

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION ENVIRONMENTAL
CHECKLIST FORM

This form and the descriptive information in the application package constitute the contents of Initial Study pursuant to County Guidelines under Ordinance 3040 and Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

PROJECT LABEL:

APNs:	0630-031-05 and 0630-031-06	USGS Quad:	Landers
Applicant:	Belfield Developments, LLC 3705 West Pico Blvd, Suite 890 Los Angeles, CA 90019	T, R, Section:	Township 2 North, Range 6 East, Section 7
Location	East of Belfield Boulevard, approximately 890 feet north of Reche Road, Landers, CA	Thomas Bros.:	N/A
Project No:	PROJ-2025-00173	Community Plan:	Homestead Valley
Rep	West of West	LUZD:	Land use: Commercial Zoning: Homestead Valley/Rural Commercial (HV/CR)
Proposal:	Landers Hotel Project	Overlays:	None

PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION:

Lead agency: County of San Bernardino
Land Use Services Department
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, 1st Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0182

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Project Sponsor Belfield Developments, LLC
3705 West Pico Blvd, Suite 890
Los Angeles, CA 90019

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Summary

The applicant proposes to develop a single-story hotel comprised of 35 hotel rooms ("Project"). The main lodge includes a restaurant, bar, and goods market offering coffee and essential food goods to the neighborhood. The lodge's patio includes outdoor dining seats, a pool, hot tub, and spa structure. The spa is a wellness center consisting of a smaller soaking pool, hot tub, sauna, and showers. The pavilion is a structure intended for exercise classes and multipurpose meetings. The Project totals approximately 30,000 square feet of space.

Discretionary entitlements, reviews, and approvals required for implementation of the Project would include, but would not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Minor Use Permit
- Lot Merger
- Certificate of Use
- Health Permit for Public Swimming Pool
- Health Permit for Food Facility
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board Drainage Study and Mitigation Plan
- Erosion Control Plan
- Construction Waste Management Plan Part 1 and Part 2

Location

The Project Site is located off Belfield Boulevard (APN 0630-031-05 and 0630-031-06, “Project Site”) within the unincorporated community of Landers in the County of San Bernardino (see **Figure 1, Regional Project Location**). The Project Site is approximately 5.8 acres, located on the east side of Belfield Boulevard, west of Pipes Wash, north of Chuckawalla Road/Amargon Road, and south of Mirasol Road. The Project Site and the parcels directly north and south of the Project Site are zoned Homestead Valley/Rural Commercial (HV/CR). The parcels west of the Project Site are zoned Homestead Valley/Rural Living (HV/RL) and parcels to the east are zoned Government Land.¹

Existing Conditions

The Project Site is currently undeveloped vacant land that is occupied by shrubs and four Joshua trees (**Figure 2, Aerial Photograph of the Project Site**). The Project Site is designated Commercial (C) and zoned HV/CR. The Project will not include the removal of any Joshua trees.

Project Features

The Project includes the construction of approximately 30,000 square feet of new development as shown in **Figure 3, Project Site Plan** and **Table 1, Project Features**. The Project would include a goods market, restaurant, lodge, health club, a pool and hot tub, and 35 hotel rooms.

Table 1
Project Features

Project Features	Square Footage (sq. ft.)
Restaurant	3,300 sq. ft.
Lodge (Hotel Lobby)	3,300 sq. ft.
Community Market	850 sq. ft.
Health Club	2,200 sq. ft.

¹ County of San Bernardino, *San Bernardino County Land Use Plan*, General Plan, Land Use Zoning Districts: F13A, Landers. Available: https://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/LUS/GeneralPlan/DesertRegion/FI13A_20100422.pdf, accessed May 16, 2023.

Project Features	Square Footage (sq. ft.)
Laundry and Engineering	1,000 sq. ft.
Shade Structure	3,600 sq. ft.
Guest Rooms	15,750 sq. ft.
Total Square Footage	30,000 sq. ft.

Source: West of West, 2/19/24.

The Project would include a total of 106 parking spaces (99 standard and 7 ADA) located primarily along the southern perimeter of the Project Site. Low voltage lighting will be used throughout the Project.

The Project would operate 24 hours a day. The proposed hours of operation for the community market are 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and the restaurant, with 75 indoor seats and 50 outdoor seats, would operate from 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM. According to the applicant, the Project is anticipated to accommodate 35-75 guests per night and 5-25 employees throughout the day. The high season would be from October to May, and low season from June to September.

Landscaping and Trees

The Project Site contains four Joshua trees. Joshua trees are protected under the California Endangered Species Act as part of the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act.² Under the Act, the unpermitted removal of Joshua trees is illegal. However, none of the Joshua trees are located within the building area and no trees would be removed or otherwise disturbed. Where necessary, the Project would remove existing Creosote Bush Scrub which occurs throughout the Project Site. The Project would include approximately 135,700 square feet of landscaping. Proposed drought-tolerant landscaping would be comprised of wild gardens, manicured gardens, and natural desert landscapes.

Access/Parking

Regional access to the Project Site is provided by State Route 247 (SR-247)/Old Woman Springs Road (approximately 2.5 miles west of the Project Site) via Reche Road to the south and Belfield Boulevard. The Project will provide 106 parking spaces (99 standard and 7 ADA). Two driveway entrances will be provided by Belfield Boulevard and the proposed driveway in the southwestern corner of the Project Site would serve as the main driveway for regular access. Both driveways will include a fire apparatus access roads for the Project Site. The primary parking area is located along the southern perimeter of the Project Site, south of the lodge and health club. The Project would also include the installation of new sidewalks adjacent to the Project Site along Belfield Boulevard.

² Senate Bill 122, *Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act*, July 10, 2023. Available online at: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB122, accessed October 12, 2023.

Utilities

Bighorn Desert View Water Agency would provide water service to the Project Site, and wastewater services would be provided via a new septic system. Stormwater would be collected in cisterns, and the gray water would be used for irrigation. Southern California Edison would provide electrical service, and Southern California Gas Company would provide natural gas service. Because the Project Site is currently undeveloped, infrastructure would be extended on-site. The installation of new water/power lines is included as part of this environmental analysis.

SURROUNDING LAND USES

The parcels adjacent to the Project Site to the north and south are vacant. Both parcels are designated Commercial (C) and zoned HV/CR. The parcel located to the west of the Project Site includes a single-family residence and retail store; and are designated Rural Living (RL) and zoned HV/RL. To the east is a vacant parcel owned by the United States Bureau of Land Management and is zoned Government Land.³ The closest sensitive receptor includes the single-family residence approximately 35 feet west of the Project Site across Belfield Boulevard.

ADDITIONAL APPROVAL REQUIRED BY OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES

Federal: None.

State of California: None.

County of San Bernardino: Land Use Services Department-Building and Safety, Public Health-Environmental Health Services, Special Districts, and Public Works.

Regional: Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District, Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board

Local: None

PROJECT CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCING

For the purpose of analyzing impacts associated with construction activities, this analysis assumes a construction schedule of approximately 12 months with site preparation/grading. Construction was assumed to begin in 2024 and the Project operational in 2025. While it is more likely that Project construction would commence in 2025 or 2026, the construction emissions estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) for this IS/MND are considered more conservative due to the use of older emission factors and less efficient equipment assumptions in the model. In other words, emission factors improve each calendar year into the future and associated air quality and greenhouse gas emissions are reduced accordingly. Thus, the emissions estimated in this analysis are higher than would be expected under the actual construction timeline. This assumption is conservative and yields the maximum daily impacts. Construction activities associated with the Project would be undertaken in two main steps: (1) grading/foundation preparation and (2) building construction (including paving and architectural coatings). The Project Site is undeveloped and would not require any demolition.

Grading and foundation preparation would occur for approximately one month and this analysis assumes cut/fill operations would balance soil on-site and no soil import or export would be required.

³ California Natural Resources Agency, California Protected Areas Database. Available online at: <https://data.cnra.ca.gov/dataset/california-protected-areas-database>. Accessed October 12, 2023.

Building construction would occur for approximately 11 months and would include the construction of the proposed structure, connection of utilities, architectural coatings, and paving the Project Site. Architectural coating and paving are assumed to occur over the final month of the building construction phase.

Conventional construction equipment would be used, such as excavators, backhoes, and both light- and heavy-duty trucks. Consistent with the assumptions included within the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), the following maximum daily equipment by phase will be assumed for a project site between 5 and 10 acres:

- Grading: 1 excavator, 1 grader, 1 rubber tired dozer, 3 tractors/loaders/backhoes
- Building Construction: 1 crane, 3 forklifts, 1 generator set, 3 tractors/loaders/backhoes, 1 welder
- Paving: 2 pavers, 2 paving equipment, 2 rollers
- Architectural Coatings: 1 air compressor

Truck trips are expected to reach the Project Site via SR-247/Old Woman Springs Road and Reche Road. Due to the existing topography of the Project Site, it is assumed that soil would balance on-site and no soil import or export would be required.



SOURCE: Esri, 2024

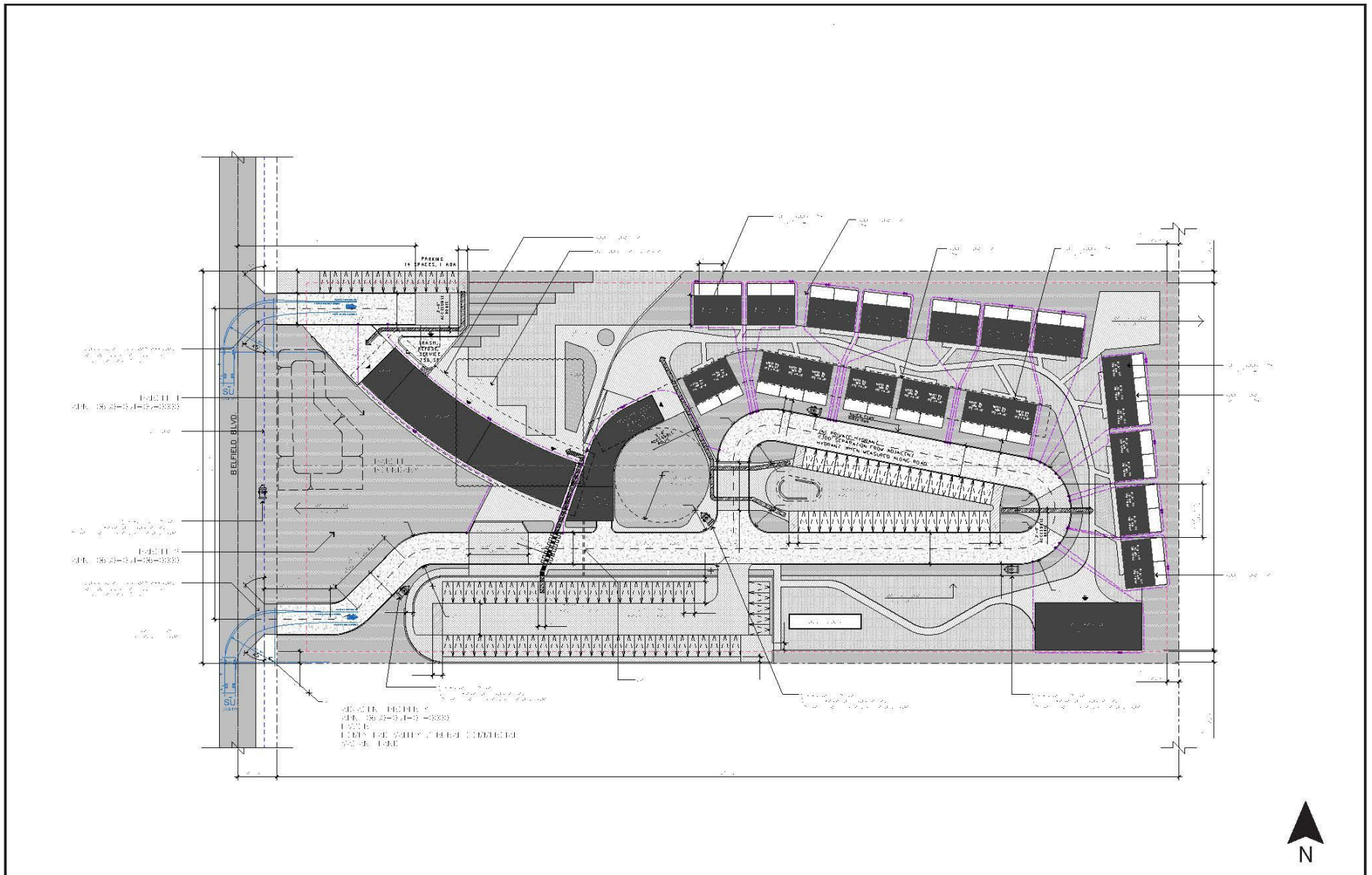
FIGURE 1



SOURCE: Esri, 2024

FIGURE 2

Aerial Photograph of the Project Site



SOURCE: West of West, 2025

FIGURE 3

Project Site Plan

CONSULTATION WITH CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

EVALUATION FORMAT

This Initial Study is prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq. and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15000, et seq.). Specifically, the preparation of an Initial Study is guided by Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This format of the study is presented as follows. The project is evaluated based on its effect on 20 major categories of environmental factors. Each factor is reviewed by responding to a series of questions regarding the impact of the project on each element of the overall factor. The Initial Study checklist provides a formatted analysis that provides a determination of the effect of the project on the factor and its elements. The effect of the project is categorized into one of the following four categories of possible determinations:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant	No Impact
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Substantiation is then provided to justify each determination. One of the four following conclusions is then provided as a summary of the analysis for each of the major environmental factors.


1. **No Impact:** No impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
2. **Less than Significant Impact:** No significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
3. **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated:** Possible significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated and the following mitigation measures are required as a condition of project approval to reduce these impacts to a level below significant. The required mitigation measures are: (List of mitigation measures)
4. **Potentially Significant Impact:** Significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required to evaluate these impacts, which are (List of the impacts requiring analysis within the EIR).

At the end of the analysis the required mitigation measures are restated and categorized as being either self- monitoring or as requiring a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the following finding is made:

<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION shall be prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there shall not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION shall be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.


Signature: (prepared by Oliver Mujica, Contract Planner III)

9/11/25
Date


Signature: (Paul Toomey, Consulting Planning Manager)

9/11/25
Date

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the following finding is made:

<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION shall be prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there shall not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION shall be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature: (prepared by Oliver Mujica, Contract Planner III)

Date

Signature: (Paul Toomey, Consulting Planning Manager)

Date

Issues		Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS-Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:					
a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which will adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check ☐ if project is located within the view-shed of any Scenic Route listed in the General Plan):

San Bernardino General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** According to the *San Bernardino Countywide Plan*, the Project Site is located within the North Desert Region of the unincorporated community of Landers. The majority of land within the community is vacant, although the community does consist of rural single-family residences and minimal commercial use. According to the County, there are no scenic vistas or scenic resources within the vicinity of the Project Site.⁴ As such, no impact to scenic vistas would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **No Impact.** There are no designated or eligible State scenic highways located near the Project Site or within its immediate vicinity. The nearest designated, or eligible for designation, State scenic highway is State Route 274, located approximately 2.46 miles

⁴ San Bernardino County, *Countywide Plan*, Adopted November 27, 2020. Available online at: <https://lus.sbcounty.gov/planning-home/general-plan/>, accessed May 30, 2023.

west of the Project Site.⁵ However, due to this distance and intervening objects (i.e., trees, buildings), the SR-39 is not visible from the Project Site. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures would be required.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is located in a rural environment of the unincorporated Landers community. As such, the Project is subject to only the first part of this impact question.

The Project would provide an opportunity for County visitors to inhabit and experience the surrounding rural desert area. As a new development, the Project would construct a single-story resort comprised of multiple attached hotel rooms, a wellness center, a restaurant, bar, and goods market. The proposed building materials and architecture for these buildings are intended to preserve the natural beauty of the high desert. As such, the Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Light emanating from building interiors that pass-through windows and light from exterior sources (i.e., street lighting, parking lot lighting, field lighting, building illumination, security lighting, and landscape lighting) serve as primary sources of light.

The Project would introduce new nighttime lighting on-site by installing lighting fixtures for the proposed driveway aisles, parking lot, security and on-site landscaping. The proposed lighting would comply with all applicable requirements outlined in Chapter 83.07 (Light Trespass) of the County Code, such as shielding the proposed light fixtures away from sensitive uses surrounding the Project Site (i.e., residential uses). Further, the landscaping lighting features would use low voltage light bulbs to preserve the Landers nighttime skyline. Additionally, the proposed building materials for the Project are not anticipated to result in substantial daytime glare. Therefore, impacts related to new sources of night or glare would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

⁵ San Bernardino County, *Countywide Plan*, Policy Map NR-3: Scenic Routes & Highways. Adopted November 27, 2020. Available online at: <https://lus.sbcounty.gov/planning-home/general-plan/>, accessed May 30, 2023.

	Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant	No Impact
II.	AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES - In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a)	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d)	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"/>
e)	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SUBSTANTIATION: (Check <input type="checkbox"/> if project is located in the Important Farmlands Overlay): San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program; Submitted Project Materials					

- a) **No Impact.** The Project Site is currently an unimproved vacant lot located in a rural area of the Landers Community. According to the California Department of Conservation's California Important Farmland Finder, the Project Site is not classified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.⁶ The Project Site is designated Commercial and zoned Homestead Valley/Rural Commercial by the County. Although agricultural uses are allowed in Rural Commercial zones, they are considered a secondary use.⁷ Additionally, the Project Site is not currently used for agricultural purposes. Therefore, the Project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **No Impact.** As stated above, the Project Site is zoned Homestead Valley/Rural Commercial, and there are no existing agricultural uses on-site. Additionally, the Project Site and surrounding uses are not subject to a Williamson Act contract.⁸ Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- c) **No Impact.** The Project Site is not zoned or used for forest land or timberland purposes and is not zoned Timberland Production. Further, Project implementation would not result in the rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **No Impact.** As stated above, the Project Site is not occupied by or used for forest land. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- e) **No Impact.** As the Project Site is a vacant parcel, Project implementation would not result in the conversion of farmland or forest land to non-agricultural/non-forest land use. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

⁶ California Department of Conservation, California Important Farmland Finder. Available online at: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/cifff/>, accessed May 26, 2023.

⁷ San Bernardino County, "Zoning and Development FAQs." Available online at: <https://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/LUS/Handouts/ZONINGFAQ.pdf>, accessed May 26, 2023.

⁸ California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, *Los Angeles County Williamson Act FY 2015/2016*. November 21, 2018.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
III. AIR QUALITY - Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district might be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:					
a)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Expose sensitive receptors 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"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: *The Project would not conflict with any air quality management plans, contribute a cumulatively considerable increase of any criteria pollutant, expose sensitive receptors to substantial air pollutant concentrations, or create emissions that would adversely affect a substantial number of people. See **Appendix A, Air Quality Technical Report**, for more details regarding the air quality analysis*

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** As part of its enforcement responsibilities, the U.S. EPA requires each state with nonattainment areas to prepare and submit a SIP that demonstrates the means to attain the federal standards. The SIP must integrate federal, state, and local plan components and regulations to identify specific measures to reduce pollution in nonattainment areas, using a combination of performance standards and market-based programs. Similarly, under state law, the CCAA requires an air quality attainment plan to be prepared for areas designated as nonattainment with regard to the federal and state ambient air quality standards. Air quality attainment plans outline emissions limits and control measures to achieve and maintain these standards by the earliest practical date.

The Project is located within the Mojave Desert Air Basin (Basin) and is regulated by the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD). As previously discussed, the MDAQMD PM₁₀ Attainment Plan and Ozone Attainment Plan are the Air Quality Management Plans (AQMPs) for the Basin and serve to guide the Basin into compliance with all federal and state air quality standards. The PM₁₀ Attainment Plan and Ozone

Attainment Plan contain control measures and related emission reduction measures based upon emissions projections for future development projects from land use, employment characteristics, and population. Consistency with these attainment plans is determined through the following criterion:

Consistency Criterion No. 1: Determining project consistency with local land use and/or population projections;

Consistency Criterion No. 2: Demonstrating project compliance with relevant MDAQMD rules and regulations; and

Consistency Criterion No. 3: Demonstrating project implementation will not increase the frequency or severity of a violation in the federal or state ambient air quality standards.

Criterion 1: Consistency with local land use plans and/or population projections.

Area air quality planning, including the AQMPs, assumes that there will be emissions from new growth, but that such emissions may not impede the attainment and may actually contribute to the attainment of applicable air quality standards within the Basin. Growth projections included in the AQMPs form the basis for projected emissions for the Basin; these projections are based on general plan land use designations as well as the Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) demographics. SCAG assembles population, housing, and employment forecasts based on local general plans as well as input from local governments, such as the County. Although the SCAG has adopted the Connect SoCal 2024, the MDAQMD has not released an updated AQMP that utilizes data from the most previous RTP/SCS. The MDAQMD has incorporated demographic growth forecasts for various socioeconomic categories from the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS into the AQMPs.

The County's land use and zoning designations serve to regulate various aspects of how land can be used. The Project Site is designated as Commercial and is zoned for Homestead Valley/Rural Commercial. The Rural Commercial land use zoning district provides sites for retail trade and personal services, repair services, lodging services, recreation and entertainment services, transportation services, and similar and compatible uses. Per the County's Code, the Rural Commercial zone permits hotel and motel uses with more than 20 guest rooms through a Minor Use Permit.⁹

According to Population and Housing Estimates from the Department of Finance, as of January of 2023, the County's unincorporated area population estimate was 297,482 persons and the County's total area population estimate was 2,182,056 persons.¹⁰ The 2016-2040 RTP/SCS estimated that the County's forecasted population to reach 2,731,000

⁹ *County of San Bernardino Code*, Chapter 82.05 Commercial Land Use Zoning Districts. Available online at: https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/sanbernardino/latest/sanberncty_ca/0-0-0-167997#JD_Chapter82.05, accessed March 26, 2024.

¹⁰ California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, "E-5 Population and Housing Estimates, 1/1/2023." Available online at: <https://dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/estimates-e5-2010-2021/>, accessed March 26, 2024.

persons by the year 2040.¹¹ Growth forecasts for employment in the County were expected to reach 1,028,000 jobs by 2040.¹²

The Project includes the development of a hotel that would include a community market, restaurant, lodge, health club, pools, and 35 guest rooms. As previously mentioned, the Project is permitted through a Minor Use Permit. Given the commercial nature of the Project, employment would be generated from the Project. Although the Project would increase employment in the area, it is anticipated that employees of the Project would primarily consist of existing residents in the San Bernardino County area and the Project would not result in a high number of employees permanently relocating to the region. Estimating the number of future employees who may choose to relocate to the County would be highly speculative, since many factors influence personal housing location decisions (e.g., family income levels and the cost and availability of suitable housing in the local area). Nevertheless, in an effort to present a worst-case population growth scenario, this analysis assumes the Project would employ up to 25 full-time employees, all of whom would permanently relocate to the County. Based on the employment forecast from the 2016-2040 RTP/SCS, the employment generated from the project would represent less than one percent of the County's projected employment.

Based on the San Bernardino County average household size of 3.15 persons, the Project could result in a maximum population increase of approximately 79 persons.¹³ The 2016-2040 RTP/SCS growth forecasts estimated the County's population to reach 2,731,000 persons by the year 2040, representing a total increase of 548,944 persons.¹⁴ The Project's potential maximum increase of 79 persons would represent less than one percent of the County's projected increase in population between the years 2023 and 2040. The Project would not generate population or employment growth beyond what was forecasted by the SCAG. As the MDAQMD has incorporated these forecasts on population, housing, and employment into the AQMPs, the Project would be consistent with the AQMPs, making impacts less than significant.

Criterion 2: Compliance with applicable MDAQMD Rules and Regulations

Construction-related emissions would be temporary in nature, lasting only for the duration of the construction period, and would not have a long-term impact on the region's ability to meet state and federal air quality standards. Furthermore, the Project will be required to comply with all applicable MDAQMD rules and regulations. For example, the Project must comply with MDAQMD Rules 401, 402, and 403 for the control of fugitive dust during construction. The Project would comply with any and all applicable rules established by the

¹¹ Southern California Association of Governments, 2016-2045 RTP/SCS, Challenges in a Changing Region, Table 3.1, 2016. Available online at: <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/f2016rtpscs.pdf?1606005557>, accessed March 26, 2024.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, "E-5 Population and Housing Estimates, 1/1/2023." Available online at: <https://dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/estimates-e5-2010-2021/>, accessed March 26, 2024.

¹⁴ Southern California Association of Governments, 2016-2045 RTP/SCS, Challenges in a Changing Region, Table 3.1. 2016. Available online at: <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/f2016rtpscs.pdf?1606005557>, accessed March 26, 2024.

MDAQMD. By meeting MDAQMD rules and regulations, Project construction activities will be consistent with the goals and objectives of the AQMPs to improve air quality in the Basin.

Criterion 3: Demonstrating project implementation will not increase the frequency or severity of a violation in the federal or state ambient air quality standards.

The Project would not result in operational air quality emissions that exceed the MDAQMD thresholds of significance. And, as discussed in more detail above, projects, land uses, and activities that are consistent with the applicable assumptions used in the development of the AQMP would not jeopardize attainment of the air quality levels identified in the AQMP.

The Project's consistency with all three criterion demonstrates that it would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of any AQMPs. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** A project may have a significant impact if project-related emissions would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase for a criteria pollutant for which the region is in nonattainment under applicable federal or state ambient air quality standards. The cumulative analysis of air quality impacts follows the MDAQMD's guidance such that construction or operational project emissions will be considered cumulatively considerable if project-specific emissions exceed an applicable MDAQMD recommended daily threshold.

Construction Significance Analysis

For purposes of this analysis, it is estimated that the Project would be constructed in approximately 12 months with construction beginning 2024 and project operations commencing in 2025. While construction may begin at a later date and/or take place over a longer period, these assumptions represent the earliest and fastest build-out potential resulting in a worst-case daily impact scenario for purposes of this analysis. This analysis assumes construction would be undertaken with the following primary construction phases: (1) grading/foundation preparation and (2) building construction. The Project would also require paving and architectural coatings, which have conservatively been assumed to occur concurrently during the final month of the building construction phase.

The analysis of regional daily construction emissions has been prepared utilizing the CalEEMod computer model. Predicted maximum daily construction-generated emissions for the Project are summarized in **Table 2, Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant and Precursor Emissions – Maximum Pounds per Day**. These calculations assume that appropriate dust control measures would be implemented as part of the Project during each phase of development, as specified by MDAQMD Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust). As shown in **Table 2**, the peak daily emissions generated during the construction of the Project would not exceed any of the emission thresholds recommended by the MDAQMD. Therefore, Project construction would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any

criteria air pollutant for which the Project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.

Table 2
Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant and Precursor Emissions – Maximum Pounds per Day

Maximum Pounds Per Day						
Construction Year	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM10	PM2.5
2024	1.98	18.30	20.20	0.03	3.80	2.15
2025	10.10	19.10	26.90	0.04	1.27	0.86
Threshold	137	137	548	137	82	65
<i>Exceed?</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
Maximum Annual Emissions (short tons)						
Construction Year	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM10	PM2.5
2024	0.09	0.80	0.96	< 0.01	0.08	0.05
2025	0.17	0.82	1.08	< 0.01	0.05	0.04
Threshold	25	25	100	25	15	12
<i>Exceed?</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>

Source: Impact Sciences January 2024. See **Appendix A, Air Quality Technical Report**. Emissions shown are the highest daily maximum from either summer or winter season.

Note: Project emissions account for the reductions from MDAQMD Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust).

Operational Significance Analysis

Project-generated emissions would be associated with motor vehicle use, energy use, and area sources, such as the use of natural-gas-fired appliances, landscape maintenance equipment, consumer cleaning products, and architectural coatings associated with the operation of the Project. The operational emissions from the Project were calculated with CalEEMod and the operational emissions were compared against MDAQMD thresholds to determine Project significance. Long-term operational emissions attributable to the Project are summarized in **Table 3, Long-Term Operational Emissions – Maximum Pounds per Day**. As shown, the operational emissions generated by the Project would not exceed the regional thresholds of significance set by the MDAQMD.

Table 3
Long-Term Operational Emissions – Maximum Pounds per Day

Maximum Pounds Per Day						
Source	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM10	PM2.5
Mobile Source	2.04	2.95	25.70	0.06	5.09	1.32
Area Source	0.98	0.01	1.42	< 0.01	< 0.01	< 0.01
Energy Use	0.02	0.34	0.29	< 0.01	0.03	0.03

<i>Total</i>	3.04	3.30	27.41	0.08	5.13	1.36
Threshold	137	137	548	137	82	65
<i>Exceed?</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
Maximum Annual Emissions (short tons)						
Source	ROG	NOx	CO	SO₂	PM10	PM2.5
Mobile	0.33	0.53	3.61	0.01	0.87	0.23
Area Source	0.16	< 0.01	0.13	< 0.01	< 0.01	< 0.01
Energy Use	< 0.01	0.05	0.05	< 0.01	< 0.01	< 0.01
<i>Total</i>	<i>0.49</i>	<i>0.59</i>	<i>3.79</i>	<i>0.01</i>	<i>0.87</i>	<i>0.23</i>
Threshold	25	25	100	25	15	12
<i>Exceed?</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>

Source: Impact Sciences, January 2024. See **Appendix A, Air Quality Technical Report**. Emissions shown are the highest daily maximum from either summer or winter season.

As shown in **Table 2** and **Table 3**, the Project's construction and operational emissions would not exceed the MDAQMD's thresholds for any criteria air pollutants. Thus, the Project would also not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria air pollutant for which the Project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. These impacts are less than significant.

Air Quality Health Impacts

On December 24, 2018, the California Supreme Court published its opinion on the *Sierra Club et al. v. County of Fresno et. Al.* (Case No. S219783) which determined that an environmental review must adequately analyze a project's potential impacts and inform the public how its bare numbers translate to a potential adverse health impact or explain how existing scientific constraints cannot translate the emissions numbers to the potential health impacts.

Criteria air pollutants are defined as those pollutants for which the federal and state governments have established air quality standards for outdoor or ambient concentrations to protect public health. The national and state ambient air quality standards have been set at levels to protect human health with a determined margin of safety. As discussed previously, the Basin is in state non-attainment for PM2.5, PM10, and Ozone (O₃) and federal non-attainment for PM10, and O₃. Therefore, an increase in emissions of particulate matter or ozone precursors (ROG and NOx) has the potential to push the region further from reaching attainment status and, as a result, are the pollutants of greatest concern in the region. As noted in **Table 2** and **Table 3** above, the Project will emit criteria air pollutants during construction and operation. However, the Project will not exceed MDAQMD thresholds for ozone precursors (ROG and NOx), PM2.5, PM10, or any other criteria air pollutants, and will not result in a cumulatively significant impact for which the region is in non-attainment. With respect to the Project's increase in criteria pollutant emissions, the Project would not have the potential cause significant air quality health impacts. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** Based on the MDAQMD Guidelines, a significant impact may occur if a project were to generate pollutant concentrations to a degree that would significantly affect sensitive receptors.

Construction

Project impacts related to increased community risk could occur by introducing a new source of localized pollutants during construction and operation with the potential to adversely affect existing sensitive receptors in the Project vicinity. According to the MDAQMD, residences, schools, daycare centers, playgrounds, and medical facilities are considered to be sensitive receptor land uses. The following project types proposed for sites within the specified distance to an existing or planned (zoned) sensitive receptor land use must be evaluated using significance threshold criteria number four:¹⁵

- Any industrial project within 1,000 feet;
- A distribution center (40 or more trucks per day) within 1,000 feet;
- A major transportation project (50,000 or more vehicles per day) within 1,000 feet;
- A dry cleaner using perchloroethylene within 500 feet;
- A gasoline dispensing facility within 300 feet.

The Project is not proposing to develop any of the project types listed above and will not be required to be evaluated against MDAQMD significance threshold criteria number four. The closest air quality sensitive receptors would be the residence 281 feet to the west of the Project Site and the residence 286 feet to the north of the Project Site.

The primary sources of potential Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) under the Project would be construction activity and the associated generation of diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions from the use of off-road diesel equipment required for grading, paving, and other construction activities. The amount to which nearby sensitive receptors are exposed (a function of concentration and duration of exposure) is the primary factor used to determine health risk. Health-related risks associated with diesel-exhaust emissions are primarily linked to long-term exposure and the associated risk of contracting cancer. Construction of the Project would not have the potential to generate large amounts of DPM since a minimal amount of daily heavy construction equipment will be utilized and the overall construction duration would be short (approximately 12 months). Furthermore, the low levels of diesel exhaust would primarily be emitted during the grading/foundational preparation phase, which is anticipated to last only one month total. Average daily diesel exhaust emissions generated on-site during the 11 months of building construction would be negligible. Emissions generated from the development of the Project are temporary and localized and would cease upon completion of construction. This impact would be less than significant.

¹⁵ MDAQMD, *CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines*. Available online at: <https://www.mdaqmd.ca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/8510/638126583450270000>, accessed January 26, 2024.

Operation

Project-operation impacts related to increased health risk can occur either by introducing a new source of TACs with the potential to adversely affect existing sensitive receptors, or by introducing a new sensitive receptor, such as a residential use, in proximity to an existing source of TACs.

The Project does not include any stationary sources of TAC emissions and most vehicles associated with the operation of the Project would run on gasoline and not diesel, which is the primary source of TACs and DPM. Therefore, operation of the Project would not generate TAC or PM_{2.5} emissions that could affect the health of sensitive receptors. As such, the Project would not contribute to human health risk to nearby receptors during operation, and the Project would not contribute to any cumulative human health risk impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** According to the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) CEQA Air Quality Handbook land uses often associated with odors include agriculture (farming and livestock), wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting facilities, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The Project would not include any of the land uses that have been identified by CARB as odor sources.

Construction activities associated with the Project may generate detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust and architectural coatings. However, construction-related odors would be short-term in nature and cease upon Project completion. In addition, the Project would be required to comply with the California Code of Regulations, Title 13, sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485, which minimizes the idling time of construction equipment either by shutting it off when not in use or by reducing the time of idling to no more than five minutes. This would reduce the detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust. Any odor impacts to existing adjacent land uses would be short-term and not substantial. As such, the Project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures required.

Therefore, less than significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES - Would the project:				
a) Have substantial adverse effects, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) 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 Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) 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"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located in the Biological Resources Overlay or contains habitat for any species listed in the California Natural Diversity Database <input type="checkbox"/>):				

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials; Add in Studies here

- a) **Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The Project Site is currently a vacant lot located within a rural area of the unincorporated Landers community. Based on the Biological Resources Assessment memorandum (see **Appendix B, Biological Resources Assessment**) prepared for the Project, approximately 24 special-status plant species and 14 special status wildlife species were identified as special status species having potential to occur within the same USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles as the Project Site (i.e., Landers, Goat Mountain, Yucca Valley North, and Joshua Tree North). No special status plant communities were identified to potentially occur within these quadrangles. It was determined that the undeveloped Project Site would have a low potential to support the following species: Providence Mountains milk-vetch (*Astragalus nutans*), white pygmy-poppy (*Canbya candida*), Joshua tree poppy (*Eschscholzia andrauxii*), and crowned mullia (*Muilla oronate*). Western Joshua trees are listed as a candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), and four Western Joshua trees were observed on-site. However, no trees would be removed under the Project. The Project Site would also have a high potential to support loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) and low potential to support burrowing owl and desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). As a result, activities during Project construction and operations could potentially impact any existing critical habitats of these special-status avian species. **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** would require a pre-construction clearance survey to be conducted and subsequent monitoring of active nests. Further, to ensure that the burrowing owl and desert tortoise are absent from the Project Site during construction, **Mitigation Measures BIO-2** and **BIO-3** would require pre-construction clearance surveys to be conducted for each wildlife species and subsequent actions to follow if they are present. Incorporation of **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** through **BIO-3** would reduce impacts to biological resources to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures:

BIO-1 In the event that ground-disturbing activities or removal of any trees, shrubs, or any other potential nesting habitat that are associated with the Project are scheduled to occur within the avian nesting season (from February 1 through August 31), a qualified biologist retained by the Project Applicant shall conduct a pre-construction clearance survey for nesting birds within three days prior to any ground disturbing activities.

The biologist conducting the clearance survey shall document the negative results if no active bird nests are observed on the Project Site during the clearance survey with a brief letter report indicating that no impact to active bird nests would occur before construction can proceed. If an active bird nest is discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey, construction activities shall stay outside of a no-disturbance buffer around the active nest. The size of the no-disturbance buffer shall be determined by the wildlife biologist and shall depend on the level of noise and/or surrounding anthropogenic disturbances, line of sight between the nest and the construction activity, type and duration of

construction activity, ambient noise, species habituation, and topographical barriers. Any activities requiring the removal of a tree with an active bird nest shall halt until nesting activity seasons, which would be determined by the qualified biologist.

The biologist shall be present to delineate the boundaries of the buffer area and to monitor the active nest to ensure that nesting behavior is not adversely affected by the construction activity. Results of the pre-construction survey and any subsequent monitoring shall be provided to the County of San Bernardino, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other appropriate agencies.

BIO-2

A pre-construction clearance survey shall be conducted 14-30 days prior to any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities to confirm the presence/absence of burrowing owls and ensure impacts to any burrowing owls or occupied burrows do not occur. The clearance survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and cover all suitable habitat within the Project impact area, including adjacent suitable habitat within a 500-foot buffer (as accessible). Following completion of the clearance survey, the qualified biologist shall prepare and submit a final report documenting the methods and results of the survey. If no burrowing owls or occupied burrows are detected, Project activities may begin, and no additional avoidance and minimization measures would be required. If an occupied burrow is found within the project impact area during pre-construction clearance surveys, a burrowing owl exclusion plan shall be prepared and submitted to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for approval prior to initiating Project activities that includes proposed mitigation for direct and permanent impacts to nesting, occupied and satellite burrows and/or burrowing owl habitat such that the habitat acreage, number of burrows and burrowing owls impacted are replaced. If an occupied burrow is found within adjacent habitat that may be indirectly impacted by project activities, the individual shall be buffered following the distances recommended by the Project biologist. The biologist shall monitor the burrow, adjust the buffer area as needed, and shall have the authority to stop construction activities to prevent take.

BIO-3

A pre-construction clearance survey shall be conducted 30 days prior to any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities to confirm the presence/absence of desert tortoises. The clearance survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and cover all suitable habitat within the Project impact area, including any adjacent suitable habitat that is present within a 500-foot buffer. Following completion of the clearance survey, the qualified biologist shall prepare and submit a final report documenting the methods and results of the survey. If no desert tortoises are detected, Project activities may begin, and no additional measures would be required. If desert tortoises are found to be present within the Project impact area during pre-construction clearance surveys, coordination between the Project Applicant and the California

Department of Fish to determine appropriate minimization and mitigation measures to offset Project related impacts to this species.

- b) **No Impact.** The existing Project Site is vacant and undeveloped. According to the Open Space and Conservation Element of the County's General Plan, there are no river, riparian, or similar resources within the Project Site's vicinity. The Biological Resources Assessment memorandum also noted that there are no riparian habitat and special-status natural communities that have the potential to occur on-site. As such, there are no local plans or policies related to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. Therefore, the Project would not adversely affect riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, and no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required

- c) **No Impact.** According to the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory Mapper, there are no mapped wetlands within the Project Site.¹⁶ As such, no impact would result pertaining to state or federally protected wetlands.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** As discussed in **Appendix B, Biological Resources Assessment**, although there are no wildlife corridors identified on-site, the Pipes Wash serves as a seasonal migratory corridor for local wildlife species and occurs immediately east of the Project Site. While the existing residential uses adjacent to the Project Site have reduced wildlife movement opportunities for local wildlife; there is ample habitat adjacent to the Project Site to support wildlife movement. There was no surface water or wildlife activity observed within the segment of the Pipes Wash closest to the Project Site. In addition, construction activities and improvements associated with the Project would be constrained to the Project Site. As such, impact to the Pipes Wash is unlikely to occur from Project implementation. Thus, the Project would result in a less than significant impacts to migratory wildlife movement opportunities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- e) **No Impact.** Local policies and ordinances protecting native plants have been put in place by the County of San Bernardino. Chapter 88.01 (Plant Protection and Management) of the County Code provides regulations for the removal or harvesting of specified desert native plants in order to preserve and protect the plants and to provide for the conservation and wise use of desert resources. The desert native plants specified in the County Code include, but are not limited to, all Joshua trees.

As stated above, four western Joshua trees were observed within the Project Site. The Project would not include the removal of any on-site trees, and the existing western Joshua trees would be preserved. Furthermore, no other plant species protected under

¹⁶ United States Fish and Wildlife, "National Wetlands Inventory," Available online at: <https://fwsprimary.wim.usgs.gov/wetlands/apps/wetlands-mapper/>. Accessed May 23, 2023.

the County Code were observed or identified on-site. Thus, the Project would not conflict with the County's local ordinances protecting desert native plants.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- f) **No Impact.** According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Service, the Project Site is not located within a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP).¹⁷ Additionally, the Project Site is not located within the sole Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) area in San Bernardino County, or the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Habitat Conservation Plan.¹⁸ Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, less than significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with incorporation of mitigation measures BIO 1 through BIO-3.

¹⁷ California Department of Fish and Wildlife, "NCCP Plan Summaries." Available online at: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/NCCP/Plans>, accessed on September 13, 2023.

¹⁸ San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, *Upper Santa Ana River Wash Habitat Conservation Plan*. Available online at: <https://www.sbvwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Final-2022-Wash-Plan-Annual-Report-05.31.2023.pdf>, accessed on September 13 2023.

Issues		Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES - Would the project:					
a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Disturb any human remains, including those outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if the project is located in the Cultural ☐ or Paleontologic ☐ Resources overlays or cite results of cultural resource review)

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Cultural Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), South Central Coast Information Center, California State University, Fullerton; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** According to **Appendix C, Cultural Resources Memo**, an initial consultation letter was sent to the South-Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on August 8, 2023, to inquire if any state or federally designated historical resources identified either on-site or within a one-mile distance from the Project Site. The records search identified that there were no cultural resources identified on-site; however, three cultural resources are located within one mile of the Project Site. However, given the distance of these resources to the Project Site, there would be no potential cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Construction activities for the Project would involve ground-disturbing activities (i.e., grading). **Appendix C** of this IS/MND did not identify any specific resources of archaeological significance during the archaeological survey of the Project Site. However, in the event that previously unidentified archaeological resources are encountered during construction activities, the Project would be required to comply with **Mitigation Measure CUL-1**. **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would ensure that work in the immediate area of a potential archaeological find is halted until an archaeologist evaluates the find and determines appropriate subsequent procedures. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1**, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

CUL-1 If previously unidentified cultural resources are encountered during ground disturbing activities, work in the immediate area must halt and a qualified archaeologist approved by the County and retained by the Project Applicant must be contacted immediately to evaluate the find. If the discovery proves to be significant under CEQA, the qualified archaeologist shall expeditiously prepare and implement a research design and archaeological data recovery plan that captures those categories of data for which the site is significant in accordance with Section 15064.5 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** No dedicated cemetery exists on the Project Site or in the vicinity of the Project. According to **Appendix C** of this IS/MND, a Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File search was requested on July 26, 2023 per Assembly Bill (AB) 52 requirements. The NAHC responded to the request on August 22, 2023, and reported negative results. A list of 36 tribal contacts who may have interest in the Project area was provided with the NAHC response. Informational query letters were sent to each of these contacts. Two responses have been received from the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians stated that the Project Site is not within the Tribe's Traditional Use Area and the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians indicated that the area may be sensitive for cultural resources. The County shall coordinate with the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to confirm if the Project Site may be sensitive for cultural resources prior to the completion of tribal consultation.

In the event that human remains are encountered, those remains would require proper treatment, in accordance with State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. Specifically, Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 describes the requirements if any human remains are accidentally discovered during excavation of a site. As required by State law, the requirements and procedures set forth in Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code would be implemented, including notification of the County Coroner, notification of the Native American Heritage Commission and consultation with the individual identified by the Native American Heritage Commission to be the "most likely descendant." If human remains are found during excavation, excavation must stop in the vicinity of the find and any area that is reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains until the County coroner has been called out, and the remains have been investigated and appropriate recommendations have been made for the treatment and disposition of the remains. As stated in **Section 18, Tribal Cultural Resources**, implementation of **Mitigation Measures TCR-1** and **TCR-3** would require the Project Applicant to implement the appropriate procedures for Native American monitoring and recovery of any tribal cultural resources and human remains. Adherence to existing State laws and mitigation measures would ensure impacts are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: See **Section 18, Tribal Cultural Resources**.

Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated with incorporation of mitigation measure CUL-1 and TCR-1 through TCR-3.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant	No Impact
VI. ENERGY – Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Materials

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** Southern California Edison (SCE) provides electrical services to the unincorporated Landers community through State-regulated public utility contracts.¹⁹ The Southern California Gas Company (SoCal Gas) provides natural gas services to the Project Area.²⁰

Construction

Construction activities associated with the Project would consume electricity on a limited basis to power lighting and electrical equipment. Electricity would be supplied to the Project Site from existing electrical lines located along Belfield Boulevard. The electricity demand at any given time would vary throughout the construction period based on the construction activities being performed and would cease upon completion of construction. Electricity use from construction would be short-term, limited to working hours, used for necessary construction-related activities, and represent a small fraction of the Project's annual operational electricity.

Typically, construction activities do not involve the consumption of natural gas. As such, natural gas would not be supplied to support Project construction activities and there would be no expected demand generated by construction of the Project. If natural gas is used during construction, it would be in limited amounts and on a temporary basis and would specifically be used to replace or offset diesel-fueled equipment and as such would not result in substantial on-going demand.

Construction activities associated with the Project would use gasoline and/or diesel-powered equipment and/or vehicles for excavation, grading, and hauling activities.

¹⁹ Southern California Edison, "Our Service Territory." Available online at: <https://www.sce.com/about-us/who-we-are/leadership/our-service-territory>. Accessed November 29, 2023.

²⁰ Southern California Gas Company, "Map Showing Local Service Zones of Southern California Gas Company." Available online at: <https://www.socalgas.com/1443739946153/Detailed-description-of-Local-Service-Zones.pdf>. Accessed November 29, 2023.

However, the Project Applicant would use fuel-efficient equipment consistent with State and federal regulations, such as the fuel efficiency regulations outlined in Title 24, Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), which regulates energy resources and fuel consumption and California Code of Regulations, Title 13, sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485, which minimizes the idling time of construction equipment either by shutting it off when not in use or by reducing the time of idling to no more than five minutes.

Construction equipment would be maintained to applicable standards, and construction activities and associated fuel consumption and energy use would be temporary and typical of construction sites. It is also reasonable to assume contractors would avoid wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary fuel consumption during construction to reduce construction costs. Therefore, construction activities associated with the Project would not involve the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary use of energy during construction, and the construction-phase impact related to energy consumption would be less than significant.

Operation

The Project would include a goods market, restaurant, lodge, health club, and 35 hotel rooms. These features would result in energy consumption. The Project would also include pools and restrooms. Accordingly, energy would also be consumed during Project operations related to water usage, wastewater generation and solid waste disposal. The Project would be designed in compliance with the 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and would be subject to a site plan review by the County to affirm the Project's consistency. The Project must comply with the mandatory requirements set forth in the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Green Code) related to energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, and material conservation and resource efficiency for new non-residential buildings.

Energy would also be consumed as a result of vehicle trips. Thus, Project operations would result in an increase in the consumption of petroleum-based fuels related to vehicular travel to and from the Project Site. The majority of the vehicle fleet that would be used by employees and visitors of the Project would consist of light-duty automobiles and light-duty trucks, which are subject to state fuel efficiency standards, such as the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) and Low-Emission Vehicle Program Standards. The Low Carbon Fuel Standard, in part, aims to reduce fuel consumption and providers of transportation fuels must demonstrate that the mix of fuels they supply for use in California meets the LCFS carbon intensity standards for each annual compliance period.

In conclusion, the Project would result in an increase in energy consumption in the form of electricity, water usage, waste disposal, and vehicle trips. Compliance with state-mandated regulations and standards would ensure the Project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project would comply with the state and local greenhouse gas reduction strategies outlined in the County of San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (2021).²¹ Project design features would also be required to comply with Title 24 CALGreen Code (2023)²² which ensures the use of energy efficient features for the Project. As such, the Project would not conflict or obstruct any local or state plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. For these reasons, this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

²¹ San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG), *County of San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan*, 2021. Available online at: https://www.gosbcta.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/San_Bernardino_Regional_GHG_Reduction_Plan_Main_Text_Mar_2021.pdf, accessed November 29, 2023.

²² *2022 California Green Building Standards Code*, Title 24, Part 11. Available online at: <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/CAGBC2022P1>, accessed on January 26, 2024.

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

- f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check ☐ if project is located in the Geologic Hazards Overlay District): **San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials**

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

a)

- i. **No Impact.** The Project Site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone and no known active faults traverse the Project Site (see **Appendix D, Geotechnical Reports**). The closest known fault to the Project Site is the Landers Fault System, located approximately 2.1 miles from the site. Given the Project Site's distance to the nearest known active fault, the potential for surface fault rupture due to a known active fault is considered low. As such, impacts pertaining to potential fault rupture of a known earthquake fault would not occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- ii. **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is located in Southern California, a known seismically active region in the State that has the potential to subject people and structures to earthquakes and seismic-related hazards. The Project would be constructed in accordance with the 2022 California Building Code (CBC), which specifies the regulatory requirements for commercial, recreational, and industrial buildings related to resiliency to strong seismic ground shaking. Additionally, the Project would comply with the applicable structural safety requirements outlined in Chapter 1 (California Building Codes) of the San Bernardino County Code. Further, to ensure foundational support during seismic events, the Project Applicant would apply the recommended seismic design parameters and foundation design that are outlined in the Foundation Design and Construction section in **Appendix D** for new buildings. By complying with state and regional regulations regarding structural safety and implementing foundation recommendations, impacts related to seismic ground shaking would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- iii **Less than Significant Impact.** Liquefaction is a seismic phenomenon in which loose, saturated, fine-grained granular soils behave similarly to a fluid when subjected to high-intensity ground shaking. Liquefaction occurs when three general conditions exist: (1) shallow groundwater; (2) low-density, fine, clean sandy soils; and (3) high intensity ground motion.

According to **Appendix D**, the Project Site is not situated within an area identified to have a moderate susceptibility to liquefaction. Additionally, shallow groundwater was not detected on-site. Thus, the potential for liquefaction within the Project Site is determined to be low. As stated, the Project Applicant would implement the

recommendations outlined in the in the Foundation Design and Construction section in **Appendix D**. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- iv. **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is located within a relatively flat area of the Landers Community, in San Bernardino County. According to **Appendix D**, the potential for a landslide to occur is determined to be low. As such, impact involving landslides would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** Construction activities associated with the Project would result in ground surface disruption during site clearance, which would temporarily expose soils, allowing for possible erosion. The Project would be required to comply with federal, regional, and local regulations pertaining to soil erosion related-construction activity. As such, the Project would comply with Section 85.11.030 (Erosion Control Plan and Inspection Required) of the County Code and prepare and Erosion Control Plan that would outline the applicable best management practices (BMPs) that would implement to reduce soil erosion and potential land disturbance during construction. Furthermore, the Project would comply with Section 85.11.030 County Code and all regulations outlined in the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to the initiation of construction activities. The SWPPP would outline all Project BMPs that would be implemented. Additionally, the Project Applicant would be required to comply with recommendations outlined in the Remedial Grading section of **Appendix D** to minimize erosion during grading activities associated with the Project. Adherence to these requirements would reduce the potential for erosion or loss of topsoil to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** Lateral spreading is a phenomenon in which surficial soil displaces along a shear zone that has formed within an underlying liquefied layer. The surficial blocks are transported downslope or in the direction of a free face, by earthquake and gravitational forces. The Project Site is relatively flat and does not include a free-facing slope in proximity to the site. Therefore, the potential for lateral spreading is considered very low.

Subsidence occurs when large amounts of groundwater have been withdrawn from certain types of rocks, such as fine-grained sediments. In California, large areas of land subsidence were first documented by United States Geological Survey (USGS) scientists in the first half of the 20th century. Based on the USGS Areas of Land Subsidence in California map, the Project Site is not located in an area of recorded subsidence.²³ Liquefaction occurs when the pore pressures generated within a soil mass approach the effective overburden pressure. According to **Appendix D**, the

²³ United States Geological Survey, "Areas of Land Subsidence in California." Available online at: https://ca.water.usgs.gov/land_subsidence/california-subsidence-areas.html, accessed April 12, 2024.

Project Site is not situated within an area identified to have a moderate susceptibility to liquefaction, and due to the lack of shallow groundwater and relatively dense nature of the subsurface soil, the liquefaction potential is low. The Project would comply with the building construction and foundation requirements outlined in the 2022 CBC to minimize seismic impacts. Further, the Project would be constructed in accordance with the construction seismic design recommendations outlined in the Seismic Design, Foundation Design and Construction, and Pole Foundations sections in **Appendix D**. As such, compliance with these requirements and the implementation of recommendations in **Appendix D** would reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Expansive soils are defined as soils possessing clay particles that react to moisture changes by shrinking (when dry) or swelling (when wet). According to **Appendix D**, the soil encountered near the ground surface on-site exhibits a very low expansion potential. Further, the Project Applicant would comply with the recommendations outlined in the Materials for Fill and Pool Design Criteria sections of **Appendix D** for construction activities and only use imported fill that consists of granular soil with a “very low” expansion potential. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- e) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project would install a new septic-tank system on site. According to the Percolation Report prepared for the Project (see **Appendix D**), on-site soils were determined to be favorable for septic tanks. Thus, Project soils would be capable of adequately supporting the use of the proposed septic tanks, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- f) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** Paleontological resources include fossil remains or traces of past life forms, including both vertebrate and invertebrate species, as well as plants. Paleontological resources are generally found within sedimentary rock formations.

According to the Draft Environmental Impact Report prepared for the San Bernardino County Policy Plan, the Project Site is located within a region identified to have “low-to-high” paleontological sensitivity. Thus, ground disturbing activities during construction could potentially impact undiscovered paleontological resources, which could be considered a significant impact. **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** would require all construction activities to halt in the event that a paleontological resource is encountered and requires a qualified paleontologist to prepare a Paleontological Resource Mitigation Plan to address assessment and recovery of the resource. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**, impacts related to the paleontological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

- GEO-1** In the event paleontological resources are discovered all work shall be halted within 100 feet of the discovery and a Paleontological Resource Mitigation Plan shall be prepared by a qualified paleontologist to address assessment and recovery of the resource. A final report documenting any found resources, their recovery, and disposition shall be prepared in consultation with the Project Applicant, and a copy of the report shall be provided to the County of San Bernardino Planning Division.

Therefore, less than significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with incorporation of mitigation measure GEO-1.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Would the project:				
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 any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** Section 15064.4(a) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* states, in part, that a lead agency shall make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project.

The Project would generate GHG emissions during temporary, short-term construction activities such as grading, running of construction equipment engines, movement of on-site heavy-duty construction vehicles, hauling of materials to and from the site, asphalt paving, and construction worker motor vehicle trips.

With the use of CalEEMod, GHG emissions associated with Project construction were calculated from off-road equipment usage, hauling vehicles, delivery, and worker trips to and from the site. According to CalEEMod calculations, the total GHG construction emissions would be 84.6 MT CO₂e for 2024 and 94.2 MT CO₂e for 2025, totaling approximately 179 MT CO₂e. However, these emissions would be temporary in nature and would represent a small portion of a Project's lifetime GHG emissions. As GHG emissions from construction activities would occur over a relatively short time span, it would contribute a relatively small portion of the lifetime GHG emission impact of the Project. The total construction GHG emissions were divided by 30 years to determine an annual construction emission rate to be amortized over the Project's first 30 years of operations. Amortized over a 30-year period, the Project is anticipated to emit approximately 5.96 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year (MT CO₂e/year).

Operation of the Project would generate GHG emissions from mobile sources (vehicles traveling to and from the Project Site), the usage of energy, water, and generation of solid waste and wastewater. Emissions of operational GHGs are shown in **Table 4, Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions**. As shown, the GHG emissions generated by the Project would be approximately 1,210 CO₂e MTY.

Table 4
Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emissions Source	Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (MTCO₂e per year)
Construction Emissions	5.96
Mobile Sources	910.00
Area Sources	0.48
Energy Sources	217.00
Water Sources	9.07
Waste Sources	25.50
Refrigerants	41.90
Total GHG Emissions	1,209.91

Source: Impact Sciences, January 2024. See **Appendix A, Air Quality Technical Report**.

The County of San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan Update (GHGRP) has a review standard of 3,000 MTCO₂e per year to identify projects that require the use of the Interim Screening Tables or a project-specific technical analysis to quantify and mitigate project emissions.²⁴ The MDAQMD CEQA Guidelines establishes thresholds for greenhouse gases as an annual threshold of 100,000 short tons of CO₂e and a daily threshold of 548,000 pounds of CO₂e per day.²⁵ As the Project would generate approximately 1,210 MTCO₂e per year, the Project would be below the 3,000 MTCO₂e review standard established by the GHGRP and below the significance thresholds established by the MDAQMD. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** A Project would have a significant impact with respect to GHG emissions and global climate change if it would substantially conflict with the provisions of Section 15064.4(b) of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, a significant GHG impact is identified if a Project could conflict with applicable GHG reduction plans, policies, or regulations. The relevant adopted regulatory plans and regulations include AB 32, SB

²⁴ County of San Bernardino, *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan Update*, 2021. Available online at: https://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/LUS/GreenhouseGas/GHG_2021/GHG%20Reduction%20Plan%20Update-Greenhouse%20Gas%20Reduction%20Plan%20Update%20-%20Adopted%209-21-2021.pdf, accessed April 12, 2024.

²⁵ MDAQMD, *MDAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, 2020. Available online at: <https://www.mdaqmd.ca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/8510/638126583450266235>, accessed April 12, 2024.

32, AB 1279, CARB's 2022 Scoping Plan, SCAG's 2020 Connect SoCal Plan, the County's General Plan, and the County's Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan.

Consistency with AB 32, SB 32, AB 1279 & 2022 Scoping Plan

The Project would be consistent with applicable statewide regulatory programs designed to reduce GHG emissions consistent with AB 32, SB 32, AB 1279 and the 2022 Scoping Plan. In response to the passage of AB 1279 and the identification of the 2045 GHG reduction target, CARB published the 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality on November 16, 2022, and it was approved on December 15, 2022.²⁶ The 2022 Scoping Plan lays out the sector-by-sector roadmap for California, the world's fifth largest economy, to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier, outlining a technologically feasible, cost-effective, and equity-focused path to achieve the state's climate target. The 2022 Scoping Plan includes policies to achieve a significant reduction in fossil fuel combustion, further reductions in short-lived climate pollutants, support for sustainable development, increased action on natural and working lands (NWL) to reduce emissions and sequester carbon, and the capture and storage of carbon.

The 2022 Scoping Plan discusses the role of local governments in meeting the State's GHG reductions goals because local governments have jurisdiction and land use authority related to: community-scale planning and permitting processes, local codes and actions, outreach and education programs, and municipal operations. Furthermore, local governments may have the ability to incentivize renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water efficiency measures. As discussed in detail in Appendix D (Local Actions) of the 2022 Scoping Plan, local jurisdictions can do much to enable statewide priorities, such as taking local action to help the state develop the housing, transport systems, and other tools we all need. Indeed, state tools—such as the Cap-and-Trade Program or zero-emission vehicle programs—do not substitute for these local efforts. Multiple legal tools are open to local jurisdictions to support this approach, including development of a climate action plan (CAP), sustainability plan, or inclusion of a plan for reduction of GHG emissions and climate actions within a jurisdiction's general plan. Any of these can help to align zoning, permitting, and other local tools with climate action. The County of San Bernardino has fulfilled this local effort through the adoption of the County of San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan Update on September 21, 2021.

The Project would comply with all regulations adopted in furtherance of the Scoping Plan to the extent required by law and to the extent that they are applicable to the Project. Furthermore, the Project would be consistent with the County's Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan which identifies several measures to reduce emissions of GHGs in a manner consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan. Additionally, as previously discussed, the Project would not exceed the 3,000 MTCO₂e review standard established by the GHGRP and would not exceed the significance thresholds

²⁶ California Air Resources Board, *2022 Scoping Plan Documents, Notice of Decision*. Available online at: <https://www2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/2022-sp-appendix-b-notice-of-decision.pdf>, accessed January 29, 2024.

established by the MDAQMD. As such, the Project is consistent with Appendix D (Local Actions) of the 2022 Scoping Plan.

Consistency with SCAG RTP/SCS (2020 Connect SoCal Plan)

The State of California has adopted plans and policies designed to reduce regional and local GHG emissions. SB 375 requires that each MPO prepare an SCS in the RTP that demonstrates how the region will meet greenhouse gas emissions targets. SB 375 establishes a collaborative relationship between MPOs and CARB to establish GHG emissions targets for each region in the state. Under the guidance of the goals and objectives adopted by SCAG's Regional Council, the RTP/SCS was developed to provide a blueprint to integrate land use and transportation strategies to help achieve a coordinated and balanced regional transportation system. The RTP/SCS represents the culmination of several years of work involving dozens of public agencies, 191 cities, hundreds of local, county, regional and state officials, the business community, environmental groups, as well as various nonprofit organizations. Adoption of the 2020 RTP/SCS substantiated that the growth forecasts for the SCAG region, taking into account efforts to reduce climate change impacts from GHG emissions, were consistent with the goals of SB 375.

The primary goal of the SCS is to provide a vision for future growth in southern California that will decrease per capita GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. However, the strategies contained in the SCS will produce benefits for the region far beyond simply reducing GHG emissions. The SCS integrates the transportation network and related strategies with an overall land use pattern that responds to projected growth, housing needs, changing demographics, and transportation demands. The regional vision of the SCS maximizes current voluntary local efforts that support the goals of SB 375. The SCS focuses the majority of new housing and job growth in high-quality transit areas and other opportunity areas on existing main streets, in downtowns, and on commercial corridors, resulting in an improved jobs-housing balance and more opportunity for transit-oriented development.

As discussed herein, the Project does not include the addition or removal of any housing and would not have the potential to alter the growth forecasts for the region. Furthermore, as detailed in **Appendix F (VMT Assessment)**, the Project would generate approximately 97 daily vehicle trips which is less than the County's 110 daily trips threshold for assessing a project's VMT impact. Thus, the Project would not have the potential to substantively increase GHG emissions associated with motor vehicles, and it would not conflict with the forecasts identified in SCAG's RTP/SCS. Accordingly, the Project would be generally consistent with the objectives identified SCAG's 2020 RTP/SCS.

Consistency with the County of San Bernardino Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan Update

Published in 2021, the Regional GHG Reduction Plan Update (GHG Plan) includes GHG inventories, and local GHG reduction strategies for each of the 25 Partnership jurisdictions, which includes the unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County. The GHG Plan provides information that can be used by Partnership jurisdictions, if they choose so, to develop their own CAPs. The GHG Plan describes the reductions that are

possible if SBCOG and every Partnership jurisdiction were to adopt the reduction strategies as described in the document.

The GHG Plan outlines how the goal of “reducing community GHG emissions to a level that is 40% below its 2020 GHG emissions level by 2030” can be achieved by the unincorporated communities of San Bernardino County. For unincorporated San Bernardino County, it is assumed that emissions reductions will be met through a combination of state (80%) and local (20%) efforts. While the majority of the County’s GHG reduction goal will be achieved through state efforts, such as the Pavley vehicle standards, the state’s low carbon fuel standard, the RPS, and other state measures to reduce GHG emissions, goal would also need to be reached through local measures, such as those included in the GHG Plan.

According to the GHG Plan, all development projects, including those otherwise determined to be exempt from CEQA will be subject to applicable Development Code provisions, including the GHG performance standards, and state requirements, such as the California Building Code requirements for energy efficiency. With the application of GHG performance standards, projects that are exempt from CEQA and small projects that do not exceed 3,000 MTCO₂e/year will be considered to be consistent with the GHG Plan.²⁷ As previously discussed, the Project operational emissions would not exceed the 3,000 MTCO₂e/year threshold. Projects that demonstrate consistency with the strategies, actions, and emission reduction targets contained in the Reduction Plan would have a less than significant impact on climate change. The Project would be compliant with the goals established in the GHG Plan and does not exceed the GHG threshold established by the GHG Plan.

Given the Project’s relatively small increase in GHG emissions (i.e., less than the County’s threshold) and the Project’s consistency with all relevant adopted regulatory plans, the Project would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. Moreover, the Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases and these impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

²⁷ San Bernardino County, *County of San Bernardino Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan*, 2021. Available online at: https://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/LUS/GreenhouseGas/GHG_2021/GHG%20Reduction%20Plan%20Update-Greenhouse%20Gas%20Reduction%20Plan%20Update%20-%20Adopted%209-21-2021.pdf, accessed January 30, 2024.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<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) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** Exposure of the public or the environment to hazardous materials could potentially occur through improper handling or use of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes during routine use, disposal, and/or transport of

hazardous materials. The severity of these potential effects varies with the activity conducted, the concentration and type of hazardous materials or wastes present, and the proximity of sensitive receptors.

Limited amounts of some hazardous materials could be used in the short-term construction phase of the Project and could expose construction workers and the general public to standard construction materials (e.g., paints and solvents), vehicle fuel, and other hazardous materials. In the event of a release of hazardous material the Project would be required to notify the following State agencies under the following State statutes, respectively:

Department of the California Highway Patrol: California Vehicle Code Section 23112.5;
Office of Emergency Services and the California Public Utilities Commission: Public Utilities Code Section 7673, (PUC General Orders #22-B, 161);

State Fire Marshal: Government Code Sections 51018

Office Emergency Services: Water Codes Sections 13271, 13272; and

Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA): California Labor Code Section 6409.1 (b)10.

Operating as a lodging facility, typical cleaning products that would be routinely used for the proposed guestrooms, laundromat and pool, along with the occasional use of pesticides and herbicides for landscape maintenance, are generally the extent of hazardous materials that would be routinely utilized on-site. The types and quantities of hazardous materials are not anticipated to result in significant hazards to the public or environment during operation of the Project. Compliance with applicable state regulations that govern the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts to occur. Thus, compliance with state and county regulations would ensure impacts related to the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impacts.** The Project would develop a new hotel consisting of 35 hotel rooms, wellness center, lodge, restaurant, bar, and goods market on a currently vacant site.

Project operations would not contribute to conditions that could cause a reasonably foreseeable release in hazardous materials. Construction equipment utilized during construction activities associated with the Project could result in accidental release of hazardous substances such as petroleum-based fuels or hydraulic fluid used for construction equipment. However, the level of risk associated with this type of accidental release of hazardous substances is not considered significant due to the small volume and low concentration of hazardous materials utilized during construction.

As discussed above, hazardous substances used during Project operations are limited to minor cleaning products and occasional pesticide use for landscaping. These

materials are not considered a significant hazard to the public or environment in the event of an accidental release and would be handled in accordance with applicable state regulations. As such, impacts related to an upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- c) **No Impact.** There are no schools within one-quarter mile of the Project Site. The closest school to the Project Site is Landers Elementary, located approximately 1.60 miles southwest of the Project Site. Additionally, there are no planned school facilities that would be developed within one-quarter mile of the Project Site.²⁸ Thus, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **No Impact.** The Project would not be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites pursuant to Government Code 65962.5.²⁹ Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- e) **No Impact.** There are no airports within a two-mile radius of the Project Site. The closest airport to the Project Site is Yucca Valley Airport, located approximately 9.7 miles south of the Project Site. Additionally, the Project Site is not within the Airport Runaway Protection Zone.³⁰ As such, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- f) **No Impact.** According to San Bernardino County, SR-247 is designated as an evacuation route for the County.³¹ The Project Site is located approximately 2.8 miles east of SR-247. Construction activities associated with the Project would occur over a span of several months. Construction activities, including equipment and supply staging and storage, would largely occur within the Project Site and would not restrict access of emergency vehicles to the Project Site or adjacent areas. The Project includes the installation of two new driveways along Belfield Boulevard which would also serve as emergency access for the Project Site. A fire apparatus access road would be included along the northern perimeter of the Project Site for fire emergency services and would

²⁸ County of San Bernardino, *First 5 San Bernardino 2020-2023 Strategic Plan*. Available online at: <https://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/First5/docs/main/2020-2023-F5SB-Strategic-Plan-2022-FINAL-5-6-22.pdf>, accessed October 31, 2023.

²⁹ California Environmental Protection Agency, "Cortese List Data Resources," Available online at: <https://calepa.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/CorteseList/>, accessed on October 31, 2023.

³⁰ San Bernardino County, *San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report*, Figure 5.8-2: Airport Safety Zones. Available online at: https://countywideplan.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/68/2021/01/Ch_05-08-HAZ.pdf?x23421, accessed January 26, 2024.

³¹ San Bernardino County, *San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft EIR*, Table 5.8-10, Evacuation Routes in San Bernardino County. Available online at: <https://countywideplan.com/resources/document-download/>, accessed May 17, 2023.

meet the San Bernardino County Fire Department's standard requirements. No off-site improvements are proposed under the Project, and construction activities associated with the Project would occur on-site. Therefore, Project operations would not interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. As such, the Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- g) **No Impact.** The Project Site is not located within a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone as identified by the California Office of Emergency Services.³² In addition, the Project would comply with the California Fire Code and San Bernardino County Fire Protection District Ordinance and Fire Code. As such, implementation of the Project is not likely to expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires; therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

³² Cal Fire, *State Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zone- San Bernardino County*. September 19, 2023. Available online at: https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/kicbi1gw/fhsz_county_sra_11x17_2022_sanbernardino_3.pdf. Adopted September 29, 2023.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY - Would the project:					
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, in a manner which would:				
i.	result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii.	substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or offsite;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii.	create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv.	impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	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"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) includes regulations established by the U.S. EPA under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to control direct stormwater discharges. In the State of California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) administers the NPDES permitting program and is responsible for developing NPDES permitting

requirements. The NPDES program regulates industrial pollutant discharges, which include construction activities. The SWRCB works in coordination with the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) to preserve, protect, enhance, and restore water quality. The Landers Community is located within the jurisdiction of the Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRRWQCB). Under the NPDES program, construction activities that disturb more than one acre of land would be required to obtain a Construction General Permit prior to the initiation of construction. Compliance with the NPDES Construction General Permit requires the preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP will provide best management practices (BMPs) in order to mitigate the release of pollutants from soil erosion or sediment release from project construction into stormwater drains.

The CRRWQCB has issued an areawide NPDES Storm Water Permit for the County of San Bernardino, the San Bernardino County Flood Control District and the unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County. The implementation of NPDES permits ensures that the State and Federal mandatory standards for the maintenance of clean water are met.

The Project would install cisterns on-site to collect stormwater from the Project Site. All cisterns would include treatment mechanisms to treat any sediment, pollutant, or siltation collected with the stormwater runoff. These cisterns would include underground connections to the County's storm drain lines in the event that the proposed cisterns exceed capacity. Additionally, the Project would comply with Section 35.0118 (Water Quality Management Plan) of the County Code and prepare a post-construction Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP). The Project WQMP shall be prepared in conformance with the CRRWQCB's *Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region*.³³ Further, the Project WQMP must include structural BMPs that would minimize the amount of stormwater runoff as required in the applicable MS4 permit. These structural BMPs would be required to successfully demonstrate that the proposed structural and treatment BMPs will infiltrate, and/or adequately treat, the projected storm water and urban runoff. In addition, the Project would be required to comply with all applicable requirements outlined in Chapter 85.11 (Pre-Construction Flood Hazard Mitigation and Erosion Control Inspection) of the County Code. Specifically, these requirements would include the preparation of an SWPPP and coordinating with the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works-Environmental Management Division for an inspection prior to Project Approval. Lastly, the Project Applicant would submit an Erosion Control Plan that details the Project's methods to minimize erosion on-site. The Project Erosion Control Plan would be subject to County review and approval.

In conclusion, compliance with all NPDES requirements, County regulations, and the implementation of BMPs during Project construction, as well as the submittal and

³³ State Water Resources Control Board, *Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region*. Available online at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/coloradoriver/water_issues/programs/basin_planning/docs/2020/rb7bpe2019.pdf, accessed January 25, 2024.

approval of the Project's Erosion Control Plan would reduce potential impacts to water quality standards or waste discharge requirements to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is underlain by the Ames Valley Groundwater Basin.³⁴ According to **Appendix D, Geotechnical Reports**, the highest level of groundwater on-site is at a depth of over 110 feet below existing grade. Although construction activities associated with the Project includes grading activities, the Project would not require excavation at or beyond this depth. The Project includes the development of a goods market, restaurant, lodge, and with 35 hotel rooms; and would not be planned to be used for groundwater recharge activities. The Project would introduce impervious surfaces to the Project Site that would reduce the amount of on-site groundwater recharge. While these new impervious surfaces may result in a reduction in natural percolation of groundwater, this decrease would be nominal compared to the overall infiltration of water into the groundwater. The Project would include approximately 135,700 square feet of landscaping on-site that would continue natural percolation. Additionally, per Section 16.0213B (Health Services-Environmental), the Project would be subject to payment of percolation test fees as part of the County plan check. Thus, impacts to groundwater supplies groundwater recharge would not be substantial, and less than significant impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- c) i **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project would involve the development of a new hotel on a currently vacant site. As such, the Project would introduce new impervious surfaces to the area and result in an increase in erosion and siltation. As discussed above, the Project would be required to comply with NPDES and MS4 requirements and apply for a Construction General Permit prior to construction. The Project would accordingly prepare an SWPPP that would detail the structural and treatment BMPs that the Project would implement to minimize the amount of on-site erosion and runoff from the Project. Additionally, the Project would comply with County regulations and prepare a WQMP prior to construction detailing the post-construction BMPs to minimize erosion and runoff. Lastly, the Project would be required to comply with all applicable floodplain management requirements outlined in Chapter 85.11 (Pre-Construction Flood Hazard Mitigation and Erosion Control Inspection). Compliance with federal, regional and County regulations would reduce potential impacts related to erosion and siltation to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- ii **Less Significant Impact.** According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the Project Site is located outside of a 100-year flood hazard

³⁴ California Department of Water and Resources, "Water Management Planning Tool." Available online at: <https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bbat/>, accessed January 25, 2024.

area.^{35,36} The Project Site is located in Flood Zone D, which is defined as an area with possible but undetermined flood hazards. The Project would collect and treat stormwater in accordance with federal and county regulations. Specifically, the Project would adhere to Section 85.11.020 (Flood Hazard Mitigation Required) and retain a County Building Official to inspect the Project Site and whether there is evidence of a discernible watercourse that could affect or could be affected by the Project. Adherence to these regulations would ensure that the Project would reduce impacts related to on-site and off-site flooding to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- iii **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project would install cisterns on-site to capture stormwater. These cisterns would include water treatment features to minimize stormwater runoff. The proposed cisterns would also include overflow pipes to offset additional stormwater runoff and prevent the cisterns from exceeding capacity. These overflow pipes would drain into existing County stormwater drainage lines. Furthermore, the Project would comply with the NPDES MS4 permit requirements and Section 35.0118 of the County's Code and would prepare a project-specific WQMP that would outline the proposed structural BMPs that would minimize the amount of stormwater runoff entering the County's drainage system. Adherence to these regulations would ensure that the Project would not exceed the capacity of the existing/planned stormwater drainage systems, and less than significant impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- iv **Less than Significant Impact.** As stated, the Project Site is located outside of a 100-year flood hazard area. The Project Site is located in Flood Zone D, which is defined as an area with possible but undetermined flood hazards. However, the proposed on-site stormwater drainage system would minimize stormwater runoff. Additionally, the Project would adhere to the applicable County regulations that would minimize drainage impacts, as well as the County's floodplain management requirements. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact** The Project Site is located approximately 102 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, and, according to the California Department of Conservation, is located at a sufficient distance so as not to be subject to potential tsunami hazards.³⁷ Therefore, there would be no impacts related to the risk of release of pollutants due to inundation from a tsunami or seiche. As stated, the Project Site is located outside of a

³⁵ Federal Emergency Management Agency, "Flood Rate Insurance Map #06071C7400H." Available online at: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>, accessed January 25, 2024.

³⁶ The 100-year floodplain includes areas subject to a base flood (also called "100-year flood") as defined by the Federal Flood Insurance Regulations. The following are the FEMA-designated flood hazard zones for this area: A, AE, AH, A1-30, and AO.

³⁷ California Department of Conservation, "Los Angeles County Tsunami Hazard Areas." Available online at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/tsunami/maps/los-angeles>. Accessed January 25, 2024.

100-year flood hazard area. Although the Project Site is located within Flood Zone D, the Project Applicant would be required to comply with all county regulations to minimize any potential for flood hazards to occur on- and off-site. As such, impacts related to the risk of release of pollutants due to inundation from flood hazards would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- e) **Less than Significant Impact.** As stated, the Project would not result in substantial additional groundwater recharge, nor would the Project install any new groundwater wells and would not otherwise directly withdraw any groundwater. The Project may result in an increase in stormwater runoff on-site. Accordingly, the Project would adhere to all applicable County, regional, state, and federal rules, and regulations regarding water quality. Adherence to these regulations, as well as the proposed on-site stormwater drainage system, would minimize the Project's effects on the County's overall water quality. As such, impacts to a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:					
a)	Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** The physical division of an established community is typically associated with construction of a linear feature, such as a major highway or railroad tracks, or removal of a means of access, such as a local road or bridge, which would impair mobility in an existing community. As a new hotel, the Project would not result in the construction of a linear feature. Therefore, the Project would neither physically divide an established community nor cause a significant environmental impact due to conflict with any land use plans or policies, and no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.**

San Bernardino Countywide Plan

The Project Site is located within an unincorporated area of the County and is designated Commercial (C) by the San Bernardino Countywide Plan. As a hotel, the Project would provide lodging, recreation, and entertainment to serve the needs of residents and tourists/visitors of the County. Thus, the Project would be considered a typical use for parcels that are designated for commercial use. Furthermore, the Project would have a floor to area ratio (FAR) of approximately 0.12, which would meet the County's maximum FAR requirement for Rural Commercial uses of 0.3.

Table 5, Project Consistency with Applicable Countywide Plan Land Use Element Policies, analyzes the Project's consistency with applicable goals and policies in the General Plan Land Use Elements. As shown, the Project would be consistent with all applicable Countywide Plan policies. Impacts would be less than significant.

Table 5
Project Consistency with Applicable Countywide Plan Land Use Element Policies

Relevant Policy	Project Consistency Analysis
Goal LU-1 Fiscally Sustainable Growth: Growth and development that builds thriving communities, contributes to our Complete County, and is fiscally sustainable	
Policy LU-1.1 Growth: We support growth and development that is fiscally sustainable for the County. We accommodate growth in the unincorporated county when it benefits existing communities, provides a regional housing option for rural lifestyles, or supports the regional economy.	Consistent. The Project would involve the development of a new hotel that would attract residents as well as tourists and visitors to the Landers Community, benefiting the regional economy overall. The operation of the proposed hotel would include 25 employees. As discussed in Section 14, Population and Housing , all 25 employees may end up relocating to the County. However, the anticipated population growth resulting from the Project would not be more substantive than SCAG's projected growth for the County
Policy LU-1.2 Infill development: We prefer new development to take place on existing vacant and underutilized lots where public services and infrastructure are available.	Consistent. The Project would occur on an existing undeveloped vacant site.
Policy LU-1.5 Development impact fees: We require payment of development impact fees to ensure that all new development pays its fair share of public infrastructure.	Consistent. The Project would be subject to all applicable development impact fees that are outlined in the San Bernardino Code of Ordinances. Furthermore, as stated in Section 15, Public Services , the Project would be subject to payment of development impact fees to the Morongo Unified School District, per Government Code Section 65996.
Goal LU-2 Land Use Mix and Compatibility: An arrangement of land uses that balances the lifestyle of existing residents, the needs of future generations, opportunities for commercial and industrial development, and the value of the natural environment.	
Policy LU-2.3 We require that new development is located, scaled, buffered, and designed for compatibility with the surrounding natural environment and biodiversity.	Consistent. The proposed building materials and architecture for the Project buildings would preserve the natural beauty of the high desert surrounding the site.
Policy LU-2.4 Land Use Map consistency: We consider proposed development that is consistent with the Land Use Map (i.e., it does not require a change in Land Use Category), to be generally compatible and consistent with surrounding land uses and a community's identity. Additional site, building, and landscape design treatment, per other policies in the Policy Plan and development standards in the Development Code, may be required to maximize compatibility with surrounding land uses and community identity.	Consistent. As stated above, the proposed lodging use is consistent with the Commercial land use designation of the Project Site, and the Project would adhere to the maximum FAR requirement for site.
Policy LU-2.7: Countywide jobs-housing balance. We prioritize growth that furthers a countywide balance of jobs and housing to reduce vehicle miles traveled, increase job opportunities and household income, and improve quality of life. We also strive for growth that furthers a balance of jobs and housing in the North Desert region and the Valley region.	Consistent. Refer to Response to Policy LU-1.1.

Source: County of San Bernardino Countywide Plan. Land Use Element. Available online at: <https://countywideplan.com/policy-plan/land-use/>, accessed November 29, 2023.

San Bernardino County Code

The Project Site is zoned Homestead Valley/Rural Commercial by the County. According to the County of San Bernardino County Code, uses involving lodging (hotels with 20 or more guest rooms) on properties zoned Homestead Valley/Rural Commercial would be acceptable upon the issuance of a Minor Use Permit. The Project would meet the minimum lot size requirements for Rural Commercial zones, as outlined in Table 82-12C (Commercial Land Use Zoning District Minimum Lot Size-Desert Region) of the San Bernardino County Code. Furthermore, the Project would be required to comply with development standards outlined in Table 82-15A (CR, CN, AND CO Land Use Zoning District Development Standards-Desert Region) of the County Code for all structures within Rural Commercial Zones. Thus, the Project would be consistent with the San Bernardino County Code and impacts would be less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XII. MINERAL RESOURCES - Would the project:					
a)	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that will be of value to the region and 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"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check ☐ if project is located within the Mineral Resource Zone Overlay):

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** According to the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mine Reclamation, there are no active mines within the Landers Community.³⁸ Although there are known regional mineral resources in San Bernardino County, the Project Site is not located within an area that is known to contain regionally significant mineral resources.³⁹ Thus, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **No Impact.** The Project Site does not contain any known mineral resources recovery sites; therefore, Project implementation would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

³⁸ California Department of Conservation, "Mines Online." Available online at: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mol/index.html>, accessed on May 26, 2023.

³⁹ California Department of Conservation, "Mineral Land Classification." Available online at: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=mlc>, accessed on May 26, 2023.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XIII. NOISE - Would the project result in:				
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 or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if the project is located in the Noise Hazard Overlay District ☐ or is subject to severe noise levels according to the General Plan Noise Element ☐):

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

a) **Less than Significant Impact.**

Construction Impacts

Construction of the Project would require the use of heavy equipment for grading/site preparation, installation of utilities, building fabrication, and finishing. Construction activities would also involve the use of smaller power tools, generators, and other sources of noise. During each stage of construction, several types of equipment potentially could be operating concurrently, and noise levels would vary based on the amount of equipment in operation and the location of the activity. The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) has compiled data regarding the noise-generating characteristics of specific types of construction equipment and typical construction activities.

With the use of the RCNM, as detailed in **Appendix E**, the construction noise levels forecasted for the sensitive receptors are presented in **Table 6, Estimated Exterior Construction Noise at Sensitive Receptors**. Noise levels would diminish notably with distance from the construction site at a rate of 6 dB(A) per doubling of distance. These noise attenuation rates assume a flat and unobstructed distance between the noise

generator and the receptor. Intervening structures and vegetation would further attenuate (reduce) the noise. Furthermore, it should be noted that increases in noise levels at sensitive receptors during construction would be intermittent and temporary and would not generate continuously high noise levels. In addition, the construction noise experienced at sensitive receptors during the initial periods of construction (i.e., site preparation/grading/foundations) typically would be reduced in the later construction periods (i.e., interior building construction).

Table 6
Estimated Exterior Construction Noise at Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive Land Uses^a	Distance to Project Site (feet)	Estimated Construction Noise Levels [dB(A) Leq]	Exceed FTA 90 dB(A) 1-Hour Leq Criteria?
1. Residences to the north	286	67.5	No
2. Residences to the west across Belfield Boulevard	281	67.7	No

- ^a Consistent with FTA methodology, these calculations are based on distances from the center of the site to the receptors.
- See **Appendix E, Noise and Vibration Technical Report**

Temporary construction, maintenance, repair, and demolition activities are exempt from the San Bernardino Development Code (SBDC) regulations regarding noise so long as the temporary construction does not take place between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., or on Sundays and federal holidays. As the Project would comply with the daytime construction hours established in the SBDC, this analysis also uses the FTA's general construction noise criteria of 90 dB(A) Leq (1-hour) to provide additional context for the Project's potential to generate daytime construction noise impacts. While construction activity would increase noise levels in the vicinity of the Project Site (see **Table 6**), the Project's construction activities would not exceed the FTA's general construction noise criteria of 90 dB(A) Leq (1-hour) at any sensitive receptors. Furthermore, Project construction would not occur during restricted periods, and thus, the Project would be consistent with the criteria set forth in the SBDC. As such, construction noise impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

Operational Impacts

Permanent Operational Traffic Noise

As detailed in **Appendix F (VMT Assessment)**, the Project would generate approximately 97 daily vehicle trips. Based on this data, the Project's estimated daily trips would generate a noise level of 44.3 dBA Leq. This is less than the 65.8 dBA Leq measured ambient noise level, as shown **Appendix E**, measured on Belfield Boulevard. This is also within the 60 dBA Leq commercial noise standard and the 55 dBA Leq residential noise standard outlined in Section 83.01.080 of the SBDC. Additionally, the Project is consistent with the surrounding land uses, which currently generate mobile

noise sources typical of a rural commercial and rural residential neighborhood. As such, any noise increase would be imperceptible, and impacts would be less than significant.

Stationary Noise Sources

As part of the Project, new mechanical equipment, HVAC units, and exhaust fans could be installed on or near the proposed new structures. Although the operation of this equipment would generate noise, the design of these on-site HVAC units and exhaust fans would be required to comply with the regulations of the SBDC. Specifically, per Section 8.01.080, the exterior noise level when measured at the property line shall not exceed 60 dB(A). As such, compliance with Section 8.01.080 of the SBDC and other applicable regulations would ensure noise from stationary sources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The FTA provides ground-born vibration impact criteria with respect to building damage during construction activities. PPV, expressed in inches per second, is used to measure building vibration damage. Construction vibration damage criteria are assessed based on structural category (e.g., reinforced-concrete, steel, or timber). FTA guidelines consider 0.2 inch/sec PPV to be the significant impact level for non-engineered timber and masonry buildings. Structures or buildings constructed of reinforced concrete, steel, or timber have a vibration damage criterion of 0.5 inch/sec PPV pursuant to FTA guidelines. Although the nearby structures appear to be constructed of reinforced concrete, steel, or timber, this analysis conservatively applies the 0.2 inch/sec PPV threshold typically applied to non-engineered timber and masonry buildings.

The vibration levels at nearby structures are shown below in **Table 7, Vibration Levels at Off-Site Structures from Project Construction.**

Table 7
Vibration Levels at Off-Site Structures from Project Construction

Sensitive Uses Off-Site^a	Distance to Project Site (ft.)	Vibration Threshold (PPV)	Estimated PPV (in/sec)
1. Residences to the North	286	0.2 in/sec	0.002
2. Residences to the West	281	0.2 in/sec	0.002

^a See **Figure 3** for locations of off-site structures.

^b These calculations are based on distance from the site boundary to the structures. See **Appendix A** to this report.

The vibration velocities predicted to occur at the nearest off-site structures would be 0.002 in/sec PPV. As shown in **Table 7**, Project construction vibration levels would not have the potential to exceed the standard 0.2 in/sec threshold established by the FTA. This impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan and is not located within 2 miles of a public airport or public-use airport. The closest airport, the Valley Vista Airport, is located approximately 11.9 miles northeast of the Project Site. Therefore, no impacts with respect to airstrip or airport related noise would occur and no further analysis is required.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING - Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** A Project could induce population growth in an area either directly, through the development of new businesses, or indirectly, through the extension of roads or other infrastructure. The Project does not include the addition or removal of housing and thus would have no direct impact on population and housing forecasts for the area. Although the Project would increase employment in the area, it is anticipated that employees of the Project would primarily consist of existing residents in the San Bernardino County area and the Project would not result in a high number of employees permanently relocating to the region. Estimating the number of future employees who may choose to relocate to the County would be highly speculative, since many factors influence personal housing location decisions (e.g., family income levels and the cost and availability of suitable housing in the local area). Nevertheless, in an effort to present a worst-case population growth scenario, this analysis assumes the Project would employ up to 25 full-time employees, all of whom would permanently relocate to the County.

Based on the San Bernardino County average household size of 3.15 persons, the Project could result in a maximum population increase of approximately 79 persons.⁴⁰

As of 2023, the County has an estimated population of 2,182,056 persons.⁴¹ The Southern California Association of Government (SCAG) growth forecasts estimate the County's population to reach 2,815,000 persons by the year 2045, representing a total

⁴⁰ California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, "E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2021-2023." May 2023.

⁴¹ California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit, "E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2021-2023." May 2023.

increase of 632,944 persons.⁴² The Project's potential maximum increase of 79 persons would represent less than one percent of the County's projected increase in population between the years 2023 and 2045. Thus, the potential increase in population resulting from the Project would be nominal. Therefore, the Project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **No Impact.** The Project Site is currently undeveloped and vacant. Construction and operational activities of the Project would be limited to the Project Site. Thus, Project implementation would not result in a substantial number of existing housing projects or people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

⁴² Southern California Association of Governments, *2025-2040 RTP/SCS Technical Report*, Demographics and Growth Forecast, September 3, 2020. Available online at: https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocal_demographics-and-growth-forecast.pdf?1606001579. Accessed October 31, 2023.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Public Facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SUBSTANTIATION:				
<i>San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials</i>				

- a)
- i. **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site would be served by the San Bernardino County Fire Protection Department (SBCFD). The SBCFPD is a community-based, all hazard emergency services provider that consists of five volunteer station and more than 30 full-time fire station in the County.⁴³ The closest full time fire station is Fire Station Number (No.) 42, located approximately 5.13 miles south of the Project Site at 58612 Aberdeen Drive in the town of Yucca Valley.

As discussed in **Section 14, Population and Housing**, the Project would result in an increase in employees, which could result in an indirect increase in the County's population. However, this increase would be nominal. The proposed structures under the Project (i.e., lobby, spa, hotel rooms, and market) would be subject to Section 63.0101 (Adoption of California Building Code) of the County Code, which adopts by reference the 2022 California Building Code (CBC) by reference, which outlines the safety design parameters for new structures. The Project would include two new driveways, fire apparatus access road, and fire hydrants that would be subject to compliance with the regulations outlined in the California Fire Code (CFC) regarding site access requirements and fire safety precautions (e.g., fire alarms, sprinkler systems, hydrants, and fire flow requirements). Furthermore, the Project is subject to a site plan review and approval from the SBFCD prior to construction. Compliance with these standard

⁴³ San Bernardino County Fire Protection District, "Home." Available online at: <https://sbcfire.org/>, accessed June 8, 2023.

conditions of approval and state and regional regulations would ensure that Project impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- ii **Less than Significant Impact.** The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department (SBCSD) serves the community of Landers and other unincorporated portions of the County of San Bernardino. The closest Sheriff station to the Project Site is located approximately 11.72 miles southeast at 6602 White Feather Road, in the census designated place of Joshua Tree.

The Project is not expected to result in a substantial increase in population compared to existing conditions. The Project would construct new driveways along Belfield Boulevard to provide vehicular access to the Project Site. Upon site plan review and approval, the Project Site would be required to meet the County's emergency access requirements, and thus, would also provide adequate emergency access for the SBCSD. Further, construction activities associated with the Project would be required to comply with the 2022 CBC, specifically Chapter 33 (Safeguards During Construction), which includes emergency access requirements minimizing site safety hazards and potential construction-related impacts to police services. Thus, the Project would not result in the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities and would not adversely impact service ratios and response times of the SBCSD. A less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- iii. **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is served by the Morongo Unified School District (MUSD). The closest MUSD school to the Project Site is Landers Elementary, located approximately 1.60 miles southwest at 56450 Reche Road in the unincorporated community of Landers.

As stated in **Section 14, Population and Housing**, the Project could result in a nominal increase within the County's population. As such, the Project would be subject to Government Code Section 65996, which requires new developments to pay school impact fees to mitigate any impacts of the development on school services. Specifically, the Project Applicant would be required to pay approximately \$9,030.20 in development fees to the MUSD.^{44,45} Therefore, less than significant impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

⁴⁴ MUSD charges a developer fee of \$0.277 per square feet for new hotel development.

⁴⁵ Morongo Unified School District, *Policy Memorandum MUSD BOE Action Resolution 15-10*. April 1, 2015. Available online at: https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/3674/MUSD/3066498/SchoolFacilityDeveloperFees.pdf, accessed October 31, 2023.

- iv. **No Impact.** The closest public park or recreational facility is the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, located approximately 17.50 southwest in the community Morongo Valley. The Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is a 31,000 acre preserve that includes multiple recreational trails available to the public. The preserve is managed by the Federal Bureau of Land Management and in part by San Bernardino County.⁴⁶ As a new hotel, the Project could result in an indirect increase in the County's population, increasing the demand for parks and recreational facilities. However, this would be a nominal increase of a maximum of 75 persons and would not substantially affect the facilities and programs provided by the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. As such, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- v. **No Impact.** The closest public library to the Project Site is the Yucca Valley Branch Library, located approximately 10.30 miles south of the Project Site. Although the Project could indirectly increase the population of the area, this increase would be nominal and is not anticipated to substantially impact the Yucca Valley Branch Library's services or facilities. As such, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

⁴⁶ Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, "About." Available online at: <https://www.bigmorongo.org/about/>, accessed January 25, 2024.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XVI. RECREATION				

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) | Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility will occur or be accelerated? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) | Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** As determined in **Section 14, Population and Housing**, the Project would not result in a substantial increase in the number of residents in the area, increasing the demand for parks and recreational facilities. As such, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **No Impact.** The Project involves the development of a single-story hotel on a currently vacant site. The proposed development would not include recreational facilities that would result in adverse physical impacts to the environment, and no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XVII. TRANSPORTATION – Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** The Project Site is located in an underdeveloped area of the unincorporated Landers Community. Transit services for the Landers Community are provided by the Basin Transit. The closest Basin Transit bus stop is located approximately 2.18 miles west of the Project Site at the intersection between Reche Road and State Route 247 (SR-247).⁴⁷ Given this distance, construction and operational activities associated with the Project would not affect access or safety at this existing bus stop. The Project Site is adjacent to Belfield Boulevard, which is not identified by the County as an existing or planned bicycle facility.⁴⁸ Additionally, there are no existing pedestrian facilities of sidewalks along Belfield Boulevard. Further, construction activities and operations associated with the Project would not result in any off-site improvements. Accordingly, the Project would not physically alter any existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The Project would not conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. No impact would occur.

⁴⁷ Basin Transit, "Landers - Yucca Valley." Available online at: <https://basin-transit.com/routes/landers-yucca-valley/>, accessed January 24, 2024.

⁴⁸ San Bernardino County, *San Bernardino County Plan*, Figure TM-4, Bicycle-Pedestrian-Planning. Available online at: <https://countywideplan.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/68/2021/02/TM-4-Bicycle-Pedestrian-Planning-201027.pdf?x23421>, accessed January 24, 2024.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** *State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)* provides considerations for evaluating a project's transportation impacts. Land Use Projects (b)(1) are evaluated through vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Generally, projects within one-half mile of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high quality transit corridor should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact.⁴⁹ Projects that decrease VMT in the project area compared to existing conditions should be presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact. A VMT screening assessment was prepared for this Project and is provided in **Appendix F, VMT Assessment**. As detailed therein, the County of San Bernardino *Traffic Impact Study Guidelines* (TISG) provides a list of uses that, at the discretion of the County, may be presumed to have a less than significant impact, including local serving uses and projects that generate less than 110 daily vehicle trips. As shown in Table 1 of **Appendix F**, the Project generates 97 daily vehicle trips which is less than the 110 daily trips threshold. Thus, the Project satisfies the Project Type Screening requirement. Additionally, the Project will operate as a locally serving business as it will provide local employment and retail opportunities for existing residents of Landers and nearby communities as well as to capture trips of tourists within the area. Therefore, the Project is presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project would not include any off-site roadway improvements. The Project includes the development of a goods market, restaurant, lodge, health club, pools, and 35 hotel rooms. The proposed improvements do not include a geometric design or incompatible uses that would substantially increase hazards. The two proposed driveways along Belfield Boulevard will include a fire apparatus access road for the Project Site. Additionally, the proposed driveways, on-site circulation, and parking would be subject to County review as part of the Project's Site Plan review and would be required to be consistent with the design standards and minimum width requirements as outlined in Chapter 83.11 (Parking and Loading Standards) of the County Code. Site plan approval and adherence to County requirements would ensure that impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** As stated, the Project would construct two new driveways off of Belfield Boulevard. These driveways would include a fire apparatus access road that would allow emergency vehicles to adequately access the Project Site. The proposed driveways would be subject to review by the County for approval and would be required to meet driveway standards and design requirements as outlined in Chapter 83.11 (Parking and Loading Standards) of the County Code. As such, the

⁴⁹ California Office of Planning and Research, *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*, 2018. Available online at: https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf.

Project would not result in inadequate emergency access and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES				
a) Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

San Bernardino County General Plan, 2007; Cultural Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), South Central Coast Information Center, California State University, Fullerton; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** Impacts related to historical resources are evaluated in **Section 5, Cultural Resources**. As discussed, there are no buildings or structures within the Project Site that are eligible to be listed on the CRHR or the NRHP. As such, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As noted above, a Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File search was requested to initiate the Project's Native American Tribal Consultation per AB52. This consultation process concluded that the Project Site and its immediate surrounding areas may be sensitive for the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians resources.

The NAHC responded to the request on August 22, 2023, and reported negative results. Contacts of approximately eight Native American Tribe were mailed letters requesting their knowledge of any archaeological or cultural resource of significance

to their respective Native American Tribes. To date, two responses have been received from the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians responded stating that the Project is not located within the Tribe's Traditional Use Area, deferring to other tribes in the area. However, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians responded and indicated that the area might be sensitive for cultural resources, requested some additional information to confirm, and requested government-to-government consultation with the County pursuant to AB 52.

Ground-disturbing activities associated with the Project could result in the discovery of previously undiscovered cultural resources. This includes potential discovery of tribal cultural resources. In the event that Native American resources are discovered, the County would consult with the Native American monitor and affected tribe(s). Implementation of **Mitigation Measures TCR-1** through **TCR-3** would require Native American monitoring, recovery and retention of tribal cultural resources, and the preservation of human remains or associated ceremonial objects, to reduce impacts to resources that are applicable under Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures:

TCR-1 Retain a Native American Monitor Prior to Commencement of Ground-Disturbing Activities

1. The project applicant/lead agency shall retain a Native American Monitor from or approved by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. The monitor shall be retained prior to the commencement of any "ground-disturbing activity" for the subject project at all project locations (i.e., both on-site and any off-site locations that are included in the project description/definition and/or required in connection with the project, such as public improvement work). "Ground-disturbing activity" shall include, but is not limited to, demolition, pavement removal, potholing, auguring, grubbing, tree removal, boring, grading, excavation, drilling, and trenching.
2. A copy of the executed monitoring agreement shall be submitted to the lead agency prior to the earlier commencement of any ground-disturbing activity, or the issuance of any permit necessary to commence a ground-disturbing activity.
3. The monitor will complete daily monitoring logs that will provide descriptions of the relevant ground-disturbing activities, the type of construction activities performed, locations of ground-disturbing activities, soil types, cultural-related materials, and any other facts, conditions, materials, or discoveries of significance to the Tribe. Monitor logs will identify and describe any discovered TCRs, including but not limited to, Native American cultural and historical artifacts, remains, places of significance, etc., (collectively, tribal cultural resources, or "TCR"), as well as any discovered Native

American (ancestral) human remains and burial goods. Copies of monitor logs will be provided to the project applicant/lead agency upon written request to the Tribe.

4. On-site tribal monitoring shall conclude upon the latter of the following (1) written confirmation to the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians from a designated point of contact for the project applicant/lead agency that all ground-disturbing activities and phases that may involve ground-disturbing activities on the project site or in connection with the project are complete; or (2) a determination and written notification by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to the project applicant/lead agency that no future, planned construction activity and/or development/construction phase at the project site possesses the potential to impact San Manuel Band of Mission Indians TCRs.

TCR-2 Unanticipated Discovery of Tribal Cultural Resource Objects (Non-Funerary/Non-Ceremonial)

1. Upon discovery of any TCRs, all construction activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall cease (i.e., not less than the surrounding 50 feet) and shall not resume until the discovered TCR has been fully assessed by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians monitor and/or San Manuel Band of Mission Indians archaeologist. The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians will recover and retain all discovered TCRs in the form and/or manner the Tribe deems appropriate, in the Tribe's sole discretion, and for any purpose the Tribe deems appropriate, including for educational, cultural and/or historic purposes.

TCR-3 Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains and Associated Funerary or Ceremonial Objects

1. Native American human remains are defined in PRC 5097.98 (d)(1) as an inhumation or cremation, and in any state of decomposition or skeletal completeness. Funerary objects, called associated grave goods in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, are also to be treated according to this statute.
2. If Native American human remains and/or grave goods are discovered or recognized on the project site, then Public Resource Code 5097.9 as well as Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 shall be followed.
3. Human remains and grave/burial goods shall be treated alike per California Public Resources Code section 5097.98(d)(1) and (2).

4. Preservation in place (i.e., avoidance) is the preferred manner of treatment for discovered human remains and/or burial goods.
5. Any discovery of human remains/burial goods shall be kept confidential to prevent further disturbance.

Less than significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and with incorporation of mitigation measures TCR-1 through TCR-3.

<i>Issues</i>		<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS - Would the project:					
a)	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUBSTANTIATION:					
County of San Bernardino General Plan 2007; Submitted Project Materials					

a) **Less than Significant Impact.**

Water

Water services for the Project Site are provided by the Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency, which is supplied by the Mojave Water Agency (MWA).⁵⁰ The Project would continue to use the existing water lines on-site to receive potable water for the landscaping, restrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms. As stated in **Section 11, Land Use and Planning**, the proposed hotel and lodging uses under the Project would be considered an allowable use under its current Commercial land use designation. Therefore, the expected development intensity of the Project has been accounted for in the County's long-range planning documents. As such, the Project would not require new or relocated or expanded water facilities. Thus, the Project would not require new or relocated or expanded off-site water facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

Wastewater

Wastewater services and treatment for the Project will be provided via a new septic system. This new system would comply with the design requirements outlined in the Percolation Report prepared for the Project (See **Appendix D, Geotechnical Reports**) to minimize potential percolation impacts to the surrounding soil. The Project would also be required to adhere to the applicable requirements of the San Bernardino County Department of Health and obtain the applicable permits prior to the installation of the septic tanks. Therefore, the Project would not require the use of off-site facilities and services for wastewater treatment. As such, the Project would not require new or relocated or expanded off-site wastewater facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

Stormwater

The Project would install new cisterns on-site to capture stormwater. These cisterns would include water treatment features to minimize stormwater runoff that could drain runoff into the existing County drainage system off-site. Therefore, the Project would not require the use of off-site facilities and services for stormwater treatment and collection. As such, the Project would not require new or relocated or expanded off-site wastewater facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

Dry Utilities

Electricity and natural gas services in the Project area are provided by Southern California Edison (SCE) and Southern California Gas (SoCal Gas), respectively.^{51 52} The

⁵⁰ San Bernardino County, *San Bernardino County Plan*, Figure IU- 1, Water Service Wholesale Provider. Available online at: <https://countywideplan.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/68/2021/02/IU-1-Water-Service-Wholesale-Provider-201027.pdf?x23421>, accessed January 24, 2024.

⁵¹ San Bernardino County, *San Bernardino County Plan*, Figure IU-7, Electric Utility Service. Available online at: <https://countywideplan.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/68/2021/02/IU-7-Electric-Utility-Service-201027.pdf?x23421>, accessed January 24, 2024.

⁵² San Bernardino County, *San Bernardino County Plan*, Figure IU-6, Natural Gas Service. Available online at: <https://countywideplan.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/68/2021/02/IU-6-Natural-Gas-Service-201027.pdf?x23421>, accessed January 24, 2024.

Project would install new electricity and natural gas lines on-site that would connect with the nearest existing SCE and SoCal Gas within the area. Payment of any standard utility services and connection fees with each utility company would occur prior to the initiation of construction activities. Implementation of the Project and the new utility connections would require minimal construction along the existing roadway. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The MWA procures its water supplies primarily through retail suppliers and groundwater extracted from the several groundwater basins in San Bernardino County.

The MWA's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) characterizes water use, estimates future demands and supply sources, and evaluates supply reliability for a normal year, a single-dry year, and a five-consecutive year drought. The reliability of the agency's water supply is expected to be adequate to meet Normal Year, Single Dry Year, and Five-Consecutive Year Drought dry year demand conditions between 2025 and 2045. Specifically, the MWA would have a surplus storage of approximately 27,180 acre-feet (AF) of water during a normal year and would break even during a single-dry year. According to **Appendix A, Air Quality Technical Report**, of this IS/MND, the Project would result in a demand of 5,177,729 gallons per year, or a nominal demand of 15.6 acre-feet per year (AFY) of potable water. Water demand for the Project would represent less than one percent of the agency's surplus storage during a normal year. Additionally, the Project would represent a nominal increase in demand during a single-dry year, and the Project would not conflict with MWA's operations and scenario plans outlined in Chapter 6 (Water Shortage Contingency Plan) of the 2020 UWMP.

According to MWA's UWMP, the MWA coordinates with the County's General Plan to determine projected water supply and demand.⁵³ As stated, the Project would be considered an allowable use under its current Commercial land use designation. Accordingly, the expected development intensity of the Project has been accounted for in the County's and MWA long term planning documents. Thus, water demand from the proposed development is within the UWMP's water demand projection for MWA, and MWA would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required

- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** As stated, the Project would implement a new septic system on-site for wastewater collection, storage, and treatment. The Project Site is located within the North Desert Region of the County, which is serviced by private septic

⁵³ Mojave Water Agency, *2020 Urban Water Management Plan*. Available online at: <https://www.mojavewater.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/MWA2020UWMPFinal061621.pdf>, at January 26, 2024.

systems for wastewater collection and treatment.⁵⁴ The Project would periodically rely on outside treatment providers for services. Further, the Project Applicant would comply with all applicable Project-specific wastewater requirements outlined by the San Bernardino County Department of the Environmental Health Service to ensure the appropriate wastewater disposal and treatment are applied. Given the periodic need for service the Project would result in less than significant impacts.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** According to the Countywide Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report, the majority of solid waste generated within the Landers Community is disposed at the Landers Sanitary Landfill. The Landers Sanitary Landfill permits a maximum of 1,200 tons of solid waste per day and has a remaining capacity of 13,983,500 tons of solid waste.

Construction activities associated with the Project would generate additional solid waste. However, the amount of waste generated by the Project would not exceed the amount of waste permitted and the capacities of the Newby Island Sanitary Landfill and Monterey Peninsula Landfill. Additionally, solid waste generation from the Project's construction activities would be temporary and would cease upon completion of the Project. According to **Appendix A** of this IS/MND, the Project would generate approximately 82 tons of waste per year (or 0.22 tons per day). Accordingly, the Project would represent less than one percent of the daily permitted and remaining capacities for solid waste for both landfills. Therefore, the Project would not generate solid waste in excess of State or County standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure. Less than significant impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- e) **Less than Significant Impact.** As concluded above, the Project would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure. Furthermore, the Project would demonstrate compliance with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill [AB] 939), which requires all California cities "reduce, recycle, and re-use solid waste generated in the State to the maximum extent feasible." AB 939 requires that at least 50 percent of waste produced is recycled, reduced, or composted. The Project would also comply with the 2022 California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code, which includes design and construction measures that help reduce construction-related waste through material conservation and other construction-related efficiency measures. Thus, less than significant impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

⁵⁴ County of San Bernardino, *San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft PEIR*, Utilities and Service Systems. Available online at: https://countywideplan.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/68/2021/01/Ch_05-18-USS.pdf?x23421, accessed April 10, 2024.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XX. WILDFIRE: If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water resources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

County of San Bernardino General Plan 2007; Submitted Project Materials

- a) **No Impact.** The Project Site is not located within or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.⁵⁵ According to San Bernardino County, SR-247 is designated as an evacuation route for the County.⁵⁶ The Project Site is located approximately 2.8 miles east of SR-247. Project operations would not interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. The Project would include two driveways along Belfield Boulevard to serve as adequate emergency access. In addition, a fire apparatus access road would be included along the northern perimeter of the Project Site for fire emergency services. As such, the Project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impact would occur.

⁵⁵ San Bernardino County, *San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft EIR*, Figure 5.8-4, Fire Severity and Growth Areas in the Valley and Mountain. Available online at: <https://countywideplan.com/resources/document-download/>, accessed May 17, 2023.

⁵⁶ San Bernardino County, *San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft EIR*, Table 5.8-10, Evacuation Routes in San Bernardino County. Available online at: <https://countywideplan.com/resources/document-download/>, accessed May 17, 2023.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- b) **No Impact.** As stated above, the Project Site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as a high fire hazard severity zone. The Project is located within a relatively flat area of the Landers community with minimal vegetation that would not exacerbate wildfire risks or expose the public to uncontrolled spread. Thus, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- c) **No Impact.** The Project will not require the installation or maintenance of infrastructure, such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities. Therefore, the Project would not exacerbate fire risks, and there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

- d) **No Impact.** As stated above, the Project would not be located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as a high fire hazard severity zone. Additionally, the Project Site is located on relatively flat terrain and would not be subject to landslides. Thus, wildfire impacts involving downslope, downstream flooding, or landslides would not occur, and there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- a) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As discussed in **Section 4, Biological Resources**, the Project could potentially disturb and modify critical habitats that may be present on-site for special-status bird species. As such, implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** would ensure that the impacts to the critical habitat of special-status bird species would be reduced to less than significant.

As discussed in **Section 5, Cultural Resources**, and **Section 7, Geology and Soils**, ground-disturbing activities associated with Project construction may potentially uncover any cultural, archaeological, or paleontological resources. As such, implementation of **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **GEO-1** would reduce these potential impacts to less than significant levels

- b) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** The Project generally would not contribute to potentially cumulatively considerable impacts. As indicated in the above analysis, with implementation of the required mitigation measures, the Project

would not result in any unmitigated significant adverse impacts and/or cumulatively considerable impacts. Specifically, **Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, CUL-1, GEO-1, and TCR-1, TCR-2, TCR-3**, would reduce potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels. The Project does not include any unmitigated cumulatively considerable impacts when considered in connection with the effects of past, present and probable future projects. No further analysis is necessary.

- c) **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** As indicated in the above analysis, with implementation of the required mitigation measures, the Project would not result in any unmitigated significant adverse impacts. Thus, the Project would not have the potential to result in substantial adverse effects on human beings.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with incorporation of mitigation measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, CUL-1, GEO-1, and TCR-1, TCR-2, TCR-3.

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