaea*). The 2012 MSHCP Vegetation Map classifies the entire project site as Developed/Disturbed Land (RCA 2012). The site is highly disturbed, and based on the substrate, may have been the location of stockpiling for previous road projects. A detailed desktop analysis was conducted to determine the potential for presence of special-status biological resources in the study area using the following sources: USFWS's Critical Habitat and Occurrence Data; CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database; the California Native Plant Society's online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants; the Calflora database, which compiles observation and plant data from both private and public institutions, including the Consortium of California Herbaria; a Natural Resources Conservation Service soil map; the USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle, and the National Wetland Inventory. The results of the detailed desktop analysis were compiled by Dudek into a Biological Resources Literature and Records Search (Appendix B).

The Biological Resources Literature and Records Search concluded that there are no listed species with a potential to occur within the project site or study area. There are no special-status plant or wildlife species with a moderate or high potential to occur; however, there are six special-status plant species, and six special-status wildlife species, California Species of Special Concern (SSC) that were determined to have a low potential to occur within the project site and study area, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Special Status Wildlife Species Potential to Occur**

| Scientific Name<br>Common Name                          | Status<br>(Federal/State) <sup>a</sup> | Habitat  | Potential to Occur  |
|---|--|--|---|
| <i>Calochortus plummerae</i><br>Plummer's mariposa lily | None/None/4.2                          | Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest, Valley and foothill grassland; granitic, rocky/perennial bulbiferous herb/May–July/325–5,575 | Low potential to occur. There is non-native grassland present; however, the project site is highly disturbed, and surrounded by residential and commercial development, reducing the potential to occur. There is a |

**Table 4. Special Status Wildlife Species Potential to Occur**

| Scientific Name<br>Common Name   | Status<br>(Federal/State) <sup>a</sup> | Habitat  | Potential to Occur  |
|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  | CCH observation from 2006 mapped approximately 1 mile southeast of the project site.  |
| <i>Centromadia pungens</i><br>ssp. <i>Laevis</i><br>smooth tarplant                  | None/None/1B.1                         | Chenopod scrub, Meadows and seeps, Playas, Riparian woodland, Valley and foothill grassland; alkaline/annual herb/Apr–Sep/0–2,095              | Low potential to occur. There is non-native grassland present; however, the project site is highly disturbed, and surrounded by residential and commercial development, reducing the potential to occur. There are no alkaline soils present to support this species. The nearest CNDDDB observation is from 1988 and mapped approximately 0.5 miles southeast of the project site.       |
| <i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var.<br><i>parryi</i><br>Parry's spineflower               | None/None/1B.1                         | Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub, Valley and foothill grassland; sandy or rocky, openings/annual herb/Apr–June/900–4,000          | Low potential to occur. There is non-native grassland habitat, and sandy loam soil present; however, the project site is highly disturbed and surrounded by residential and commercial development, reducing the potential to occur. The nearest CNDDDB observation is from 2006 and mapped approximately 0.6 miles southeast of the project site.  |
| <i>Chorizanthe polygonoides</i><br>var. <i>longispina</i><br>long-spined spineflower | None/None/1B.2                         | Chaparral, Coastal scrub, Meadows and seeps, Valley and foothill grassland, Vernal pools; often clay/annual herb/Apr–July/95–5,015             | Low potential to occur. There is non-native grassland habitat present; however, the project site is highly disturbed and surrounded by residential and commercial development, reducing the potential to occur. The nearest CNDDDB observation is from 2006 and mapped approximately 1.2 miles southeast of the project site.   |
| <i>Deinandra paniculate</i><br>paniculate tarplant                                   | None/None/4.2                          | Coastal scrub, Valley and foothill grassland, Vernal pools; usually vernal mesic, sometimes sandy/annual herb/(Mar)Apr–Nov(Dec)/80–3,080       | Low potential to occur. There is non-native grasslands present; however, the project site is highly disturbed and surrounded by residential and commercial development, reducing the potential to occur. In addition, the project site lacks mesic conditions to support this species. The nearest CCH observation is from 1989 and mapped approximately 1 mile east of the project site. |
| <i>Tortula californica</i><br>California screw-moss                                  | None/None/1B.2                         | Chenopod scrub, Valley and foothill grassland; sandy, soil/moss/N.A./30–4,790  | Low potential to occur. There is non-native grassland present; however, the project site is highly disturbed and surrounded by residential and commercial development, reducing the potential to occur. There is a CNDDDB observation from 2012 mapped approximately 4.1 miles from the project site (CNDDDB 2020).   |
| <i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i><br>Blainville's horned lizard                          | None/SSC                               | Open areas of sandy soil in valleys, foothills, and semi-arid mountains including coastal scrub, chaparral, valley–foothill hardwood, conifer, | Low potential to occur. Sandy loam soils and non-native grassland habitat are present within the project site; however, the project site is an urbanized area reducing the potential to occur. A CNDDDB observation from  |

**Table 4. Special Status Wildlife Species Potential to Occur**

| Scientific Name<br>Common Name   | Status<br>(Federal/State) <sup>a</sup> | Habitat  | Potential to Occur   |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | riparian, pine–cypress, juniper, and annual grassland habitats   | 2006 is mapped 1.5 miles east of the project site.   |
| <i>Athene cunicularia</i> (burrow sites & some wintering sites)<br>burrowing owl | BCC/SSC                                | Nests and forages in grassland, open scrub, and agriculture, particularly with ground squirrel burrows   | Low potential to occur. There is open habitat with non-native grasses present that has the potential to support this species; however, the project site is surrounded by commercial and residential development, reducing the potential to occur. There is a CNDDDB observation from 2006 mapped approximately 0.3 miles south from the site (CNDDDB 2020). However, the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Conservation Plan does not require burrowing owl surveys for the Assessor Parcel Numbers within the project site. |
| <i>Buteo regalis</i> (wintering)<br>ferruginous hawk                             | BCC/WL                                 | Winters and forages in open, dry country, grasslands, open fields, agriculture   | Low potential to occur. There are open, non-native grasslands present that has the potential to support foraging of this species. There is a CNDDDB observation mapped approximately 1.9 miles north of the project site (CNDDDB 2020).  |
| <i>Elanus leucurus</i> (nesting)<br>white-tailed kite                            | None/FP                                | Nests in woodland, riparian, and individual trees near open lands; forages opportunistically in grassland, meadows, scrubs, agriculture, emergent wetland, savanna, and disturbed lands            | Low potential to occur. There are open, non-native grasslands present that has the potential to support foraging of this species, with a single large tree. However, there is no riparian or woodland vegetation. There is a CNDDDB observation from 2006 mapped approximately 1.9 miles east of the project site.   |
| <i>Eremophila alpestris actia</i><br>California horned lark                      | None/WL                                | This subspecies of horned lark occurs on the state's southern and central coastal slope and in the San Joaquin Valley. Nests and forages in grasslands, disturbed lands, agriculture, and beaches. | Low potential to occur. There are open, non-native grasslands present that have the potential to support nesting and foraging activities for this species. However, the nearest CNDDDB observation is mapped approximately 4.2 miles southeast of the project site (CNDDDB 2020).  |
| <i>Lepus californicus bennettii</i><br>San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit         | None/SSC                               | Arid habitats with open ground; grasslands, coastal scrub, agriculture, disturbed areas, and rangelands  | Low potential to occur. There are suitable non-native grasslands, and disturbed areas present; however, the project site is surrounded by development, limiting access to the site for this species and reducing the potential to occur. The nearest CNDDDB observation from 2006 is mapped approximately 1 mile southeast of the project site.  |

**Source:** Appendix B

**Notes:**

**Status Legend**

**Federal**

FE: Federally listed as endangered

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
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| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

**Table 4. Special Status Wildlife Species Potential to Occur**

| <b>Scientific Name<br/>Common Name</b> | <b>Status<br/>(Federal/State)<sup>a</sup></b> | <b>Habitat</b> | <b>Potential to Occur</b> |
|--|---|----------------|---------------------------|
|--|---|----------------|---------------------------|

FT: Federally listed as threatened

FC: Federal candidate for listing as threatened or endangered

**State**

SE: State listed as endangered

ST: State listed as threatened

SR: State listed as rare

**CRPR (California Rare Plant Rank)**

CRPR 1A: Plants presumed extinct in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere

CRPR List 1B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere

CRPR List 2A: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but common elsewhere

CRPR List 2B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere

**Threat Rank**

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

.2 Fairly endangered in California (20% to 80% of occurrences threatened/moderate degree and immediacy of threat)

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

As described in Table 4, due to the disturbed nature of the project site and surrounding development and roadways, special-status wildlife species are not anticipated to occur within the project site. Although a site visit specific to biological resources was not conducted, the disturbed nature of the site and surrounding development is known from conducting other non-bio-specific site visits. For those species with a low potential to occur, this site does not support habitat that could sustain populations of special-status species, nor would this site provide long-term conservation value.

Nonetheless, on-site vegetation and trees may potentially be used by migratory birds for breeding. The proposed project would require removal of some trees during construction activities; therefore, the proposed project has potential to directly impact nesting bird species. To avoid potential impacts to nesting birds, and in conformance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code, Mitigation Measure (MM-) BIO-1 will be implemented. With implementation of MM-BIO-1, the proposed project is not anticipated to impact special-status plant and wildlife species.

- d) **No Impact.** The project site consists of vacant, disturbed land, and minimal vegetation. The project site is located at the busy intersection of SR-74 and SR-79, located to the north and west respectively. The project site is within an area surrounding by existing commercial and residential development and paved roadways and is not the location for any designated wildlife movement corridors or linkages. Due to the presence of existing development surrounding the project site, wildlife would not be expected to move through this area. Therefore, the proposed project would not constrain natural wildlife movement.
- e) **No Impact.** No special-status or sensitive vegetation communities are present within the study area or impact footprint, as identified in Appendix B. As such, there would be no direct or indirect impacts to riparian vegetation or other sensitive or special-status vegetation communities. The 2012 MSHCP Vegetation Map classifies the entire project site as Developed/Disturbed Land (RCA 2012).
- f) **No Impact.** Dudek conducted a desktop assessment of aerial imagery, the National Wetlands Inventory, the National Hydrography Dataset, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Custom Soil Resource Report to confirm no waters, wetlands, or hydric soils are present within

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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

the project site. No jurisdictional waters of the United States or state occur within the project site. This includes the absence of federally defined wetlands and other waters (e.g., drainages), state-defined waters (e.g., streams and riparian extent) and vernal pools. The general soil series found at the project site consists primarily of Greenfield sandy loam and Monserate sandy loam, and additional details regarding soils can be found in the Geology and Soils section below (USDA 2020). The proposed project would be subject to the typical restrictions (e.g., Best Management Practices [BMPs]) and requirements that address erosion and runoff, including those of the Clean Water Act and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

- g) **No Impact.** Riverside County Ordinance No. 559 prohibits removal of any living native tree on any parcel greater than one-half acre in size, located in an area above 5,000 feet in elevation. The project site elevation ranges from approximately 1,572 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the southwest portion of the site to approximately 1,590 feet amsl in the northeast portion of the site. In addition, only non-native ornamental trees are located within the project site, including Red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), and Olive Tree (*Olea europaea*). As such, Ordinance No. 559 is not applicable to the proposed project. No other local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, have been identified as applicable to the proposed project or project site.

#### **Mitigation:**

- MM-BIO-1 Preconstruction Nesting Bird Survey and Avoidance Measures.** In conformance with the requirements of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code, should vegetation clearing, cutting, or removal activities be required during the nesting season (i.e., February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist shall conduct a nesting bird survey within 72 hours of such activities. The survey shall consist of full coverage of the project footprint and an appropriate buffer, as determined by the biologist. If no occupied nests are found, no additional steps shall be required. If nests are found that are being used for breeding or rearing young by a native bird, the biologist shall recommend further avoidance measures, including establishing an appropriate buffer around the occupied nest. The buffer shall be determined by the biologist based on the species present, surrounding habitat, and existing environmental setting/level of disturbance. No construction or ground-disturbing activities shall be conducted within the buffer until the biologist has determined that the nest is no longer being used for breeding or rearing.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project:**

|  |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>8. Historic Resources</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Alter or destroy a historic site?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment (2008) (Appendix C); Google 2009.

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
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| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

### **Findings of Fact:**

**a-b) No Impact.** A Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment was prepared for a project previously proposed on the project site in 2008. Since that time, no changes have been made to the project site except for demolition of a structure that previously occupied the eastern portion of the project site and mass grading of the site. As such, results of the previously prepared Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment, included as Appendix E to this document, have been used for evaluation of impacts to historical and archaeological resources.

A records search conducted at the Eastern Information Center (EIC) concluded that the project site had not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no cultural resources had been previously identified or recorded on or adjacent to the project site. Within a one-mile radius of the project site, at least 22 previous cultural resources studies had been conducted, covering approximately 50 percent of the one-mile radius area. As a result of studies conducted within the one-mile radius, 6 historical/archaeological sites and two isolates, (i.e., localities with fewer than three artifacts) were previously recorded. The majority of recorded sites were prehistoric (i.e., Native American) archaeological sites consisting of bedrock metates (milling surfaces) with no associated artifacts on the surface of the site area. However, there was at least one prehistoric site found in the area that contained habitation debris on the surface, such as groundstone fragments, chipped-stone debitage, and midden soil. The historic-period resources found within the one-mile radius included household refuse, remnants of an earthen reservoir, a concrete cistern, an earthen channel, a dirt road, and isolated soldered cans, all dating to the early and mid-20th century, along with four early and mid-20th century residences of both vernacular and traditional designs. None of these previously recorded resources was located in the immediate vicinity of the project area.

During a field survey performed as part of the 2008 Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment, no new historic-period or archaeological resources were identified. A commercial building built around 1960 occupied the eastern portion of the project site. The 2008 Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment concluded that the commercial building was on eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, and thus was not considered a historical resource pursuant to CEQA. The commercial structure was demolished in 2009 (Google 2009).

Based on the findings of the 2008 Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment, construction of the proposed project would not cause an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|   |                          |                                     |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>9. Archaeological Resources</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Alter or destroy an archaeological site?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment (2008) (Appendix C).

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
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| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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### **Findings of Fact:**

- a-b) Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As discussed in Section 9(a-b) above, the Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment previously conducted did not identify any archaeological resources based on a records search at the EIC and a field survey of the project site. Six previously recorded historical/archaeological sites and two isolates were identified within a one-mile radius of the project site. The majority of recorded sites were prehistoric—i.e., Native American—archaeological sites consisting of bedrock metates (milling surfaces) with no associated artifacts on the surface of the site area. However, there was at least one prehistoric site found in the area that contained habitation debris on the surface, such as groundstone fragments, chipped-stone debitage, and midden soil. None of these previously recorded resources was located in the immediate vicinity of the project area. As such, construction of the proposed project is not expected to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological site or resource.

Despite the lack of evidence of archaeological resources within the project site, it is always possible that ground-disturbing activities during construction could encounter previously unidentified subsurface resources. In the event that previously unknown archaeological materials are uncovered during construction, potentially significant impacts to archaeological resources may occur. Therefore, MM CUL-1 is proposed and would be implemented if previously unknown archaeological materials are encountered during construction. With implementation of MM CUL-1, impacts to archaeological resources would be less than significant.

- c) Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** The discovery of human remains is always a possibility during ground disturbance. The State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, State CEQA Guidelines 15064.5(e), and California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98 mandate the process to be followed in the unlikely event of an accidental discovery of any human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery. This requirement, incorporated as MM CUL-2, provides standard procedures in the event that human remains are encountered during project construction. Therefore, the potential for project impacts associated with the disturbance of human remains would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

### **Mitigation:**

**MM-CUL-1** Prior to any project grading, excavation and/or ground disturbing activities, the project applicant shall retain an on-call Registered Professional Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards. In the event that cultural resources (sites, features, and artifacts) are exposed during construction activities involving ground disturbance for the project, all construction work occurring within 100 feet of the find shall immediately cease, the County must immediately be notified and the discovery must be inspected by the on-call archaeologist.. The 100-foot avoidance buffer may be adjusted following inspection of this area by the on-call archaeologist. Depending on the significance of the find, the County will make a determination on how the discovery must be treated.

**MM CUL-2** In accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if potential human remains are found, earth-disturbing work in the vicinity (100-foot [30.5-meter] buffer area) shall immediately halt, and the County Coroner shall be notified of the

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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discovery within 24 hours of the discovery. The Coroner will provide a determination within 48 hours of notification. No further excavation or disturbance of the identified material, or any area reasonably suspected to overlie additional remains, shall occur until a determination has been made. If the County Coroner determines that the remains are, or are believed to be, Native American, they shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. In accordance with California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, the NAHC must immediately notify those persons believed to be the most likely descendant (MLD) from the deceased Native American. The MLD may, with the permission of the owner of the land, or his or her authorized representative, inspect the site of the discovery of the Native American human remains and may recommend to the owner or the person responsible for the excavation work, the means for treatment or disposition, with appropriate dignity, of the human remains and any associated grave goods. The MLDs shall complete their inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48 hours of being granted access to the site.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### ENERGY Would the project:

##### 10. Energy Impacts

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

b) Conflict with or obstruct a State or Local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

**Source(s):** Air Quality Technical Memo for the Hemet Retail Center Project (Appendix A); CARB 2013; CEC 2018a; CEC 2018b; EIA 2017; SCAG 2020; The Climate Registry 2018.

#### Findings of Fact:

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The short-term construction and long-term operation of the proposed project would require the consumption of energy resources in several forms at the project site and within the project area. Construction and operational energy consumption are evaluated in detail below.

##### **Electricity**

##### **Construction Use**

Temporary electric power for as-necessary lighting and electronic equipment such as computers inside temporary construction trailers would be provided by Southern California Edison (SCE). The electricity used for such activities would be temporary and would have a negligible contribution to the project's overall energy consumption. No impact would occur.

##### **Operational Use**

Project operation would require electricity for multiple purposes including building heating and cooling, lighting, appliances, and electronics. For building consumption, default electricity consumption rates in CalEEMod for the proposed project land uses and climate zone were used.

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
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Building operations for the project would involve energy consumption for multiple purposes including, but not limited to, building heating and cooling, lighting, and electronics, as well as parking lot lighting. Building operations, including parking lot lighting, would consume approximately 159,492 kilowatt hours per year (kWh/yr) of electricity (Appendix A). For comparison, electricity demand for Riverside County in 2018 was 15,981 million kWh (CEC 2018a). The proposed project would result in a negligible increase in electricity consumption. Therefore, impacts related to operational electricity use would be less than significant.

### ***Natural Gas***

#### **Construction Use**

Natural gas is not anticipated to be required during construction of the proposed project. Fuels used for construction would primarily consist of diesel and gasoline, which are discussed below under the “petroleum” subsection. Any minor amounts of natural gas that may be consumed as a result of project construction would have a negligible contribution to the project’s overall energy consumption. No impact would occur.

#### **Operational Use**

Natural gas consumption during operation would be required for various purposes, including building heating and cooling and cooking. For building consumption, default natural gas generation rates in CalEEMod for the proposed project land uses and climate zone were used. Building operations would consume an estimated 820,320 kilo-British thermal units per year (kBTU/yr) of natural gas (Appendix A). For comparison, in 2018 approximately 398.5 million therms (398.5 billion kBTU) of natural gas were delivered to Riverside County (CEC 2018b). The proposed project is subject to statewide mandatory energy requirements as outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations. Title 24, Part 11, contains additional energy measures that are applicable to proposed project under the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). As such, impacts related to operational natural gas use would be less than significant.

### ***Petroleum***

#### **Construction Use**

Heavy-duty construction equipment associated with construction activities would rely on diesel fuel, as would haul and vendor trucks involved in delivery of materials to the project site. Construction workers would travel to and from the project site throughout the duration of construction. It is assumed in this analysis that construction workers would travel in gasoline-powered light-duty vehicles.

Heavy-duty construction equipment of various types would be used during each phase of project construction. Appendix A lists the assumed equipment usage for each phase of construction. Fuel consumption from construction equipment was estimated by converting the total carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from each construction phase to gallons using the conversion factors for CO<sub>2</sub> to gallons of gasoline or diesel. The conversion factor for gasoline is 8.78 kilograms per metric ton CO<sub>2</sub> per gallon, and the conversion factor for diesel is 10.21 kilograms per metric ton CO<sub>2</sub> per gallon (The Climate Registry 2018). The estimated diesel fuel usage from construction equipment is shown in Table 5, Construction Equipment Diesel Demand.

**Table 5. Construction Equipment Diesel Demand**

| Phase                 | Pieces of Equipment | Equipment CO <sub>2</sub> (MT) | Kg CO <sub>2</sub> /Gallon | Gallons         |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Grading               | 4                   | 23.98                          | 10.21                      | 2,248.97        |
| Building Construction | 4                   | 23.61                          | 10.21                      | 2,312.31        |
| Paving                | 4                   | 6.15                           | 10.21                      | 602.21          |
| Architectural Coating | 1                   | 5.76                           | 10.21                      | 564.62          |
| <b>Total</b>          |                     |                                |                            | <b>5,828.12</b> |

**Sources:** Pieces of equipment and equipment CO<sub>2</sub> (Appendix A); kg CO<sub>2</sub>/Gallon (The Climate Registry 2018).

**Notes:** CO<sub>2</sub> = carbon dioxide; MT = metric ton; kg = kilogram.

Fuel estimates for total worker, vendor, and haul truck fuel consumption are provided in Table 6, Construction Worker, Vendor, and Haul Truck Petroleum Demand.

**Table 6. Construction Worker, Vendor, and Haul Truck Petroleum Demand**

| Phase                             | Trips | Vehicle MT CO <sub>2</sub> | Kg CO <sub>2</sub> /Gallon | Gallons        |
|-----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Worker Vehicles (Gasoline)</b> |       |                            |                            |                |
| Grading                           | 10    | 2.26                       | 8.78                       | 257.94         |
| Building Construction             | 10    | 4.21                       | 8.78                       | 479.02         |
| Paving                            | 8     | 0.78                       | 8.78                       | 88.44          |
| Architectural Coating             | 2     | 0.53                       | 8.78                       | 60.43          |
| <b>Total</b>                      |       |                            |                            | <b>885.83</b>  |
| <b>Vendor Trucks (Diesel)</b>     |       |                            |                            |                |
| Grading                           | 0     | 0.00                       | 10.21                      | 0.00           |
| Building Construction             | 2     | 1.78                       | 10.21                      | 173.898        |
| Paving                            | 0     | 0.00                       | 10.21                      | 0.00           |
| Architectural Coating             | 0     | 0.00                       | 10.21                      | 0.00           |
| <b>Total</b>                      |       |                            |                            | <b>173.898</b> |
| <b>Haul Trucks (Diesel)</b>       |       |                            |                            |                |
| Grading                           | 0     | 0.00                       | 10.21                      | 0.00           |
| Building Construction             | 0     | 0.00                       | 10.21                      | 0.00           |
| Paving                            | 0     | 0.00                       | 10.21                      | 0.00           |
| Architectural Coating             | 0     | 0.00                       | 10.21                      | 0.00           |
| <b>Total</b>                      |       |                            |                            | <b>0.00</b>    |

**Sources:** Trips and vehicle CO<sub>2</sub> (Appendix A); kg CO<sub>2</sub>/Gallon (The Climate Registry 2018).

**Notes:** MT = metric ton; CO<sub>2</sub> = carbon dioxide; kg = kilogram.

In summary, construction of the project is conservatively anticipated to consume approximately 1,060 gallons of gasoline and 6,000 gallons of diesel over a period of approximately 7 months. For comparison, approximately 20 billion gallons of petroleum will likely be consumed in California over the course of the proposed project's construction phase, based on the California daily petroleum consumption estimate of approximately 78.6 million gallons per day (EIA 2017). Overall, because petroleum use during construction would be temporary, and would not be wasteful or inefficient, impacts would be less than significant.

### **Operational Use**

The fuel consumption resulting from the project's operational phase would be attributable to employees and visitors traveling to and from the project site. Petroleum fuel consumption associated with motor vehicles traveling to and from the project site during operation is a function of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As shown in Appendix A, the annual VMT attributable to the project is expected to be 3,199,178 VMT per year. Similar to construction worker and truck trips, fuel consumption for operation is estimated by converting the total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from VMT to gallons using the conversion factors for CO<sub>2</sub> to gallons of gasoline or diesel. Based on the default CalEEMod vehicle mix and the countywide proportion of gasoline and diesel on-road vehicle VMT, the vehicles associated with project operations would likely be approximately 93% gasoline powered and 7% diesel powered vehicles. The estimated fuel use from vehicles traveling to and from the project site during operation is shown in Table 7.

**Table 7. Project Operations – Petroleum Consumption**

| Fuel     | Vehicle MT CO <sub>2</sub> | kg CO <sub>2</sub> /Gallon | Gallons   |
|----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Gasoline | 1,723.57                   | 8.78                       | 15,132.94 |
| Diesel   | 129.73                     | 10.21                      | 1,324.55  |

**Source:** Appendix A

**Notes:** CO<sub>2</sub> = carbon dioxide; kg = kilogram; MT = metric ton

As depicted in Table 7, project operation would result in approximately 16,458 gallons of petroleum fuel usage per year. This is a conservative estimate, since it does not account for usage of electric vehicles (EVs). By comparison, California as a whole consumes approximately 28.7 billion gallons of petroleum per year (EIA 2017).

Over the lifetime of the project, the fuel efficiency of vehicles is expected to increase. As such, the amount of petroleum consumed as a result of vehicular trips to and from the project site during operation is expected to decrease over time. There are numerous regulations in place that require and encourage increased fuel efficiency, such as efforts to accelerate the number of plug-in hybrids and zero-emissions vehicles in California and increasingly stringent emissions standards (CARB 2013). As such, operation of the project is expected to use decreasing amounts of petroleum over time due to advances in fuel economy. Impacts related to operational petroleum use would therefore be less than significant.

In summary, although the project would increase energy use, the use would be a small fraction of the statewide use and due to efficiency increases, is expected to diminish over time (particularly with respect to petroleum). Given these considerations, energy consumption associated with the project would not be considered inefficient or wasteful and would result in a less than significant impact.

- b) Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would be subject to state regulations for energy efficiency, namely, California's Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen, both of which are set forth in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24. California's Building Energy Efficiency Standards were established in 1978 and serve to enhance and regulate California's building standards. These standards include regulations for residential and nonresidential buildings constructed in California to reduce energy demand and consumption. The Building Energy Efficiency Standards are updated periodically (every 3 years) to incorporate and consider new energy efficiency technologies and methodologies. CALGreen institutes mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up, new construction

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of commercial, low-rise residential, and state-owned buildings, as well as schools and hospitals. The 2016 CALGreen standards became effective on January 1, 2017. The new 2019 standard became effective on January 1, 2020. The proposed project would meet Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen standards to reduce energy demand and increase energy efficiency.

At a regional level, the proposed project would be subject to the policies set forth in SCAG's 2016 RTP/SCS. The RTP/SCS is a regional growth-management strategy that targets per-capita greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction from passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks in the Southern California region pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 375. In addition to demonstrating the region's ability to attain and exceed the GHG emission-reduction targets set forth by CARB, the 2016 RTP/SCS outlines a series of actions and strategies for integrating the transportation network with an overall land use pattern that responds to projected growth, housing needs, changing demographics, and transportation demands. Thus, successful implementation of the 2016 RTP/SCS would result in more complete communities with a variety of transportation and housing choices, while reducing automobile use. With regard to individual developments, such as the project, the strategies and policies set forth in the 2016 RTP/SCS include improved energy efficiency. The 2016 RTP/SCS goal is to actively encourage and create incentives for energy efficiency, where possible. As discussed previously, the project would comply with the 2019 CALGreen standards. For these reasons, the proposed project would be consistent with the SCAG 2016 RTP/SCS.

The proposed project would follow applicable energy standards and regulations during construction. In addition, the proposed project would be built and operated in accordance with all existing, applicable regulations at the time of construction. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with existing energy standards and regulations.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### **GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the project directly or indirectly:**

##### **11. Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone or County Fault Hazard Zones**

☐
☐
☐
☒

a) Be subject to 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?

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b; County of Riverside n.d.; USGS 2020a.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is located in a seismically active region of Southern California dominated by activity on the San Andreas and related faults. As shown on Figure S-2, *Earthquake Fault Study Zones*, of the County's General Plan, the project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone or in any Riverside County Fault Zones (County of Riverside 2019). No known fault lines traverse the project site (County of Riverside n.d.). The closest fault is the San Jacinto Fault, located approximately 8 miles northeast of the project site (USGS,

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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2020a). As such, the proposed project would not be subject to rupture of a known earthquake fault.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### 12. Liquefaction Potential Zone

a) Be subject to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

|                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b; ; County of Riverside n.d.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Liquefaction susceptibility of the project site is "low" (County of Riverside 2016a). To further reduce the potential for seismic-related ground failure on the project site, project design and construction would be implemented in conformance with the California Building Code (CBC) and County building standards.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### 13. Ground-shaking Zone

a) Be subject to strong seismic ground shaking?

|                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b; USGS 2020a.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site is located approximately 8 miles west of the San Jacinto Fault, within the seismically active region of Southern California (USGS 2020a). Although the project site is expected to experience moderate to severe ground shaking, the proposed project would be designed and constructed in a manner that reduces the risk of seismic hazards (Title 24, California Code of Regulations). The proposed project would be conditioned to comply with the most current seismic design coefficients, ground motion parameters, and all applicable provisions of the CBC.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### 14. Landslide Risk

a) 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, collapse, or rockfall hazards?

|                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2016a; County of Riverside 2019b.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** According to Figure S-5, *Regions Underlain by Steep Slope*, of the Riverside County General Plan, the project site is not within or adjacent to an area with slopes 15 percent or greater (County of Riverside 2019b). In addition, liquefaction susceptibility of the project site is "low" (County of Riverside 2016a). As such, the proposed project would not be susceptible to landslides, rockfall, or lateral spreading.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**15. Ground Subsidence**

- a) 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 ground subsidence?

☐
☐
☒
☐

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b. USDA 2020.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Approximately 0.25 acres in the eastern portion of the project site are identified as an area susceptible to subsidence, but no subsidence has been documented in the vicinity of the project site (County of Riverside 2019b). The general soil series found at the project site consists of Greenfield sandy loam and Monserate sandy loam (USDA 2020). The Greenfield series consists of well drained soils formed in moderately coarse textured alluvium, derived from granite and mixed rock sources. The Monserate series consists of well drained soils formed in alluvium, derived from granite rocks. These soils exhibit low plasticity and, thus, are not readily subject to expansion or compaction. To minimize potential for impacts associated with subsidence, the project site would be over-excavated and the building pad compacted during construction grading activities. In addition, the proposed project would be conditioned to comply with the most current seismic design coefficients, ground motion parameters, and all applicable provisions of the CBC.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**16. Other Geologic Hazards**

- a) Be subject to geologic hazards, such as seiche, mudflow, or volcanic hazard?

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☐
☐
☒

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2016a; Google 2020; USGS 2020b.

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### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** A seiche is an oscillation of an enclosed and semi-enclosed body of water, such as a lake or reservoir, commonly caused by seismic activity, high wind, or tsunamis. The project site is not located near any large bodies of water that would result in seiche on-site. The nearest body of water is Diamond Valley Lake, located approximately 3.5 miles south of the project site. The project site is relatively flat, with slopes less than 15 percent, and is not located adjacent to an area with steep slopes (County of Riverside 2019b). Therefore, the threat of mudslides is very low (County of Riverside 2019b). There are no known volcanos near the project site. The Salton Buttes are the nearest volcano to the project site, located approximately 90 miles southeast of the project site, at the southeast edge of the Salton Sea (USGS 2020b). As such, the proposed project would not be subject to geologic hazards such as seiche, mudflow or volcano.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|  |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>17. Slopes</b>  |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
| a) Change topography or ground surface relief features?                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b) Create cut or fill slopes greater than 2:1 or higher than 10 feet?            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| c) Result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2016a; Absolute Design Methods 2018.

### **Findings of Fact:**

- a-b) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site is relatively flat with elevations sloping from 1,572 feet amsl in the southwest to approximately 1,590 feet amsl in the northeast portion of the site. Development of the proposed project would require rough grading and finished pad construction in accordance with the CBC. Proposed grading within the project site would not change the general southeasterly gradient of the project site. The maximum slopes within the project site would be in the southwest corner, with slopes less than or equal to 2:1 ratio. As such, the cut and fill required for project implementation would not substantially change the topography or surface relief features of the project site.
- c) **No Impact.** No subsurface sewage disposal systems have been identified within the project site. Existing wastewater infrastructure is located within the public ROW on Old State Highway, south of the project site. Grading activities associated with the proposed project would be limited to on-site improvements and parkway improvements (i.e. curb-and gutter, sidewalk and landscaping) within the public ROW along the project frontage. Off-site roadway improvements would be limited to existing paved roadways and would not require grading that would affect the existing subsurface wastewater infrastructure. As such, grading required for the proposed project would not result in excavation that would impact existing subsurface utility infrastructure, including sewage disposal systems.

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|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
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**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|  |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>18. Soils</b>   |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
| a) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Section 1803.5.3 of the California Building Code (2019), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| c) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** USDA 2020.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Project construction would be subject to local and state codes and requirements for erosion control and grading. Because construction activities would disturb one or more acres, the proposed project must adhere to the provisions of the NPDES Construction General Permit. Construction activities subject to this permit include clearing, grading, and other soil disturbances, such as stockpiling and excavating. The NPDES Construction General Permit requires implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevent Plan (SWPPP), which would include temporary project construction features (i.e., BMPs) designed to prevent erosion and protect the quality of stormwater runoff. Sediment-control BMPs may include stabilized construction entrances, straw wattles on earthen embankments, sediment filters on existing inlets, or the equivalent.

In addition, grading activities would be required to conform to the most current version of the California Building Code, the County Code, the approved grading plans, and good engineering practices. The proposed project must also comply with SCAQMD Rule 402 (Nuisance) and Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), which would reduce construction erosion impacts. Rule 403 requires control measures to reduce fugitive dust from active operations, storage piles, or disturbed surfaces, with a goal to omit visibility beyond the property line or avoid exceedance of 20% opacity. Rule 402 requires dust suppression techniques be implemented to prevent dust and soil erosion from creating a nuisance off site. Compliance with these federal, regional, and local requirements would reduce the potential for both on-site and off-site erosion effects to accepted levels during project construction. Upon completion of construction activities, ground surfaces would be stabilized by project structures, paving and landscaping. Therefore, impacts associated with soil erosion, topsoil loss, and expansive soils would be less than significant.

- b) **No Impact.** The soil series found at the project site consist of Greenfield Sandy Loam and Monserate Sandy Loam (USDA 2020). The Greenfield series consists of well drained soils formed in moderately coarse textured alluvium, derived from granite and mixed rock sources. The Monserate series consists of well drained soils formed in alluvium, derived from granite rocks. These soils exhibit low plasticity and, thus, are not expansive.

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

- c) **No Impact.** The Lake Hemet Municipal Water District (LHMWD) provides wastewater collection services to the project area. The proposed project would connect to the existing 6-inch sewer line within the public ROW on Old State Highway, sought of the project site. As such, the use of septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems would not be required for the proposed project.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**19. Wind Erosion and Blowsand from project either on or off site.**

☐
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☐

- a) Be impacted by or result in an increase in wind erosion and blowsand, either on or off site?

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b; Riverside County Ord. Ord. No. 484.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site is in an area with “moderate” susceptibility for wind erosion (County of Riverside 2019b). During construction of the proposed project, loose soil would be exposed during grading activities, thereby increasing the potential for wind or water-related erosion. During construction activities, the contractor would be required to comply with federal, state, and local requirements and guidelines to minimize the potential for wind erosion, including compliance with SCAQMD Rule 403, through application of standard best management practices (BMPs). Development of the proposed project would result in construction of impervious surfaces across most of the project site that would reduce the exposure of soils within the project site, resulting in reduced impacts associated with wind erosion during long-term operation of the project.

Riverside County Ordinance No. 484 requires protective actions from landowners disturbing sandy or sandy loam soils to prevent substantial quantities of soil from being deposited on public roads and private property. The project applicant would adhere to Ordinance No. 484, implementing protective actions described herein to prevent soil deposition as a result of excavating, leveling, or removing natural or planted vegetation or root crops; by depositing or spreading a substantial quantity of similar soil on said land; by any other act likely to cause or contribute to wind erosion of said land; or to aggravate an existing wind erosion condition.

As previously addressed, the proposed project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rules 403 to control dust emissions generated during the grading activities. Standard construction practices that would be employed to reduce fugitive dust emissions include watering of the active sites three times per day depending on weather conditions. Compliance with existing SCAQMD regulations and Ordinance No. 484, would ensure that impacts associated with wind erosion are less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|  | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact             |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS Would the project:</b>   |                                      |  |                                       |                          |
| <b>20. Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?      | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** Air Quality Technical Memo (Appendix A); County of Riverside 2019a.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Gases in the atmosphere can contribute to climate change both directly and indirectly.<sup>1</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change developed the global warming potential (GWP) concept to compare the ability of each GHG to trap heat in the atmosphere relative to another gas. The reference gas used is CO<sub>2</sub>; therefore, GWP-weighted emissions are measured in metric tons (MT) of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e). The estimated GHG generated by the proposed project have been derived using the CalEEMod modeling output for air quality emissions projects, included as Appendix A.

**Construction Emissions**

*Less-than-Significant*<sup>2</sup>. Construction of the project would result in GHG emissions, which are primarily associated with use of off-road construction equipment, on-road vendor and haul trucks, and worker vehicles. As previously stated, SCAQMD recommends that construction emissions be amortized over a 30-year project lifetime. The CalEEMod was used to estimate GHG emissions during construction. Construction of the project is anticipated to last approximately 7 months. Table 8 shows the estimated annual GHG construction emissions associated with the proposed project, as well as the annualized construction emissions over a 30-year project life.

**Table 8. Estimated Annual Construction Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

|                                    | CO <sub>2</sub>      | CH <sub>4</sub> | N <sub>2</sub> O | CO <sub>2</sub> e |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Year                               | Metric Tons per Year |                 |                  |                   |
| 2021                               | 248.13               | 0.07            | 0.00             | 250.45            |
| Annualized emissions over 30 years |                      |                 |                  | 8.35              |

**Source:** Appendix A

**Notes:** CO<sub>2</sub> = carbon dioxide; CH<sub>4</sub> = methane; N<sub>2</sub>O = nitrous oxide; CO<sub>2</sub>e = carbon dioxide equivalent.

As shown in Table 8, the estimated total GHG emissions during construction would be approximately 250.45 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e over the construction period. Estimated project-generated construction emissions annualized over 30 years would be approximately 8.35 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year. As with project-generated construction air pollutant emissions, GHG emissions generated during construction of the proposed project would be short term in nature, lasting only for the

<sup>1</sup> Direct effects occur when the gas itself absorbs radiation. Indirect radiative forcing occurs when chemical transformations of the substance produce other GHGs, when a gas influences the atmospheric lifetimes of other gases, and/or when a gas affects atmospheric processes that alter the radiative balance of the Earth (e.g., affect cloud formation or albedo) (EPA 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Currently, there is no standardized construction threshold for GHG, but based on the results (Appendix A), it can be assumed that impacts would be less than significant.

duration of the construction period, and would not represent a long-term source of GHG emissions. Because there is no construction GHG threshold, the amortized construction emissions were added to the operational emissions and evaluated therein.

### Operational Emissions

**Less-than-Significant.** CalEEMod was used to estimate potential project generated operational GHG emissions from area sources (landscape maintenance), energy sources (natural gas and electricity), mobile sources, solid waste, and water supply and wastewater treatment. Emissions from each category are discussed in the following text with respect to the project. Estimated annual operation emissions of the proposed project are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9. Estimated Annual Operational Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

| Emissions Source                         | CO <sub>2</sub>      | CH <sub>4</sub> | N <sub>2</sub> O | CO <sub>2</sub> e <sup>a</sup> |
|--|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
|  | Metric Tons per Year |                 |                  |                                |
| Area                                     | .0014                | 0.00            | 0.00             | .0015                          |
| Energy                                   | 62.68                | 0.002           | 0.0009           | 62.99                          |
| Mobile                                   | 1,853.30             | 0.16            | 0.00             | 1,857.21                       |
| Solid Waste                              | 6.94                 | 0.41            | 0.00             | 17.19                          |
| Water and Wastewater                     | 3.11                 | 0.03            | 0.0007           | 4.05                           |
| <b>Total</b>                             |                      |                 |                  | <b>1,941.44</b>                |
| <b>Amortized Construction Emissions</b>  |                      |                 |                  | <b>8.35</b>                    |
| <b>Total with Construction Emissions</b> |                      |                 |                  | <b>1,949.79</b>                |

**Source:** Appendix C

**Notes:** CO<sub>2</sub> = carbon dioxide; CH<sub>4</sub> = methane; N<sub>2</sub>O = nitrous oxide; CO<sub>2</sub>e = carbon dioxide equivalent.

a. Numbers may not add exactly due to rounding.

In guidance provided by the SCAQMD GHG CEQA Significance Threshold Working Group, SCAQMD considered the following tiered approach to determine the significance of GHG emissions from residential and commercial projects (SCAQMD 2010):

- Tier I – Exemptions, e.g., categorical, statutory, etc.
- Tier II – Consistency with a locally adopted GHG reduction plan
- Tier III – Numerical Screening Thresholds (10,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e for industrial projects and 3,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e for non-industrial projects)
- Tier IV – Service Population Screening Threshold

Tier III was determined to be the most appropriate approach for the proposed project because commercial uses are proposed. As such, the numerical threshold of 3,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year for non-industrial project was used as the significance threshold in this analysis.

As shown in Table 9, the proposed project would result in 1,941.44 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year during operation. When the amortized construction emissions are included, the total project operational emissions would be 1,949.79 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year. As such, the proposed project would not exceed the non-industrial threshold of 3,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year as established by the SCAQMD.

- b) Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Consistent with the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project's significance with respect to GHG emissions is evaluated based on its consistency with the County of Riverside Climate Action Plan (CAP), which is considered a qualified CAP. The County revised its CAP in November 2019 contains guidance on Riverside County's GHG

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Inventory reduction goals, thresholds, policies, guidelines, and implementation programs. In particular, the CAP elaborates on the General Plan goals and policies relative to the GHG emissions and provides a specific implementation tool to guide future decisions of the County of Riverside.

The CAP was designed under the premise that the County of Riverside, and the community it represents, is uniquely capable of addressing emissions associated with sources under Riverside County's jurisdiction, and that Riverside County's emission reduction efforts coordinate with the state strategies of reducing emissions in order to accomplish these reductions in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The County of Riverside developed the CAP with the following purposes in mind:

- Create a GHG emissions baseline from which to benchmark GHG reductions.
- Provide a plan that is consistent with and complementary to: the GHG emissions reduction efforts being conducted by the State of California through the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB32 & SB32), federal government through the actions of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the global community through the Kyoto Protocol.
- Guide the development, enhancement, and implementation of actions that reduce GHG emissions.
- Provide a policy document with specific implementation measures meant to be considered as part of the planning process for future development projects.

By implementing the CAP, the County of Riverside is able to determine that projects that are consistent with the plan will not have significant GHG-related impacts. Coordination with CARB, SCAQMD, and the State Attorney General's office ensures that the inventories and reduction strategies presented in the CAP adequately address the County of Riverside's emissions. The CAP, prepared in accordance with SCAQMD, recognizes an annual GHG threshold of 3,000 MT CO<sub>2e</sub> per year to identify projects that are considered to be less than significant regarding GHG impacts (County of Riverside 2019a). As demonstrated in Table 9, the proposed project would not exceed the CAP annual threshold; and therefore, the proposed project does not conflict with local or regional GHG plans. Thus, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS Would the project:

##### 21. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

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

|                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

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

|                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

c) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?

|                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

|  | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact                        |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| d) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter (1/4) mile of an existing or proposed school?  | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** DTSC 2020; SWRCB 2020; EPA, 2020.

### **Findings of Fact:**

- a-b) Less-Than-Significant Impact.** During construction of the proposed project, hazardous and potentially hazardous materials typically associated with construction activities would be routinely transported to/from and used on the project site. These hazardous materials could include gasoline, diesel fuel, lubricants, and other products used to operate and maintain construction equipment. The transport, use, and handling of these materials would be a temporary activity coinciding with short-term proposed project construction activities.

Operation of the proposed fast food restaurant and 24-hour convenience market would involve the routine transport, use, and disposal of minor quantities of hazardous materials associated with commercial uses and restaurants, such as cleaning products, solvents, lubricants, adhesives, refrigerants, sealants, other chemical materials used in building maintenance and interior improvements, and paints. This level of hazardous materials use is typical for commercial areas and has not been identified as a significant threat to the environment.

Any handling, transport, use, or disposal would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local agencies and regulations, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the California Department of Transportation, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health (the Certified Unified Program Agency for Riverside County). In addition, as mandated by the OSHA, all hazardous materials stored on site would be accompanied by a Material Safety Data Sheet, which would inform on-site personnel about the necessary remediation procedures in the case of accidental release.

- c) Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project includes development of a fast-food restaurant with drive-through and 24-hour convenience market development on a parcel that is slated for commercial development under the County's General Plan. Off-site roadway improvements and parkway improvements (i.e. curb-and-gutter, sidewalk and landscaping) are proposed along the project frontage. As required by MM-TRA-1, the project applicant must prepare a construction traffic plan to be implemented during construction within existing roadways to ensure that all roadways remain operational during construction activities. No existing or proposed roadways would be impacted by the proposed project that would affect the evacuation routes established by the County. In addition, the proposed project would be required to implement any applicable programs for the Riverside County Disaster Preparedness Plan in the event of a natural disaster or other emergency. As such, the proposed project would not impair implementation of or interfere with an adopted emergency response plan.

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|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

d) **No Impact.** No schools are located within the vicinity of the project site. The nearest school, Vista Del Monte Elementary School, is located approximately 2.5 miles south of the project site at 28751 Winchester Road.

e) **No Impact.** Pursuant to Government Code 65962.5 and its subsections, record searches on the project property were performed within multiple database platforms in October 2020. The resources consulted included GeoTracker, EnviroStor and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO).

No Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Cleanup Sites, Land disposal Sites, Military Sites, DTSC Hazardous Waste Permits, DTSC Cleanup Sites, or Permitted Underground Storage Tanks were identified within or adjacent to the project site. The nearest registered Geotracker database site is located approximately 210 feet north of the project site at the ARCO gas station, at the northwest corner of the SR-74/SR-79 intersection. The status of the LUST Cleanup Site is "Completed – Case Closed" as of 2006 (RWQCB 2020). This site does not pose a threat to the project site due to its "completed" status.

The EnviroStor database did not register an active Federal Superfund, a State Response, Voluntary Cleanup, School Cleanup, Evaluation, School Investigation, Military Evaluation, Tiered Permit, or Corrective Action Site within close proximity to the project site. The closest site is a Voluntary Cleanup site approximately 5.25 miles northeast of the project site (DTSC 2020). This site does not pose a threat due to its distance from the project site.

No indication of the project site was found when consulting the ECHO database and no sites were identified within one mile of the project site (EPA 2020).

The project site is not listed as a hazardous materials site in any of these databases, and pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. The registries listed a few sites within a mile of the project site; however, their distance and current status as "completed-case closed" do not render them a threat to the proposed project.

**Mitigation:** Implementation of MM-TRA-1, detailed in Section 37, is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|  |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>22. Airports</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Result in an inconsistency with an Airport Master Plan?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Require review by the Airport Land Use Commission?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two (2) miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, or heliport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** County of Riverside, 2016b; ALUC 2017.

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

### **Findings of Fact:**

**a-c) No Impact.** The project site is located approximately 2.7 miles northwest of the Hemet-Ryan Airport. The project site is not within a Hemet-Ryan Airport Compatibility Zone (ALUC 2017). In addition, the proposed land uses are consistent with the existing zoning designation. As such, the proposed project would not result in an inconsistency with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan or require review by the Airport Land Use Commission. Due to the project site's distance from the Hemet-Ryan Airport, no airport safety hazards would occur at the project site.

**d) No Impact.** No private airstrips are located in the vicinity of the project site.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

### **HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project:**

#### **23. Water Quality Impacts**

|   |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| d) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on-site or off-site?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| e) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-site or off-site?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| f) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| g) Impede or redirect flood flows?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| h) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk the release of pollutants due to project inundation?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| i) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

**Source(s):** FEMA 2017; RWQCB 2016; LHMWD 2016.

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
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| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

### **Findings of Fact:**

a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Construction of the proposed project would be subject to County and state requirements for erosion control and grading. Because construction activities would disturb one or more acres, the project applicant would be required to adhere to the provisions of the NPDES Construction General Permit. Construction activities subject to this permit include clearing, grading, and soil disturbance through stockpiling and grading. The NPDES Construction General Permit requires implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would include BMPs designed to prevent erosion and sedimentation in stormwater runoff. Collectively, these construction BMPs would help retain stormwater, and any constituents, pollutants, and sediment contained therein, on the project site, which, in turn, would help prevent water quality impacts to downstream receiving waters during project construction.

b) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site would be served by the Lake Hemet Municipal Water District (LHMWD). The LHMWD serves its customers from three main sources: locally pumped groundwater, surface water diversions from the San Jacinto River system, and water purchased from the Eastern Municipal Water District. The LHMWD 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) accounts for existing and forecasted development in its supply and demand forecasts. The proposed project would include construction and operation of land uses that are consistent with the C-R land use designation established by the County's General Plan. Therefore, the UWMP supply and demand forecasts accounted for anticipated commercial development within the project site. The 2015 UWMP forecasts a supply surplus of 470 acre-feet per year (AFY) in 2035 under a multiple dry-year scenario (LHMWD 2015).

The proposed project would include construction of impervious surfaces across the majority of the project site. An increase in impervious surfaces would decrease percolation potential within the project site. Although implementation of the proposed project would reduce the pervious areas available for potential natural recharge, the area of the project site is relatively small (approximately 1.22 acres) in relation to the areal size of the groundwater basin (188,000 acres), and the project site's only source of water is from direct precipitation, providing little opportunity to recharge under existing conditions. The proposed project would also include subsurface retention/treatment infrastructure on-site, discharge to the public ROW, and surface flow to surface waters or other areas where percolation is possible. Due to the size of the project and on-site stormwater management design, implementation of the proposed project would not significantly deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge.

c-d) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.**

#### ***Construction***

Construction of the proposed project would result in grading and ground disturbance, which could alter the current drainage pattern of the project site. Erosion during construction would be related primarily to disturbed soils and sediments that may enter the storm water during rainfall events or winds. Implementation of the SWPPP, including erosion control and sediment control BMPs (described in response to Section 21(a-b)) would reduce erosion on and off site. Therefore, compliance with existing water quality regulations would ensure short-term construction impacts would be less than significant.

### **Operation**

Development of the proposed project would alter existing ground contours of the project site and increase the impervious surface area on the site, all of which would result in changes to the existing drainage patterns interior to the site. Proposed grading within the project site would not change the general southeasterly gradient of the project site. By increasing the area of impervious surfaces on the site, more surface runoff would be generated, and the rate and volume of runoff would increase. Although installation of impervious surfaces would increase surface runoff, sedimentation within the runoff would be reduced with due to site development, landscaped areas, and implementation of BMPs. Thus, on-site erosion would be reduced with development of the proposed project. To manage surface runoff, the proposed project would incorporate an underground drainage system to capture storm water from the site. Thus, impacts associated with the alteration of drainage patterns and erosion would be less than significant with adherence to applicable local, regional, and State requirements.

- e) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Development of the proposed project would result in the conversion of on-site permeable surfaces to impermeable surfaces, which would alter the current drainage pattern of the project site. Stormwater runoff within the project site would be directed to grate inlets that would carry the water to two subsurface stormwater treatment chambers located in the western portion of the project site. Treated water from the drive-through retail site would be control-discharged south of the project site. The proposed project's on-site storm drain systems would adequately convey storm water flows and control the release of stormwater to the public ROW. In addition, the proposed on-site storm drain and water quality system would adequately treat on-site flows. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in on-site or off-site flooding.
- f) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would be served by the County's existing stormwater drainage system. Construction activities such as demolition, grading, and paving could introduce additional pollutants and sediment into water runoff and flow into nearby storm drains. Implementation of erosion control and sediment control BMPs as part of the SWPPP (described in response to Section 23[a-b]) would reduce pollutants in storm water runoff. The proposed project would also be required to comply with applicable regulations for the long-term protection of water quality, including the development and implementation of a WQMP that must be approved by the County. The project-specific WQMP would identify structural and non-structural BMPs to remove pollutants generated on-site, capture storm water on-site, and treat on-site storm water prior to discharge.
- g) **No Impact.** The project site is located within Zone X of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Map panel 06065C2080H, dated April 19, 2017 (FEMA 2017). Zone X represents areas of minimal flood hazard. Construction of the proposed project would not impede or redirect flood flows within a designated 100-year flood plain. Stormwater captured on-site would be treated, and control-released via surface flow to the public ROW south of the project site, similar to existing conditions.
- h) **No Impact.** As discussed in Section 23(g), the proposed project is not within a 100-year flood zone (FEMA 2017). The project site is not located near a levee or dam, nor is the project located near a body of water that would pose potential seiche or tsunami impacts. As such, the proposed

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project would not pose risk of release of pollutants within a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone

- i) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site is under the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana RWQCB. The RWQCB sets water quality objectives and beneficial uses in the Santa Ana River Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the Perris-South Management Zone, which includes the project site. These water quality objectives are intended to protect the present and probable beneficial uses of California inland water bodies including bays, estuaries, and groundwater.

To address the potential for urban pollutants, such as oil, grease, sediment, and trash, discharged in stormwater during operation, the project applicant would implement a site-specific Water Quality Management Plan to capture stormwater runoff within the project site and operate a low impact development (LID) BMP bioretention system and underground retention chambers to ensure the proposed project site does not increase runoff volume when compared to the existing, undeveloped condition. Each of the proposed LID BMPs are designed to perform at a "high" level of pollutant removal efficiency in accordance with the most current edition of the RWQCB Design Handbook for Low Impact Development Best Management Practices (RWQCB 2016), and therefore are not anticipated to obstruct implementation of the Santa Ana River Basin Plan.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### LAND USE/PLANNING Would the project:

##### 24. Land Use

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

☐
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☒
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b) Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community (including a low-income or minority community)?

☐
☐
☐
☒

**Source(s):** County of Riverside n.d.; County of Riverside Code of Ordinances.

#### Findings of Fact:

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.**

##### **Regional Plans**

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for six counties: Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Ventura, and Imperial. The proposed project would not be considered regionally significant by SCAG based on the established criteria in Section 15206 of the State CEQA Guidelines, which is applied by SCAG to determine regional significance. Therefore, SCAG's regional plans and programs including the 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) are not applicable to the proposed project.

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The project's consistency with regional plans and programs that address specific topical issues are discussed in the respective sections of this Initial Study. This includes but is not limited to the SCAQMD AQMP (Air Quality section), the Western Riverside MSHCP (Biological Resources section), and the Santa Ana River Water Quality Control Plan (Hydrology and Water Quality section). As indicated in the analysis presented in this Initial Study, the proposed project would be consistent with the requirements outlined in these regional plans, including requirements in place to avoid or mitigate environmental effect.

### ***County of Riverside***

The County of Riverside General Plan and Zoning Ordinance define the permitted land uses and the corresponding development standards within the County. The project site has a General Plan land use designation of Community Retail (C-R) and a zoning designation of Commercial Scenic Highway (C-P-S) (County of Riverside n.d.). The General Plan land use and zoning designations for the project site and surrounding properties are shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4, respectively. The proposed project would comply with all Zoning Code development and design standards for the C-P-S designation, outlined in Chapter 17.80 of the County's Code of Ordinances.

The proposed 24-hour convenience market is permitted within the C-P-S zoning designation and the fast-food restaurant with drive-through and is conditionally permitted within the C-P-S zoning designation. A Plot Plan is required for uses that are necessary and appropriate in the designation with specific consideration of the proposed use due to the use's unique character, including but not limited to, the possible effect of the use on public facilities and/or surrounding uses. In compliance with the County's Zoning Code, the applicant has submitted a Plot Plan application (PPT200023) to the County for development of the fast-food restaurant with its drive-through and operation of a 24-hour convenience market. The County will conduct discretionary review of the Plot Plan. The potential for environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the proposed project, including impacts to surrounding uses, have been addressed in this Initial Study.

In summary, as presented in the analysis above and in the respective sections of this Initial Study, the proposed project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

- b) No Impact.** The proposed project site is currently vacant and has an existing Commercial Retail land use designation. Development of the project site with a fast-food restaurant with drive-through and 24-hour convenience market would not physically disrupt or divide the arrangement of an established community. Existing roadways are adjacent to the north, west and south of the project site. Existing single-family residences are located north of the project site, beyond SR-74. Additional single-family development is located south of the project site, beyond Old State Highway. Existing commercial land uses are developed at the northwest and southwest corners of the SR-74/SR-79 intersection. Connectivity between the project site and surrounding areas would be maintained, and no division of an established community would occur.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

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|---|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>MINERAL RESOURCES Would the project:</b>   |                                      |  |                                       |                                     |
| <b>25. Mineral Resources</b>  |                                      |  |                                       |                                     |
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Potentially expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing, or abandoned quarries or mines?  | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2015b; DOC 2020.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a-b) No Impact.** The project site is classified as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-) 3, according to the Riverside County General Plan, Figure OS-6, *Mineral Resources Area*. MRZ-3 is an area where geologic information indicates that mineral deposits are likely to exist, but the significance of the deposits is undetermined. Although it is mapped in MRZ-3, there are no known mineral resource deposit sites within or near the project site (County of Riverside 2015). Moreover, any potential mineral resources located within or adjacent to the project site would not be commercially viable to extract because the majority of the properties in the immediate vicinity have been previously developed with land uses incompatible with mining activities.

Proposed project construction would require use of common construction materials, such as asphalt, concrete, and gravel. These materials are widely available throughout the region; therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of regionally or locally designated "significant" deposits of mineral resources required for project construction (i.e., deposits classified by the California Geological Survey as MRZ-2 or deposits listed as locally important in a general plan).

As such, implementation of the proposed project would not result in loss of availability of a known mineral resource that is of value on a statewide, regional, or local level.

- c) No Impact.** The closest active mine is approximately 4.4 miles northwest of the project site (DOC 2020). There are no abandoned mines within the project site or vicinity. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not expose people or property to hazards from existing or abandoned quarries or mines.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|   |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>NOISE Would the project result in:</b>   |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
| <b>26. Airport Noise</b>  |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
| a) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two (2) miles of a public airport or public use airport would the project | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?   |                                      |  |                                       |                                     |
| b) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b; ALUC 2017.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is located approximately 2.7 miles northwest of the Hemet-Ryan Airport, outside of the noise contours established in the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUC 2017). Therefore, people employed at the project site would not be exposed to excessive airport noise levels from the Hemet-Ryan Airport.
- b) **No Impact.** There are no private airstrips within two miles of the project site.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|   |                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>27. Noise Effects by the Project</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? |                          |                          |                                     |                          |
| b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** Noise Technical Memo (Appendix D)

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.**

***Short-Term Construction***

Construction noise and vibration would be temporary. Construction noise and vibration levels vary from hour to hour and day to day, depending on the equipment in use, the operations performed, and the distance between the source and receptors.

Equipment that would be in use during construction would include, in part, graders, backhoes, rubber-tired dozers, cranes, forklifts, cement mixers, pavers, rollers, and air compressors. The typical maximum noise levels for various pieces of construction equipment at a distance of 50 feet are presented in Table 10. Note that the equipment noise levels presented in Table 4 are maximum noise levels. Usually, construction equipment operates in alternating cycles of full power and low power, producing average noise levels over time that are less than the maximum noise level. The average sound level of construction activity also depends on the amount of time that the equipment operates and the intensity of construction activities during that time.

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

**Table 10. Typical Construction Equipment Maximum Noise Levels**

| Equipment Type      | Typical Equipment ( $L_{max}$ , dBA at 50 Feet) |
|---------------------|---|
| Air compressor      | 78  |
| Backhoe             | 78  |
| Concrete pump truck | 81  |
| Grader              | 85  |
| Crane               | 81  |
| Dump Truck          | 76  |
| Dozer               | 82  |
| Paver               | 77  |
| Roller              | 80  |

**Source:** Appendix D.

**Note:**  $L_{max}$  = maximum sound level; dBA = A-weighted decibels.

Aggregate noise emissions from project construction activities, broken down by sequential phase, was predicted at two distances to the nearest existing noise-sensitive receptor: 1) from the nearest position of the construction site boundary, and 2) from the geographic center of the construction site, which serves as the time-averaged location or geographic *acoustical centroid* of active construction equipment for the phase under study. The intent of the former distance is to help evaluate anticipated construction noise from a limited quantity of equipment or vehicle activity expected to be at the boundary for some period of time, which would be most appropriate for phases such as site preparation, grading, and paving. The latter distance is used in a manner similar to the general assessment technique as described in the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) guidance for construction noise assessment, when the location of individual equipment for a given construction phase is uncertain over some extent of (or the entirety of) the construction site area. Because of this uncertainty, all the equipment for a construction phase is assumed to operate, on average, from the acoustical centroid. Table 11 summarizes these two distances to the apparent closest noise-sensitive receptor for each of the seven sequential construction phases. At the site boundary, this analysis assumes that up to only one piece of equipment of each listed type per phase would be involved in the construction activity for a limited portion of the 8-hour period. In other words, at such proximity, the operating equipment cannot “stack” or crowd the vicinity and still operate. For the acoustical centroid case, which intends to be a geographic average position for all equipment during the indicated phase, this analysis assumes that the equipment may be operating up to all 8 hours per day.

**Table 11. Estimated Distances between Construction Activities and the Nearest Noise-sensitive Receptors**

| Construction Phase (and Equipment Types Involved)     | Distance from Nearest Noise-Sensitive Receptor to Construction Site Boundary (Feet) | Distance from Nearest Noise-Sensitive Receptor to Acoustical Centroid of Site (Feet) |
|---|---|--|
| Grading (grader, dozer, excavator, backhoe)           | 60  | 170  |
| Building construction (crane, man-lift, welder)       | 130   | 170  |
| Paving (paver, roller, backhoe, concrete mixer truck) | 90  | 170  |
| Architectural Coating (compressor)                    | 130   | 170  |

**Source:** Appendix D

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
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| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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A Microsoft Excel-based noise prediction model emulating and using reference data from the Federal Highway Administration Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) was used to estimate construction noise levels at the nearest occupied noise-sensitive land use. Input variables for the predictive modeling consist of the equipment type and number of each (e.g., two graders, a loader, a tractor), the duty cycle for each piece of equipment (e.g., percentage of time within a specific time period, such as an hour, when the equipment is expected to operate at full power or capacity and thus make noise at a level comparable to what is presented in Table 10), and the distance from the noise-sensitive receiver. The predictive model also considers how many hours that equipment may be on site and operating (or idling) within an established work shift. Conservatively, no topographical or structural shielding was assumed in the modeling. The RCNM has default duty-cycle values for the various pieces of equipment, which were derived from an extensive study of typical construction activity patterns. Table 12 summarizes these two distances to the apparent closest noise-sensitive receptor for each of the sequential construction phases.

**Table 12. Predicted Construction Noise Levels per Activity Phase**

| Construction Phase (and Equipment Types Involved)     | 8-Hour $L_{eq}$ at Nearest Noise-Sensitive Receptor to Construction Site Boundary (dBA) | 8-Hour $L_{eq}$ at Nearest Noise-Sensitive Receptor to Acoustical Centroid of Site (dBA) |
|---|---|--|
| Grading (grader, dozer, excavator, backhoe)           | 79  | 73   |
| Building construction (crane, man-lift, welder)       | 69  | 67   |
| Paving (paver, roller, backhoe, concrete mixer truck) | 79  | 70   |
| Architectural Coating (compressor)                    | 66  | 63   |

**Source:** Appendix D

**Notes:**  $L_{eq}$  = equivalent noise level; dBA = A-weighted decibels.

As presented in Table 12, the estimated construction noise levels are predicted to be 80 dBA  $L_{eq}$  or less over an 8-hour period (consistent with what the FTA recommends as a daytime threshold for construction noise exposure over an 8-hour period at a residential receptor) at the nearest existing residences (as close as 60 feet away) when grading activities take place near the southern project site boundary. Note that these estimated noise levels at a source-to-receiver distance of 60 feet would only occur when noted pieces of heavy equipment would each operate for a cumulative period from up to 5 hours a day. By way of example, a grader might make multiple passes on site that are this close to a receiver; but, for the remaining time during the day, the grader is sufficiently farther away, performing work at a more distant location, or simply not operating. Under these conditions, predicted operation of construction equipment and processes do not exceed noise levels of 80 dBA  $L_{eq}$ .

Although nearby off-site residences would be exposed to elevated construction noise levels, the increase to existing outdoor noise levels would typically be relatively short term during the 7-month construction period. Pursuant to Section 9.52.020 of the Riverside County Code of Ordinances, construction activities associated with the proposed project would take place within the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., during the months of June through September, and 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., during the months of October through May.

In summary, daytime construction noise would not exceed the FTA guidance-based standard and construction activities would be limited to permitted construction hours pursuant to the County's Code of Ordinances. Thus, temporary construction-related noise impacts would be considered less than significant.

## Long-Term Operational

### Roadway Traffic Noise

The proposed project would result in the creation of additional vehicle trips on local roadways (i.e., Old State Highway, SR-74 and SR-79), which could result in increased traffic noise levels at adjacent noise-sensitive land uses. In particular, the proposed project would create additional traffic along Old State Highway, which according to the Traffic Impact Assessment prepared for the proposed project (Appendix E) would add 2,037 average daily trips to the adjacent roadways surrounding the project site. ADT volumes are summarized on Table 13, Roadway Segment ADT Volumes.

**Table 13. Roadway Segment ADT Volumes**

| Roadway Segment                                   | Existing<br>ADT <sup>1</sup> | Existing plus<br>Ambient<br>ADT <sup>1</sup> | Existing plus<br>Ambient plus<br>Project<br>ADT <sup>1</sup> | Existing plus<br>Ambient plus<br>Cumulative<br>ADT <sup>1</sup> | Existing plus<br>Ambient plus<br>Cumulative<br>plus Project<br>ADT <sup>1</sup> |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| SR-74, West of Winchester Road/SR-79              | 27,488                       | 28,038                                       | 28,547   | 41,190  | 41,699  |
| SR-74, Winchester Road/SR-79 to Old State Highway | 34,367                       | 35,054                                       | 35,268   | 51,454  | 51,668  |
| Winchester Road/SR-79, Old State Highway to SR-74 | 11,852                       | 12,089                                       | 12,395   | 26,632  | 26,938  |
| Old State Highway, Winchester Road/SR-79 to SR-74 | 827                          | 844  | 1,506  | 844   | 1,506   |

**Source:** Appendix D

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> ADT – Average Daily Traffic

Potential noise effects from vehicular traffic were assessed using the Federal Highway Administration's Traffic Noise Model version 2.5. Information used in the model included the roadway geometry, posted traffic speeds, and traffic volumes for the above roadway segments with the following scenarios: existing (year 2017), existing plus ambient, existing plus ambient plus project, existing plus ambient plus cumulative, and existing plus ambient plus cumulative plus project. Noise levels were modeled at representative noise-sensitive receivers ST1 through ST4, as shown in Figure 7.

The Riverside County General Plan, Noise Element, establishes a policy for exterior sensitive areas to be protected from high noise levels. The Noise Element sets 65 dBA CNEL for the outdoor areas and 45 dBA CNEL for interior areas as the normally acceptable levels. However, existing levels from traffic already exceed this threshold. For the purposes of this noise analysis, such impacts are considered significant when they cause an increase of 3 dB over the existing noise levels. An increase or decrease in noise level of at least 3 dB is required before any noticeable change in community response would be expected. The receivers were modeled to be 5 feet above the local ground elevation. The noise model results are summarized in Table 14.

**Table 14. Roadway Traffic Noise Modeling Results**

| Modeled Receiver Tag (Location Description) | Existing (2018) Noise Level (dBA CNEL) | Existing (2018) Plus Ambient Noise Level (dBA CNEL) | Existing (2018) Plus Ambient plus Project Noise Level (dBA CNEL) | Existing (2018) Plus Ambient plus Cumulative Noise Level (dBA CNEL) | Existing (2018) Plus Ambient plus Cumulative plus Project Noise Level (dBA CNEL) | Maximum Project-Related Noise Level Increase (dB) |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| ST1   | 63.4                                   | 63.5  | 62.4   | 65.3  | 64.2   | 0.0   |
| ST2   | 69.9                                   | 70  | 70.1   | 71.7  | 71.8   | 0.2   |
| ST3   | 68.2                                   | 68.4  | 68.2   | 71.5  | 71.4   | 0.0   |
| ST4   | 70.9                                   | 71  | 71   | 72.6  | 72.7   | 0.2   |

Source: Appendix D

Notes: dBA = A-weighted decibel; CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level; dB = decibel.

Table 14 shows that at all four listed representative receivers, the addition of traffic generated by the proposed project to the roadway network would result in a CNEL increase of less than 3 dB, which is below the discernible level of change for the average healthy human ear. At some modeled locations, expected traffic noise levels are predicted to decrease due to introduction of the proposed new building and retaining walls associated with the proposed project. For example, traffic noise from SR-74 would be reduced at some residences south of the project because the project structures would act as a noise buffer. Thus, a less-than-significant impact is expected, related off-site traffic noise increases affecting existing residences in the vicinity of the project site.

### **Stationary Operations Noise**

The incorporation of new facilities attributed to development of the proposed project would add a variety of noise-producing mechanical equipment. Most of these noise-producing equipment or sound sources would be considered stationary or limited in mobility to a defined area. Using a Microsoft Excel-based outdoor sound propagation prediction model, project-attributed operational noise at nearby community receptors was predicted using several assumptions:

- The 2,097-sf 24-hour convenience market and a 2,425-sf drive-through fast food restaurant would both likely feature a packaged air-conditioner on its roof, which we could assume would be something like a 5-ton (refrigeration) air-cooled condensing unit resembling a Carrier CA16NA 060 and thus having a reference sound power level of 78 dBA (or 76 dBA if equipped with a “sound shield” [Carrier 2012]). These two rooftop HVAC units would also operate during some or all nighttime hours.
- Four (4) idling vehicles in line for the fast food restaurant drive-through window. Conservatively, a pick-up truck is considered idling with  $Leq = 79$  dBA at 3 feet
- Point-source sound propagation (i.e., 6 dB per doubling of distance) that conservatively ignores acoustical absorption from atmospheric and ground surface effects; and,
- Conservative treatment of potential noise path occlusion due to intervening building locations having no effect on emitted sound levels. Hence, should the proposed project position these condenser units at-grade level; the predictive analysis would still be considered accurate.

Stationary noise sources associated with project operations would result in noise levels up to 45 dBA at the nearest sensitive receptors located south of the project site. As such, noise levels

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
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| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

generated by stationary sources during project operations would not exceed the County's daytime threshold of 65 dBA hourly  $L_{eq}$  and nighttime threshold of 45 dBA hourly  $L_{eq}$ . Therefore, the on-site operations would result in less-than-significant noise impacts.

- b) Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Construction activities may expose persons to excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise, causing a potentially significant impact. Caltrans has collected groundborne vibration information related to construction activities. Information from Caltrans indicates that continuous vibrations with a PPV of approximately 0.2 inches per second (ips) is considered annoying. For context, heavier pieces of construction equipment, such as a bulldozer that may be expected on the project site, have peak particle velocities of approximately 0.089 ips or less at a reference distance of 25 feet.

Groundborne vibration attenuates rapidly, even over short distances. The attenuation of groundborne vibration as it propagates from source to receptor through intervening soils and rock strata can be estimated with expressions found in FTA and Caltrans guidance. By way of example, for a bulldozer operating on site and as close as the southern project boundary (i.e., 60 feet from the nearest receiving sensitive land use) the estimated vibration velocity level would be 0.024 ips per the equation as follows:

$$PPV_{rcvr} = PPV_{ref} * (25/D)^{1.5} = 0.023 = 0.089 * (25/60)^{1.5};$$

Where  $PPV_{rcvr}$  is the predicted vibration velocity at the receiver position,  $PPV_{ref}$  is the reference value at 25 feet from the vibration source (the bulldozer), and D is the actual horizontal distance to the receiver. Therefore, at this predicted PPV, the impact of vibration-induced annoyance to occupants of nearby existing homes would be less than significant.

Construction vibration, at sufficiently high levels, can also present a building damage risk. However, the predicted 0.023 ips PPV at the nearest residential receiver 60 feet away from on-site operation of the bulldozer during grading would not surpass the guidance limit of 0.3 to 0.5 ips PPV for preventing damage to residential structures. Because the predicted vibration level at 60 feet is less than both the annoyance and building damage risk thresholds, vibration from project conventional construction activities is considered less than significant.

Once operational, the proposed project would not be expected to feature major on-site producers of groundborne vibration. Anticipated mechanical systems like pumps are designed and manufactured to feature rotating components (e.g., impellers) that are well-balanced with isolated vibration within or external to the equipment casings. On this basis, potential vibration impacts due to proposed project operation would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.



Source: Bing 2020; Riverside County 2020..

FIGURE 7  
Noise Measurement Locations

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|  | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

#### PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

##### 28. Paleontological Resources

a) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource, site, or unique geologic feature?

☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2015b.

#### Findings of Fact:

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** The Riverside County General Plan, Figure OS-8, identifies the project site as having low paleontological sensitivity (County of Riverside 2015b). This category encompasses lands for which previous field surveys and documentation demonstrate a low potential for sediments to contain significant paleontological resources which could be subject to significant impacts. Nevertheless, there is potential to uncover subsurface paleontological resources during ground-disturbing construction activities. As such, pursuant to General Plan Policy OS 19.7, the proposed project would be required to implement MM-PAL-1 in the event a fossil is encountered during ground disturbing activities, to ensure proper treatment of unanticipated paleontological resources.

#### Mitigation:

**MM-PAL-1** The project applicant shall retain an on-call qualified paleontologist per the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (2010) guidelines. In the event fossil(s) are encountered during ground-disturbing construction activities, construction activities shall be temporarily halted and/or diverted within 50 feet of the find to allow recovery of paleontological resource(s). The contractor shall notify the County Geologist and the on-call paleontologist of the find immediately. The paleontologist shall document the extent and potential significance of the paleontological resources on the site and establish appropriate avoidance and/or mitigation measures for further site development. Once documentation and collection of the find is completed, the paleontologist, in coordination with the County geologist, will inform the contractor and allow grading to recommence in the area of the find.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### POPULATION AND HOUSING Would the project:

##### 29. Housing

a) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

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b) Create a demand for additional housing, particularly housing affordable to households earning 80% or less of the County's median income?

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

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**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2017; SCAG 2020.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project includes construction and operation of a fast-food restaurant with drive-through and 24-hour convenience market on a vacant site zoned for commercial land uses. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not result in displacement of people or housing.
- b) **No Impact.** The estimated number of employed residents in unincorporated Riverside County in 2014 was 133,508 persons (County of Riverside 2017). SCAG forecasts an increase of 155,100 residents and 63,500 employees in unincorporated Riverside County from 2016 to 2045 (SCAG 2020). The proposed fast-food restaurant and 24-hour convenience market would require approximately 8 new employees for operation activities. Due to the nature of the proposed employment opportunities, employees are anticipated to be drawn from the local workforce and would not result in the relocation of new residents to the County of Riverside. Therefore, the proposed project would not create demand for additional housing in the project area.
- c) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would include development of the site in accordance with the land use designation applied to the site by the County of Riverside General Plan. While the proposed project would generate new employment opportunities, the proposed project would not result in growth that was not already anticipated by the County and evaluated in the SCAG RTP/SCS.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**PUBLIC SERVICES** Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:

**30. Fire Services**

|                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Fire protection, fire suppression and emergency medical services with the project area are provided by the Riverside County Fire Department (County of Riverside 2019b). The project site is served by Riverside County Fire Station 34, located approximately 2.5 miles south of the project site at 32655 Haddock Street.

While implementation of the project would not involve new residential uses or an increase in the County's population, the operation of new commercial uses would marginally increase the demand for fire protection, prevention, and emergency medical services at the currently undeveloped project site. The proposed project would create the typical range of service calls

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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for commercial developments, such as medical aid, fire response, traffic collisions, and hazardous materials. The proposed project has been designed in compliance with all applicable ordinances and standard conditions established by the County and State including, but not limited to, those regarding fire prevention and suppression measures, such as fire hydrants, fire access, emergency exits, combustible construction, fire flow, and fire sprinkler systems. Additionally, the project applicant would be required to pay a development impact fee (DIF), which provides a funding source for construction of fire protection facilities and staffing as a result of impacts related to future growth in the County. Compliance with applicable regulations would be confirmed by the Fire Department during its review of development plans.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

### 31. Sheriff Services

|                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Riverside County Sheriff's Department provides patrol, criminal investigation, traffic enforcement, accident investigation, and tactical team services to the project area (County of Riverside 2019b). The project site would be served by the Hemet Sheriff's Station, located at 43950 Acacia Avenue, approximately 6.25 miles east of the project site.

While implementation of the project would not involve new residential uses or an increase in the County's population, the operation of new commercial uses would marginally increase the demand for police services at the currently undeveloped project site. The proposed project would create the typical range of service calls for commercial developments. Additionally, the project applicant would be required to pay a development impact fee (DIF), which provides a funding source for construction of police facilities and staffing as a result of impacts related to future growth in the County. As such, the proposed project would create an incremental demand for police protection services, but would not require the construction of new or expanded police protection facilities or significantly impact existing service ratios and response times.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

### 32. Schools

|                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

**Source(s):** Riverside County n.d..

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is within the Hemet Unified School District (HUSD), which operates 15 elementary schools, four middle schools, four high schools, seven alternative education schools, and seven other sites/programs (County of Riverside n.d.). As discussed in Section 25(c), the proposed project would not create a direct demand for school services, as the project

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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involves non-residential uses that would not generate any school-aged children. The proposed project would generate a minimal number of employment opportunities (eight full-time positions), and it is expected these positions would be filled by the local labor force. Therefore, the proposed project would not generate a substantial number of new residents nor result in additional school-aged students requiring public education. As such, the project would not cause or contribute to a need to construct new or physically altered public school facilities.

Although the proposed project would not create a direct demand for additional public school services, the project applicant would be required to contribute school mitigation fees, which allows the school district to collect fees from new developments to offset the costs associated with increasing school capacity needs. This is a standard condition for new development and not considered mitigation under CEQA.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

### 33. Libraries

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**Source(s):** Absolute Design Methods 2018.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** As discussed in Section 25(c), the project involves non-residential uses that would not directly induce population growth. As such, the proposed project would not increase demand for library services.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

### 34. Health Services

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**Source(s):** Absolute Design Methods 2018.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** As discussed in Section 25(c), the proposed project would not directly induce population growth. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not increase the demand for health services.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|   | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact                        |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>RECREATION Would the project:</b>  |                                      |  |                                       |                                     |
| <b>35. Parks and Recreation</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?                      | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Be located within a Community Service Area (CSA) or recreation and park district with a Community Parks and Recreation Plan (Quimby fees)?   | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** County of Riverside n.d.; County Ordinance No. 659 (Development Impact Fees); Absolute Design Methods 2018.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a-b) No Impact.** The proposed project would include development of commercial land uses. The proposed project does not include any type of residential use or other land use that will directly generate population growth and increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. Accordingly, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, or result in increased use of existing recreational facilities.
- c) No Impact.** The project site is located within the Homeland Community Service Area (CSA 80) (County of Riverside n.d.). However, CSA 80 was established for street lighting services, and does not address recreational facilities. The project site is not located in a recreation and parks district and DIF for commercial land uses do not require payment for Regional Parks or Regional Trails, pursuant to County Ordinance No. 659.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|   |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>36. Recreational Trails</b>                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Include the construction or expansion of a trail system? |                          |                          |                          |                                     |

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2016a; Absolute Design Methods 2018.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) No Impact.** The Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan (Figure 9, Winchester Area Plan Trails And Bikeway System) identifies designated Community Trails north of the project site, north of residential development within the Community of Green Acres (County of Riverside 2016a). Additional Community Trails are designated along SR-74 south of the project site and continuing to the hillside areas to the east. Implementation of the proposed project would not interfere with the use of any existing trails. The proposed project would include installation of sidewalk along the frontage with SR-74, SR-79 and Old State Highway. The new sidewalk would provide better

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

pedestrian access to the designated community trail south of the project site. As such, the proposed project would have no impact on existing or planned recreational trails.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**TRANSPORTATION Would the project:**

**37. Transportation**

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

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b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b), in relation to potential Vehicle Miles Traveled impacts?

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment)?

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d) Cause an effect upon, or a need for new or altered maintenance of roads?

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e) Cause an effect upon circulation during the project's construction?

☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

f) Result in inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses?

☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

**Source(s):** Highway 74/79 (Hemet Retail Development) Traffic Impact Analysis, December 2, 2019 (TIA; Appendix E); County of Riverside 2020; County of Riverside 2016b.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy that establishes measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, based on the TIA prepared for the proposed project, included as Appendix E. The TIA prepared for the project has undergone extensive review by Caltrans. Due to the length of review, the "existing" traffic conditions reflect 2017 traffic volumes and the "opening year" is assumed to be 2018. Caltrans staff deemed the TIA sufficient in May 2020.

The TIA includes a quantitative level of services (LOS) analysis for the following study area intersections:

1. SR-74 / Winchester Road / SR-79
2. SR-74 / Old State Highway
3. SR-74 / Florida Avenue / California Avenue
4. Old State Highway / Winchester Road / SR-79
5. Stowe Road / Winchester Road / SR-79
6. SR-74 / Project Driveway North
7. Old State Highway / Project Driveway South

Figure 8 identifies the location of each study area intersection compared to the project site.

### ***Trip Generation, Distribution and Assignment***

The proposed project is estimated to generate a total of 2,037 new daily trips with 186 trips during the AM peak hour and 140 trips during the PM peak hour. Due to the nature of the proposed land use, a 25% pass-by credit was applied to the project trips at the study intersections around the project site, excluding project driveways.

The project trip distribution patterns are based on review of existing volume data, surrounding land uses, and the local and regional roadway facilities in the project vicinity. Ingress and egress for the project site is proposed on Old State Highway and SR-74 via two project driveways. Egress on SR-74 would be right-turn only.

### ***Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project***

In order to estimate the traffic volumes at the opening of the proposed project (TIA assumes 2018 opening year), the calculated project trips were added to the Existing Plus Ambient traffic in the TIA. In addition to on-site improvements, the following off-site improvements will be installed as project design features prior to issuance of Certificate of Occupancy:

- SR-74 / Winchester Road/SR-79 intersection improvements - Improve the northbound approach to provide one shared thru/right lane and one dedicated left-turn lane, and improving the eastbound approach to provide one dedicated right-turn lane, two thru lanes and one dedicated left-turn lane
- Old State Highway / Winchester Road / SR-79 intersection improvements - Improve the southbound approach to provide one right-turn lane and one shared thru/left lane

The intersection Levels of Service for Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project conditions are shown in Table 15.

**Table 15. Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project Intersection Operations**

| Intersection                                      |         |     |  | Existing + Ambient<br>+ Project |     | Mitigation |     |
|---|---------|-----|--|---------------------------------|-----|------------|-----|
|   |         |     |  | Delay                           | LOS | Delay      | LOS |
| 1. SR-74 / Winchester Road/SR-79 (S)              | AM Peak |     |  | 44.0                            | D   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak |     |  | 51.6                            | D   | -          | -   |
| 2. SR-74 / Old State Highway (U)                  | AM Peak | NBL |  | 16.2                            | C   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak | NBL |  | 16.4                            | C   | 0          | -   |
| 3. SR-74/Florida Avenue / California Avenue (S)   | AM Peak |     |  | 27.8                            | C   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak |     |  | 33.2                            | C   | -          | -   |
| 4. Old State Highway / Winchester Road/SR-79 (U)  | AM Peak | NBL |  | 27.7                            | D   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak | NBL |  | 26.9                            | D   | -          | -   |
| 5. Stowe Road / Winchester Road/SR-79 (U)         | AM Peak | NBL |  | 33.9                            | D   | 4.9        | A   |
|   | PM Peak | NBL |  | 60.3                            | F   | 5.2        | A   |
| 6. SR-74 / Project Driveway North (U)             | AM Peak | NBL |  | 14.1                            | B   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak | NBL |  | 16.2                            | C   | -          | -   |
| 7. Old State Highway / Project Driveway South (U) | AM Peak | SBL |  | 9.0                             | A   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak | SBL |  | 8.8                             | A   | -          | -   |

Source: Appendix E, 2019.

Notes: DELAY is measured in seconds, LOS = Level of Service; NB = Northbound, SB = Southbound, T=thru movement, L=left-turn movement, etc.; (S) = Signalized intersection, (U) = Unsignalized intersection

|                                      |  |                                       |              |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

As shown in Table 15, all the project area signalized intersections are anticipated to operate at LOS D or better during the AM and PM peak hours with the addition of project traffic. All the project area un-signalized intersections are anticipated to operate at LOS D or better during the AM and PM peak hours with the addition of project traffic, with the exception of the following:

- Stowe Road / Winchester Road/SR-79 – LOS F during the PM Peak Hour

As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in unacceptable LOS at one unsignalized study area intersections under Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project conditions. With implementation of MM-TRA-1, all study area intersections would operate within acceptable LOS, consistent with target LOS D or better established by the County. Therefore, Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project impacts would be less-than-significant with mitigation incorporated.

### ***Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project Plus Cumulative***

The County of Riverside's Planning Department was contacted to determine a list of cumulative projects to be included in this traffic analysis. Information on 17 projects within a 2.5-mile radius of the project site was applicable to the analysis and assumed under the Cumulative Scenario. The intersection LOS for Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project Plus Cumulative conditions are shown in Table 16.

**Table 16. Existing Plus Ambient Plus Project Plus Cumulative Intersection Operations**

| Intersection                                      |         |     |  | Existing +<br>Ambient + Project |     | Mitigation |     |
|---|---------|-----|--|---------------------------------|-----|------------|-----|
|   |         |     |  | Delay                           | LOS | Delay      | LOS |
| 1 SR-74 / Winchester Road/SR-79 (S)               | AM Peak |     |  | 262.2                           | F   | 32.3       | C   |
|   | PM Peak |     |  | 225.7                           | F   | 54.8       | D   |
| 2 SR-74 / Old State Highway (U)                   | AM Peak | WBL |  | 27.0                            | D   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak | WBL |  | 28.7                            | D   | -          | -   |
| 3 SR-74/Florida Avenue / California Avenue (S)    | AM Peak |     |  | 35.8                            | D   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak |     |  | 27.4                            | E   | 51.3       | D   |
| 4 Old State Highway / Winchester Road / SR-79 (U) | AM Peak | WBL |  | 300+                            | F   | 300+       | F   |
|   | PM Peak | WBL |  | 300+                            | F   | 300+       | F   |
| 5 Stowe Road / Winchester Road/SR-79 (U)          | AM Peak | WBL |  | 300+                            | F   | 5.2        | C   |
|   | PM Peak | WBL |  | 300+                            | F   | 5.2        | D   |
| 6 SR-74 / Project Driveway North (U)              | AM Peak | NBL |  | 19.7                            | C   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak | NBL |  | 26.7                            | D   | -          | -   |
| 7 Old State Highway / Project Driveway South (U)  | AM Peak | SBL |  | 9.0                             | A   | -          | -   |
|   | PM Peak | SBL |  | 8.8                             | A   | -          | -   |

Source: Appendix E, 2019.

Notes: DELAY is measured in seconds, LOS = Level of Service; NB = Northbound, SB = Southbound, T=thru movement, L=left-turn movement, etc.; (S) = Signalized intersection, (U) = Unsignalized intersection

Table 16 shows that all project area intersections are anticipated to operate at an acceptable LOS with addition of cumulative project related traffic, with the exception of the following:

- SR-74 / Winchester Road/SR-79 – LOS F during both AM/PM Peak Hours
- SR-74/Florida Avenue / California Avenue – LOS E during the PM Peak Hour
- Old State Highway / Winchester Road/SR-79 – LOS F during AM/PM Peak Hours
- Stowe Road / Winchester Road/SR-79 – LOS F during AM/PM Peak Hours

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

With implementation of MM-TRA-1, all study area intersections would operate at an acceptable LOS, consistent with the target LOS established by the County, with the exception of the Old State Highway/Winchester Road/SR-79 intersection. Winchester Road/SR-79 is a State Highway that is not maintained by the County (County of Riverside 2016b). As such, the County's target LOS does not apply to Winchester Road/SR-79. As previously discussed, the County coordinated with Caltrans for review and approval of the TIA and roadway improvements within Caltrans jurisdiction. Caltrans approved the TIA, including the proposed improvements on Winchester Road/SR-79, in May 2020. Based on the forgoing analysis, with implementation of MM-TRA-1, all County-maintained study area intersections would operate at LOS D or better, consistent with the target LOS established by the County. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system.

- b) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** In the fall of 2013, Senate Bill (SB) 743 was passed by the legislature and signed into law. Delay-based metrics such as roadway capacity and level of service is no longer be the performance measures used for the determination of the transportation impacts of projects in studies conducted under CEQA. Vehicle miles travelled (VMT) is now the applicable method for evaluation transportation impacts under CEQA.

The Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled and Level of Service Assessment (County of Riverside 2020) have been utilized in screening the proposed project's VMT analysis. Local-serving retail projects less than 50,000 square feet may be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. The TIA guidelines for VMT and LOS do not require local-serving retail projects to prepare a VMT analysis. This is due to local serving retail generally improving the convenience of shopping close to home and reducing vehicle travel instead of increasing or inducing vehicular travel.

The project proposes construction and operation of approximately 6,550 sf of local-serving retail uses which include a fast-food restaurant with drive-through and 24-hour convenience market. The proposed retail development is well below the 50,000 sf VMT screening threshold. Therefore, the proposed project meets the County's screening criteria for presumption of less-than-significant VMT impacts for local-serving retail land uses.

- c) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would be accessible from SR-74 and Old State Highway. The project would include on-site circulation improvements (driveways and internal drive aisles), frontage improvements along the project site boundary, and roadway improvements to SR-79. These on-site and adjacent improvements would be designed in accordance with all applicable design standards set forth by the County and Caltrans. The design will undergo County and Fire Department review before approval to ensure that the local development standards for roadways are met without resulting in traffic safety impacts including hazardous design features. Due to high speed limits along SR-74, there is potential for safety hazards for right-turning vehicles leaving the through traffic along SR-74 to enter the northern project driveway. As such, an eastbound right-turn lane along the project frontage between Winchester Road / SR-79 and the project driveway must be constructed prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy, through implementation of MM-TRA-2. Based on the above analysis, the proposed project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project would be served by existing roads (i.e. SR-74, SR-79, and Old State Highway). As such, the proposed project would not cause an effect upon or require new or altered maintenance of roads.

e) **Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** Project construction would occur over an approximate 7-month duration. Construction activities are estimated to require up to 10 worker vehicle trips daily to access the site and up to 2 vendor trips daily to deliver building materials (Appendix A). These trips would occur during the temporary construction phase only and would result in a negligible increase in traffic on existing roadways. Project construction would require off-site roadway improvements adjacent to the project site, within existing roadways, including widening to designated half widths and striping improvements to modify existing lane alignments on SR-74 and SR-79, within Caltrans ROW. No full road closures are proposed. To ensure that impacts associated with temporary lane closures are minimized, the project applicant must prepare a traffic control plan through implementation of MM-TRA-3. This construction traffic plan would include measures designed to reduce the impact of temporary construction traffic and any necessary lane closures. Such measures may include but are not limited to providing early notification of closures to the fire and police services, residents, and nearby businesses; the use of signage before and during construction activities that clearly delineates detour routes around the lane and street closures; and flaggers to direct traffic in the vicinity of the closure. With the incorporation of mitigation, the proposed project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system.

f) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site would be accessible to emergency responders during construction and operation activities. During construction of off-site roadway improvements within Caltrans jurisdiction, the project applicant is required to implement a Construction Management Plan (CMP) to reduce roadway impacts associated with temporary lane closures, through implementation of MM-TRA-3. As discussed in Section 37(e) above, construction of off-site improvements is not anticipated to require any full road closures. T As such, adequate emergency access to the project site and vicinity would be maintained during construction activities.

During project operations, the project site would be accessible via driveways on SR-74 and Old State Highway. Each of the proposed driveways would be designed and constructed to County standards and comply with County width, clearance, and turning-radius requirements. The project site would be designed with adequate space for an emergency vehicle to enter the driveways. Development of two driveway access points and compliance with all applicable local requirements related to emergency vehicle access and circulation would ensure the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access.

### **Mitigation:**

**MM-TRA-1** Prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy, the project applicant shall contribute their fair-share cost percentage towards installation of required improvements at the following intersections (as recommended in the TIA [Appendix E]):

- SR-74 / Winchester Road / SR-79 – 3.46% fair-share contribution
  - Westbound Approach –two left-turn lanes, one shared thru/right, one thru lane
  - Northbound Approach –one left-turn lane, two right-turn lanes, one thru lane
- SR-74 / Florida Avenue / California Avenue – 3.48% fair-shar contribution
  - Provide a right-turn overlap phase on the southbound approach
- Old State Highway / Winchester Road / SR-79 – 6.47% fair-share contribution

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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- Restrict southbound left turn lane movements and westbound left turn and thru movements with a raised median and signage on the corresponding approaches
- Stowe Road / Winchester Road / SR-79 – 4.19% fair-share contribution
- Installation of a traffic signals along with the existing roadway configurations

**MM-TRA-2** To maximize the safety of right-turning vehicles leaving the through traffic along SR-74, the project applicant must construct an eastbound right-turn lane along the project frontage between Winchester Road / SR-79 and the Project Driveway prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy.

**MM-TRA-3** Prior to finalization of plans and specifications, a construction management plan (CMP) shall be prepared by the project applicant and/or their construction contractor for any construction activities that encroach into the public right-of-way. The CMP shall include measures designed to reduce the impact of temporary construction traffic and any necessary lane closures. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, providing early notification of closures to the County Fire Department and Sherriff's Department, residents, and nearby businesses; the use of signage before and during construction activities that clearly delineates detour routes around lane closures; and, flaggers to direct traffic in the vicinity of the closure.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

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Source: Rick Engineering 2018; Google Earth 2020.

FIGURE 8  
Study Area Intersections

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|  | Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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### 38. Bike Trails

a) Include the construction or expansion of a bike system or bike lanes?

|                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2016a.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project includes development of commercial land uses on a vacant site at the southeast corner of the SR-74/SR-79 intersection. There are no existing or proposed bicycle facilities in the project vicinity (County of Riverside 2016a). Nevertheless, the proposed project would include installation of three bike racks adjacent to the western side of the building to accommodate cyclists. Due to existing conditions and proposed buildout of the transportation system in the project vicinity, the proposed project would not require construction or expansion of bicycle facilities within the public right-of-way.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES** Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a Tribal Cultural Resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, or cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe, and that is:

### 39. Tribal Cultural Resources

a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1 (k)?

|                          |                                     |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? (In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.)

|                          |                                     |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

**Source(s):** Assembly Bill (AB) 52 Tribal Consultation; Phase I Cultural/Archaeological Assessment (2008) (Appendix C).

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As described in Section 8 and 9, the proposed project would not result in impacts to any known historic or archaeological resources. Nevertheless, it is possible that archaeological resources would be encountered at

subsurface levels during ground-disturbing construction activities. To ensure that inadvertent impacts to resources eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources during project construction, procedures for inadvertent discovery of archaeological resource must be implemented through MM-CUL-1 and MM-CUL-2.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation incorporated.** Changes in the California Environmental Quality Act, effective July 2015, require that the County address a new category of cultural resources – tribal cultural resources – not previously included within the law’s purview. Tribal Cultural Resources are those resources with inherent tribal values that are difficult to identify through the same means as archaeological resources. These resources can be identified and understood through direct consultation with the tribes who attach tribal value to the resource. Tribal cultural resources may include Native American archaeological sites, but they may also include other types of resources such as cultural landscapes or sacred places. The appropriate treatment of tribal cultural resources is determined through consultation with tribes.

In compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), notices regarding this project were mailed to all requesting tribes on September 9, 2020. No Response was received from the Colorado River Indian Tribes, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, the Ramona Band, the Pala Band, Morongo, Cahuilla, or Quechan.

Formal AB 52 Consultation was requested by the Pechanga Band (Pechanga), the Soboba Band (Soboba) and the Rincon Band (Rincon) of Luiseno Indians. Consultation with Pechanga was initiated on September 24, 2020. The County provided the cultural report and the draft Conditions of Approval to Pechanga on September 24 and 30, 2020, respectively. Consultation was concluded on November 20, 2020. Pechanga did not identify any Tribal Cultural Resources within the project site.

Consultation was initiated with Rincon on September 14, 2020. The County provided the cultural report and conditions of approval to Rincon and consultation was concluded on September 30, 2020.

Consultation with Soboba was initiated on September 23, 2020. The project was discussed during a meeting held on October 14, 2020. No Tribal Cultural Resources were identified by Soboba and consultation was concluded on November 2, 2020.

In summary, no specific Tribal Cultural Resources were identified by any of the consulting tribes during formal AB 52 consultation. All the consulting tribes however, expressed concern that there is the potential that previously unidentified resources could be found during ground disturbing activities. As such, through implementation of MM-TCR-1, a Tribal Monitor from the consulting tribe(s) must be present during grading activities to ensure unanticipated Tribal Cultural Resources encountered during project construction activities would be handled in a timely and culturally appropriate manner. With implementation of MM-TCR-1, any potential inadvertent impacts TCRs would be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** In addition to implementation of MM-CUL-1 detailed in Section 9, the following mitigation is required:

**MM-TCR-1 Native American Monitor.** Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the project applicant shall enter into agreement(s) with the consulting tribe(s) for Native American Monitor(s). In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor(s), the Native American Monitor(s) shall attend the pre-grading meeting with the contractors to provide Cultural Sensitivity

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Training for all construction personnel. In addition, the Native American Monitor(s) shall be on-site during all initial ground disturbing activities and excavation of each portion of the project site including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading and trenching. In conjunction with the Archaeological Monitor(s), the Native American Monitor(s) have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources.

The project applicant shall submit a fully executed copy of the agreement(s) to the County Archaeologist to ensure compliance with this mitigation measure. The agreement shall not modify any condition of approval or mitigation measure.

**Monitoring:** Tribal monitoring is required during ground-disturbing construction activities, as detailed in MM-TCR-1.

#### UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS Would the project:

##### 40. Water

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or storm water drainage systems, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects?

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b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

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**Source(s):** LHMWD 2016; Air Quality Technical Memo (Appendix A).

#### Findings of Fact:

**a) Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would include construction of an on-site network of water, wastewater, and stormwater facilities that would connect to existing facilities adjacent to or within the project site. Minimal off-site ground disturbance within the public ROW would be required to connect the proposed on-site water and wastewater infrastructure to the existing points of connection in SR-79 and Old State Highway, respectively. Currently, there is not storm water infrastructure present within or adjacent to the project site. The proposed project would include installation of an on-site subsurface bioretention basin to capture and treat on-site storm water flows. Treated flows would be control-released from the underground basin to the public ROW, consistent with current storms flows from the project site. In addition, curb-and-gutter would be installed along the project frontage, thus improving containment of storm flows within the existing roadway. The impacts associated with proposed utility connections are considered to be part of the project's construction phase and are evaluated throughout this Initial Study accordingly. As identified throughout this Initial Study, no significant impacts have been identified for the project's construction phase. The construction of on-site water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure necessary to serve the project would not result in any significant physical effects on the environment that are not already identified and disclosed as part of this Initial Study.

**b) Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site would be served by the Lake Hemet Municipal Water District (LHMWD) which serves approximately 14,500 domestic and 51 agricultural customers in Hemet, San Jacinto and Garner Valley. The LHMWD 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (UQMP) accounts for existing and forecasted development in its supply and

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demand forecasts. The proposed project would include construction and operation of land uses that are consistent with the C-R land use designation established by the County's General Plan. Therefore, the UWMP supply and demand forecasts accounted for anticipated commercial development within the project site. The 2015 UWMP forecasts a supply surplus of 470 acre-feet per year (AFY) in 2035 under a multiple dry-year scenario (LHMWD 2015).

According to the CalEEMod modeling included in Appendix A, the proposed project would have an indoor water demand of approximately 3.04 AFY. In addition, the proposed project is anticipated to have an outdoor water demand of approximately 0.20 AFY to irrigate a landscaped area of 6,550 sf. As such, total annual water demand associated with the proposed project would be approximately 3.24 AFY, or approximately 0.23 percent of the anticipated LHMWD supply surplus. As such, LHMWD would have sufficient water supplies to serve the proposed project.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### 41. Sewer

a) Require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities, including septic systems, or expansion of existing facilities, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects?

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b) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may service the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

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**Source(s):** LHMWD 2016; EMWD 2016a; EMWD 2016b.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** As discussed in Section 40(a) above, wastewater infrastructure is present within Old State Highway adjacent to the project site. Off-site improvements to the wastewater facility would be limited to extension of the on-site sewer line to the existing infrastructure south of the project site within the paved roadway. The impacts associated with proposed wastewater utility connection is considered to be part of the project's construction phase and are evaluated throughout this Initial Study accordingly. As identified throughout this Initial Study, no significant impacts have been identified for the project's construction phase. The construction of on-site wastewater infrastructure necessary to serve the project would not result in any significant physical effects on the environment that are not already identified and disclosed as part of this Initial Study.
- b) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The LHMWD would provide wastewater collection services for the proposed project. Wastewater collected by LHMWD is treated by the Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) Perris Valley Regional Water Reclamation Facility (RWRF) or the San Jacinto RWRF (LHMWD 2016). The Perris Valley RWRF treats approximately 13.9 million gallons per day (mgd) of wastewater and has a current treatment capacity of 14 mgd (EMWD 2016a). The San Jacinto RWRF currently treats approximately seven mgd of wastewater and has a current treatment capacity of 14 mgd (EMWD 2016b). The Perris Valley and San Jacinto

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RWRF facilities would have an ultimate treatment capacity of 100 mgd and 27 mgd, respectively, upon construction of future planned expansion.

The anticipated total annual water demand associated with the proposed project would be approximately 3.24 AFY. Assuming wastewater generation is 80 percent of total water demand, the proposed project would generate approximately 0.002 mgd, or 0.01 percent of the total current wastewater capacity of the Perris Valley and San Jacinto RWRF facilities. As such, existing wastewater treatment facilities have sufficient capacity to serve the proposed project.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### 42. Solid Waste

a) Generate solid waste in excess of State or Local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

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b) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes including the CIWMP (County Integrated Waste Management Plan)?

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**Source(s):** EPA 1998; CalRecycle 2018; CalRecycle 2020.

#### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Implementation of the project would generate an incremental increase in solid waste volumes requiring off-site disposal during short-term construction and long-term operational activities.

Solid waste requiring disposal would be generated by the construction process, primarily consisting of discarded materials and packaging. Based on the size of the proposed project (i.e., 4,522-sf building area) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) construction waste generation factor of 4.38 pounds per sf for non-residential uses, approximately 9.9 tons of waste is expected to be generated during the project's construction phase (EPA, 1998). In compliance with the CalGreen Code, a minimum of 65 percent of all solid waste must be diverted from landfills (by recycling, reusing, and other waste reduction strategies). Therefore, the project is estimated to generate approximately 3.47 tons of solid waste during its construction phase that would be disposed of in a landfill. Based on the anticipated construction schedule, the project's construction phase is estimated to last for approximately 210 days; therefore, the proposed project is estimated to generate approximately 0.016 tons of solid waste per day requiring landfill disposal during construction.

The CalEEMod model (Appendix A) incorporated estimates for project operations as generating 34.19 tons of solid waste annually, or 0.93 tons per day. Assuming a minimum of 65 percent of solid waste generated is diverted from landfills, the proposed project would generate approximately 0.03 tons of solid waste daily that would be disposed of at a landfill.

Solid waste generated by the proposed project would be disposed of at the Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill. The Lamb Canyon Landfill has a maximum permitted throughput of 5,000

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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tons/day and is anticipated to operate until 2029 (CalRecycle 2018). Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill currently accepts approximately 1,616 tons of solid waste per day (CalRecycle 2020); thus, the relatively minimal construction waste generated by the proposed project is not anticipated to cause the landfill to exceed its maximum permitted daily disposal volume. Furthermore, the Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill is not expected to reach their total maximum permitted disposal capacities during the project's construction period. As such, the Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill has sufficient daily capacity to accept solid waste generated by the proposed project's construction phase.

- b) Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations regarding solid waste generation, transport, and disposal are intended to decrease solid waste generation through mandatory reductions in solid waste quantities (e.g., through recycling and composting of green waste) and the safe and efficient transport of solid waste. The project would be required to coordinate with the to develop a collection program for recyclables, such as paper, plastics, glass, and aluminum, in accordance with local and State programs, including AB S41, Mandatory Commercial Recycling, and the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Act of 1991. Additionally, the project would be required to comply with applicable practices enacted by the County under the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) and any other applicable local, State, and federal solid waste management regulations. AB 939 required that local jurisdictions divert at least 50 percent of all solid waste generated by January 1, 2000. The diversion goal has been increased to 75 percent by 2020 by SB 341. Further, the Solid Waste Disposal Measurement Act of 2008 (SB 1016) was established to make the process of goal measurement (as established by AB 939) simpler, more timely, and more accurate. SB 1016 builds on AB 939 compliance requirements by implementing a simplified measure of jurisdictions' performance. SB 1016 accomplishes this by changing to a disposal-based indicator—the per capita disposal rate—which uses only two factors: (1) a jurisdiction's population (or in some cases employment); and (2) its disposal, as reported by disposal facilities.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### 43. Utilities

Would the project impact the following facilities requiring or resulting in the construction of new facilities or the expansion of existing facilities, whereby the construction or relocation would cause significant environmental effects?

|   |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Electricity?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Natural gas?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Communications systems?                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Street lighting?                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Maintenance of public facilities, including roads? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| f) Other governmental services?                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source(s):** Air Quality Technical Memo (Appendix A); Absolute Design Methods 2018.

#### Findings of Fact:

- a) No Impact.** Southern California Edison (SCE) would provide electrical service to the project site. The proposed project would receive electrical power by connecting to Southern California

Edison's existing electrical infrastructure adjacent to the project site. Minor ground disturbance may be required off-site to connect to existing infrastructure. Any off-site disturbance would be limited to a short underground extension within the existing paved roadway. As such, connection of on-site electrical infrastructure to existing SCE infrastructure adjacent to the site would not result in any environmental effects.

- b) **No Impact.** Southern California Gas Company (SoCal Gas) would provide natural gas service to the project site. The proposed project would connect to SoCal Gas's existing natural gas infrastructure adjacent to the project site. Minor ground disturbance may be required off-site to connect to existing infrastructure. Any off-site disturbance would be limited to a short underground extension within the existing paved roadway. As such, connection of on-site natural gas infrastructure to existing SoCal Gas infrastructure adjacent to the site would not result in any environmental effects.
- c) **No Impact.** Verizon and Time Warner Cable would provide communications services to the project site. The proposed project would connect to existing communications infrastructure adjacent to the project site. Minor ground disturbance may be required off-site to connect to existing infrastructure. Any off-site disturbance would be limited to a short underground extension within the existing paved roadway. As such, connection of on-site communications infrastructure to existing Verizon and Time Warner Cable infrastructure adjacent to the site would not result in any environmental effects.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project would include installation of on-site LED light fixtures to provide adequate lighting Infrastructure. As shown on Figure 6, all proposed lighting would be installed within the project site and no off-site street lighting is required.
- e) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Access to the site would be provided by a 40-foot driveway at Old State Highway and a 40-foot right-in and right-out only driveway at SR-74. The County of Riverside Transportation Department is responsible for the repair and maintenance of approximately 2,200 miles of roads located within the unincorporated areas of Riverside County. In addition, the proposed project would include off-site improvements to the SR-74/SR-79 and Old State Highway/SR-79 intersections. The SR-74/SR-79 improvements include updates to the northbound approach to provide one shared thru/right lane and one dedicated left-turn lane, and updating the eastbound approach to provide one dedicated right-turn lane, two thru lanes and one dedicated left-turn lane. The Old State Highway/SR-79 intersection improvements include updating the southbound approach to provide one right-turn lane and one shared thru/left lane. All improvements would be conducted within the public ROW in Caltrans jurisdiction.

In addition to proposed roadway improvements, DIF collected at the time of permit issuance would fund the installation and maintenance of roadways within the Department's system to accommodate continued growth and development within the County. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

- f) **No Impact.** The proposed project is not expected to have a significant impact on other governmental services, such as libraries, community recreation centers, and/or animal shelter. The employees for the proposed project are anticipated to come from the local community. Implementation of the proposed project would not adversely affect other public facilities or require the construction of new or modified facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur, and no mitigation measures are required.

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**WILDFIRE** If located in or near a State Responsibility Area ("SRA"), lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zone, or other hazardous fire areas that may be designated by the Fire Chief, would the project:

**44. Wildfire Impacts**

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

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b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

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c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

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d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

e) Expose people or structures either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

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**Source(s):** County of Riverside 2019b; CAL FIRE 2007;; County of Riverside 2016a.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** According to the County's General Plan Figure S-14, *Inventory of Emergency Response Facilities*, the project site does not contain any emergency facilities and does not occur adjacent to an emergency evacuation route (County of Riverside 2019b). During construction the contractor would be required to maintain adequate emergency access for emergency vehicles as required by the County, through implementation of MM-TRA-4. Project operations would not interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. In addition, the project site would be accessible from two driveways, so emergency vehicles could access the site even if one of the access driveways were blocked during an emergency. Therefore, with implementation of MM-TRA-4, the proposed project would not impair implementation of an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan.
- b) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The project site is within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the Western Riverside County Local Responsibility Area (CAL FIRE 2007). Although the project site is located in a rural community west of the San Bernardino National Forest, the project site is adjacent to paved roadways to the north, west and south. The nearest open space area with natural vegetation is a hillside located approximately 0.3 miles east of the project site. As identified in the Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan, Figure 14 *Steep Slopes*, the proposed project and vicinity contain slopes less than 15 percent (County of Riverside 2016a).

| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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The proposed project is required to comply with applicable provisions of the CBC, California Fire Code (County Ordinance 787), and Riverside County Fire Department Standards pertaining to human health and safety. The County will review all project plans to ensure compliance with these regulations. For example, the plan check process includes County Fire Department review of proposed fire hydrant spacing and incorporation of automatic sprinkler systems in accordance with applicable Sections of Ordinance 787 .1 (e.g., Sections 901.6.1, 903.2, 903.4.2.1, 4.3, 3, 5, and 8603.1), proper roadway turning radii (minimum 38 feet), fire lane widths (minimum 24 feet), etc. Additionally, the project site layout includes provisions for emergency vehicle access, which also would be reviewed for adequacy by the County Fire Department. Through proper site design and compliance with standard and emergency County access requirements, the proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risk, or expose the project site to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or uncontrolled spread of wildfire.

- c) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not require installation or maintenance of infrastructure that could exacerbate fire risk. Nevertheless, to ensure the project site is designed to minimize potential wildfire risk, the proposed project would be required to comply with applicable provisions of the CBC, California Fire Code, Riverside County Ordinance 460, Riverside County Ordinance 787, and Riverside County Fire Department Standards pertaining to human health and safety. The County will review all project plans to ensure compliance with these regulations.
- d) **No Impact.** The project site is relatively flat. As identified in the Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan, Figure 14, *Steep Slopes*, the proposed project and vicinity contain slopes less than 15 percent. As such, the project site would not be exposed to downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.
- e) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** As described above in Section 37(a-d), although the proposed project is within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (CAL FIRE 2007), the project site and proposed land uses do not contain specific attributes or factors that would exacerbate wildfire risk. To ensure the project site is designed to minimize potential wildfire risk, the proposed project would be required to comply with applicable provisions of the CBC, California Fire Code, Riverside County Ordinance 460, Riverside County Ordinance 787, and Riverside County Fire Department Standards pertaining to human health and safety.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

#### **MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE Does the Project:**

**45.** Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

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**Source(s):** All sources previously identified in Section 1 through Section 44.

### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As concluded in the Biological and Cultural Resources sections of this document, all potential impacts discussed can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level for these resources.

As described in Section 7(a), the proposed project is not located within a designated WRCMSHCP Conservation Area nor would it conflict with the provisions of the WRCMSHCP. In addition, the proposed project has low potential for impacts to special-status plants and wildlife. Therefore, with implementation of MM-BIO-1 (pre-construction nesting bird surveys), impacts to special-status plants and wildlife species would be less than significant.

As described in Section 8 and 9, the proposed project would not result in impacts to any known historic or archaeological resources. Nevertheless, it is possible that archaeological resources would be encountered at subsurface levels during ground-disturbing construction activities. To reduce potential adverse effects to post-review discoveries during project implementation, procedures for inadvertent discovery of archaeological resource must be implemented through MM-CUL-1 and MM-CUL-2.

As described in Section 39, the proposed project would not result in impacts to any known Tribal Cultural Resources. Nevertheless, it is possible the Tribal Cultural Resources would be inadvertently encountered during ground-disturbing construction activities. To reduce potential adverse effects associated with inadvertent discover of Tribal Cultural Resources during project construction activities, the project applicant must retain a tribal monitor(s) to be present during ground disturbing activities, implemented through MM-TCR-1.

Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife populations to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

**46.** Have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects and probable future projects)?

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**Source(s):** All sources previously identified in Section 1 through Section 44.

### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As analyzed throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts or no impact to aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, air quality, biological resources, energy, Geology and Soils GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, utilities and service systems, and wildfire. Mitigation would be required to reduce potentially significant impacts related to cultural resources, paleontological resources, transportation and

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Tribal Cultural Resources. As such, cumulatively considerable impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

**47.** Have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

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**Source(s):** All sources previously identified in Section 1 through Section 44.

### **Findings of Fact:**

- a) **Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** Direct and indirect environmental effects on human beings were analyzed in the following sections: aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, and transportation. As found in discussion of each relevant section, there are no potential impacts that cannot be fully mitigated to less-than-significant levels. Furthermore, the proposed project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local policies and regulations. As such, the proposed project would not result in environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings and impacts would be less than significant.

## **VI. EARLIER ANALYSES**

Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration as per California Code of Regulations, Section 15063 (c) (3) (D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

Earlier Analyses Used, if any: Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment

Location Where Earlier Analyses, if used, are available for review:

Location: Appendix C of this Initial Study

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|                                      |  |                                       |              |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Potentially<br>Significant<br>Impact | Less than<br>Significant<br>with<br>Mitigation<br>Incorporated | Less<br>Than<br>Significant<br>Impact | No<br>Impact |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|

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