

INITIAL STUDY

FOR THE

PIONEERTOWN SOUNDSTAGE PROJECT –
PROJ-2022-00191

Prepared for:

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

Prepared by:

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February 2026

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

°F	Fahrenheit
AAQS	Ambient Air Quality Standards
AB	Assembly Bill
AF	acre feet

AF	Acre Feet
AFY	acre feet per year
AKA	also known as
amsl	above mean sea level
APE	Area of Potential Effect
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
AQMD	Air Quality Management District
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ARB	Air Resources Board
BACMs	Best Available Control Measures
bgs	belowground surface
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BRA	Biological Resources Assessment
C&D	construction and demolition
C ₂ Cl ₄	perchloroethylene
C ₂ H ₄ O	acetaldehyde
C ₄ H ₆	1,3-butadiene
C ₆ H ₆	benzene
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendment
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CAPCOA	California Air Pollution Control Officers Association
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CBMWD	Central Basin Municipal Water District
CCAR	California Climate Action Registry
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CH ₂ O	formaldehyde
CH ₄	methane
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
COA	Conditions of Approval

COCs	constituents of concern
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRMP	Cultural Resource Management Plan
CWA	Clean Water Act
CY	cubic yard
dB	decibel
dba	A-weighted decibel
DDW	Division of Drinking Water
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substance Control
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EO	Executive Orders
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FE	Federally Endangered
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FGC	Fish & Game Code
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
FT	Federal Threatened
FTA	Federal Transit Association
GCC	Global Climate Change
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
gpm	gallons per minute
GSA	Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plans
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HFCs	hydrofluorocarbons
hP	horse power
HSC	Health and Safety Code
in/sec	inches per second
km	kilometers
kWh	kilowatt hour
lbs./day	Pounds Per Day
Leq	equivalent continuous sound level
LF	lineal feet
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
LSA	Lake or Streambed Alteration

LST	Localized Significance Thresholds
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MCL	maximum contamination level
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MM	Mitigation Measure
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zone
MT	Metric Ton
MTCO ₂ e/yr	Metric Tons of CO ₂ equivalent per year
N ₂ O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NBP	Nesting Bird Plan
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
No.	Number
NO ₂ or NO _x	Nitrogen Dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	National Resource Conservation Service
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
O ₃	Ozone
OPR	Office of Planning and Research
Pb	Lead
PFCs	perfluorocarbons
PM 10	Fine Particulate Matter
PM 2.5	Fine Particulate Matter
ppm	parts per million
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resource Code
R	Refrigerants
ROG	reactive organic gases
ROW	Rights-of-Way
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
RW	Recycled water
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center

SCE	Southern California Edison
SEAs	Significant Ecological Areas
SF ₆	sulfur hexafluoride
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SGMP	Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan
SO ₂	Sulfur Dioxide
SOI	Secretary of Interior
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	Toxic Air Contaminants
TCR	Tribal Cultural Resources
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VdB	vibration-velocity decibel
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VOCs	Volatile Organic Compounds
vph	vehicles per hour
WOTUS	Waters of the United States
WQMP	Water Quality Management Plan

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This form and the descriptive information in the application package constitute the contents of Initial Study pursuant to San Bernardino County (County) Guidelines under Ordinance 3040 and Section 15063 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

Project Summary Table

APNs:	0594-391-06, -07, and -08	USGS Quad:	Yucca Valley North, CA
Applicant:	Pioneertown Land Company, LLC Mr. David Corso Managing Member 72135 Woburn Court Thousand Palms, CA 92276	T, R, Section:	Section 26 of Township 2 North, Range 4 East
Location:	The proposed project is located at 53585 Mane Street, Pioneertown, CA 92268. The Pioneertown Soundstage is located along Pioneertown Road in the unincorporated community of Pioneertown, San Bernardino County, CA. The approximate GPS coordinates of the project site are 34.156600°, -116.495457°.	Thomas Bros:	N/A
Project No:	PROJ-2022-00191	Community Plan:	Pioneertown Community Plan
Rep:	Transtech David Mlynarski david.mlynarski@transtech.org 13367 Benson Avenue Chino, California 91710	LUZD:	Countywide Plan: Commercial (C) Zoning: Rural Commercial Zoning District: Special Development-Residential (SD-RES)
Proposal:	Development of a Soundstage, Ice Creamery/Coffee Shop, and Outdoor Dining Area in Pioneertown, which requires a Conditional Use Permit.	Overlays:	Biotic Resources for Desert Tortoise (Sparse Population)

Project Contact Information

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

Lead Agency
Contact person: Luis Rodriguez, Jr. Contract Planner III
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Project Description

Existing Site Conditions

The proposed project site is located in the unincorporated community of Pioneertown within the Desert Region of San Bernardino County, California. Pioneertown is a rural community located east of the San Bernardino Mountains and regionally set in the Morongo Basin region of the Mojave Desert. **Figures 1 and 2** provide a regional and local context, respectively, of the project location.

Land in the vicinity of the project site supports a mosaic of developed and undeveloped land, with developed land dominated by residential and commercial parcels and undeveloped land supporting a mixture of natural plant communities and disturbed/modified landscapes. Pioneertown was established in 1946 as a wild-west themed community that was developed as a shooting location for Western films and television series, and Mane Street Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The project site is bounded on the north by Mane Street with commercial development found farther north; on the east by commercial development; on the south by Pioneertown Road with undeveloped, vacant land and residential development farther south; and on the west by commercial development.

The project site itself primarily supports commercial development associated with the existing Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette, and several retail establishments with associated infrastructure and unpaved parking areas. The project site also supports narrow swaths of undeveloped land that are periodically cleared of vegetation in association with routine weed abatement activities and associated infrastructure maintenance.

The San Bernardino County Countywide Plan Land Use designation is Commercial (C), while the Zoning classification is Rural Commercial, while the Land Use Zoning District is Special Development-Residential (SD-RES). The land uses and zoning districts bordering the project site are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: EXISTING LAND USE AND LAND USE ZONING DISTRICTS

Location	Existing Land Use	Land Use Category	Zoning District
Project Site	Existing Soundstage	Commercial	Special Development-Residential (SD-RES); Rural Commercial
North	Pioneertown commercial shops and Camp Pioneertown	Commercial	Special Development-Residential (SD-RES)
South	Single Family Residences	Rural Living	Special Development-Residential (SD-RES)
East	Pioneer Bowl	Commercial	Special Development-Residential (SD-RES))
West	The Red Dog Saloon and associated parking	Commercial	Special Development-Residential (SD-RES)

Project Overview

The Applicant proposes to improve an existing 1.84-acre, multi-use commercial site serving the Pioneertown area in unincorporated San Bernardino County (refer to **Figure 3**). The main proposed uses are as follows:

The Pioneertown Soundstage

- The Pioneertown Soundstage (6,223 square feet [SF]) would be renovated to facilitate musical programming that residents and visitors of Pioneertown would expect, such as cowboy karaoke, line dancing, and country rock performances, in addition to more varied programming like vinyl listening sessions and current popular music options.
- The interior of Soundstage will be a flexible open area in the middle with permanent seating on the interior perimeter. The enclosed outdoor patio area associated with the Soundstage would be 3,258 SF.
- The renovation would keep the Soundstage as a community resource, as it hosts fundraisers for local organizations, such as the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol (CHP) Holiday Party, Joshua Tree National Park Association, and local residential uses such as Pioneertown Holiday Potluck and various celebration of life events for residents.
- The Soundstage would continue to be a venue available to rent for weddings and events on evenings when programming is not scheduled.
- The existing historical wood block signs associated with the Pioneertown Soundstage will be retained.

The Pioneertown Gazette-Cowboy Coffee & Creamery

- The goal is to turn the dilapidated former local newspaper building into an all-day café for the community and visitors of Pioneertown. The Pioneertown Gazette-Cowboy Coffee & Creamery (831 SF) would serve coffee and espresso in the morning along with light breakfast snacks, transitioning into family friendly snacks and ice creamery serving community and visitors needs later in the day. The business will provide a respite from the heat and cold. The Pioneertown Gazette will include the original Pioneertown Gazette sign that was restored by a legendary craftsman consistent with that which exists throughout Pioneertown.

Outdoor Dining/Gathering Pavilion-The Hitching Post

- The Outdoor Dining/Gathering Pavilion (3,024 SF) would serve as a central gathering place between the Pioneertown Soundstage and Gazette, with shade and ample seating for guests at either establishment or visitors/residents of the town to gather while enjoying food, music, or Pioneertown's vistas and climate. The outdoor patio area will have non-fixed picnic tables.

As part of this project, the Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette would be sensitively restored to a Western look in the vein of what currently exists in Pioneertown to retain the unique historical character of the area.

Additional modular structures are proposed to serve as public restrooms, mobile snack cart, and a self-contained mobile kitchen (225 SF). These features are shown on the site plan provided on **Figure 3**. The Soundstage remodel includes new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) restrooms, ADA parking, bar area, and lounge. Parking will primarily be installed on the southern portion of the site, with ADA parking installed adjacent to the Soundstage. Additionally, a new wood deck (that will be 1,831 SF in size) will be installed along the project's northern frontage, which will provide for ADA accessible entrances to each of the three proposed uses (Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette, and Outdoor Dining/Gathering Pavilion).

Site Layout and Access

Access to the site will occur through the installation of two new driveways; each will only serve as exit or entry only, along Pioneertown Road. The driveway entrance will utilize gravel to provide a compacted gravel access road and driveway in accordance with the fire department standards. The proposed project is anticipated to retain existing native plants/landscaping onsite. Landscaped areas on site will be 13,033 SF, while paved areas on site would be 2,029 SF per County landscaping standards. The parking and drive aisles will be compacted native soil at 21,934 SF. The project will also remove the existing wood fence and install a new wood fence along the southern property line. Additionally, the fenced area behind the Soundstage will remain an open area on native soil at 3,266 SF.

Pedestrian access to the site will occur from the wood deck located along Mane Street to the Pioneertown Gazette and project site as a whole. The wood deck would connect to a concrete walkway at the northeast corner of the project site along Main Street and will allow pedestrians to continue to the Pioneertown Soundstage and parking lot.

Parking

The parking onsite includes 50 automobile parking spaces, which includes 5 accessible (American Disabilities Act [ADA]) parking spaces that would be paved, and 1 loading space. While no EV charging stations are planned at this time, the developer is open to providing space for such installation if feasible. Other than the accessible parking spaces, the parking lot will remain unpaved compacted native soil at 21,934 SF. The accessible parking spaces will also be accompanied by a concrete walkway totaling 710 SF.

Utility Connections

- Power: Southern California Edison (SCE). The project includes the installation of a new electrical panel, which is required to bring the project into compliance with the County Building and Fire codes.
- Water: San Bernardino County Department of Public Works Special Districts Water (District) and Sanitation Division
- Internet:
 - Soundstage: Flashbyte
 - Gazette: No internet proposed at this time
- Wastewater: Existing septic tank at Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette to be removed and replaced with environmentally upgraded septic system (one septic tank that includes three leach lines). This system would be both more efficient than the existing system at processing septic waste, and further, would be developed to prevent septic leaching into the underlying soils or groundwater table.
- Trash/Waste Disposal: Burrtec

Construction Scenario

Project construction will begin with clearing and grubbing the site. No grading is proposed at this time, as no new habitable structures would be installed. Minor clearing and grubbing activity beyond that which has already taken place as part of site maintenance will consist of removing the vegetation from the areas that will eventually support the features of the project shown on **Figure 3**. An estimated 10 workers will complete this phase of site preparation over a period of about 7 weeks. A paver will be necessary for up to 7 days of construction during this period to install the pavement supporting the ADA parking spaces.

The standard parking area will be surface graded, and the entryway access road will be compacted and covered with gravel. If fugitive dust is observed, the remainder of the access road and parking will be covered with compacted gravel, sprayed with water, or the Applicant will utilize other means of dust minimization. This is required to manage fugitive dust as a result of the fine particulate matter (PM-10) non-attainment status of the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB) area, which therefore requires that Best Available Control Measures (BACMs) be used to comply with the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) Rule 403.

In addition to the clearing and grubbing described above, site development will include the removal of an existing septic tank and the installation of a new septic tank to meet County requirements for onsite wastewater management (County Development Code Section 33.08105, Minimum Requirements). The septic tank must be abandoned (abated) by either removing the tank entirely or backfilling it with an approved material in accordance with the County Code of Ordinances Section 33.0879. Excavation will be required in support of the septic system at its location north of the restrooms, as shown on the site plan (**Figure 3**), with an excavation depth of no greater than 10 feet. Onsite utilities, such as septic lines, water connections, and electrical connections will be installed through trenching to serve the proposed site uses. Construction equipment is expected to be utilized for the above activities includes a small tractor, a small trencher, backhoe, tractor, trencher, and bobcat.

Delivery of construction supplies and removal of any excavated materials, if necessary, will be accomplished using trucks during normal working hours (between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. daily, except Sundays and Federal holidays County Development Code Section § 83.01.080(g) Exempt Noise), with a maximum of 45 round trips per day. It is anticipated that 10-15 employees will be required to support the construction of the project each day.

Construction materials are typical of most commercial building projects. The materials will include lumber, metals, PVC piping, conduit/copper wiring.

Construction timing: Design and construction of the project is anticipated to begin in June of 2026 completed by August of 2027. However, the Air Quality Impact Analysis utilized October 2025 through December 2026 for modeling purposes. The construction schedule utilized in this analysis for air quality modeling, purposes, for instance, represents a “worst-case” analysis scenario should construction occur any time after the respective dates since emission factors for construction decrease as time passes and the analysis year increases due to emission regulations becoming more stringent.

Operational Scenario

Pioneertown Soundstage

The Pioneer Soundstage will operate within the following parameters:

- Monday-Sunday from 11am to 10pm
- Monday/Tuesday closed except during holidays and events.
- Friday, Saturday, Sunday 11am to 2am

Note that events held at the Pioneertown Soundstage would be permitted under its proposed Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The Noise Study prepared for the proposed project (**Appendix 5**) was prepared to verify that the operational hours of the Pioneertown Soundstage would meet the County Development Code

for daytime and nighttime noise limits. The predicted operational noise for the project is presented in Subsection XII, Noise.

*** Please note that if there was no event buyout or entertainment planned Soundstage may close much earlier than the above hours ***

The Pioneertown Soundstage is anticipated to employ 8 full-time employees, with up to 30 part-time employees anticipated to serve its operations during events. The maximum permitted occupancy for the Pioneertown Soundstage is 500 persons considering both the inside and outside patios.

Pioneertown Gazette

The Pioneertown Gazette will operate within the following parameters:

- Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday from 7am to 3pm for breakfast and lunch.
- Closed Tuesday and Wednesday
- Friday, Saturday, Sunday 7am to 5pm

The Pioneertown Gazette is anticipated to employ 2 full-time employees, with up to 10 part-time employees anticipated to serve its operations during the high season. The occupancy for the Pioneertown Gazette is 25 persons.

Outdoor Dining/Gathering Pavilion

The Outdoor Dining/Gathering Pavilion will operate within the following parameters:

- Wednesday to Thursday from 7am to 6pm for breakfast and lunch, snacks, coffee, and ice cream for purchase from on-site snack carts, the mobile kitchen, or the Pioneertown Gazette.
- Closed Monday/Tuesday
- Friday to Sunday 7am to 8pm

The occupancy for the Outdoor Dining/Gathering Pavilion would be 50 persons.

Application with the County

The Applicant requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) from the County to construct the Pioneertown Soundstage Project as described throughout this project description.

Project Site Photos



Photo 1: From the northwest corner of the project site looking south along the western boundary.



Photo 2: From the northwest corner of the project site looking east along the northern boundary



Photo 3: From the northeast corner of the project site looking west along the northern boundary.



Photo 4: From the northeast corner of the project site looking south along the eastern boundary.



Photo 5: From the southeast corner of the project site looking north along the eastern boundary.



Photo 6: From the southeast corner of the project site looking west along the southern boundary.



Photo 7: From the southwest corner of the project site looking east along the southern boundary.



Photo 8: From the southwest corner of the project site looking north along the western boundary.



Photo 9: From the southern boundary of the project site looking north at the entrance sign.

Additional Approvals that may be Required by Other Public Agencies

(Example: permits, financing approvals or participation agreements.)

- San Bernardino County Fire Department: Project Approval
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) may need to be consulted regarding threatened and endangered species documented to occur within an area of potential impact for future individual projects. This could include consultations under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.
- No other permits are known to be required at this location because the project would not result in the disturbance of more than one acre of soil/land during construction. Thus, no Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) or Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) are required.

Summary of Consultation with California Native American Tribes

The County has been contacted by several Tribes under Assembly Bill (AB) 52 requesting to be consulted on applicable projects within the County. The Tribes with a historical presence in the Pioneertown area were contacted by the County through mailed letters to initiate the AB 52 process on December 6, 2023. These Tribes are: Soboba Band of Mission Indians, Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, and the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians. During the 30-day consultation period, the County received a response from only one Tribe—the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians—which indicated that the project is outside of the known Chemehuevi Traditional Use Area. As a result, consultation under AB 52 was not requested. Therefore, consultation has concluded with no request from any Tribe to be included as a consulting party for this project.

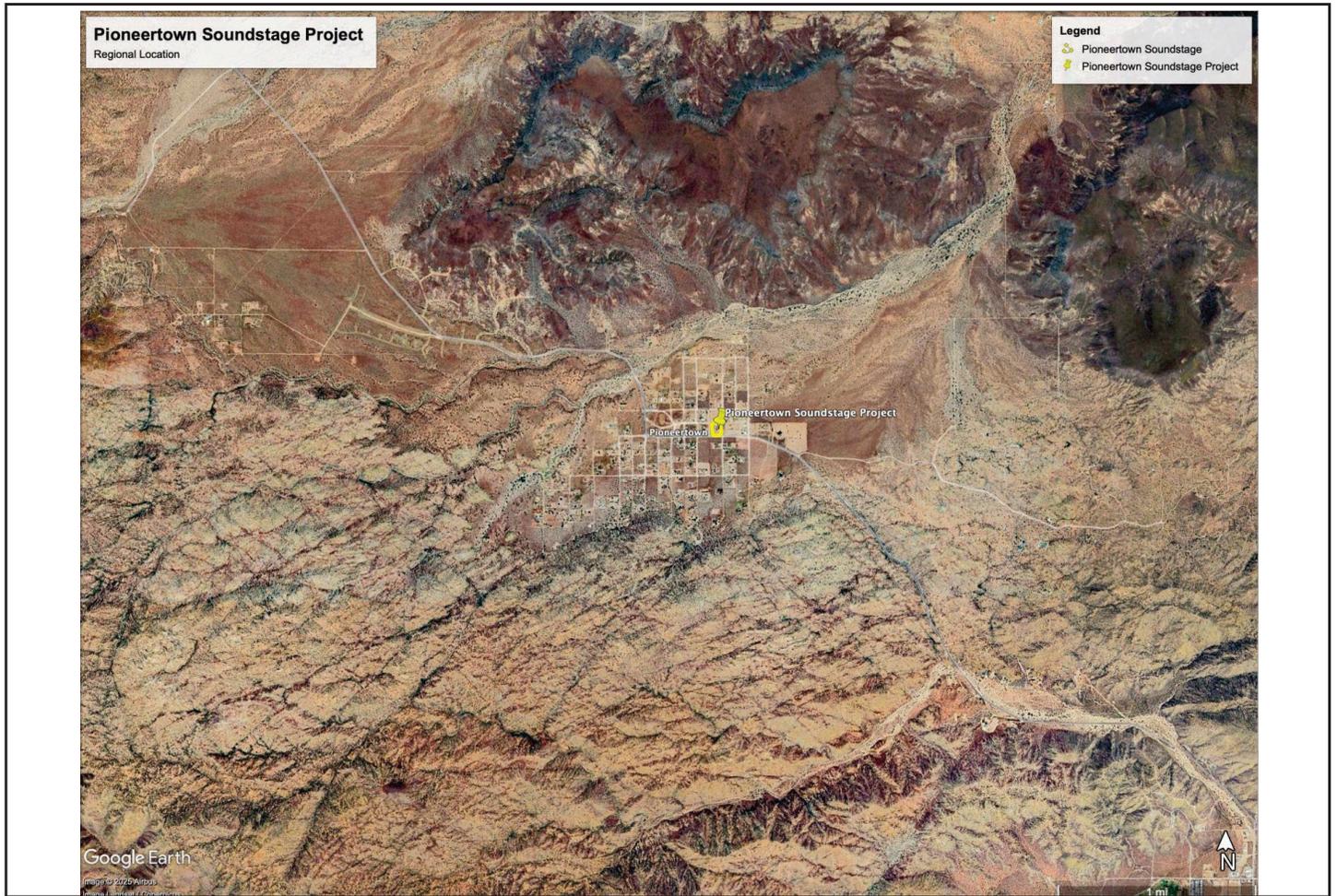


FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

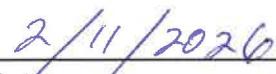
DETERMINATION

(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 will be prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will 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.


 Prepared by: Luis Rodriguez, Contract Planner


 Date


 Approved by: Paul Domey, Supervising Planner


 Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., Countywide Plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a

previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning or 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 would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I. AESTHETICS

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

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Adverse impacts to scenic vistas can occur in one of two ways. First, an area itself may contain existing scenic vistas, such as resources and focal views of such resources, that would be altered by new development. The project site primarily supports commercial development associated with the existing Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette and several retail establishments with associated infrastructure and unpaved parking areas and also supports narrow swaths of undeveloped land that are periodically cleared of vegetation in association with routine weed abatement activities and infrastructure maintenance. A review of the project area determined that there are no natural scenic vistas located internally within the area proposed for the development of the project site. The San Bernardino Countywide Plan does not identify historic Pioneertown as part of the scenic vista within the Desert Region. Thus, as no scenic resources are located within the areas proposed for development, the proposed development would not have the potential to impact scenic views of individual onsite resources.

A scenic vista impact can also occur when a scenic vista can be viewed from the project area or immediate vicinity, and a proposed development may interfere with the view to a scenic vista. As shown in Photos 1 through 9, the views surrounding the project site can be characterized by Black Hill to the north, with the Sawtooths located to the south of the project site, and native

vegetation characteristic of the Desert Region of San Bernardino County. Development at the proposed project site would not interfere with panoramic mountain views of Black Hill to the north, Little San Bernardino Mountains to the south, or any other surrounding mountain views as the proposed project is level in elevation to the surrounding area. Additionally, the existing residences to the south of the project, on the opposite side of Pioneertown Road, would not experience substantial viewshed changes as the proposed project would retain the existing Western historical character of the project site by sensitively restoring existing structures at the Soundstage and Gazette. Further the scale of the structures would remain the same as that which occurs within the project site at present, and as such, the existing visual setting would not be substantially altered by implementation of the proposed project. Designs for new structures that may be visible from surrounding areas, such as the new shade structure and enclosed patio for the Soundstage, would consider and complement the Western aesthetic of the project site.

Notwithstanding any potential impacts to scenic views that may be experienced from residences, the issue of guarantee of private views is one of the few qualitative environmental issues that the California Supreme Court has addressed. State court decisions regarding private views indicate that private views are not protected. Furthermore, the San Bernardino Countywide Plan and County Development Code do not protect private views, and this parcel is not zoned nor designated by the Countywide Plan for open space. Thus, private residential views of the project site in its present condition are not protected. As a result, while the immediate view of the project site will be modified as the site is improved from its current use, panoramic vistas to the area mountains will remain intact. Therefore, it is anticipated that the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on scenic vistas within the project area.

- b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway corridor. As shown in the Photos 1 through 9, the views surrounding the project site can be characterized by Black Hill to the north, with the Sawtooths located to the south of the project site, and native vegetation characteristic of the Desert Region of San Bernardino County. The project site is located along Pioneertown Road, and is bounded by Mane Street, which are not considered by the State to be a scenic highway. The Countywide Plan¹ identifies several County Scenic Routes as shown on **Figure I-1**, and Pioneertown Road is designated as a County Scenic Route in this area. The proposed project would be installed adjacent to Pioneertown Road. However, the proposed project would be subject to the development criteria specific to properties adjacent to the County Scenic Route (County Development Code Section 82.19.040). Furthermore, as the proposed project would be compatible with the surrounding uses, and furthermore enhances the present use of the site, rather than constructing new uses, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would facilitate damage of scenic resources. As described above, the proposed project would comply with the Countywide Policy Plan, as well as by the standards of the San Bernardino Countywide Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to damage scenic resources within a State or County scenic route.

¹ San Bernardino County, 2020. San Bernardino Countywide Plan. <https://countywideplan.sbcounty.gov/policy-plan/> (accessed 09/20/25)

Note that, the Cultural Resources Report prepared for the project (**Appendix 3a**) revealed that two previously recorded contributing elements (the Pioneertown Gazette building and the Silver Dollar building [currently known as the Pioneertown Soundstage]) to the existing district (P-36- 25903) within the project site and recorded them on California Department of Park and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms. This district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (the National Register) in 2020, which means that it is automatically listed on the California Register of Historical Resources (the California Register), making it a Historical Resource under CEQA.

Because the Pioneertown Mane Street Historic District is a Historic Property and a Historical Resource, any proposed project activities should be consistent with “plans for rehabilitation to ensure that the undertaking maintains consistency with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.”² Thus, **MM CUL-1** must be implemented to ensure that the standards for developing the proposed project align with the Secretary of Interior Standards, thereby ensuring that the proposed project preserves the historic nature of the structures on site, and thereby would not substantially alter a historic property such that a significant scenic impact would result. This is further substantiated by the findings made in the “*Historic Building Study and CEQA-Compliance Analysis Pioneertown Gazette and Soundstage Buildings, 53563 and 53585 Mane Street Pioneertown, San Bernardino County, California Conditional Use Permit Application No. 2022-00191*” prepared by CRM TECH for the proposed project, dated June 27, 2025 (**Appendix 3b**), which concluded that “If the project is designed and implemented in accordance with these recommendations and guidelines, it will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of this “historical resource.” Refer to the recommendations presented therein to achieve the implementation of this criterion.

These recommendations shall be further enforced through the implementation of **MM CUL-1**, which shall require the enforcement of the above recommendations as part of the County’s review and approval of the project design. Additionally, no rock outcroppings would be impacted by the proposed project, as none have been observed within the project site. As stated under Threshold (a), above, the proposed project is developed with no trees on site that would fall under the County’s tree ordinance. No other scenic resources have been identified on the site. Therefore, with the implementation of **MM CUL-1** the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is located in a relatively sparsely developed portion of the County, and according to the State Office of Planning and Research “Site Check,”³ it does not meet the legal criteria for an urbanized area. Therefore, the threshold related to non-urbanized areas will be utilized. Refer to **Figure 1**, which depicts an aerial view of the project area. The proposed project would be installed to be compatible with the types of surrounding uses (in both land use and type), in that the architecture, scale, and historic character of the site will be retained and remain similar, and furthermore enhance the present use of the site, rather than creating an entirely new site use. As a result, the project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings; instead, by enhancing the

² 36 CFR part 68; see <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/index.htm> (Accessed 09/20/25)

³ LCI, 2025. Site Check. <https://sitecheck.lci.ca.gov/> (Accessed 09/20/25)

existing features of the site—Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette—the proposed project would enhance the existing visual character and quality of the site, thereby improving public views of the site and its surrounding area.

For informational purposes, the proposed project would be compatible with the Countywide Policy Plan's visual resources and aesthetic policies including:

- **Policy LU-2.1 Compatibility with existing uses.** We require that new development is located, scaled, buffered, and designed to minimize negative impacts on existing conforming uses and adjacent neighborhoods. We also require that new residential developments are located, scaled, buffered, and designed so as to not hinder the viability and continuity of existing conforming nonresidential development.
 - The proposed project is on a similar scale as the surrounding uses and to that which exists on site presently.
- **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 County Development Code, may be required to maximize compatibility with surrounding land uses and community identity.
 - The proposed project is compatible with the land use map designation, with the approval of a CUP, which the County determined to be necessary due to the nature of the Soundstage and proposed outdoor uses, which would host a variety of uses that, according to the County Development Code Table 82-17 as it pertains to SD-RES uses, require a Conditional Use Permit.
- **Policy LU-4.7 Dark skies.** We minimize light pollution and glare to preserve views of the night sky, particularly in the Mountain and Desert regions where dark skies are fundamentally connected to community identities and local economies. We also promote the preservation of dark skies to assist the military in testing, training, and operations.
 - The County has adopted the San Bernardino Night Sky Ordinance. All new development, including the proposed project, may incrementally change conditions of nighttime views and the character of dark skies, but the project would be required to adhere to County standards for lighting and glare to ensure that impacts to night skies would be minimized to a level of less than significant (refer to analysis presented in issue I(d), below).
- **Policy LU-4.1 Context-sensitive design in the Mountain/Desert regions.** We require new development to employ site and building design techniques and use building materials that reflect the natural mountain or desert environment and preserve scenic resources.
 - The proposed project would be installed to be compatible with the types of surrounding uses, in that the architecture, scale, and historic character of the site will be retained and remain similar, and furthermore enhances the present use of the site, rather than creating an entirely new site use.
- **Policy NR-4.1 Preservation of scenic resources.** We consider the location and scale of development to preserve regionally significant scenic vistas and natural features, including prominent hillsides, ridgelines, dominant landforms, and reservoirs.
 - As discussed under this topic, the proposed project would not conflict with the preservation of scenic resources.

- **Policy NR-4.3 Off-site signage.** We prohibit new off-site signage and encourage the removal of existing off-site signage along or within view of County Scenic Routes and State Scenic Highways.
 - The proposed project would not install offsite signage, thus meeting the provisions of this policy. The proposed project would not result in a significant change in viewshed in the vicinity of any County Scenic Route (Pioneertown Road).

Thus, with the design elements that have been incorporated into the project—i.e. preservation of historical resources on site, in addition to restoration of the existing historical structure, as well as compliance with the County Development Code—the project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings nor would it conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality, and therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Implementation of the proposed project will create only limited new sources of light during the occupancy phase of the project. Existing sources of light in the project area include nearby rural residences and occasional headlights from the adjacent roadways. The County Development Code requires new projects to adhere to the provisions of the Chapter 83.07.060 Glare and Outdoor Lighting – Mountain and Desert Requirements. The Development Code requires that outdoor lighting meet shielding requirements, light pollution standards, automated control standards, dark sky curfew, and other requirements. While the proposed project will generate a new source of lighting in support of the outdoor shade structure, the project lighting will be consistent with that which exists onsite at the present because the Soundstage is an existing operational use that will be improved and expanded by the proposed project. Further, the proposed project will be required to adhere to the County Development Code light and glare requirements. As the proposed project would reflect to continued and enhanced operation of an existing operational use that currently utilizes lighting for the same uses, including events (nighttime lighting) and standard hours of operation, no mitigation will be required for lighting at this location and with County Development Code compliance, and potential light and glare impacts associated with the proposed project will be a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Program

- CUL-1** The proposed project shall be designed to be consistent with the plans for rehabilitation to ensure that the undertaking maintains consistency with the “Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties” (36 CFR part 68; see <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>).

Further, the recommendations presented in CRM TECH’s Historic Building Study and CEQA-Compliance Analysis (Appendix 3b) shall be enforced and incorporated into the project design. These are:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Regarding the property treatment of historic buildings during “work that must be done to meet accessibility and life-safety requirements,” guidelines for implementing the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards offer the following recommendations that shall be implemented by the Developer of the project (Weeks and Grimmer 2017:69):

- Identify the historic building’s character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting which may be affected by accessibility code-required work.
- Comply with barrier-free access requirements in such a manner that the historic building’s character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting are preserved or impacted as little as possible.
- Work with specialists in accessibility and historic preservation to determine the most sensitive solutions to comply with access requirements in a historic building, its site, and setting.
- Provide barrier-free access that promotes independence for the user while preserving significant historic features.

- **Find solutions to meet accessibility requirements that minimize the impact of any necessary alteration for accessibility on the historic building, its site, or setting, such as compatible ramps, paths, and lifts.**

The developer shall demonstrate consistency with 36 CFR part 68 standards in the plans for development submitted to the County, and plans must be approved by the County prior to construction.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with implementation of the above mitigation measure.

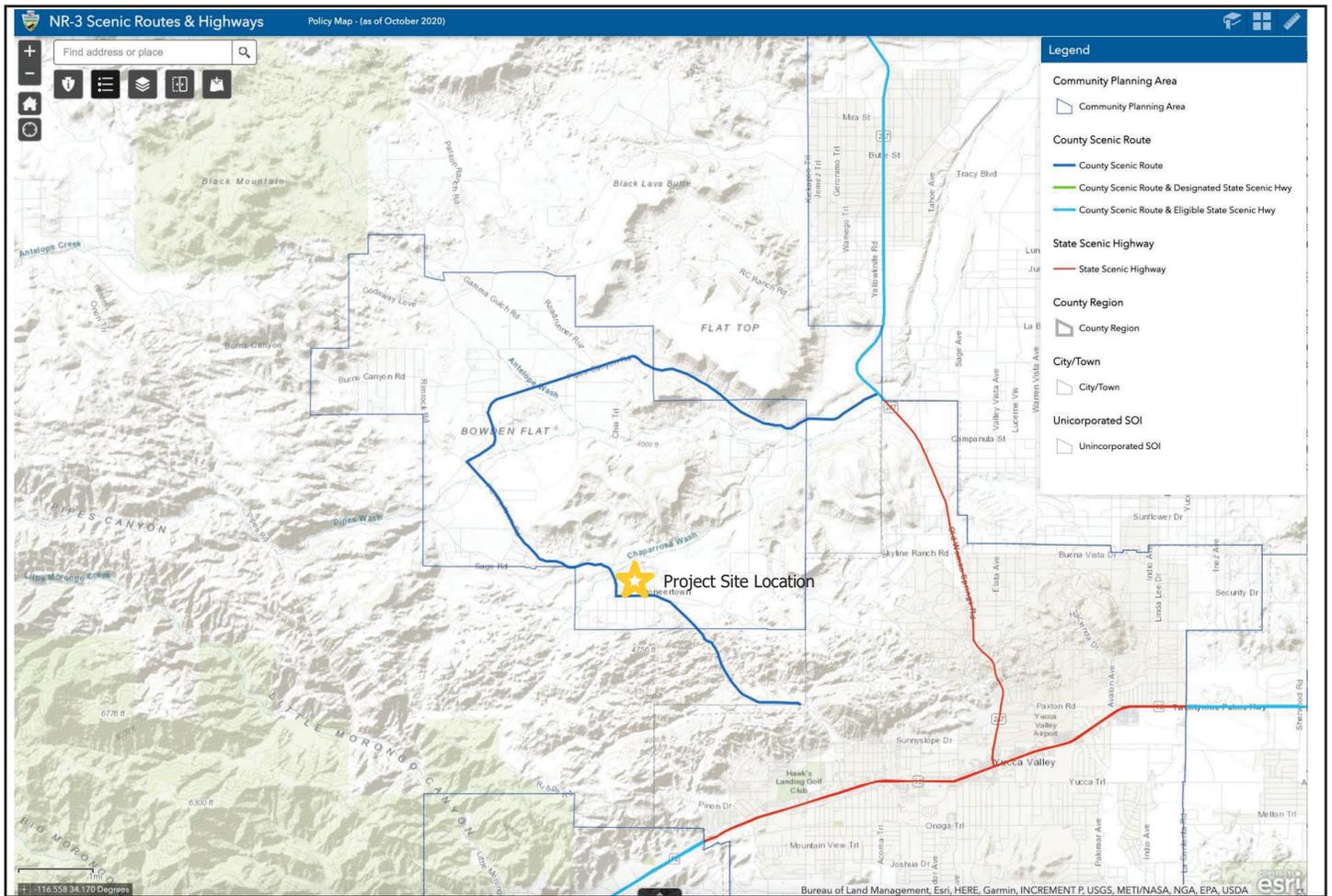


FIGURE I-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Scenic Highways Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
<p>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:</p>				
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"/>

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located in the Important Farmlands Overlay)

Impact Analysis

- a. *No Impact* – The proposed project will occur within an area consisting of native vegetation and trees, and does not contain any agricultural uses. Neither the project footprint nor the surrounding

area is designated for agricultural use; no agricultural activities exist in the project area; and there is no potential for impact to any agricultural uses or values as a result of project implementation. According to the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Natural Resources Agency, which are depicted as part of the Countywide Plan Farmland Map, no prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of state importance exist within the vicinity of the proposed project (**Figure II-1**). No adverse impact on any agricultural resources would occur from implementing the proposed project. No mitigation is required.

- b. *No Impact* – There are no agricultural uses currently within the boundaries of the project site or adjacent to the project site, and the project site itself is not under a Williamson Act Contract. The San Bernardino County Countywide Plan Land Use designation is Commercial (C), while the Zoning classification is Rural Commercial, while the Zoning District is Special Development-Residential (SD-RES). Therefore, no potential exists for a conflict between the proposed project and agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contracts within the project area. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.
- c. *No Impact* – Please refer to issues II(a) and II(b) above. The proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project would be located within a rural desert community. Neither the project site nor the adjacent and surrounding properties support forest land or timberland uses or associated designations. No potential exists for a conflict between the proposed project and forest/timberland zoning. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.
- d. *No Impact* – There are no forest lands within the project area. No potential for loss of forest land would occur if the project is implemented. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.
- e. *No Impact* – Because the project sites and surrounding area do not support either agricultural or forestry uses and, furthermore, because the project sites and environs are not designated for such uses, implementation of the proposed project would not cause or result in the conversion of Farmland or forest land to alternative uses. No adverse impact would occur. No mitigation is required.

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

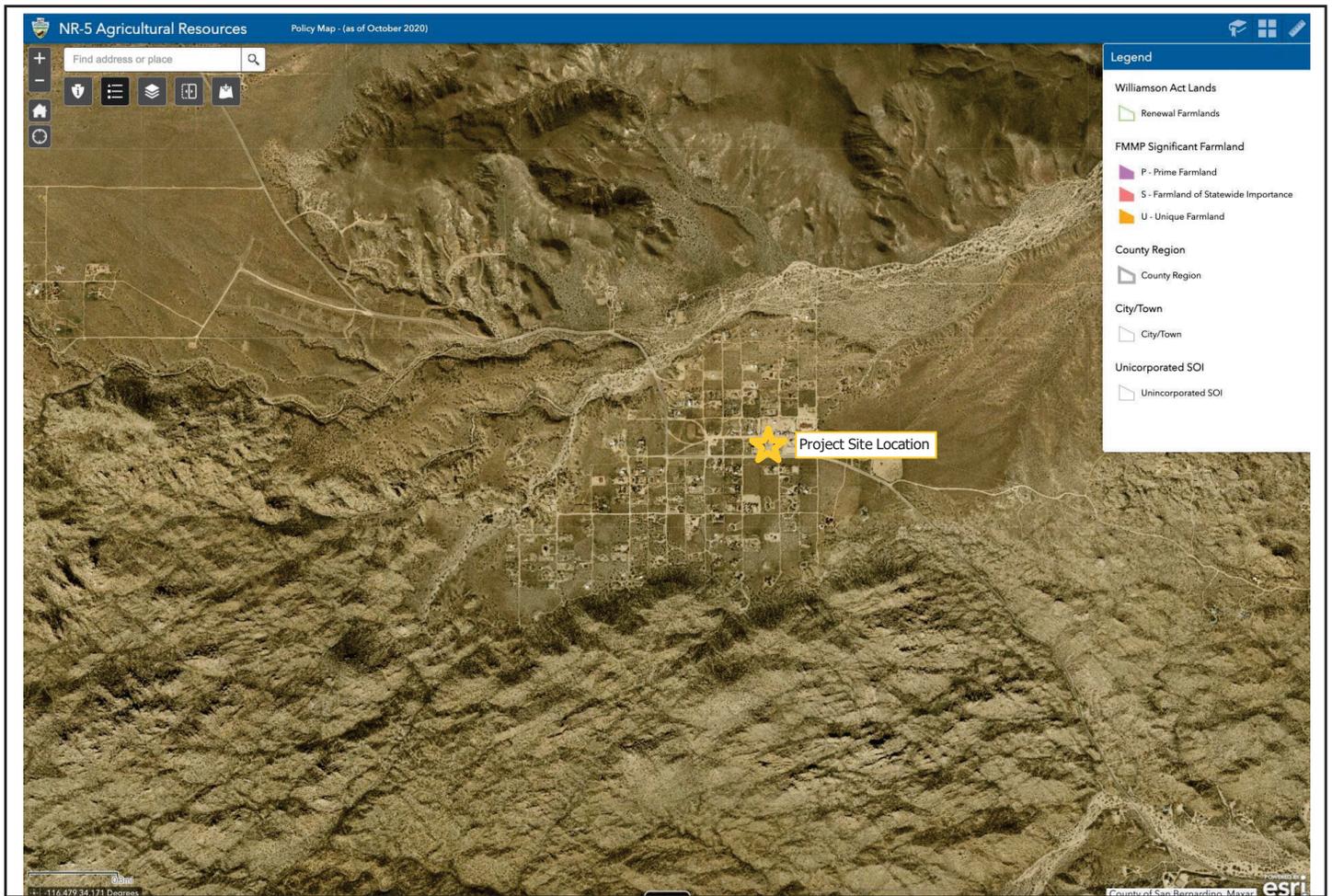


FIGURE II-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Agricultural Resources Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 following information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: *Pioneertown Mane Street Preservation and Improvement Plan Project Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment (AQGGA)* prepared by Urban Crossroads, dated December 2, 2025. This AQGGA is provided as **Appendix 1** to this Initial Study.

Background

The project site is located in the portion of the County that is part of the MDAB and is under the jurisdiction of the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD). The air quality assessment for the project evaluates emissions impacts associated with short-term construction and long-term operation of the project. A number of air quality modeling tools are available to assess the air quality impacts of projects, and in this case, the current version of CalEEMod 2022, which was released in May of 2022 with subsequent updates, was used to model air quality and greenhouse gas emissions/impacts associated with the project. In addition, certain air districts, such as the MDAQMD, have created guidelines and requirements to conduct air quality analyses. The MDAQMD's current guidelines, included in its *California Environmental Quality Act and Federal Conformity Guidelines* (August 2016), were adhered to in the assessment of air quality impacts for the project.

Climate

Air quality in the project area is not only affected by various emissions sources (mobile, industry, etc.) but is also affected by atmospheric conditions such as wind speed, wind direction, temperature, and rainfall.

The MDAB is an assemblage of mountain ranges interspersed with long broad valleys that often contain dry lakes. Many of the lower mountains within the vast terrain rise from 1,000 to 4,000 feet above the

valley floor. Prevailing winds in the MDAB are out of the west and southwest. These prevailing winds are due to the proximity of the MDAB to coastal and central regions and the blocking nature of the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the north; air masses pushed onshore in Southern California by differential heating are channeled through the MDAB. The MDAB is separated from the Southern California coastal and Central California valley regions by mountains (highest elevation is approximately 10,000 feet), whose passes form the main channels for these air masses. The Mojave Desert is bordered on the southwest by the San Bernardino Mountains, separated from the San Gabriel Mountains by the Cajon Pass (4,200 feet). A lesser pass lies between the San Bernardino Mountains and the Little San Bernardino Mountains in the Morongo Valley. The Palo Verde Valley portion of the Mojave Desert lies in the low desert, at the eastern end of a series of valleys (notably the Coachella Valley), whose primary channel is the San Geronio Pass (2,300 feet) between the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains.

During the summer, the MDAB is generally influenced by a Pacific subtropical high cell that sits off the coast, inhibiting cloud formation and encouraging daytime solar heating. The MDAB is rarely influenced by cold air masses moving south from Canada and Alaska, as these frontal systems are weak and diffuse by the time they reach the desert. Most desert moisture arrives from infrequent warm, moist, and unstable air masses from the south. The MDAB averages between three and seven inches of precipitation per year (from 16 to 30 days with at least 0.01 inch of precipitation). The MDAB is classified as a dry-hot desert climate, with portions classified as dry-very hot desert, to indicate that at least three months have maximum average temperatures over 100.4° F.

Snow is common above 5,000 feet in elevation, resulting in moderate snowpack and limited spring runoff. Below 5,000 feet, any precipitation normally occurs as rainfall. Pacific storm fronts normally move into the area from the west, driven by prevailing winds from the west and southwest. During late summer, moist high-pressure systems from the Pacific collide with rising heated air from desert areas, resulting in brief, high-intensity thunderstorms that can cause high winds and localized flash flooding

Applicable Regulatory Requirements

MDAQMD Rules that are currently applicable during construction activity for this project include but are not limited to Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust) and Rule 1113 (Architectural Coatings).

MDAQMD Rule 403

The purpose of this rule is to reduce the amount of PM₁₀ entrained in the ambient air from anthropogenic fugitive dust sources within the MDAQMD by requiring actions to prevent, reduce, or mitigate fugitive dust. The following measures shall be incorporated into project plans and specifications as implementation of Rule 403.

- Use periodic watering for short-term stabilization of Disturbed Surface Area to minimize visible fugitive dust emissions. For purposes of this Rule, use of a water truck to maintain moist disturbed surfaces and actively spread water during visible dusting episodes shall be considered sufficient to maintain compliance.
- Take actions sufficient to prevent project-related trackout onto paved surfaces.

MDAQMD Rule 1113

The purpose of this rule is to limit the quantity of volatile organic compounds (VOC) in architectural coatings. The following measures shall be incorporated into project plans and specifications as implementation of MDAQMD Rule 1113.

- Only “Low-VOC” paints consistent with MDAQMD Rule 1113 shall be used.

Methodology

The California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) in conjunction with other California air districts, including MDAQMD, released CalEEMod 2022 in May 2022. CalEEMod periodically releases updates, as such the latest version available at the time of this report has been utilized in this analysis. The purpose of this model is to calculate construction-source and operational-source criteria pollutant (VOCs, NO_x, SO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}) and GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources; and quantify applicable air quality and GHG reductions achieved from mitigation measures. Accordingly, the latest version of CalEEMod has been used for this project to determine construction and operational air quality and GHG emissions.

Air Quality Regional Emissions Thresholds

The MDAQMD has developed regional significance thresholds for criteria pollutants, as summarized at Table III-1. The MDAQMD’s *CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines* indicate that any projects in the MDAB with daily regional emissions that exceed any of the indicated thresholds should be considered as having an individually and cumulatively significant air quality impact.

Table III-1: Maximum Daily Regional Emissions Thresholds

Pollutant	Regional Thresholds
NO _x	137 lbs/day
VOC	137 lbs/day
PM ₁₀	82 lbs/day
PM _{2.5}	65 lbs/day
SO _x	137 lbs/day
CO	548 lbs/day

lbs/day = Pounds Per Day

Impact Analysis

- Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The Federal Particulate Matter Attainment Plan and Ozone Attainment Plan for the Mojave Desert set forth a comprehensive set of programs that will lead the MDAB into compliance with federal and State air quality standards. The control measures and related emission reduction estimates within the Federal Particulate Matter Attainment Plan and Ozone Attainment Plan are based upon emissions projections for a future development scenario derived from land use, population, and employment characteristics defined in consultation with local governments. Accordingly, conformance with these attainment plans for development projects is determined by demonstrating compliance with the indicators discussed below:

Consistency Criterion No. 1

The project proposes redevelopment of an existing historically themed retail area with construction of 3,024 square feet shaded outdoor dining area situated in between the existing Soundstage and Gazette buildings. New modular structures are proposed to serve as public restrooms, mobile snack cart, and a self-contained mobile kitchen. The existing structures will be remodeled to serve two purposes: an event and hospitality space (Soundstage) and an Ice Cream/Coffee Shop (Gazette).

The Soundstage remodel includes new ADA restrooms, ADA parking, Bar Area, and Lounge. The interior of Soundstage will be a flexible open area in the middle with permanent seating on the interior perimeter. The outdoor patio area will have non-fixed picnic tables. Utility improvements include a new septic waste system and new electrical panel. The San Bernardino County designates the project site for Commercial land uses, which is intended for retail trade and personal services, repair services, lodging services, recreation and entertainment services, transportation services, and similar and compatible uses. Agriculture and residential uses allowed also but are secondary in importance. Additionally, the project site is zoned as SD-RES. The Special-Development zoning category allows for a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. A Residential subcategory designation indicates that the primary focus is on residential planned development projects. The project is consistent with the Commercial land use designation but is inconsistent with the Special-Development Residential zoning designation. However, since the project regional construction and operational emissions (refer to Tables III-4 and III-5 under issue III(b), below) do not exceed the thresholds of significance, the project would not cause an exceedance of an air quality violation.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, the project is determined to be consistent with Criterion No. 1 and a less than significant impact is expected.

It should also be noted that since the proposed project is not a residential use, it does not contribute directly to an increase in population. As such, there would be no impact on population projections, and consequently, the project's implementation would not alter the assumptions or forecasts within the AQMP.

Consistency Criterion No. 2

All MDAQMD Rules and Regulations

The project would be required to comply with all applicable MDAQMD Rules and Regulations, including, but not limited to Rules 401 (Visible Emissions), 402 (Nuisance), 403 (Fugitive Dust), and 1113 (Architectural Coatings). As previously stated, the project would implement MDAQMD Rule 403 and MDAQMD Rule 1113. While compliance with all applicable rules is mandatory, only the emission reductions associated with implementation of Rule 403 and Rule 1113 can be quantified in CalEEMod.

Consistency Criterion No. 3

Demonstrating that the project will not increase the frequency or severity of a violation in the federal or state ambient air quality standards

As the project's construction and operational-source emissions would not exceed applicable MDAQMD significance thresholds. As such, the project would not have the potential to increase the frequency or severity of a violation in the federal or state ambient air quality for on-going project operations.

Valley Fever

Valley Fever, *Coccidioidomycosis*, more commonly known as "valley fever," is an infection caused by inhalation of the spores of the *Coccidioides immitis* fungus, which grows in the soils of the southwestern United States. The fungus is very prevalent in the soils of California's San Joaquin Valley, particularly in Kern County. The ecological factors that appear to be most conducive to survival and replication of the spores are high summer temperatures, mild winters, sparse rainfall, and alkaline, sandy soils.

San Bernardino County is not considered a highly endemic county (i.e., highly endemic meaning more than 20 cases annually of valley fever per 100,000 people) based on the incidence rates reported through 2024. The latest report from the California Department of Public Health indicates that San Bernardino County had 178 cases in 2024, or 8.2 cases per 100,000 people.

Construction of the proposed project has the potential to generate fugitive dust that may suspend coccidioides spores and expose sensitive receptors. The project site is located in an area with low Valley Fever activity; however, there is still a potential for exposure. As previously stated, the Project would be required to comply with all applicable MDAQMD Rules and Regulations, including Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust). Implementation of Rule 403 would reduce fugitive dust minimizing exposure of coccidioides spores to workers and receptors. Recommended construction activity mitigation intended to minimize fugitive dust impacts includes **MMs AQ-1 through AQ-6**. Therefore, impacts related to Valley Fever from the proposed project would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

AQMP Consistency Conclusion

The project's proposed land uses are consistent with the Countywide Plan land use designations, and the project would not exceed the applicable regional thresholds during construction or operations for emissions of VOCs, NO_x, CO, SO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} and would therefore be considered to have a less than significant impact. Therefore, the project is considered to be consistent with the AQMP and impacts under this issue are considered less than significant.

- b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The MDAQMD relies on the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) guidance for determining cumulative impacts. The SCAQMD has recognized that there is typically insufficient information to quantitatively evaluate the cumulative contributions of multiple projects because each project applicant has no control over nearby projects.

The SCAQMD has published a report on how to address cumulative impacts from air pollution: White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution. In this report the SCAQMD clearly states (Page D-3):

“...the SCAQMD uses the same significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts for all environmental topics analyzed in an Environmental Assessment or EIR. The only case where the significance thresholds for project specific and cumulative impacts differ is the Hazard Index (HI) significance threshold for TAC emissions. The project specific (project increment) significance threshold is HI > 1.0 while the cumulative (facility-wide) is HI > 3.0. It should be noted that the HI is only one of three TAC emission significance thresholds considered (when applicable) in a CEQA analysis. The other two are the maximum individual cancer risk (MICR) and the cancer burden, both of which use the same significance thresholds (MICR of 10 in 1 million and cancer burden of 0.5) for project specific and cumulative impacts.

Projects that exceed the project-specific significance thresholds are considered by the SCAQMD

to be cumulatively considerable. This is the reason project-specific and cumulative significance thresholds are the same. Conversely, projects that do not exceed the project-specific thresholds are generally not considered to be cumulatively significant.”

Therefore, this analysis assumes that individual projects that do not generate operational or construction emissions that exceed the SCAQMD’s recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts would also not cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which MDAB is in nonattainment, and, therefore, would not be considered to have a significant, adverse air quality impact. Alternatively, individual project-related construction and operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD thresholds for project-specific impacts would be considered cumulatively considerable.

Construction Activities

Construction activities associated with the project would result in emissions of VOCs, NO_x, SO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. Construction related emissions are expected from the following construction activities:

Project Construction

- Demolition
- Site Preparation
- Grading
- Building Construction
- Paving
- Architectural Coating

Septic Tank Construction

- Linear, Grading & Excavation
- Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade
- Linear, Trenching

Dust Emissions

Dust is typically a major concern during demolition and grading activities. Because such emissions are not amenable to collection and discharge through a controlled source, they are called “fugitive emissions.” Fugitive dust emission rates vary as a function of many parameters (soil silt, soil moisture, wind speed, area disturbed, number of vehicles, depth of disturbance or excavation, etc.). CalEEMod was utilized to calculate fugitive dust emissions resulting from these phases of activity.

Dust Emissions

As previously mentioned, the existing structures will be remodeled for two purposes: an event and hospitality space (Soundstage) and an ice cream/coffee shop (Gazette). As a conservative estimate, this analysis assumes the potential demolition of interior structures (e.g., drywall, flooring, ceiling, etc.) and anticipates that demolition activities may generate up to 100 tons of debris.

Grading Activities

This analysis assumes that earthwork activities are expected to balance on site, and no import or export of soil would be required.

On-Road Trips

Construction generates on-road vehicle emissions from vehicle usage for workers and vendors commuting to and from the site. For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that approximately 10 to 15 employees will be required to support the construction of the project each day. Additionally, a maximum of 30 round trips per day will be made for the delivery of construction supplies and the removal of excavated materials.

Construction Duration

While construction of the project is projected to occur beginning in June of 2026 and would be completed by August of 2027. However, for purposes of analysis, construction of the project was expected to commence in October 2025 and would last through December 2026. The construction schedule utilized in the analysis represents a “worst-case” analysis scenario should construction occur any time after the respective dates since emission factors for construction decrease as time passes and the analysis year increases due to emission regulations becoming more stringent.⁴ The duration of construction activity and associated equipment represents a reasonable approximation of the expected construction fleet as required per *CEQA Guidelines*.

Table III-2: Construction Duration

Construction Activity	Start Date	End Date	Days
Project Construction			
Demolition	10/01/2025	10/14/2025	10
Site Preparation	10/15/2025	12/02/2025	35
Building Construction	12/03/2025	12/29/2026	280
Paving	12/16/2026	12/29/2026	10
Architectural Coating	12/16/2026	12/29/2026	10
Septic Tank Construction			
Linear, Grading & Excavation	06/01/2026	07/01/2026	23
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	07/02/2026	07/22/2026	15
Linear, Trenching	07/23/2026	08/07/2026	12

Construction Equipment

Equipment used for vertical and linear construction of the project at either site is shown in Table III-3.

⁴ As shown in the CalEEMod User’s Guide Version 2022, Appendix G “Table G-11. Statewide Average Annual Offroad Equipment Emission Factors” as the analysis year increases, emission factors for the same equipment pieces decrease due to the natural turnover of older equipment being replaced by newer less polluting equipment and new regulatory requirements.

Table III-3: Construction Equipment

Construction Activity	Equipment	Quantity	Hours
Project Construction			
Demolition	Rubber Tired Dozers	1	8
	Concrete/Industrial Saws	1	8
	Crawler Tractors	3	8
Site Preparation	Graders	1	8
	Rubber Tired Dozers	1	8
	Crawler Tractors	1	8
Building Construction	Cranes	1	8
	Forklifts	1	8
	Generator Sets	1	8
	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1	8
	Welders	3	8
Paving	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1	8
	Pavers	1	8
	Paving Equipment	1	8
	Rollers	1	8
	Cement and Mortar Mixers	1	8
Architectural Coating	Air Compressors	1	8
Linear Construction			
Linear, Grading & Excavation	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	2	8
	Skid Steer Loader	1	8
Linear, Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade	Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	1	8
Linear, Trenching	Trenchers	2	8

Regional Construction Emissions Summary

The estimated maximum daily construction emissions without mitigation are summarized in Table III-4. Under the assumed scenarios, emissions resulting from the project construction at the site would not exceed thresholds established by the MDAQMD for emissions of any criteria pollutant. project construction-source emissions impacts would therefore be less-than-significant. Detailed construction model outputs are presented in **Appendices 1 and 2** to the AQGGA.

Table III-4: Regional Construction Emissions Summary

Year	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer						
2026	1.68	14.70	19.12	0.05	1.25	0.64
Winter						
2025	2.19	20.70	18.80	0.04	3.53	1.83
2026	4.78	22.20	25.70	0.08	2.99	1.23

Year	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Maximum Daily Emissions	4.78	22.20	25.70	0.08	3.53	1.83
MDAQMD Regional Threshold	137	137	548	137	82	65
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Short-term emissions are primarily related to the construction of the project and are recognized to be short in duration and without lasting impacts on air quality. With the enhanced dust control mitigation measures listed below, construction activity air pollution emissions are not expected to exceed MDAQMD CEQA thresholds for any pollutant. Regardless, the PM₁₀ non-attainment status of the Mojave Desert area requires that Best Available Control Measures (BACMs) be used as required by the MDAQMD Rule 403. Recommended construction activity mitigation includes **MMs AQ-1 through AQ-6**, each of which is intended to minimize fugitive dust impacts. The project-specific evaluation of emissions presented in the preceding analysis demonstrates that proposed project construction-source air pollutant emissions would not result in exceedances of regional thresholds. With the above mitigation measures, any impacts related to construction emissions are considered less than significant on a project-specific and cumulative basis. No further mitigation is required.

Regional Operational Emissions

The project site is currently developed with 6,223 square foot event and hospitality space (Soundstage) and 831 square foot commercial structure (Gazette). The existing commercial structure (Gazette) is proposed to be redeveloped as an ice cream/coffee shop. The estimated operation-source emissions from the commercial structure (Gazette) are summarized in Table III-5.

Table III-5: Operational Emissions from Existing Development

Source	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer						
Mobile	0.08	0.12	1.12	< 0.005	0.24	0.06
Area	0.02	< 0.005	0.04	< 0.005	< 0.005	< 0.005
Energy	< 0.005	0.01	0.01	< 0.005	< 0.005	< 0.005
Maximum Daily Emissions	0.10	0.12	1.16	<0.005	0.24	0.06
Winter						
Mobile	0.07	0.13	0.83	< 0.005	0.24	0.06
Area	0.02	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Energy	< 0.005	0.01	0.01	< 0.005	< 0.005	< 0.005
Maximum Daily Emissions	0.09	0.13	0.83	<0.005	0.24	0.06

Operational activities associated with the project would result in emissions of CO, VOCs, NO_x, SO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. Operational related emissions are expected from the following primary sources: area source emissions, mobile source emissions, and energy source emissions.

The project related operational air quality impacts derive primarily from vehicle trips generated by

the proposed project. Trip characteristics available from the *Pioneertown Mane Street Preservation and Improvement Plan Project Transportation Screening Assessment (Appendix 6)* were utilized in this analysis.

Operational emissions associated with the project are summarized in Table III-6.

Table III-6: Total Project Regional Operational Emissions

Source	Emissions (lbs/day)					
	VOC	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Summer						
Mobile	3.20	3.90	38.00	0.09	7.80	2.00
Area	0.37	<0.005	0.53	<0.005	<0.005	<0.005
Energy	0.01	0.25	0.21	<0.005	0.02	0.02
Maximum Daily Emissions	3.58	4.15	38.74	0.09	7.82	2.02
<i>Existing</i>	<i>0.10</i>	<i>0.12</i>	<i>1.16</i>	<i><0.005</i>	<i>0.24</i>	<i>0.06</i>
Net New Emissions (Project - Existing)	3.48	4.02	37.57	0.09	7.58	1.96
MDAQMD Regional Thresholds	137	137	548	137	82	65
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Winter						
Mobile	2.90	4.30	28.00	0.08	7.80	2.00
Area	0.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Energy	0.01	0.25	0.21	0.00	0.02	0.02
Maximum Daily Emissions	3.19	4.55	28.21	0.08	7.82	2.02
<i>Existing</i>	<i>0.09</i>	<i>0.13</i>	<i>0.83</i>	<i><0.005</i>	<i>0.24</i>	<i>0.06</i>
Net New Emissions (Project - Existing)	3.10	4.41	27.37	0.08	7.58	1.96
MDAQMD Regional Thresholds	137	137	548	137	82	65
Threshold Exceeded?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Project operational-source emissions would not exceed the numerical thresholds of significance established by the MDAQMD for any criteria pollutant, a less than significant impact would occur for project-related operational-source emissions and no mitigation is required.

Conclusion

With the incorporation of mitigation measures (MMs) **AQ-1** through **AQ-6**, the development of the project would have a less than significant potential to 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.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The potential impact of project-generated air pollutant emissions at sensitive receptors has also been considered. Sensitive receptors can include uses such as long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, and retirement homes. Residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, and athletic facilities can also be considered as sensitive receptors.

As per the MDAQMD’s *Guidelines*, the following project types are located within a specified distance

to an existing or planned sensitive receptor land use must be evaluated to determine exposure of substantial pollutant concentrations to sensitive receptors:

- 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 proposed project's land uses do not include the above uses. As such, no analysis for sensitive receptors is required. Additionally, results of the regional analysis indicate that the project will not exceed the MDAQMD significance thresholds during construction or operations. Therefore, sensitive receptors would not be subject to a significant air quality impact during project construction and operational activities.

The construction analysis previously presented is intentionally conservative (i.e. overstates rather than understates potential air emissions). In reality, construction is expected to be very limited and includes the development of amenities including a new sound stage and outdoor dining area which would not require significant grading or involve the construction of a large building. As a result, there will be little to no heavy diesel construction equipment and consequently no substantive exposure to sensitive receptors from diesel particulate matter (DPM) from construction activity.

- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Substantial odor-generating sources include land uses such as Agricultural uses (livestock and farming), Wastewater treatment plants, Food processing plants, Chemical plants, Composting operations, Refineries, Landfills, Dairies, and Fiberglass molding facilities. The project does not contain land uses typically associated with emitting objectionable odors. Potential odor sources associated with the proposed project may result from construction equipment exhaust and the application of asphalt and architectural coatings during construction activities and the temporary storage of typical solid waste (refuse) associated with the proposed project's (long-term operational) uses. Standard construction requirements would minimize odor impacts from construction. The construction odor emissions would be temporary, short-term, and intermittent in nature and would cease upon completion of the respective phase of construction and is thus considered less than significant. It is expected that project-generated refuse would be stored in covered containers and removed at regular intervals in compliance with the solid waste regulations. The proposed project would also be required to comply with MDAQMD Rule 402 to prevent occurrences of public nuisances. The septic tank will be maintained properly, which will ensure that no odors emit from its operation in support of the project site its operation would adversely affect a substantial number of people. Therefore, odors associated with the proposed project construction and operations would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Program

- AQ-1 The following measures shall be incorporated into project plans and specifications for implementation:**
- **Apply soil stabilizers such as hay bales or aggregate cover to inactive areas.**
 - **Prepare a high wind dust control plan and implement plan elements and terminate soil disturbance when winds exceed 25 mph.**

- Stabilize previously disturbed areas if subsequent construction is delayed.
- Water exposed surfaces and haul roads 3 times/day.
- Cover all stockpiles with tarps.
- Replace ground cover in disturbed areas quickly.
- Reduce speeds on unpaved roads to less than 15 mph.
- Trenches shall be left exposed for as short a time as possible.

AQ-2 The following signage shall be erected no later than the commencement of construction: A minimum 48 inch high by 96 inch wide sign containing the following shall be located within 50 feet of each project site entrance, meeting the specified minimum height text, black text on white background, on one inch A/C laminated plywood board, with the lower edge between six and seven feet above grade, identifying a responsible official for the site and local or toll free number that is accessible 24 hours per day:

“[Site Name] {four-inch text}
[project Name/project Number] {four-inch text}
IF YOU SEE DUST COMING FROM {four-inch text}
THIS PROJECT CALL: {six-inch text}
[Contact Name], PHONE NUMBER {six-inch text}
If you do not receive a response, Please Call {three-inch text} The MDAQMD at 1-800-635-4617 {three-inch text}”

AQ-3 During project construction a (minimum) 3,000-gallon water truck shall be available on-site at all times for dust control.

AQ-4 During Construction, wind breaks and/or fencing shall be developed in areas that are susceptible to high wind induced dusting.

AQ-5 The Developer shall use a water truck to maintain moist disturbed surfaces and actively spread water during visible dusting episodes to minimize visible fugitive dust emissions. If the site contains exposed sand or fines deposits (and if the project would expose such soils through earthmoving), water application or chemical stabilization will be required to eliminate visible dust/sand from sand/fines deposits.

AQ-6 The Developer shall formulate a high wind response plan that addresses enhanced dust control if winds are forecast to exceed 25-mph in any upcoming 24-hour period.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with implementation of the above mitigation measures.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. 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, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 Overlay [Figure IV-1] or contains habitat for any species listed in the California Natural Diversity Database). The project is located in the County's Biological Overlay for Burrowing Owl and Desert Tortoise: Sparse. The following information is provided based on a study titled "Biological Resources Assessment for the Proposed Pioneertown Mane Street Preservation and Improvement Plan Located within Assessor Parcel Numbers 0594- 391-06, -07, and -08 in the Community of Pioneertown, San Bernardino County, California" (BRA) prepared by ELMT Consulting, Inc. dated October 16, 2024, provided as **Appendix 2**.

General Setting

Vegetation

Due to historic and ongoing land uses, no natural plant communities are supported within or adjacent to the project site. The site supports two (2) land cover types that would be classified as disturbed and developed (Figure IV-2).

Narrow swaths of disturbed land are supported along site boundaries where routine weed abatement and maintenance activities occur. These areas primarily support weedy/early successional species that are adapted to establishing in routinely disturbed areas. Common plant species observed in the disturbed portions of the project site include devil's lettuce (*Amsinckia tessellata*), desert mariposa-lily (*Calochortus kennedyi*), wingnut cryptantha (*Cryptantha pectocarya*), sacred datura (*Datura wrightii*), rubber rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Saharan mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*), red brome (*Bromus rubens*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), foxtail (*Hordeum murinum*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), Mediterranean grass (*Schismus barbatus*), and London rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*).

The majority of the project site supports developed land with existing commercial development, ornamental landscaping, parking lots, and the Mane Street Historic District. Vegetation supported in the developed portions of the site is generally limited to ornamental landscaping, with limited weedy/early successional species present. Parking lots are unpaved; however, they are periodically subject to sufficient disturbances from lot maintenance and vehicle and pedestrian access to prevent the establishment of a plant community. Common species observed in the developed and ornamentally landscaped portions of the project site include western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*), oleander (*Nerium oleander*), Italian cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*), red-stemmed filaree, Saharan mustard, and desert mariposa-lily.

Wildlife

Plant communities provide foraging habitat, nesting/denning sites, and shelter from adverse weather or predation. This section provides a discussion of those wildlife species that were observed or are expected to occur within the project site. The discussion is to be used as a general reference and is limited by the season, time of day, and weather conditions in which the field investigation was conducted. Wildlife detections were based on calls, songs, scat, tracks, burrows, and direct observation. The project site provides limited habitat for wildlife species except those adapted to a high degree of anthropogenic disturbances and development.

Nesting Birds

No active nests associated with native avian species were observed on-site during the field investigation. Multiple avians, including ladder-backed woodpeckers, northern mockingbirds, and house finches, were observed exhibiting nesting behaviors including territorial displays and nest construction and excavation. The project site and surrounding area, including structures, provide suitable nesting opportunities for year-round and seasonal avian residents, as well as migrating songbirds that could occur in the area that adapted to frequent vehicle and pedestrian presence. In addition, tall electrical poles and ornamental trees observed in the surrounding area provide suitable nesting opportunities for raptor species adapted to the aforementioned routine disturbances.

Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 prohibit the take, possession, or destruction of birds, their nests or eggs). Typical guidance for protecting nesting birds is that, if construction occurs between February 1st and August 31st, a pre-construction clearance survey for nesting birds should be conducted within three (3) days of the start of any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities to ensure that no nesting birds will be disturbed during construction. However, based on recent guidance from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), preconstruction nesting bird surveys shall occur regardless of the time of year due to changing climate resulting in nesting out of season.

Special-Status Plants

According to the CNDDDB and CNPS, twenty-five (25) special-status plant species have been recorded in the Rimrock and Yucca Valley North quadrangles. The project site supports exclusively developed and highly disturbed land and no natural plant communities are supported within or adjacent to site boundaries. One (1) special-status plant species, western Joshua tree, was observed on-site during the field investigation. Based on habitat requirements for specific special-status plant species and the availability and quality of habitats needed by each species, it was determined that the project site does not have potential to support any of the other special-status plant species known to occur in the vicinity of the site and all are presumed to be absent.

Western Joshua Tree

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) designated the western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*) as a candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) in October 2020. This action afforded the western Joshua tree the same CESA protections as listed species, which means that removal of the desert trees was subject to fines and criminal penalties unless authorized by a “take” permit issued by the CDFW. Such permits were difficult to obtain, and when issued would authorize removal only in limited circumstances. The new law, which became effective July 1, streamlines the western Joshua Tree take permit process and broadens the purposes for which a permit may be issued. A western Joshua tree may now be removed for any purpose, so long as a permit is obtained and the removal is fully mitigated, or alternatively, an in-lieu mitigation fee is paid. The table below summarizes the new rules for the area in which the project site is located.

Table IV-1: Western Joshua Tree Mitigation

Location	Mitigation Fees
The project site is not located within the Reduced Mitigation Fee Area.	Full mitigation, or in-lieu fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,500 per tree > 5 meters tall • \$500 per tree 1 to 5 meters tall • \$340 per tree < 1 meter tall

A total of six (6) western Joshua trees measuring between 1 and 5 meters in height were observed on the northern boundary of the project site along Mane Street in accordance with western Joshua tree protocols. These western Joshua trees are shown overlaid on the site plan in **Figure IV-2**. No western Joshua trees are expected to be directly impacted by project implementation, and they will be protected in place. Project impacts will occur within 50 feet of the mapped western Joshua trees.

Special-Status Plant Communities

No special-status plant communities were identified as occurring in the Rimrock and Yucca Valley North quadrangles and no special-status plant communities were observed during the field investigation. Therefore, no special-status plant communities will be impacted by project implementation.

Special-Status Wildlife

According to the CNDDDB, ten (10) special-status wildlife species have been reported in the Rimrock and Yucca Valley North quadrangles (refer to Attachment D of **Appendix 2**). The project site supports exclusively developed and highly disturbed land and no natural plant communities are supported within or adjacent to site boundaries. No special-status wildlife species or signs thereof (i.e., burrows, scat, etc.) were observed during the field investigation. Based on habitat requirements for specific species and the availability and quality of on-site habitats and isolation of the site from natural habitats, it was determined that the proposed project site does not have potential to support any of the special-status wildlife species known to occur in the vicinity of the site and all are presumed to be absent.

In order to ensure impacts to special-status avian species do not occur from implementation of the proposed project, a pre-construction nesting bird clearance survey shall be conducted prior to ground disturbance. With implementation of the pre-construction nesting bird clearance survey, impacts to special-status avian species will be less than significant and no mitigation will be required.

Due to regional significance and listing status, the potential occurrence of burrowing owl and desert tortoise are discussed in further detail below.

Burrowing Owl

On October 25, 2024, the California Fish and Game Commission also accepted a petition to make the western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)(BUOW) a candidate for listing as a threatened or endangered species under CESA and this species also now receives the same legal protection afforded to a state listed threatened or endangered species. This species is also protected by international treaty under the MBTA and by State law under the California FGC (FGC #3513 & #3503.5). It is a grassland specialist distributed throughout western North America where it occupies open areas with short vegetation and bare ground within shrub, desert, and grassland environments. Burrowing owls use a wide variety of arid and semi-arid environments with well-drained, level to gently sloping areas characterized by sparse vegetation and bare ground. Burrowing owls are dependent upon the presence of burrowing mammals (such as ground squirrels) whose burrows are used for roosting and nesting. The presence or absence of colonial mammal burrows is often a major factor that limits the presence or absence of burrowing owls. Where mammal burrows are scarce, burrowing owls have been found occupying man-made cavities, such as buried and non-functioning drainpipes, standpipes, and dry culverts. Burrowing mammals may be burrowed beneath rocks and debris or large, heavy objects such as abandoned cars, concrete blocks, or concrete pads. They also require open vegetation allowing line-of-sight observation of the surrounding habitat to forage as well as watch for predators.

No burrowing owls or new sign of use (i.e., pellets, feathers, castings, or whitewash) were observed during the field investigation. The land cover types supported by the site allow for line-of-sight observation favored by burrowing owls. However, no suitable burrows (>4 inches) for roosting and nesting were observed on-site. Further, routine anthropogenic disturbance associated with existing

land uses preclude burrowing owl from occurring on-site. Therefore, the project site was determined not have potential to support burrowing owl. No further surveys are recommended.

Desert Tortoise

The Mojave population of the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) inhabits areas north and west of the Colorado River in the Mojave Desert of California, Nevada, Arizona, and southwestern Utah, and in the Sonoran Desert in California. Throughout the majority of the Mojave Desert, desert tortoises occur most commonly on gentle sloping soils characterized by an even mix of sand and gravel and sparsely vegetated low-growing vegetation where there is abundant inter-shrub space. Typical habitat for the Mojave Desert Tortoise has been characterized as Mojavean desert scrub below 5,500 feet in elevation with a high diversity of perennial and ephemeral plants. The dominant shrub commonly associated with desert tortoise habitat is creosote bush; however, other shrubs including burrobush (*Ambrosia dumosa*), Mojave yucca, cheesebush (*Ambrosia salsolea*), and Mojave prickly pear (*Opuntia mojavensis*) also provide suitable habitat. The desert tortoise spends 95 percent of its life underground and will opportunistically utilize burrows of various lengths, deep caves, rock and caliche crevices, or overhangs for cover. Therefore, moderately friable soil is required to allow for burrow construction and ensure that burrows do not collapse.

No live desert tortoises, suitable burrows, or other sign were observed during the field investigation. The land cover types supported by the project site provide neither suitable foraging habitat nor burrowing conditions for desert tortoise. Further, isolation by surrounding development and routine anthropogenic disturbance associated with existing land uses preclude desert tortoise from occurring on-site. Therefore, the project site was determined not to have potential to support desert tortoise. No further surveys are recommended.

Critical Habitat

Under the federal Endangered Species Act, “Critical Habitat” is designated at the time of listing of a species or within one year of listing. Critical Habitat refers to specific areas within the geographical range of a species at the time it is listed that include the physical or biological features that are essential to the survival and eventual recovery of that species. Maintenance of these physical and biological features requires special management considerations or protection, regardless of whether individuals or the species are present or not. All federal agencies are required to consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding activities they authorize, fund, or permit which may affect a federally listed species or its designated Critical Habitat. The purpose of the consultation is to ensure that projects will not jeopardize the continued existence of the listed species or adversely modify or destroy its designated Critical Habitat. The designation of Critical Habitat does not affect private landowners, unless a project they are proposing is on federal lands, uses federal funds, or requires federal authorization or permits (e.g., funding from the Federal Highways Administration or a Clean Water Act Permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers [Corps]). If there is a federal nexus, then the federal agency that is responsible for providing the funding or permit would consult with the USFWS.

The project site is not located within federally designated Critical Habitat. The nearest Critical Habitat designations to the site is located approximately 10.8 miles to the northwest for Cushenbury buckwheat (*Eriogonum ovalifolium* var. *vineum*) and Parish’s daisy (*Erigeron parishii*). Therefore, no impacts to federally designated Critical Habitat will occur from implementation of the proposed project.

Jurisdictional Waters

There are three key agencies that regulate activities within inland streams, wetlands, and riparian areas in California. The Corps Regulatory Branch regulates discharge of dredge or fill materials into “waters of the United States” pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. Of the State agencies, the CDFW regulates alterations to streambed and bank under Fish and Game Code Sections 1600 et seq., and the Regional Board regulates discharges into surface waters pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

A query of the National Wetlands Database (NWI) database found no potential blueline streams, riverine, or other aquatic resources within or adjacent to the project site. During the field investigation, one (1) swale was observed traversing the northern boundary of the project site from west to east along the middle of Mane Street, a dirt access road. This feature is an erosional feature that only receives flows from direct precipitation during storm events and surface runoff from adjacent developed areas.

The project site does not support any discernible drainage courses, inundated areas, wetland features, or hydric soils that would be considered jurisdictional by the Corps, Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board or RWQCB), or CDFW. Therefore, project activities will not result in impacts to Corps, Regional Board, or CDFW jurisdictional areas and regulatory approvals will not be required.

Impact Analysis

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* –

Sensitive Biological Resources

Special Status Wildlife

A BRA survey was conducted by ELMT Consulting in March 2024 to identify potential habitat for special-status wildlife and habitats within the project area. The habitat assessment evaluated the conditions of the habitat(s) within the boundaries of the project site to determine if the existing plant communities, at the time of the survey, have the potential to provide suitable habitat(s) for special-status plant and wildlife species. The literature search identified twenty-five (25) special-status plant species and ten (10) special-status wildlife species as having potential to occur within the Rimrock and Yucca Valley North USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles.

Based on habitat requirements for specific species and the availability and quality of onsite habitats, it was determined that the proposed project site has a low potential to support western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) and desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). It was further determined that the project site does not provide suitable habitat for any of the other special-status wildlife species known to occur in the vicinity of the site.

No burrowing owls or new signs thereof (i.e., pellets, feathers, castings, or whitewash) were observed during the field investigation. The land cover types supported by the site allow for line-of-sight observation favored by burrowing owls. However, no suitable burrows (>4 inches) for roosting and nesting were observed on-site. Further, routine anthropogenic disturbances associated with existing land uses preclude burrowing owl from occurring on-site. Therefore, the project site was determined not to have potential to support burrowing owl. No further surveys are recommended.

No live desert tortoises, suitable burrows, or other signs were observed during the field investigation. The land cover types supported by the project site provide neither suitable foraging habitat nor burrowing conditions for desert tortoise. Further, isolation by surrounding development and routine anthropogenic disturbance associated with existing land uses preclude desert tortoise from occurring on-site. Therefore, the project site was determined not to have potential to support desert tortoise. No further surveys are recommended.

Thus, impacts to special status wildlife are considered less than significant without the need for added mitigation.

Special Status Plant Communities

According to the CNDDDB and CNPS, twenty-five (25) special-status plant species have been recorded in the Rimrock and Yucca Valley North quadrangles (refer to Attachment D of Appendix 2). The project site supports exclusively developed and highly disturbed land and no natural plant communities are supported within or adjacent to site boundaries. While western Joshua tree was observed on-site during the field investigation, based on habitat requirements for specific special-status plant species, it was determined that the project site does not have potential to support any of the other special-status plant species known to occur in the vicinity of the site and all are presumed to be absent.

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) designated the western Joshua tree as a candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) in October 2020. The new law, which became effective July 1, streamlines the western Joshua tree take permit process and broadens the purposes for which a permit may be issued. A western Joshua tree may now be removed for any purpose, so long as a permit is obtained and the removal is fully mitigated, or alternatively, an in-lieu mitigation fee is paid. A total of six (6) western Joshua trees measuring between 1 and 5 meters in height were observed on the northern boundary of the project site along Mane Street in accordance with western Joshua tree protocols. These western Joshua trees are shown overlaid on the site plan in **Figure IV-2**. No western Joshua trees are expected to be directly impacted by project implementation, and they will be protected in place. The project would be developed within 50 feet of the mapped western Joshua trees, and thus, mitigation is necessary to ensure their protection during construction. However, to protect the trees during construction, **MMs BIO-1 through BIO-3** shall be implemented.

No special-status plant communities were identified as occurring in the Rimrock and Yucca Valley North quadrangles and no special-status plant communities were observed during the field investigation. Therefore, no special-status plant communities will be impacted by project implementation.

Impact Conclusion

No special-status wildlife species were observed on-site during the field investigation. Based on habitat requirements for specific species and the availability and quality of on-site habitats, it was determined that the proposed project site does not have a potential to support burrowing owl or desert tortoise. It was further determined that the project site does not provide suitable habitat for any of the other special-status wildlife species known to occur in the vicinity of the site. As the proposed project site contains 6 western Joshua trees, mitigation to protect the trees in place is

necessary to minimize impacts to this species **MMs BIO-1 through BIO-3**. Thus, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the implementation of mitigation.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project site is not located within federally designated Critical Habitat. The nearest Critical Habitat designations to the site is located approximately 10.8 miles to the northwest for Cushenbury buckwheat (*Eriogonum ovalifolium* var. *vineum*) and Parish’s daisy (*Erigeron parishii*). Therefore, no impacts to federally designated Critical Habitat will occur from implementation of the proposed project. Thus, impacts are less than significant.
- c. *No Impact* – The project site does not support any discernible drainage courses, inundated areas, wetland features, or hydric soils that would be considered jurisdictional by the Corps, Regional Board, or CDFW. A query of the NWI database found no potential blue-line streams, riverine, or other aquatic resources within or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, project activities will not result in impacts to Corps, Regional Board, or CDFW jurisdictional areas and regulatory approvals will not be required and thus, the proposed project would have no potential to 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.
- d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The site was not identified as occurring within or adjacent to a recognized wildlife corridor. According to the San Bernardino County Countywide Plan, the nearest major open space area to the site is located approximately 9.8 miles to the northwest within the San Bernardino Mountains. In addition, the Open Space Element identifies Wilderness Areas as occurring approximately 5.6 miles to the northwest. The proposed project will be confined to existing areas that have been heavily disturbed or developed and are isolated from regional wildlife corridors and linkages. In addition, there are no riparian corridors, creeks, or useful patches of steppingstone habitat (natural areas) within or connecting the site to a recognized wildlife corridor or linkage. As such, the project site and off-site street improvement areas are not expected to contribute to local wildlife movement opportunities and no impacts to wildlife corridors or linkages will occur from project implementation.

However, nesting birds are protected pursuant to the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code (Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 prohibit the take, possession, or destruction of birds, their nests or eggs). A pre-construction clearance survey for nesting birds shall be conducted within three (3) days (72-hours) of the start of any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities to ensure that no nesting birds will be disturbed during construction. A pre-construction nesting bird clearance survey shall be conducted prior to ground disturbance. Thus, with implementation of **MM BIO-4**, any effects on migratory birds, wildlife movement or the use of wildlife nursery sites can be reduced to a less than significant impact.

- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Certain desert plant species (i.e., smoke trees, cacti, Mojave yuccas [*Yucca schidigera*]) are regulated pursuant to Section 88.01.060 of the San Bernardino County Development Code and Section 80073 of the California Desert Native Plant Act. Therefore, impacts

to these species should be avoided in all instances. In the event that avoidance is not feasible, the project applicant will be required to obtain a Tree or Plant Removal Permit from the County, prior to removal of any regulated tree or plant. However, it is anticipated that, due to the site design and absence of most protected species except the western Joshua tree, the proposed project will avoid impacting desert plant species that require permit for removal from the County. Thus, through compliance with the County Development Code and Desert Plant removal permitting therein, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

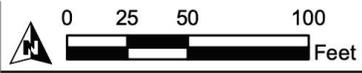
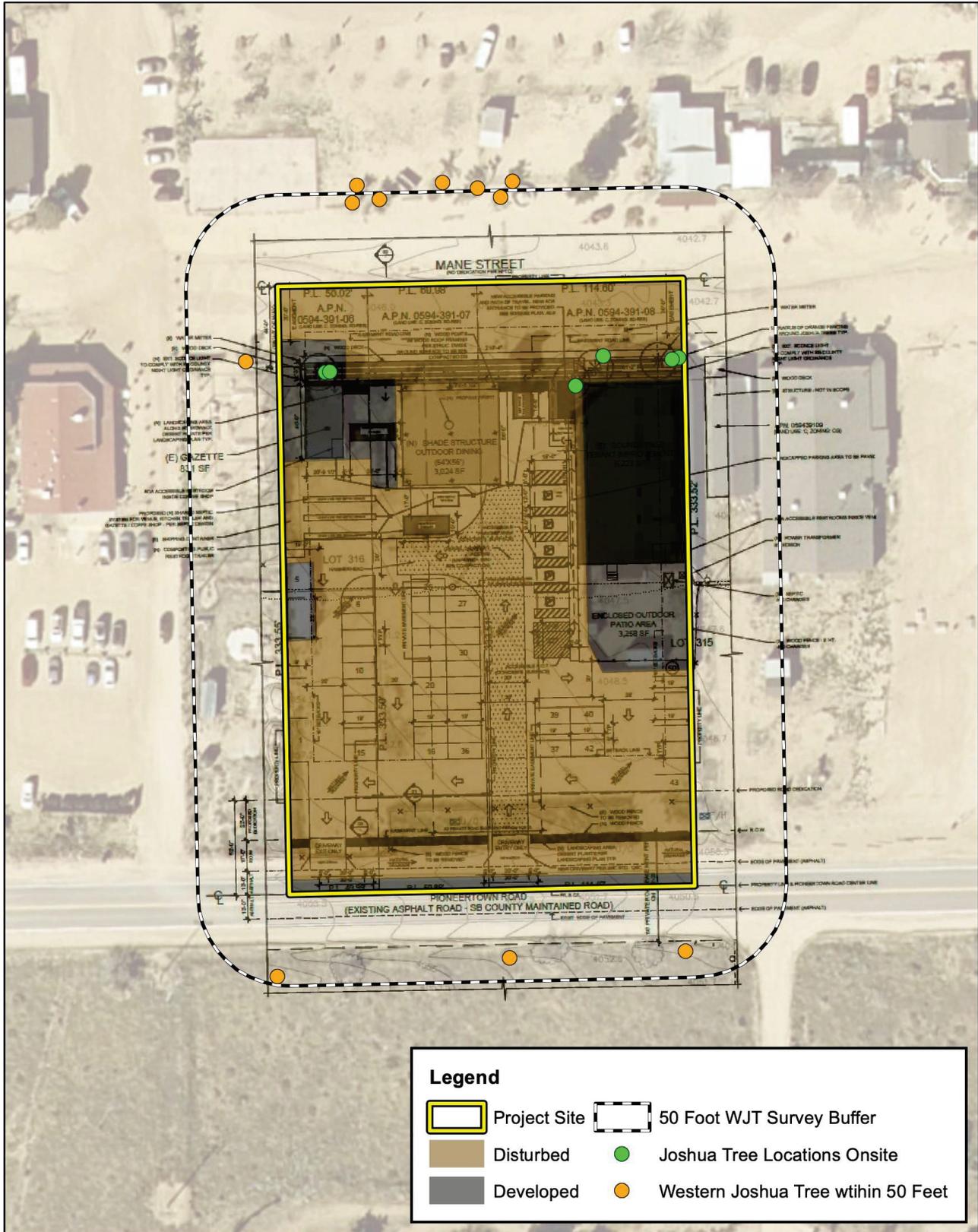
- f. *No Impact* – The BRA provided as **Appendix 2** concluded that the project site is not located in an area within a Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan, and implementation of the proposed project would therefore not result in a significant impact to any such plans. No mitigation is required.

Mitigation Program

- BIO-1** Construction fencing 4” or higher shall be installed around western Joshua Trees a minimum of 1’ around the trees that are within 50 feet of construction activities, unless a tree is located on a neighboring property and there is an existing fence between the neighboring property. Fencing shall be maintained throughout construction and shall be removed at the conclusion of construction. Signs shall be posted at each tree indicating protection of the trees.
- BIO-2** Heavy construction equipment shall not be operated or stored within the western Joshua tree protection area delineated by the construction fencing required by MM BIO-1, unless a tree is located on a neighboring property and there is an existing fence between the neighboring property. Construction equipment and materials shall be stored at least 50 feet from any western Joshua tree and to protect the tree’s root zone, no trenching, removal, or addition of soil shall occur within this same buffer.
- BIO-3** The western Joshua tree is a candidate threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act. Prior to the initiation of western Joshua tree removal, relocation, replanting, trimming, or pruning or any activity that may result in take of WJT, the Developer shall obtain California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) under Section 2081b of the CESA, or under the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA) of Fish and Game Code (§§ 1927- 1927.12). California Fish and Game Code section 86 defines “take” as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill”. Mitigation for CESA will occur at a minimum 1:1 or per the stem count per the WJTCA census in lieu fee.
- BIO-4** Regardless of the time of year, a preconstruction survey shall be performed to verify absence of nesting birds. A qualified biologist shall conduct the pre-activity survey within the Project areas (including access routes) and a 500-foot buffer surrounding the Project areas, no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of project activities, including, but not limited to clearing, grubbing, and/or rough grading to prevent impacts to birds and their nests. Pre-construction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of

nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified biologist shall make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If nesting bird activity is present within the work area or the Project's zone of influence (generally 100-300 feet), a no disturbance buffer zone shall be established by the qualified biologist to be marked on the ground around each nest. The buffer shall be a minimum of 500 feet for raptors and 300 feet for songbirds, unless a smaller buffer is specifically determined by a qualified biologist familiar with the nesting phenology of the nesting species. The buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. Active nest(s) and an established buffer distance(s) shall be monitored daily by the qualified biologist until the qualified biologist has determined whether the young have fledged or the Project has been completed. The qualified biologist has the authority to stop work if nesting pairs exhibit signs of disturbance. If there is no nesting activity, then no further action is needed for this measure. If an active nest is encountered during the Project construction, construction shall stop immediately until a qualified biologist can determine (1) the status of the nest, and (2) when work can proceed without risking violation to state or federal laws.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with implementation of the above mitigation measures.



Source: ESRI Aerial Imagery, San Bernardino County

PIONEERTOWN SOUNDSTAGE PROJECT
Vegetation

FIGURE IV-2

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

SUBSTANTIATION: Check if project is located in the Archaeological or Paleontological Resources overlays or cite results of cultural resource review) The information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: “*Cultural Resources Assessment Pioneertown Mane Street Preservation and Improvement Plan Project Pioneertown, Unincorporated San Bernardino County, California*” prepared by BCR Consulting LLC dated July 24, 2024 (**Appendix 3a**). Additionally, a “*Historic Building Study and CEQA-Compliance Analysis Pioneertown Gazette and Soundstage Buildings, 53563 and 53585 Mane Street Pioneertown, San Bernardino County, California Conditional Use Permit Application No. 2022-00191*” was prepared by CRM TECH for the proposed project, dated June 27, 2025 (**Appendix 3b**)

Background

BCR Consulting LLC (BCR Consulting) completed a Cultural Resources Assessment of the project. A cultural resources records search, pedestrian field survey, Sacred Lands File Search through the Native American Heritage Commission, and vertebrate paleontological resources assessment were conducted for the project in partial fulfillment of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The records search revealed that three cultural resource studies have taken place resulting in the recording of five cultural resources within one mile of the project site. One previous study has assessed the project site resulting in one cultural resource (the Pioneertown Mane Street Historic District designated P-36-25903) within which the project site is located. During the research and field survey, BCR Consulting archaeologists identified two previously recorded contributing elements (the Pioneertown Gazette building and the Silver Dollar building [currently known as the Pioneertown Soundstage]) to the existing district (P-36-25903) within the project site and recorded them on California Department of Park and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms. This district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (the National Register) in 2020, which means that it is automatically listed on the California Register of Historical Resources (the California Register), making it a Historical Resource under CEQA.

Because the Pioneertown Mane Street Historic District is a Historic Property and a Historical Resource, any

proposed project activities should be consistent with “plans for rehabilitation to ensure that the undertaking maintains consistency with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties” (36 CFR part 68). The Standards are intended to pertain to rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility. Project design must be carried out in consultation with a professional that meets the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualification Standards for Historic Architecture (National Park Service 2024).

Preservation in place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to historical resources under CEQA. Where preservation and rehabilitation (as described above) are not an option, a data collection mitigation program has been developed in which potential adverse effects of any proposed demolition would be reduced.

If significant adverse effects are unavoidable, prior to any project-related impacts to significant resources, the County would complete or require the completion of Historic American Building Survey (HABS) style photographic documentation of the subject property. While the photographs would meet HABS standards, only local curation (and no federal curation or involvement) would be necessary. The photographic documentation will be provided to the County (and any required local repositories) for curation. However:

In most cases the use of drawings, photographs, and/or displays does not mitigate the physical impact on the environment caused by demolition or destruction of an historical resource (14 CCR § 15126.4(b)). However, CEQA requires that all feasible mitigation be undertaken even if it does not mitigate below a level of significance. In this context, recordation serves a legitimate archival purpose. The level of documentation required as a mitigation should be proportionate with the level of significance of the resource (California State Parks 2024).

The current project proposes the preservation of the district contributors (the Silver Dollar building-also known as the Pioneertown Soundstage, and the Pioneertown Gazette building), although minor components may be subject to alteration. The appropriate application of the recommendations and mitigations as stated are anticipated to reduce impacts to the Pioneertown Mane Street Historic District below a significant level. This is further demonstrated by the conclusions made in **Appendix 3b**, which concluded that if the project is designed and implemented in accordance with these recommendations and guidelines, it will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of this “historical resource. The recommendations presented therein are as follows:

Project components involving the Pioneertown Gazette building are nearly entirely confined to the interior except for the installation of a wood plank decking adjacent to the front of the building. This change, as proposed, will recreate an original feature and essentially enhance the historical character of the building (Fig. 6). In fact, the other recent modifications to the building, such as removal of the synthetic siding in favor of wood board cladding and restoration of early signage, incorporate several of the character-defining features noted above in a manner consistent to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the rehabilitation of historic buildings. The proposed additional improvement of a wood plank deck will not constitute an adverse change to this historical resource.

Similarly, the planned exterior alterations to the Pioneertown Soundstage, namely the enclosed outdoor patio extension from the southern side and the ADA reserved parking and access ramp, will not in and of

themselves impose any significant physical impact to the building or cause a substantial alteration to its current appearance, especially in the primary façade. As auxiliary features, they present relatively minor and unintrusive modifications and can be easily reversed if necessary. Nevertheless, these project components should be designed with sensitivity to the building’s historical character and integrity to ensure consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards. In particular, the standards for rehabilitation provide the following guidelines for any projects that may require exterior renovation and/or modification of a significant historic building (Morton et al. 1997:vi-vii):

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Regarding the property treatment of historic buildings during “work that must be done to meet accessibility and life-safety requirements,” guidelines for implementing the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards offer the following recommendations (Weeks and Grimmer 2017:69):

- Identifying the historic building’s character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting which may be affected by accessibility code-required work.
- Complying with barrier-free access requirements in such a manner that the historic building’s character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting are preserved or impacted as little as possible.

- Working with specialists in accessibility and historic preservation to determine the most sensitive solutions to comply with access requirements in a historic building, its site, and setting.
- Providing barrier-free access that promotes independence for the user while preserving significant historic features.
- Finding solutions to meet accessibility requirements that minimize the impact of any necessary alteration for accessibility on the historic building, its site, or setting, such as compatible ramps, paths, and lifts.

No other cultural resources or sensitivity were identified during the research and fieldwork. Generally, if previously undocumented cultural resources are identified during earthmoving activities associated with development of the project site, a qualified archaeologist should be contacted to assess the nature and significance of the find, diverting construction excavation if necessary. Further, findings were negative during the Sacred Lands File search with the NAHC.

If human remains are encountered during the undertaking, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC.

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – CEQA establishes that "a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment" (PRC §21084.1). "Substantial adverse change," according to PRC §5020.1(q), "means demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of a historical resource would be impaired."

Because the Pioneertown Mane Street Historic District is a Historic Property and a Historical Resource, the proposed project is required to be consistent with "plans for rehabilitation to ensure that the undertaking maintains consistency with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties."⁵ Thus, **MM CUL-1** would be implemented to ensure that the standards for developing the proposed project align with the Secretary of Interior Standards, thereby ensuring that the proposed project preserves the historic nature of the structures on site, and thereby would not substantially alter a historic property such that a significant scenic impact would result. Further, the recommendations found in **Appendix 3b**, which are outlined under Background, above, and are found on pages 10-11 on **Appendix 3b**, detail the manner in which the project modifications to historical structures shall be carried out in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (36 CFR 67, 68). **MM CUL-1** would further require the enforcement of the recommendations found in **Appendix 3b** as part of the County's review and approval of the project design.

⁵ 36 CFR part 68; see <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/index.htm> (accessed 06/19/25)

In light of this information and pursuant to PRC §21084.1, the following conclusions have been reached for the project:

- Historical resources within the project area would be modified and rehabilitated to Secretary of the Interior Standards to avoid significant environmental effects. This requirement shall be enforced through the implementation of **MM CUL-1**. Thus, the project as currently proposed will not cause a substantial adverse change to any known historical resources.
- No further historical resources investigation is necessary for the proposed project unless construction plans undergo such changes as to include areas not covered by the Cultural Resources Assessment and Historic Building Study prepared for the project (**Appendices 3a and 3b**).

Thus, through the implementation of mitigation, the potential for impact to historical resources will be reduced to a less than significant level.

- b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Per the discussion contained in **Appendix 3a**, no archaeological sites or isolates were found to be located within the project boundaries during the field review of the project area. Further, the records search undertaken for the proposed project did not reveal any archaeological findings that would be impacted by project implementation. Thus, no such resources require further consideration.

In light of this information and pursuant to PRC §21084.1, the following conclusions have been reached for the project:

- No archaeological resources are known to occur within the project site, however, if potentially significant archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all work should be halted in the vicinity of the discovery until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance and integrity of the find through the implementation of **MM CUL-2**.
- No further cultural resources investigation is necessary for the proposed project unless construction plans undergo such changes as to include areas not covered by the Cultural Resources Assessment and Historic Building Study prepared for the project (**Appendices 3a and 3b**).
- The above conclusions are dependent on Native American Consultation, which the County has conducted with no requests from any Tribe to consult. Based on the feedback from the Tribes, no known tribal resources exist within the project site, and as a result, no impacts thereof are anticipated.

However, if potentially significant archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all work should be halted in the vicinity of the discovery until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance and integrity of the find. Furthermore, the archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that impacts to archaeological resources would be minimized to a level of less than significant. This shall be enforced through the implementation of **MM CUL-2**. Thus, through the implementation of mitigation, the potential for impact to archaeological resources will be reduced to a less than significant level.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – As noted in the discussion above, no available information suggests that human remains may occur within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and the potential for such an occurrence is considered low. Human remains discovered during the project will need to be treated in accordance with the provisions of Health and Safety Code (HSC) §7050.5 and PRC §5097.98, which is mandatory. State law (Section 7050.5 of the HSC) as well as local laws requires that the Police Department, County Sheriff and Coroner’s Office receive notification if human remains are encountered. Compliance with these laws is considered adequate mitigation for potential impacts and no further mitigation is required.

Mitigation Program

- CUL-1** The proposed project shall be designed to be consistent with the plans for rehabilitation to ensure that the undertaking maintains consistency with the “Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties” (36 CFR part 68; see <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>).

Further, the recommendations presented in CRM TECH’s Historic Building Study and CEQA-Compliance Analysis (Appendix 3b) shall be enforced and incorporated into the project design. These are:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated

from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Regarding the property treatment of historic buildings during “work that must be done to meet accessibility and life-safety requirements,” guidelines for implementing the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards offer the following recommendations that shall be implemented by the Developer of the project (Weeks and Grimmer 2017:69):

- Identify the historic building’s character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting which may be affected by accessibility code-required work.
- Comply with barrier-free access requirements in such a manner that the historic building’s character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting are preserved or impacted as little as possible.
- Work with specialists in accessibility and historic preservation to determine the most sensitive solutions to comply with access requirements in a historic building, its site, and setting.
- Provide barrier-free access that promotes independence for the user while preserving significant historic features.
- Find solutions to meet accessibility requirements that minimize the impact of any necessary alteration for accessibility on the historic building, its site, or setting, such as compatible ramps, paths, and lifts.

CUL-2 Should any cultural resources be encountered during construction of the project, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an on-site inspection shall be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the on-site archaeological professional, who is acceptable to the County and retained by the Applicant. The archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with implementation of the above mitigation measures.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VI. ENERGY: Would the project:				
a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operations?	<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"/>

VI. ENERGY

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project consists of rehabilitation and utilization of the existing Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette, including installation of a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code, as well as installation of a shaded outdoor dining area, modular structures serving as restrooms, snack carts, and a mobile kitchen, and parking.

Energy consumption encompasses many different activities. For example, construction can include the following activities: delivery of equipment and material to a site from some location (note it also requires energy to manufacture the equipment and material, such as harvesting, cutting and delivering wood from its source); employee trips to work, possibly offsite for lunch (or a visit by a catering truck), travel home, and occasionally leaving a site for an appointment or checking another job; use of equipment onsite (electric or fuel); and sometimes demolition and disposal of construction waste. During construction, the proposed project will utilize construction equipment that is CARB approved, minimizing emissions generated and electricity required to the extent feasible (as outlined under Section III, Air Quality, above). Equipment not in use for 5 minutes must be turned off, and electrical construction equipment must be used where available. This standard requirement would prevent a significant impact during construction due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, and would also conform to the CARB regulations regarding energy efficiency. Furthermore, the project is required to comply with CARB Rule 2485 (13 CCR, Chapter 10 Section 2485), Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling. The project would comply with existing regulations requiring recycling of construction debris from demolition of the onsite structures. Compliance with these existing regulations would prevent a significant impact during construction due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, and would also conform to the CARB regulations regarding energy efficiency. These requirements are consistent with State and regional rules and regulations.

Additionally, operation of construction equipment would be regulated per the In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation administered by CARB. The In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation is

intended to reduce emissions from in-use, off-road, heavy-duty diesel vehicles in California by imposing limits on idling, requiring all vehicles to be reported to CARB, restricting the addition of older vehicles into fleets, and requiring fleets to reduce emissions by retiring, replacing, or repowering older engines, or installing exhaust retrofits. Compliance with this regulation would also ensure that off-road diesel-powered vehicles would consume less fuel and more efficiently combust fuel. In addition to off-road regulations, the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) establishes stringent on-road emissions standards for heavy-duty engines, though enforcing emissions standards that promote fuel efficiency. These standards are continually evolving to result in more effective technology and more stringent standards, which reduce reliance on fossil. The development of the proposed project would be required to comply with Title 24, Part 6, of the CCR (the CALGreen Code), which would help to ensure that energy efficient equipment is utilized. As the proposed project would be required to comply with these standards and regulations, under the construction scenario outlined in the Project Description, the proposed project would not result in a significant increase in demand on regional energy supplies or require additional capacity from local or regional energy suppliers.

The proposed project will be supplied with electricity by Southern California Edison (SCE) through the existing electrical connection located within the site. SCE will be able to continue to supply sufficient electricity. No connection to natural gas would be necessary. Energy use associated with project occupancy would be typical of a commercial use, and the project would be required to comply with the most recently adopted California Energy Code, and as part of the utilization and rehabilitation of the historic structures on site, would upgrade the existing electrical panel by installing a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code, thus further reducing the demand for electricity that would be obtained from SCE's mix of electricity sources as a result of energy demanded by project occupancy. Additionally, the project would be developed with Energy Star-rated appliances, and other energy efficient systems, including the HVAC systems. The most recently adopted CALGreen Code also requires water efficient landscaping and irrigation, to which project development will adhere.

Other energy demanding activities associated with project occupancy would include landscape maintenance, consumption of fuel from non-electric vehicle trips, consumption of electricity from electric-vehicle trips, etc. The developer would not have control over what types of vehicles visit the site over the life of the project, but the trend for greater fuel efficiency in on-road vehicles that has occurred as a result of California's Clean Vehicle Standards suggest that long-term transportation fuel consumption from project occupancy would steadily decline over time, thus ensuring that vehicle fuel consumption is not wasteful or inefficient.

The proposed project must be constructed in conformance with a variety of existing energy efficiency regulatory requirements or guidelines including:

- Compliance with Title Chapter 6 of the California Code of Regulations with respect to energy efficiency standards for new building construction.
- Both federally and non-federally regulated appliances shall abide by the efficiency standards of Title 20, Section 1601 et seq. of the California Code of Regulations.
- Compliance with the most recently adopted CALGreen Code (Title 24, Part 11). The purpose of the CALGreen Code is to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing

the design and construction of building through the use of building concepts encouraging sustainable construction practices.

- The provisions of the CALGreen Code apply to the planning, design, operation, construction, use, and occupancy of every newly constructed building.
- Compliance with the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (CBSC) would ensure that the building energy use associated with the proposed project would not be wasteful or unnecessary.
- Compliance with Indoor Water use consumption reduced through the maximum fixture water use rates.
- Compliance with diversion of construction and demolition materials from landfills.
- Compliance with MDAQMD Mandatory use of low-pollutant emitting finish materials.
- Compliance with MDAQMD Rules 431.1 and 431.2 to reduce the release of undesirable emissions.
- Compliance with diesel exhaust emissions from diesel vehicles and off-road diesel vehicle/equipment operations.

Compliance with these regulatory requirements for operational energy use and construction energy use would not be wasteful or unnecessary use of energy. Further, SCE is presently in compliance with State renewable energy supply requirements. Under the operational scenario for the proposed project, the proposed project will have a less than significant potential to result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy consumption that could result in a significant adverse impact to energy issues based on compliance with the referenced laws, regulations and guidelines. No mitigation is required.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project’s consistency with the applicable state and local plans is discussed below.

Consistency with Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)

Transportation and access to the project site is provided by the local and regional roadway systems. The project would not interfere with, nor otherwise obstruct intermodal transportation plans or projects that may be realized pursuant to the ISTEA because Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is not planning for intermodal facilities on or through the project site.

Consistency with the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

The project site is located near major transportation corridors, including Pioneertown Road, which connects to Highway 62, and therefore has proximate access to the Highway system. The site selected for the project facilitates access and acts to reduce vehicle miles traveled, takes advantage of existing infrastructure systems, and promotes land use compatibilities through collocation of similar uses, particularly as the proposed project would expand the existing site use, rather than creating a new site use. The project supports the strong planning processes emphasized under TEA-21. The project is therefore consistent with, and would not otherwise interfere with, nor obstruct implementation of TEA-21.

Consistency with Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR)

Electricity for the project would be provided by SCE. SCE’s Clean Power and Electrification Pathway white paper builds on existing State programs and policies. As such, the project is consistent with, and would not otherwise interfere with, nor obstruct implementation of the goals presented in the IEPR.

Consistency with State of California Energy Plan

The project site is located proximate to transportation corridors, including Pioneertown Road, which connects to Highway 62, and therefore has proximate access to the highway system. The site selected for the project is infill and facilitates access and takes advantage of existing infrastructure systems, including those that presently serve the project. Further the proposed project would upgrade the existing electrical infrastructure through the installation of a new electrical panel that would be installed to meet the CBC and Fire Codes. The project therefore supports urban design and planning processes identified under the State of California Energy Plan, is consistent with, and would not otherwise interfere with, nor obstruct implementation of the State of California Energy Plan.

Consistency with California Code Title 24, Part 6, Energy Efficiency Standards

The 2022 version of Title 24 was adopted by the California Energy Commission (CEC) and became effective on January 1, 2023. It should be noted that the analysis herein assumes compliance with the 2022 or most recently adopted Title 24 Standards, which may include the 2025 version, which is slated to become effective on January 1, 2026.

Consistency with AB 1493 (Pavley Regulations and Fuel Efficiency Standards)

AB 1493 is not applicable to the project as it is a Statewide measure establishing vehicle emissions standards. No feature of the project would interfere with implementation of the requirements under AB 1493.

Consistency with California's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)

California's Renewable Portfolio Standard is not applicable to the project as it is a Statewide measure that establishes a renewable energy mix. No feature of the project would interfere with implementation of the requirements under RPS.

Consistency with the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 (SB 350)

The proposed project would use energy from SCE, which has committed to diversify its portfolio of energy sources by increasing energy from wind and solar sources. No feature of the project would interfere with implementation of SB 350. Additionally, the project would be designed and constructed to implement the energy efficiency measures—such as through reducing outdoor water use through water efficient design, meeting Title 24/CALGreen requirements for building efficiency, installing a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Codes, utilization of low flow indoor fixtures, and installation of energy efficient appliances—for new commercial developments and would include several measures designed to reduce energy consumption as described above.

Conclusion

As shown above, the project would not conflict with any of the State or local plans. As such, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 onsite or offsite 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 RWs 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located in the Geologic Hazards Overlay District). The information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: “*Cultural Resources Assessment Pioneertown Mane Street Preservation and Improvement Plan Project Pioneertown, Unincorporated San Bernardino County, California*” prepared by BCR Consulting LLC dated July 24, 2024 (**Appendix 3a**).

Impact Analysis

a. Ground Rupture

Less Than Significant Impact – The project site is located in the Desert Region of the County within the community of Pioneertown, which is located in a highly seismically active area. The project site is located approximately 4 miles to the north of the Pinto Mountain Fault Zone system, which is classified as an Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zone under the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (**Figure VII-1**). **Figure VII-1** shows where these faults are located as indicated by the Department of Conservation. Additionally, faults and fault zones are delineated on **Figure VII-2**, the San Bernardino Countywide Plan Earthquake Fault Zones Map. As shown, the closest known active fault zones are more than 4 miles from the proposed project site. As such, the site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zone. Based on this information, the risk for ground rupture at the site location is low; therefore, it is not likely that future visitors and employees of the project will be subject to rupture from a known earthquake fault. Therefore, any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant; no mitigation is required.

b. Strong Seismic Ground Shaking

Less Than Significant Impact – As stated in the discussion above, several faults run through this portion of the County as shown on **Figures VII-1 and VII-2**. As with much of southern California, the proposed structures will be subject to strong seismic ground shaking impacts should any major earthquakes occur in the future. Any future developments at the project site should anticipate that moderate to large seismic events could occur near the site. The project site has a moderate earthquake shaking potential. As a result, and like all other development projects in the County and throughout the Southern California Region, the proposed project will be developed in accordance with the applicable development code, the current California Building Code (CBC), and County Development Code. This will ensure that structural integrity will be maintained in the event of an earthquake, and as such, impacts associated with seismic ground shaking will be less than significant.

c. Seismic-Related Ground Failure Including Liquefaction

No Impact – The San Bernardino Countywide Plan Environmental Impact Report, Chapter 5, Geology & Soils (Page 5.6-15), indicates that, in the Desert Regions, liquefaction is most likely to occur in areas of alluvial deposits with relatively shallow groundwater or around dry lakebeds, along the Mojave River, and areas adjacent to faults that form groundwater barriers. According to the map prepared for the San Bernardino Countywide Plan Liquefaction & Landslides Map (**Figure VII-3**), the project site is not mapped within an area that is considered susceptible to liquefaction. As the proposed project is not located in any of the aforementioned areas, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would be susceptible to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

d. iv. Landslides

No Impact – The project site is located in a flat area and is therefore not located in an area in which landslides are anticipated to occur. According to the map prepared for the San Bernardino

Countywide Plan Liquefaction & Landslides Map (**Figure VII-3**), the project site is not mapped within an area that is considered susceptible to landslides. Therefore, the project will not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse landslide effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. No impacts under this issue are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Project construction will not include any mass grading at the site, as the proposed project would utilize existing structures onsite, with the only new structures being mobile restroom, kitchen, and kiosk structures. The standard parking area will be surface graded, and the entryway access road will be compacted and covered with gravel; and if fugitive dust is observed, the remainder of the access road and parking will be covered with compacted gravel, sprayed with water, or the Applicant will utilize other means of dust minimization. Surface grading is anticipated to only result in minor losses of topsoil or erosion. Furthermore, the County Development Code Chapter 85.11.030 requires standard erosion control practices (Best Management Practices [BMPs]) to be implemented for all construction, which would ensure that the project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Therefore, any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant.
- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – As previously stated, according to the San Bernardino Countywide Plan EIR, the potential for liquefaction to occur within the project site is low. Additionally, the potential for landslide at the project site has been determined to be minimal based on the flat topography of the site, and the distance from area mountains and hillsides. The San Bernardino Countywide Plan EIR indicates that subsidence due to groundwater extraction affects the Desert Regions, particularly near dry lakebeds in the Mojave and Morongo basins. Areas at high risk of future subsidence include the El Mirage Valley, Lower Mojave, Harper Valley, and Lucerne Valley. Areas at medium-high risk include the Upper Mojave River, Irwin Subbasin, Fremont Valley, and Twentynine Palms. The proposed project has been mapped as being located in an area that has medium to low subsidence potential by the San Bernardino Countywide Plan EIR (**Figure VII-3**). Thus, as the proposed project would only include the improvement of existing structures, which would be subject to the current CBC standards in addition to County Development Code requirements, the project would have a less than significant potential to 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 onsite or offsite subsidence.

According to the San Bernardino Countywide Plan EIR, the Desert Region have the highest potential for collapsible soils due to their aridity, the prevalence of both alluvial and wind-deposited soils, and soils with salts. As previously stated, project construction will not include any mass grading at the site, as no new habitable structures will be installed. The standard parking area will be surface graded, and the entryway access road will be compacted and covered with gravel; and, if fugitive dust is observed, the remainder of the access road and parking will be covered with compacted gravel, sprayed with water, or the Applicant will utilize other means of dust minimization. Thus, as only surface grading would be required for the access road and driveway, and existing structures onsite would limit scope and scale of ground disturbance during construction, the potential for a significant impact to occur as a result of collapse at the project site would be less than significant. Based on the above discussion, it is not anticipated that the project will 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 onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse. No further mitigation is required.

- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is located within the community of Pioneertown and according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Web Soil Survey, soils underlying the project site have not been mapped in detail, but the surrounding area is mapped as being underlain by Nebona-Mirage-Joshua-Cajon soil complex. This soil series is not considered to contain expansive properties, as these soils do not contain a high percentage of clay. The San Bernardino Countywide Plan EIR Chapter 5, Geology & Soils, indicates that much of the Desert Region has low to moderately expansive soils. In select areas, such as Lucerne Valley and dry lakebeds, the soils can be highly expansive. This proposed project site is not located on a dry lakebed. Thus, it is anticipated that the expansion potential is low. Furthermore, as USDA soil maps do not indicate that any clay type soils are present in the project area, the development of the project will not create a substantial risk to life or property by being placed on expansive soils. Thus, impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No further mitigation is required.
- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project would abate an existing septic system and install a new septic system to accommodate wastewater from the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project. The new septic tank system will be capable of handling about 2,000 gallons of waste per day and will be developed in accordance with current California Plumbing Code (Part 5, Title 24, California Code of Regulations) standards, which sets parameters for private sewage disposal, and in compliance with the County Development Code, Article 6.

As previously stated, the proposed project is supported by stable soils (soils in the greater area are underlain by a Nebona-Mirage-Joshua-Cajon soil series, which series consists of shallow to deep, well drained soils that formed in mixed alluvium).^{6,7} Furthermore, these soils are somewhat excessively drained, with negligible to low runoff, and rapid permeability, which demonstrates the stability of these soils.⁸ Based on the nearly exclusive use of septic tanks or other alternative wastewater systems within the area (no municipal wastewater collection or treatment systems exist in the project vicinity), the soils are capable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater. Through compliance with the current California Plumbing Code (Part 5, Title 24, California Code of Regulations), any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

- f. *No Impact* – The San Bernardino Countywide Plan for indicates that the proposed project area is not located within a delineated sensitivity area for paleontological resources (refer to **Figure VII-4**). However, the Cultural Resources Assessment (**Appendix 3b**) evaluated the potential for paleontological resources to exist within the project site at the site-specific level, and determined that, the majority of the project is underlain by Pleistocene-aged gravel and sand (Dibblee and Minch 2008). Pleistocene units are considered to be highly paleontologically sensitive. Western Science Center does not have localities within the project area or within a 1-mile radius, but does have

⁶ USDA, 2025. Mirage Series. https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/M/MIRAGE.html (Accessed 03/25/25)

⁷ USDA, 2025. Nebona Series. https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/N/NEBONA.html (Accessed 03/25/25)

⁸ National Cooperative Soil Survey, 2023. Cajon Series. https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/C/CAJON.html (Accessed 03/25/25)

localities within similarly mapped units in Southern California. Any fossil specimen from the Pioneertown Soundstage Project would be scientifically significant. Excavation activity associated with the development of the project area would impact the paleontologically sensitive Pleistocene alluvial units, and it is the recommendation of the Western Science Center that a paleontological resource mitigation program be put in place to monitor, salvage, and curate any recovered fossils associated with the study area. As a result, **MM GEO-1** shall be implemented to ensure that the paleontological resource mitigation program is implemented to ensure impacts to such resources are minimized to a level of less than significant. Therefore, as the proposed project is underlain by geologic formations that are supportive of paleontological resources, even though excavation associated with project development is minimal in support of the development of the septic tank onsite, the proposed project would, with the implementation of mitigation, have a less than significant potential to directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

Mitigation Program

GEO-1 All mass grading, excavation, drilling, and trenching activities within the site, shall be monitored part-time for paleontological resources, on an as-needed basis, as determined by the project paleontologist. Prior to initiation of any grading, drilling, and/or excavation activities, a preconstruction meeting shall be held and attended by the paleontologist of record, representatives of the grading contractor and subcontractors, the project owner or developer, and a representative of the lead agency. The nature of potential paleontological resources shall be discussed, as well as the protocol that is to be implemented following discovery of any fossiliferous materials. A qualified paleontologist shall monitor earth disturbance activities for potential paleontological resource and shall have the authority and responsibility to halt or divert grading operations. The paleontological principal investigator shall notify the County of any fossil discoveries by email and/or phone call. The monitor shall be prepared to quickly salvage fossils, if they are unearthed, to avoid construction delays, but must have the power to temporarily halt or divert construction equipment to allow for removal of abundant or large specimens.

Collected samples of sediment shall be processed to recover small fossils, and all recovered specimens shall be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage.

A report of findings, including an itemized inventory of recovered specimens, shall be prepared upon completion of the procedures outlined above. The report shall include a discussion of the significance of the paleontological findings, if any. The report and the inventory, when approved by San Bernardino County, would signify completion of the program to mitigate potential impacts on paleontological resources. Under these conditions, the proposed project may be cleared to proceed in compliance with CEQA provisions on paleontological resources.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with implementation of the above mitigation measure.

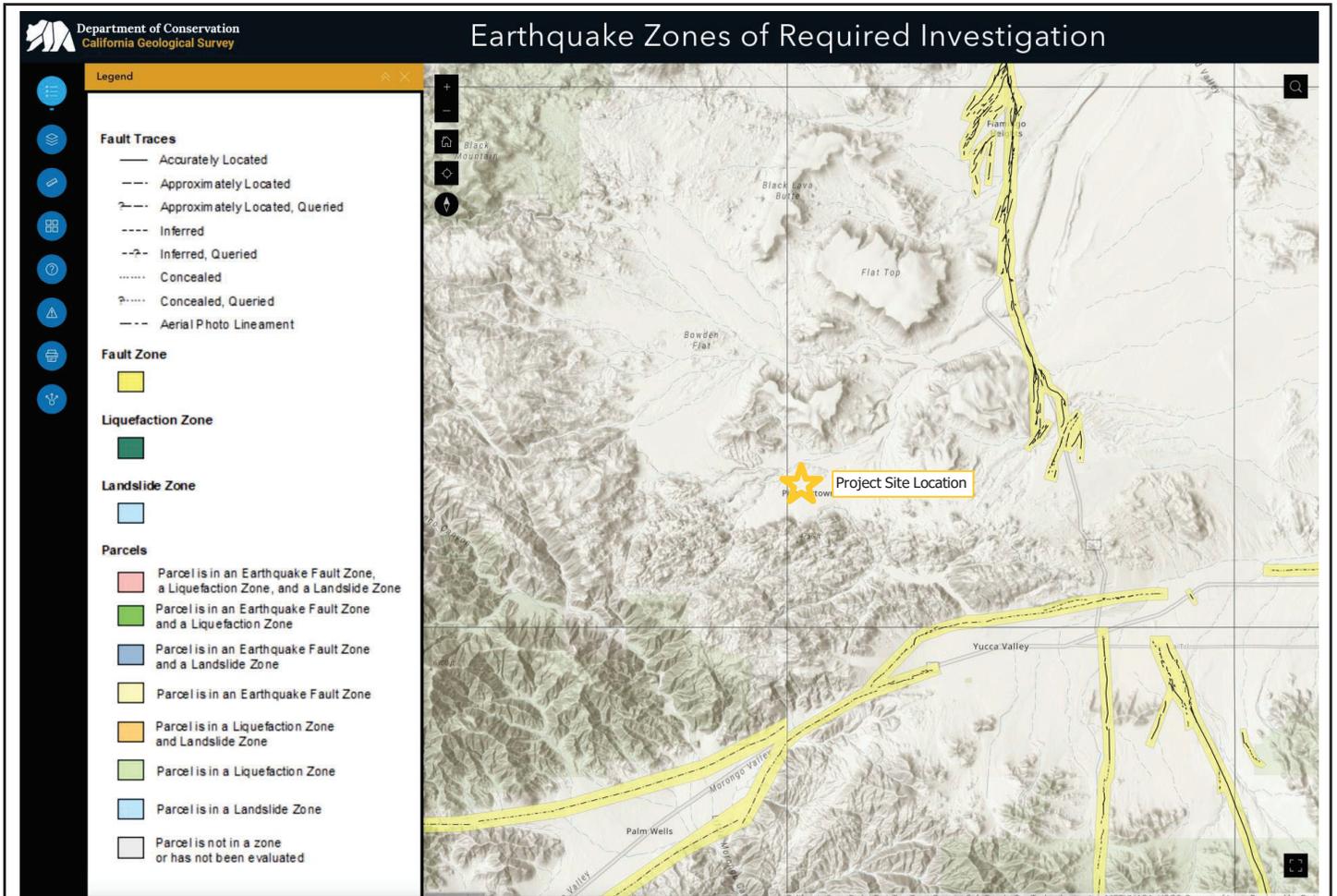


FIGURE VII-1

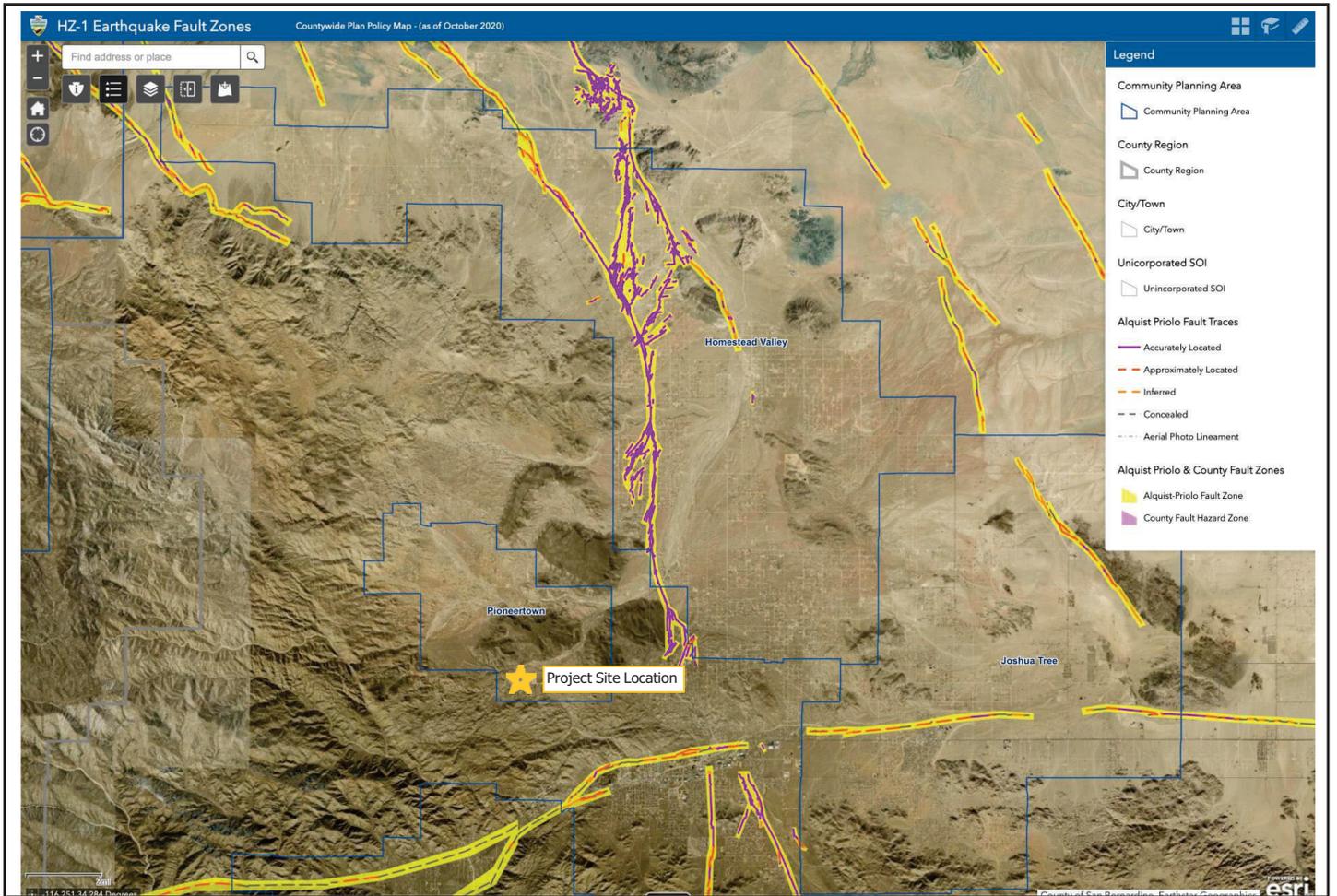


FIGURE VII-2

Figure 5.6-4 Land Subsidence Potential

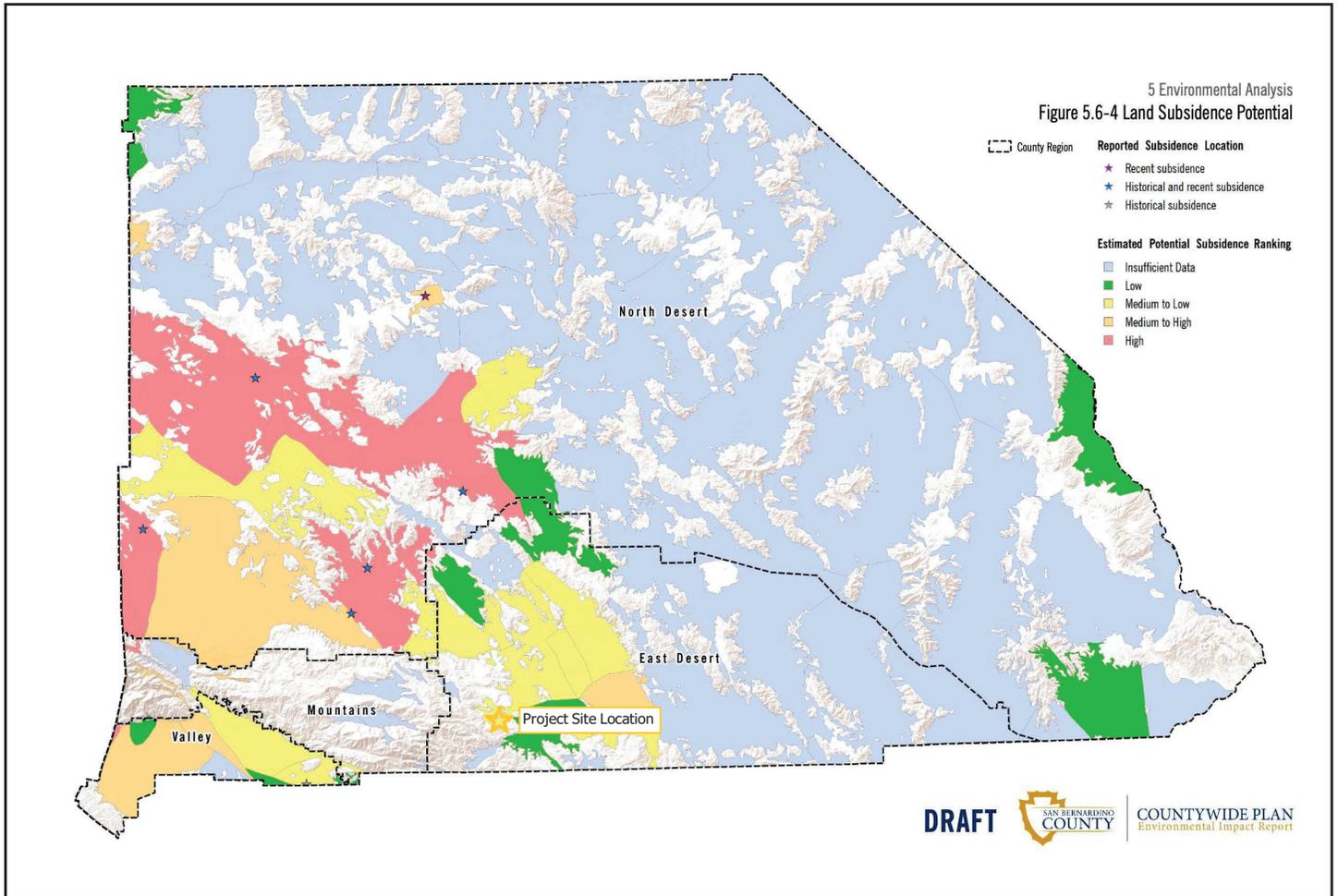


FIGURE VII-3

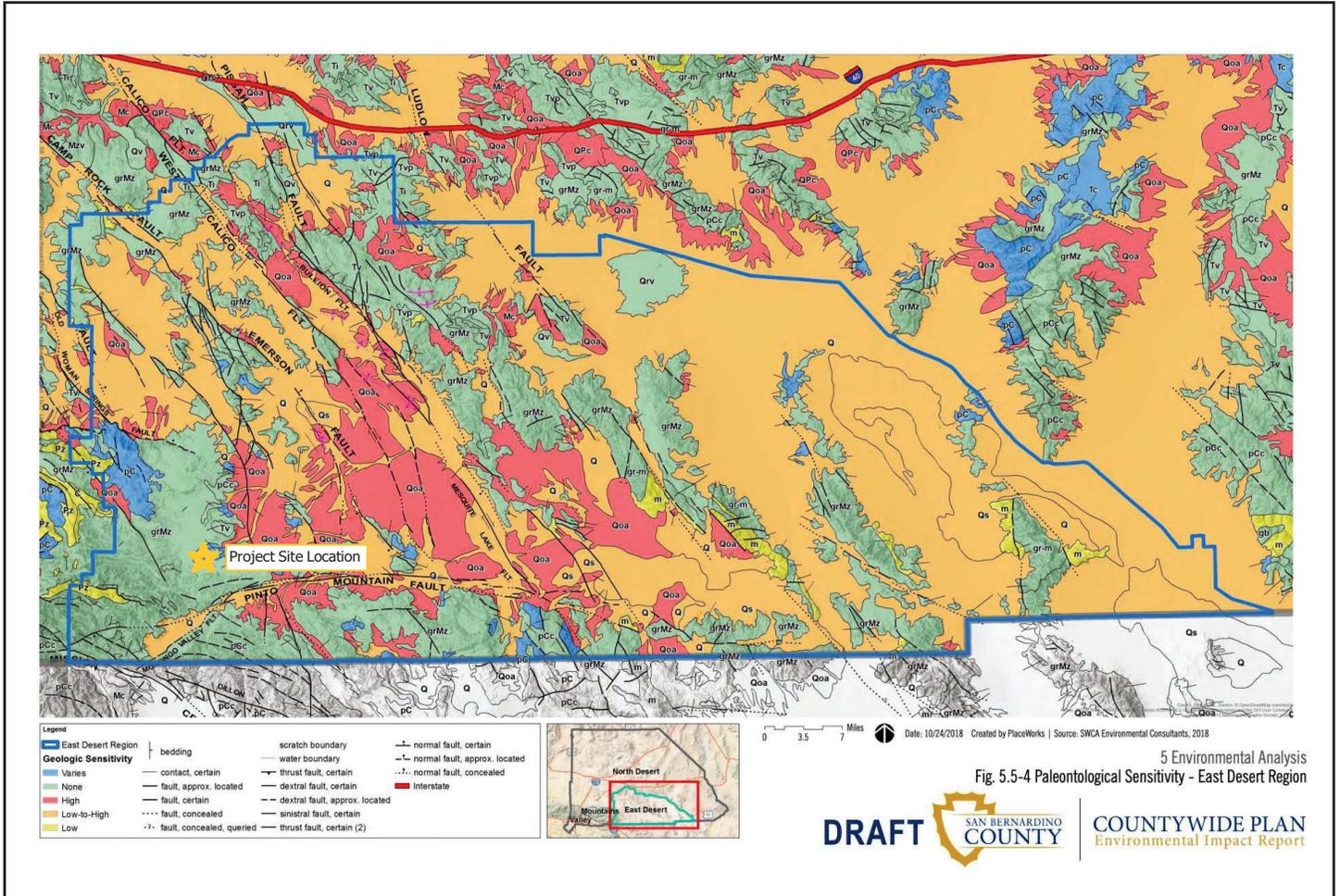


FIGURE VII-4

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

Paleontological Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section of the Initial Study was obtained from the following technical study: *Pioneertown Mane Street Preservation and Improvement Plan Project Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment (AQGGA)* prepared by Urban Crossroads, dated December 2, 2025. This AQGGA is provided as **Appendix 1** to this Initial Study.

Climate Change Setting

Global climate change (GCC) is the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, precipitation, and storms. The majority of scientists believe that the climate shift taking place since the Industrial Revolution is occurring at a quicker rate and magnitude than in the past. Scientific evidence suggests that GCC is the result of increased concentrations of GHGs in the earth’s atmosphere, including carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and fluorinated gases. The majority of scientists believe that this increased rate of climate change is the result of GHGs resulting from human activity and industrialization over the past 200 years.

An individual project like the proposed project evaluated in this memo cannot generate enough GHG emissions to affect a discernible change in global climate. However, the proposed project may participate in the potential for GCC by its incremental contribution of GHGs combined with the cumulative increase of all other sources of GHGs, which when taken together constitute potential influences on GCC. Because these changes may have serious environmental consequences, this memo will evaluate the potential for the proposed project to have a significant effect upon the environment as a result of its potential contribution to the greenhouse effect.

GCC refers to the change in average meteorological conditions on the earth with respect to temperature, wind patterns, precipitation and storms. Global temperatures are regulated by naturally occurring atmospheric gases such as water vapor, CO₂, N₂O, CH₄, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆). These particular gases are important due to their residence time (duration they stay) in the atmosphere, which ranges from 10 years to more than 100 years. These gases allow solar radiation into the earth’s atmosphere, but prevent radioactive heat from escaping, thus warming the earth’s atmosphere. GCC can occur naturally as it has in the past with the previous ice ages.

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are often referred to as GHGs. GHGs are released into the atmosphere by both natural and anthropogenic activity. Without the natural GHG effect, the earth's average temperature would be approximately 61 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) cooler than it is currently. The cumulative accumulation of these gases in the earth's atmosphere is considered to be the cause for the observed increase in the earth's temperature.

For the purposes of this analysis, emissions of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O were evaluated because these gases are the primary contributors to GCC from development projects. Although there are other substances such as fluorinated gases that also contribute to GCC, these fluorinated gases were not evaluated as their sources are not well-defined and there are no accepted emissions factors or methodology to accurately calculate these gases.

Standards of Significance

According to the *CEQA Guidelines* Appendix G thresholds, to determine whether impacts from GHG emissions are significant. Would the project:

- Threshold 1: Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- Threshold 2: Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?

The evaluation of an impact under CEQA requires measuring data from a project against both existing conditions and a "threshold of significance." For establishing significance thresholds, the Office of Planning and Research's amendments to the *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.7(c) state "[w]hen adopting thresholds of significance, a lead agency may consider thresholds of significance previously adopted or recommended by other public agencies, or recommended by experts, provided the decision of the lead agency to adopt such thresholds is supported by substantial evidence."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a) further states, ". . . A lead agency shall have discretion to determine, in the context of a particular project, whether to: (1) Use a model or methodology to quantify greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project, and which model or methodology to use . . .; or (2) Rely on a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards."

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 provides that a lead agency should consider the following factors, among others, in assessing the significance of impacts from greenhouse gas emissions:

- Consideration #1: The extent to which the project may increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting.
- Consideration #2: Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project.
- Consideration #3: The extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. Such regulations or requirements must be adopted by the relevant public agency through a public review process and must reduce or mitigate the project's incremental contribution of greenhouse gas emissions. In determining the significance of impacts,

the lead agency may consider a project’s consistency with the State’s long-term climate goals or strategies, provided that substantial evidence supports the agency’s analysis of how those goals or strategies address the project’s incremental contribution to climate change and its conclusion that the project’s incremental contribution is not cumulatively considerable.

Establishment of Significance Thresholds

According to the MDAQMD’s CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines, a project is significant if it triggers or exceeds the most appropriate evaluation criteria. The MDAQMD states that in general, for GHG emissions, the significance emission threshold of 100,000 Tons CO₂e per year (90,718.5 MTCO₂e/yr⁹) is sufficient. A significant project must incorporate mitigation sufficiently to reduce its impact to a level that is not significant. A project that cannot be mitigated to a level that is not significant must incorporate all feasible mitigation.

Additionally, the County adopted the GHG Reduction Plan Update in June 2021. The GHG Reduction Plan Update provides guidance on how to analyze GHG emissions and determine significance during the CEQA review of proposed development projects within the County. The County includes a GHG Development Review Process (DRP) that specifies a two-step approach in quantifying GHG emissions. First, a screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr is used to determine if additional analysis is required. Projects that exceed the 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr will be required to either achieve a minimum 100 points per the Screening Tables or a 31% reduction over 2007 emissions levels. Consistent with CEQA guidelines, such projects would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions.

Impact Analysis

a. Less Than Significant Impact –

Existing

As previously stated, the project site is currently developed with 6,223 square foot event and hospitality space (Soundstage) and 831 square foot commercial structure (Gazette). The existing commercial structure (Gazette) is proposed to be redeveloped as an ice cream/coffee shop. The estimated GHG emissions from the commercial structure (Gazette) are summarized in Table VIII-1.

Table VIII-1: Operational Emissions From Existing Development

Source	Emissions (MT/yr)				
	CO ₂ T	CH ₄	N ₂ O	R	Total CO ₂ e
Mobile	43.60	< 0.005	< 0.005	0.07	44.20
Area	0.01	< 0.005	< 0.005	<0.01	0.01
Energy	3.49	< 0.005	< 0.005	<0.01	3.50
Water	0.18	< 0.005	< 0.005	<0.01	0.34
Waste	0.07	0.01	<0.01	<0.01	0.24

⁹ The threshold was converted from tons to metric tons (MT) to ensure a consistent, apples-to-apples comparison with the project’s GHG emissions which CalEEMod reports in MT. This conversion ensures that the GHG emissions from the project can be directly compared to the threshold, allowing for a more accurate and consistent evaluation.

Source	Emissions (MT/yr)				
	CO ₂ T	CH ₄	N ₂ O	R	Total CO ₂ e
Refrigeration	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	< 0.005
Total CO ₂ e (All Sources)	48.29				

Proposed Project

The estimated GHG emissions for project are summarized in Table VIII-2. The estimated GHG emissions include emissions from Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), Methane (CH₄), Nitrous Oxide (N₂O), and Refrigerants (R). As shown in Table VIII-2, the project would generate either a net total of approximately 1,575.07 MTCO₂e/yr, which would not exceed the screening threshold of 90,718.5 MTCO₂e/yr or the County's screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. This would be considered a less than significant impact.

Table VIII-2: Total Project GHG Emissions

Source	Emissions (MT/yr)				
	CO ₂ T	CH ₄	N ₂ O	R	Total CO ₂ e
Annual construction emissions amortized over 30 years	22.17	3.33E-04	1.67E-03	0.01	22.63
Mobile	1,431.00	0.05	0.06	2.30	1,454.00
Area	0.18	< 0.005	< 0.005	<0.01	0.18
Energy	93.00	0.01	< 0.005	<0.01	94.00
Water	4.20	1.00	< 0.005	<0.01	31.00
Waste	6.10	0.61	<0.01	<0.01	21.00
Refrigeration	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	0.55	0.55
Total CO ₂ e (All Sources)	1,623.36				
<i>Existing</i>	<i>48.29</i>				
Net New Emissions (Project - Existing)	1,575.07				
Screening Threshold (CO ₂ e)	3,000				
Threshold Exceeded?	NO				

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Pursuant to 15604.4 of the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency may rely on qualitative analysis or performance-based standards to determine the significance of impacts from GHG emissions.

Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan

The 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan) lays out a path to achieve targets for carbon neutrality and reduce anthropogenic GHG emissions by 85 % below 1990 levels no later than 2045, as directed by Assembly Bill 1279. The actions and outcomes in the plan will achieve significant reductions in fossil fuel combustion by deploying clean technologies and fuels, further reductions in short-lived climate pollutants, support for sustainable development, increased action on natural and working lands to reduce emissions and sequester carbon, and the capture and storage of carbon.

Consistency With SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)

The 2016-2040 RTP/SCS indicates that the project site is located in a jobs poor area. Providing more jobs may reduce regional GHG emissions and reduce regional VMT as it will provide local jobs to achieve a more favorable jobs-housing balance.

The project will employ approximately 10 full time employees and 10 part time employees and will operate Monday – Sunday from 8:00 AM – 12:00 AM. According to SCAG's 2024-2050 RTP/SCS, employment within San Bernardino County in 2019 is approximately 860,000 jobs with an anticipated increase to approximately 1,145,000 jobs by 2045, a growth of approximately 285,000 jobs. The proposed project represents 0.004% of the anticipated increase in jobs, and therefore, would not result in long-term operational employment growth that exceeds planned growth projections in the RTP/SCS or the AQMP, or result in employment growth that would substantially add to traffic congestion.

Consistency with County of San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan and GHG Development Review Process

The County adopted the Reduction Plan in September 2011 (updated June 2021), which provides guidance on how to analyze GHG emissions and determine significance during the CEQA review of proposed development projects within the County.

The County includes a GHG DRP that specifies a two-step approach in quantifying GHG emissions. First, a screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr is used to determine if additional analysis is required. projects that exceed the 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr will be required to either achieve a minimum 100 points per the Screening Tables or a 31% reduction over 2007 emissions levels. Consistent with CEQA guidelines, such projects would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions.

As previously shown in Table VIII-2, the project will result in approximately 1,575.07 MTCO₂e/yr; the proposed project would not exceed the screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr. This would be considered a less than significant impact.

Since the County's Reduction Plan was developed in response to SBCTA's Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, and because the project is consistent with the County's Reduction Plan, it is also consistent with the goals outlined in SBCTA's Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan.

Conclusion

In summary, the results of the assessment indicate that the project would result in a less than significant with respect to GHGs.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

a&b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project is not anticipated to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; but it may create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable

upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment during construction. The proposed project consists of rehabilitation and utilization of the existing Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette, including installation of a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code, as well as installation of a shaded outdoor dining area, modular structures serving as restrooms, snack carts, and a mobile kitchen, and parking. During construction, there is a potential for accidental release of petroleum products in sufficient quantity to pose a significant hazard to people and the environment. The septic tank must be abandoned (abated) by either removing the tank entirely or backfilling it with an approved material in accordance with the County Development Code Section 33.0879. This activity is not considered to be hazardous in nature when conducted in accordance with County regulations. Due to the size of ground disturbance anticipated as part of development of the proposed project (i.e., less than one acre), the proposed project would not be subject to a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Thus, in order to reduce accidental release of hazardous materials to a less than significant level, the following condition will be required by the County to be implemented as a BMP during construction of the project.

Condition HAZ-1 All accidental spills or discharge of hazardous material during construction activities shall be reported to the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) and shall be remediated in compliance with applicable state and local regulations regarding cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released pursuant to a Spill, Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Plan (SPCCP) to be developed by the Applicant in conformance with County requirements, and reviewed by the County prior to operation. The contaminated waste will be collected and disposed of at an appropriately a licensed disposal or treatment facility. This measure shall be incorporated into construction contract as a BMP to be implemented during construction of the proposed project. Prior to accepting the site as remediated, the area contaminated shall be tested to verify that any residual concentrations meet the standard for future residential or public use of the site.

Operation of the proposed use would not involve the use of a substantial amount of hazardous materials. Household/commercial cleaning supplies would continue to be used in support of the project. These site improvements are not expected to result in any substantial increase in the use of hazardous materials to support these new facilities. Compliance with all federal, State, and local regulations¹⁰ governing the storage and use of hazardous materials is required and would ensure that the project operates in a manner that poses no substantial hazards to the public or the environment. Operational impacts would be less than significant, while construction impacts require adherence to **Condition HAZ-1**.

- c. *No Impact* – The project site is not located within one-quarter mile of any public or private schools. The closest school to the project site is the Yucca Valley Elementary School approximately 3-miles

¹⁰ Regulations include, but are not limited to: Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), California Hazardous Waste Control Act (California Health and Safety Code, Section 25100 et seq.), California Accidental Release Prevention Program (CalARP), California Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Law of 1985, California Health and Safety Code, Section 25500 et seq., San Bernardino County Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA)(SB 1082), etc.

to the southeast of the project site. The proposed project is not anticipated to emit hazardous emissions as discussed under issue IX(a&b), above, as the project consists of rehabilitation and utilization of the existing Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette, including installation of a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code, as well as installation of a shaded outdoor dining area, modular structures serving as restrooms, snack carts, and a mobile kitchen, and parking, which has little or no potential to use or store substantial amounts of hazardous materials. No hazardous materials would be transported offsite during standard operation. As part of septic abatement and as part of ongoing septic maintenance for the new septic tank, septic waste would be hauled off-site utilizing Pioneertown Road, and eventually Highway 62. This material is not technically categorized as hazardous by septic waste (domestic sewage) and is generally not considered a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste because it is excluded from the definition of solid waste by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Yucca Elementary School is less than a quarter of a mile from Highway 62. However, these roadways are public roads that can be used by any common carrier to or from the local area. For such transporters, the existing regulatory mandates ensure that the hazardous materials and any hazardous waste transported to and from the project site will be properly managed. These regulations are codified in CCR Titles 8, 22, and 26. For example, maintenance trucks for construction equipment must transport their hazardous materials in appropriate containers, such as tanks or other storage devices. In addition, the haulers must comply with all existing applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations regarding transport, use, disposal, handling and storage of hazardous wastes and material, including storage, collection and disposal. Compliance with these laws and regulations related to transportation will minimize potential exposure of humans or the environment to significant hazards from transport of such materials and wastes. Based on this information, implementation of the project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

- d. *No Impact* – The proposed project is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites that are currently under remediation. The two comprehensive State database websites that keep track potential hazmat sites are the California State Water Board's (SWRCB's) GeoTracker website and the Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) EnviroStor website. Both of these databases are consistent with Government Code Section 65962.5 requirements. There are no hazardous materials sites listed in either database within 2,500 feet of the project site (refer to **Figure IX-1**). Therefore, there is no potential for the project to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment due to being located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. No impacts are anticipated under this issue and no mitigation is required.

- e. *No Impact* – The project site is located greater than 5 miles from any nearby airport. As shown on the Airport Safety & Planning Areas map prepared for the San Bernardino Countywide Plan (**Figure IX-2**), the proposed project is not located within an Airport Safety Review Area at any of the area airports (Yucca Valley Airport and Roy Williams Airport). Further, the proposed project is not located within the AR4-Low Altitude/High Speed Military Airspace Overlay. There is no potential safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area as a result of proximity to a public airport or private airstrip. No mitigation is required.

- f. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is not anticipated to interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. As shown on the Evacuation Route Map prepared for the San Bernardino Countywide Plan (**Figure IX-3**), the adopted evacuation routes in the area are Highway 62 to the southeast of the project site, and Highway 247 to the east of the project site. A de facto evacuation route in the vicinity of the project site would be Pioneertown Road, which traverses through the community. Access to the site will occur through the installation of two new driveways along Pioneertown Road, each will only serve as exit or entry only, along Pioneertown Road. The driveway entrance will utilize gravel to provide a compacted gravel access road and driveway in accordance with the fire department standards. Development of the project at this location would not interfere with access to emergency evacuation routes, as the proposed project will be constructed entirely within the boundaries of the project site. Site access is reviewed by the County, and as a result will be designed in accordance with County Development Code, California Fire Code, and San Bernardino County Fire standards. Encroachment onto Pioneertown Road resulting in construction- or operation-related road or lane closures is not anticipated per the site plan (**Figure 3**), and as a result, no conflicts with emergency access or evacuation plans are anticipated to occur. Thus, the proposed project will not experience substantial conflicts with surrounding traffic. Therefore, there is a less than significant potential for the development of the project to physically interfere with any adopted emergency response plans, or evacuation plans.
- g. *No Impact* – The proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands. The site itself primarily supports commercial development associated with the existing Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette, and several retail establishments with associated infrastructure and unpaved parking areas and also supports narrow swaths of undeveloped land that are periodically cleared of vegetation in association with routine weed abatement activities and infrastructure maintenance. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer Map (**Figure IX-4**), the proposed project is located in an area with Moderate wildfire risk within a State Responsibility Area (SRA). The proposed project does not include the use of any flammable or explosive materials. The proposed project has no other identifiable potential to expose people or property to wildland fires. Ultimately, the proposed project is located in an area removed from high fire hazard areas within the County (refer to **Figure IX-4**). Therefore, project implementation would not result and a potential to expose people or structures to fire hazards. No mitigation measures are required.

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

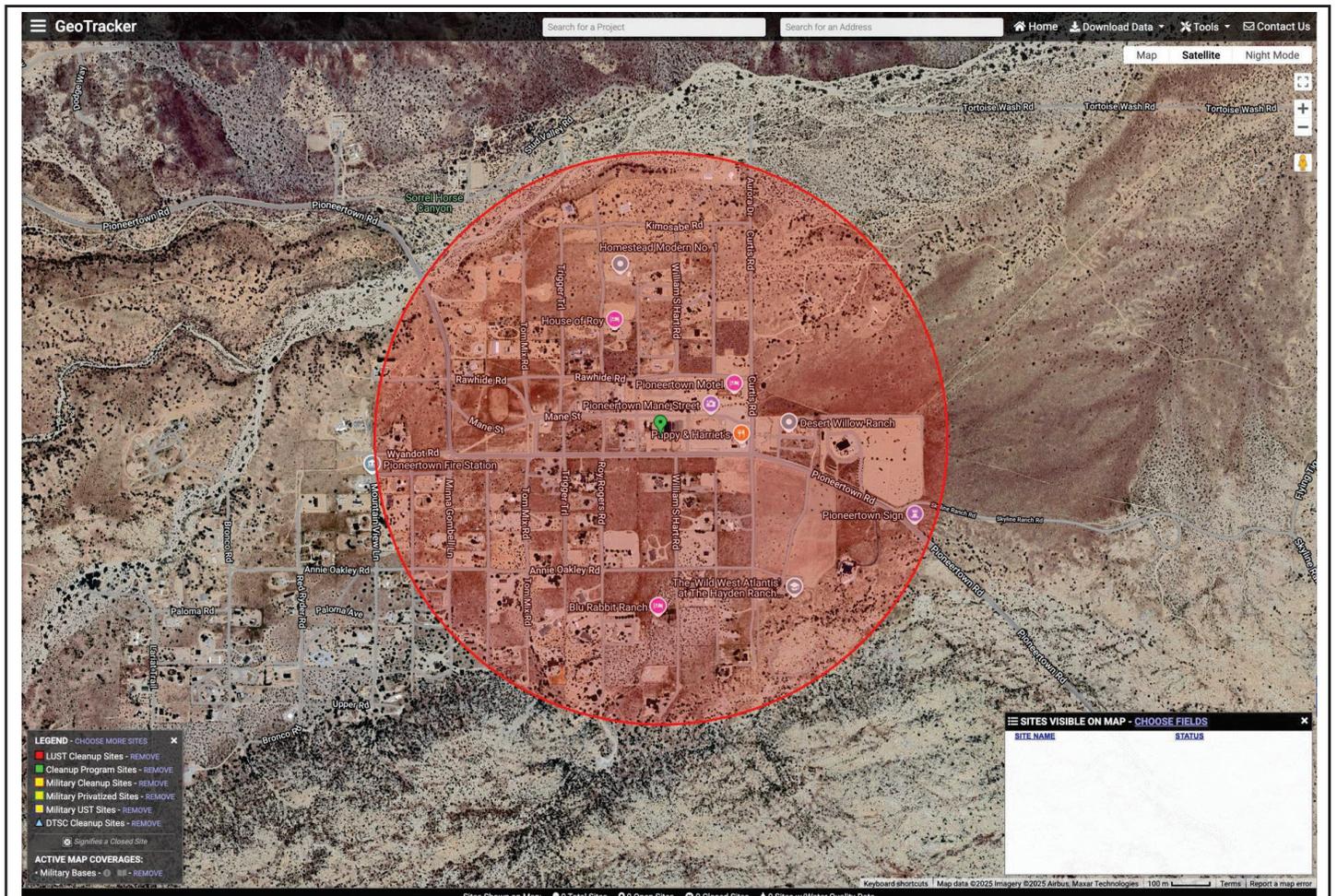


FIGURE IX-1

Tom Dodson & Associates
Environmental Consultants

GeoTracker Map

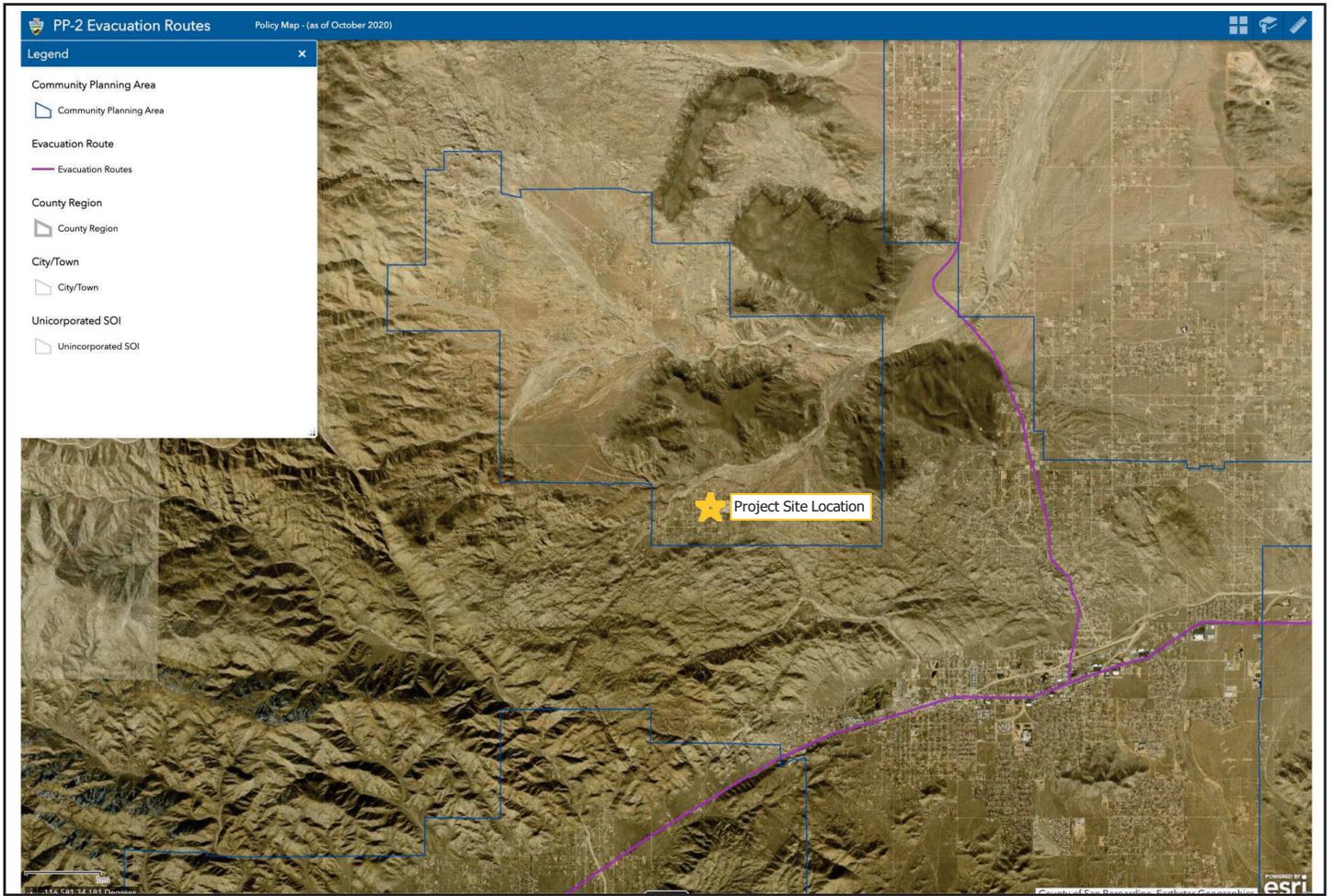


FIGURE IX-3

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such 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 onsite or offsite?	<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 onsite 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 polluted runoff?; or,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

SUBSTANTIATION: A *Preliminary Hydrology Studies Pioneertown, San Bernardino, California* has been prepared by Transtech for the proposed project. This study is provided as Appendix 4 to this Initial Study.

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project is located within the planning area of the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The

project would be supplied with water by San Bernardino County Department of Public Works Special Districts Water and Sanitation Division, and the project would dispose of wastewater through the use of a new onsite septic system that would replace the existing system with an environmentally upgraded system. This system would be both more efficient than the existing system at processing septic waste, and further, would be developed to prevent septic leaching into the underlying soils or groundwater table.

Three main sources of potential violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements are as follows: from generation of municipal wastewater; from stormwater runoff; and potential discharges of pollutants, such as accidental spills. Municipal wastewater would not be generated by the proposed project; however, the proposed project would abate any existing and install a new septic system to accommodate wastewater from the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project. The new septic tank system will be capable of handling about 2,000 gallons of waste per day and will be developed in accordance with current California Plumbing Code (Part 5, Title 24, California Code of Regulations) standards, which sets parameters for private sewage disposal, and in compliance with the County Development Code, Article 6. Further, the septic tank must be abandoned (abated) by either removing the tank entirely or backfilling it with an approved material in accordance with the County Code of Ordinances Section 33.0879. Development in accordance with these standards would ensure that water quality regulations are not violated.

The proposed project may result in minor soil erosion during construction activities because the proposed project would be developed within some compacted dirt areas but would not require substantial ground disturbance to facilitate the installation of the project. Due to the small size of the ground disturbance associated with the proposed project (less than one acre), a SWPPP, which would typically address means by which to control potential sources of water pollution that could violate any standards or discharge requirements during construction, is not required. The Applicant shall instead implement BMPs during construction, such as the use of silt fences or coir rolls; the washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads; the storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles) which will be enforced through implementation of **MM HYD-1**. Implementation of **MM HYD-1** in addition to County identified BMPs, would ensure that project-related after development surface runoff meets discharge requirements over the short- and long-term.

Implementation of **MM HYD-1**, in addition to County identified BMPs, would ensure that project-related after development surface runoff meets discharge requirements over the short- and long-term. The BMPs will establish requirements for capturing, retaining, and treating onsite stormwater once the project has been developed. Per Regulatory Requirement (RR) HYD-3 identified in the Countywide Plan, the BMPs provide the following: control contaminant discharges downstream of the project site; and provide education materials to future customers about the public about stormwater impacts.

Further, the Preliminary Hydrology Report (**Appendix 4**) prepared for the proposed project concluded that the proposed improvements within the project site would not increase the existing peak discharges, and therefore the project would not necessitate any attenuation of flows or require discharge point improvements. As a result, operation of the proposed project, once developed, is not anticipated to result in a violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge. Onsite drainage will be managed during operation pursuant to San Bernardino County requirements, which stipulate that individual projects would be required to effectively retain or treat the 85th percentile 24-hour stormwater runoff for pollutants prior to discharge off their properties (Countywide Plan EIR; Page 5.9-29). Therefore, with only minimal changes anticipated as a result of operational impacts, implementation of these mandatory plans and their BMPs, compliance with regulatory requirements identified by the Countywide Plan and County Code of Ordinances Sections 33.0616 and 35.0118, as well as **MM HYD-1** and **Condition HAZ-1** above, will prevent a violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project does not propose the installation of any water wells that would directly extract groundwater and the change in pervious surfaces to impervious surfaces will be minimal, such that the change in pervious surfaces would be countered by onsite landscaping and vegetation. The project is located within Pioneertown, and the underlying groundwater basin is the Ames Valley Basin. The Ames Valley Basin is an important source of groundwater for producers within the Mojave Water Agency (MWA) service area. The Ames Valley Basin covers an area of approximately 110,000 acres and is bounded by the San Bernardino Mountains on the west, Iron Ridge to the north, Hidalgo Mountain on the northeast, and various faultlines on the east and northern boundaries. The Ames Valley Basin is also subject to stringent groundwater extraction and recharge rules under the Ames/Reche Groundwater Storage and Recovery Program Management Agreement. Based on the type of development proposed, no substantial alterations to existing permeable surfaces would occur, and thus any groundwater recharge that presently occurs onsite would not be obstructed by implementation of the proposed project.

The project would be supplied with water by San Bernardino County Department of Public Works Special Districts Water and Sanitation Division (District) as it is located within County Service Area 70 W4.¹¹ The District obtains its water from the Mojave and Morongo groundwater basins. As of July 27, 2019, the water system now consists of one well and an emergency inter-tie to the Hi-Desert Water District's system and four water reservoirs with a combined capacity of 345,000 gallons (1.059-acre feet [AF]). There are approximately seven miles of water line and 123 metered water connections utilizing the radio read system. At present, the proposed project represents one of the District's water connections, as the project would constitute the expansion of an existing use.¹² The proposed project would require continued use of water to support site uses. The current water use is about 0.12-acre feet per year (AFY), while the projected water use is not expected to change substantially, with only a potential 10% increase in water use projected for a total of 0.132 AFY. Existing water use and conservation measures are anticipated to cover the demand for water by the proposed site use. As the District has identified sufficient capacity for its existing uses and also

¹¹ San Bernardino County, 2025. County Service Area 70 W4 Pioneertown. <https://specialdistricts.sbcounty.gov/water-sanitation/service-districts/csa-70w4/> (Accessed 05/23/25)

¹² San Bernardino County, 2024. County Service Area 70 W-4 2023 Consumer Confidence Report General District Information https://specialdistricts.sbcounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2024/06/CSA-70-W-4-Pioneertown_2024_Final.pdf (Accessed 05/23/25)

receives Hi-Desert Water District excess supplies from an emergency inter-tie,¹³ the San Bernardino County Special Districts 70-W4 municipal water system has been determined to have available capacity to serve the proposed project. Thus, the proposed project is not anticipated to cause a significant demand for new groundwater supplies relative to existing water supply service system capacities. The potential impact under this proposed project is considered less than significant; no mitigation measures are required.

c. i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on-site or offsite?

Less Than Significant Impact – The project site conditions are similar to those in the surrounding area (i.e., developed with rural desert commercial uses that make up Pioneertown, with sparse desert vegetation characteristic of the Mojave Desert Region). Construction of the proposed project could alter the existing drainage patterns of the site. Given that the project would retain the existing onsite structures and would not include substantial ground disturbing activities beyond excavation for the proposed septic abatement and installation, and trenching for utilities internal to the project site, substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site is not anticipated to occur. The construction of proposed facilities would require activities such as pavement breaking, ditching, drilling, excavation and demolition, which would temporarily alter each site’s existing ground surface and drainage patterns. Compliance with the Construction General Permit (CGP) and SWPPP would be required. Each of these permits and plans would require the implementation of BMPs that manage overland runoff from the project site and establish permanent drainage pathways to stabilized outlets. With implementation of such BMPs and compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, potential onsite and offsite erosion would be reduced and discharges from construction sites would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant.

The Preliminary Hydrology Study (refer to **Appendix 4**) demonstrates that the proposed project would not significantly alter the volume of flows downstream of the project site. The project site would continue to drain from southwest to northeast and no increases to peak discharge flows would occur (refer to **Figure X-1** which depicts the proposed hydrological conditions). The Preliminary Hydrology Study further demonstrates that onsite flows would be discharged in conformance with County requirements. Accordingly, the proposed improvements would not necessitate attenuation of flows, discharge point improvements, or alterations to the downstream drainage system. Given that future surface runoff from the project site would remain comparable to that which presently occurs onsite, the potential for downstream erosion or sedimentation would be controlled to a less than significant impact level and no mitigation is required.

ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite?

Less Than Significant Impact – The proposed project would only very minimally alter the existing drainage courses or patterns onsite but would maintain the existing offsite downstream drainage system through control of future discharges from the site. As discussed above under Threshold X(a),

¹³ Hi-Desert Water District, 2021. Hi-Desert Water District 2020 Urban Waer Management Plan. <https://www.hdwd.com/DocumentCenter/View/807/Hi-Desert-WD-2020-UWMP-Final> (Accessed 06/19/25)

above, the proposed project could alter the existing drainage patterns within the project site. Given that the project would retain the existing onsite structures and would not include substantial ground disturbing activities beyond excavation for the proposed septic abatement and installation, and trenching for utilities internal to the project site, it is not anticipated that substantial changes in drainage would occur. The construction of proposed project which would temporarily the site's existing ground surface and drainage patterns and could ultimately provide flooding on- or off-site without preventative measures in place. Compliance with the CGP, SWPPP, or San Bernardino County MS4 Permits (WQMP), where applicable, would be required; these plans would ensure that drainage and stormwater will not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site. With implementation of such BMPs, compliance with conditions of required permits governing storm water runoff from construction sites, and retention of runoff on site where feasible, the potential for on- or off-site flooding during construction would be reduced to less than significant levels and discharges from construction sites would not exceed the capacity of existing storm water drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

As outlined in Threshold X(a) above, the Preliminary Hydrology Study (refer to **Appendix 4**) demonstrates that the proposed project would not significantly alter the volume of flows downstream of the project site, and would not be anticipated to change the amount of surface water in any water body in an amount that could substantially increase the rate or volume of runoff in a manner that would result in substantial flooding on- or off-site. The proposed project would continue to drain from southwest to northeast, and the Preliminary Hydrology Study further indicates that the proposed improvement within project site does not increase the peak discharges and does not necessitate any attenuation of flows. It is also recommended that there is no need to do any improvements in the discharge points as peak flows remain virtually the same. As a result, operation of the proposed project once developed is not anticipated to result in increases in peak discharges or changes that would result in substantial flooding on- or off-site (refer to **Figure X-1** which depict the proposed hydrological conditions). The Preliminary Hydrology Study demonstrates that onsite flows would be discharged in conformance with County requirements. The downstream drainage system would not need to be altered and given that future surface runoff from the project site would remain comparable to that which presently occurs onsite as a result of existing operations, and as a result, stormwater runoff would not substantially increase the rate or volume of runoff in a manner that would result in substantial flooding on- or off-site. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant with no mitigation required.

iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated – The proposed project would only very minimally alter the site as the Preliminary Hydrology Report (**Appendix 4**) determined that there is no need to do any improvements in the discharge points as peak flows remain virtually the same. The development of the site would be designed to prevent runoff from leaving the project site or otherwise pretreat the runoff before leaving the site to meet San Bernardino County requirements. Varying amounts of urban pollutants, such as motor oil, antifreeze, gasoline, pesticides, detergents, trash, animal wastes, and fertilizers, could be introduced into downstream stormwater within the watershed. However, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate discharges that would

require pollution controls beyond those already incorporated into the project design and/or required by the County as standard conditions of approval (COAs) to meet water quality management requirements from the RWQCB. As such, the project is not anticipated to result in a significant adverse impact to water quality or flows downstream of the project with implementation of mitigation outlined below.

The County has adopted stringent best management practices designed to control discharge of non-point source pollution that could result in a significant adverse impact to surface water quality. As discussed above, under Threshold X(a), above, the proposed project will be required to implement BMPs throughout the duration of construction through the implementation of **MM HYD-1**, which would ensure proper management of stormwater drainage. In addition, the project will be required to adhere to regulatory requirements identified by the Countywide Plan and County Development Code to ensure that stormwater runoff is controlled. The project would ensure that the degree of water quality control is adequate to ensure the project does not contribute significantly to downstream water quality degradation. Thus, the implementation of onsite drainage improvements and applicable requirements would ensure that drainage and stormwater would not create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned offsite stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. With the indicated mitigation, the project's impact under this issue would be reduced to less than significant levels.

iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?

Less Than Significant Impact – As shown on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Federal Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) #06071C8115H dated 8-28-2008 (**Figure X-2**), the project site is located within Zone D which represents areas of undetermined flood hazard. Furthermore, according to the San Bernardino Countywide Plan Flood Hazards Map (**Figure X-3**), the proposed project is not located within a flood hazard zone. As summarized in Threshold X(a) above and further described in the Preliminary Hydrology Study (see **Appendix 4**), the proposed project would not significantly alter the volume of flows downstream of the project site because it would not involve major construction that would change onsite drainage patterns or result in new operations that increase off-site discharge volumes. As a result, flood flows would resemble existing conditions during both construction and operation of the site. As such, development of this site is not anticipated to redirect or impede flood flow at the project site. Therefore, impacts under this issue are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – As stated under Threshold X(c[iv]), the proposed project is not located in a known flood hazard area, as mapped by the County and by FEMA (**Figures X-2 and X-3**). The project is not located within the limit of an inundation area associated with any nearby dams. The project is located more than 100 miles from the Pacific Ocean, which eliminates the potential for a tsunami to impact the project area. Additionally, a seiche would not occur within the vicinity of the project because no lakes or enclosed bodies of water exist near the site that could be impacted by such an event. It is anticipated that through compliance with the County Development Code and minimal modifications to the existing drainage patterns within the site, inundation hazards within the County would be reduced to a level of less than significant. Therefore, the potential to expose

people or structures to a significant risk of pollutants due to inundation would be minimal. No mitigation is required.

- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – In 2014, Governor Brown signed into law the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, also known as SGMA. The Act took effect in 2015. It “requires for the first time in state history that groundwater resources be sustainably managed by local agencies through the formation of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in each basin that are deemed high-priority or medium-priority by the Department of Water Resources. In such basins, GSAs are required to develop and implement Groundwater Sustainability Plans.”¹⁴ The SGMA empowers local agencies to form Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to manage basins and requires GSAs to adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) for crucial groundwater basins in California. According to the California Department of Water Resources Groundwater Sustainability Agency Formation Notification System,¹⁵ the groundwater basin underlying the project site is very low priority under SGMA and therefore has not been required to prepare a GSP to address groundwater basin management. The proposed project receives water from the District, which also utilizes Hi-Desert Water Agency supply as emergency supply in emergency circumstances. The District obtains water from the Mojave and Morongo Groundwater Basins, and Hi-Desert Water Agency contains water from the Warren Valley Groundwater Basin and Ames Groundwater Basin. The proposed project would not conflict with the management of groundwater by the District or Hi-Desert Water Agency as these entities manage groundwater use and compliance with the regulations thereof as part of normal operations. As such, the project would not conflict with a sustainable groundwater management plan. Water consumption and effects thereof in the Basin indicate that the proposed project’s water demand is considered to be minimal. By controlling water quality during construction and operations through implementation of both short- (SWPPP) and long- (WQMP) term best management practices at the site, no potential for conflict or obstruction of the Regional Board’s Water Quality Control Plan has been identified.

Mitigation Program

HYD-1 The Applicant shall require that the construction contractor implement specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will prevent all construction pollutants from contacting stormwater and with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving offsite into receiving waters. These practices shall include a Plan that identifies the methods of containing, cleanup, transport and proper disposal of hazardous chemicals or materials released during construction activities that are compatible with applicable laws and regulations. BMPs to be implemented by the Developer include the following:

- **The use of silt fences or coir rolls;**
- **The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins;**
- **The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff;**
- **The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site;**
- **The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads;**

¹⁴ Western Municipal Water District, 2025. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act <https://www.wmwd.com/461/Sustainable-Groundwater-Management-Act> (accessed 05/20/25)

¹⁵ Department of Water Resources, 2025. Groundwater Sustainability Act Map Viewer. <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/index.jsp?appid=gasmaster&rz=true> (accessed 05/20/25)

- **The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and**
- **Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.**

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with implementation of the above mitigation measures.

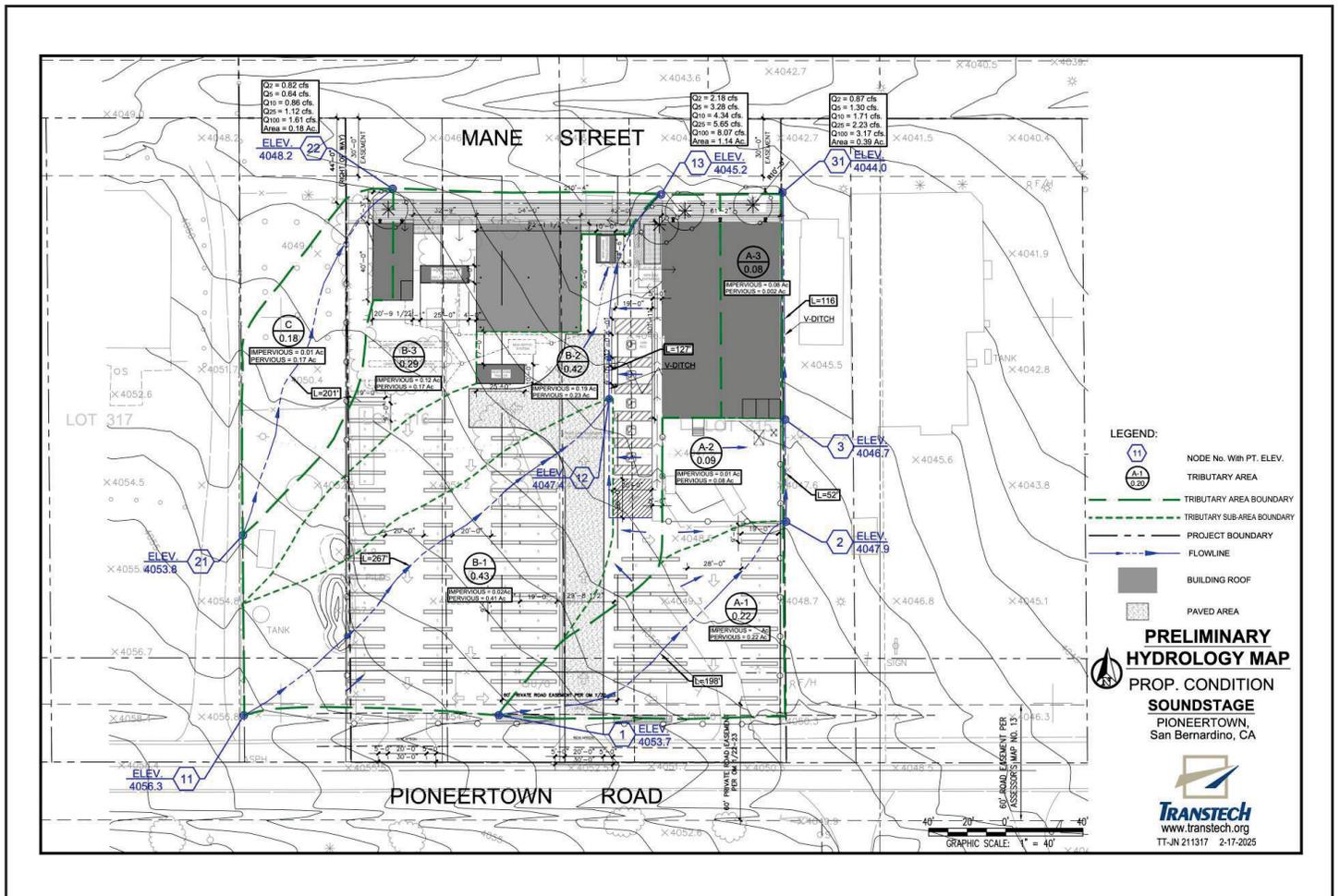


FIGURE X-1

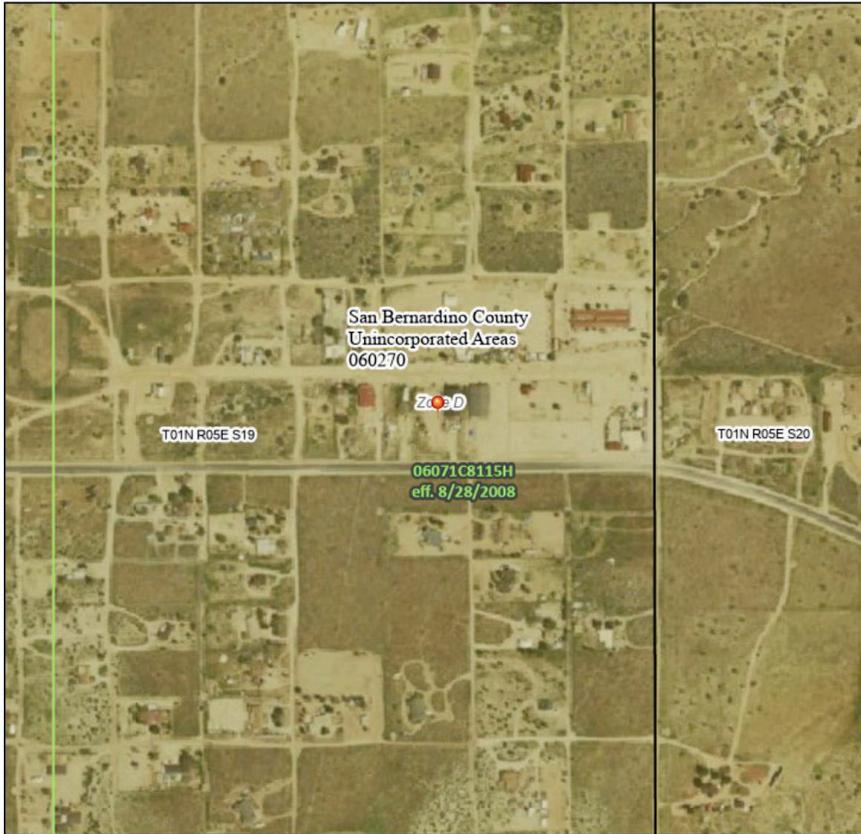
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Preliminary Hydrology Map

National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



116°30'2" W 34°9'39" N



Legend

SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

- SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS**
 - Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Zone A, V, A99
 - With BFE or Depth Zone AE, AO, AH, VE, AR
 - Regulatory Floodway
- OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD**
 - 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile Zone X
 - Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone X
 - Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee. See Notes, Zone X
 - Area with Flood Risk due to Levee Zone D
- OTHER AREAS**
 - NO SCREEN Area of Minimal Flood Hazard Zone X
 - Effective LOMRs
 - Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard Zone D
- GENERAL STRUCTURES**
 - Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
 - Levee, Dike, or Floodwall
- OTHER FEATURES**
 - 20.2 Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance Water Surface Elevation
 - 17.5 Coastal Transect
 - Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
 - Limit of Study
 - Jurisdiction Boundary
 - Coastal Transect Baseline
 - Profile Baseline
 - Hydrographic Feature
- MAP PANELS**
 - Digital Data Available
 - No Digital Data Available
 - Unmapped

The pin displayed on the map is an approximate point selected by the user and does not represent an authoritative property location.

This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards.

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on 3/12/2025 at 7:49 PM and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.

Basemap Imagery Source: USGS National Map 2023

FIGURE X-2

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National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette

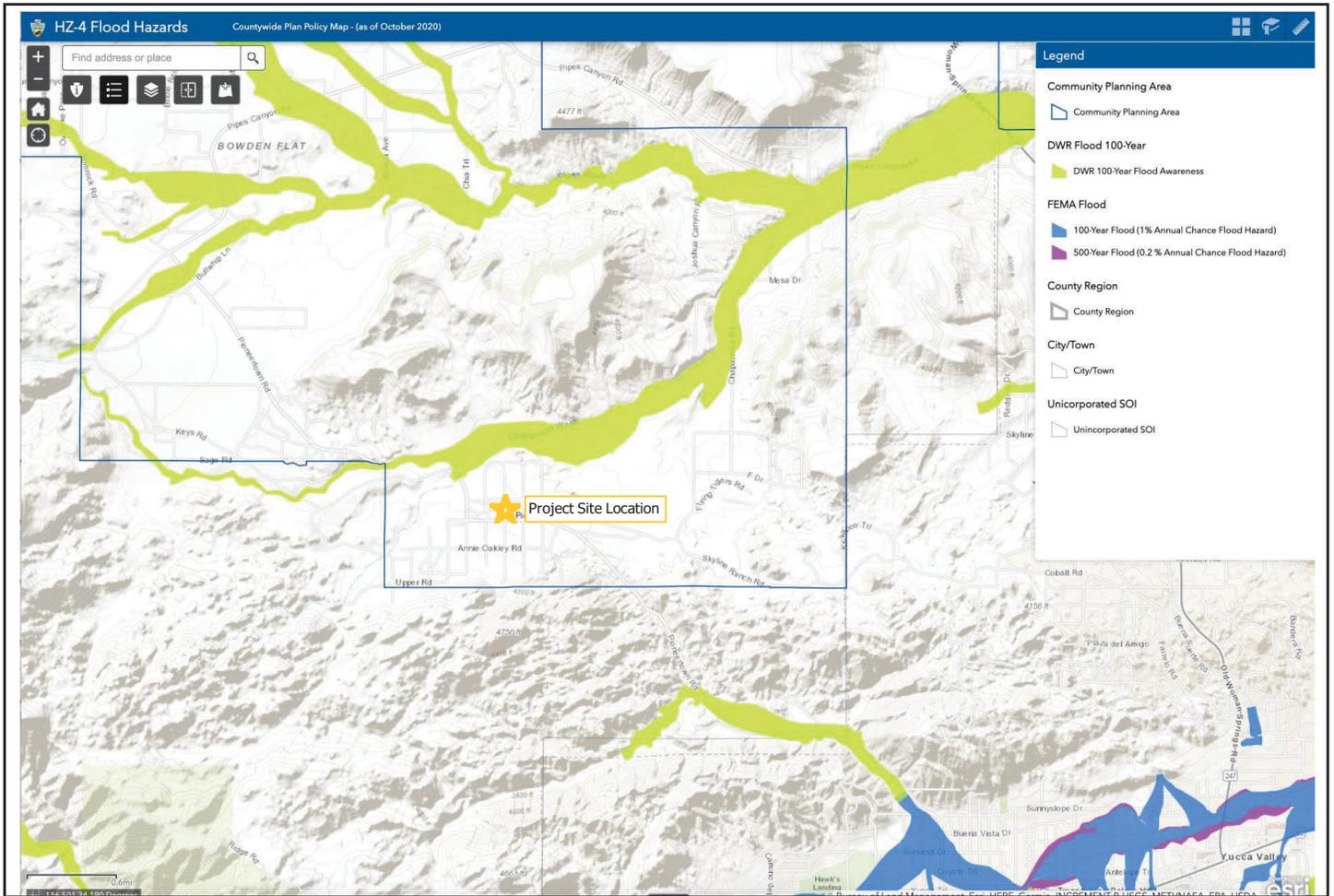


FIGURE X-3

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Flood Hazard Map

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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"/>

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

- a. *No Impact* – Refer to the aerial photos provided as **Figures 1 and 2**, which depict the project's regional and site-specific location. The San Bernardino County Countywide Plan Land Use designation is Commercial (C), while the Zoning classification is Rural Commercial, while the Zoning District is Special Development-Residential (SD-RES) Land to the north, south, east, and west has the same zoning classification. Note that the project site land use designation is Commercial, as are the surrounding land uses, with the exception of the land use to the south, which is Rural Living. The development of the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project on this site would be consistent with the surrounding uses, including the surrounding land use designations and zoning classifications. The proposed project would not include any physical improvements beyond the property line. Rehabilitation of the existing site uses, and enhancement to become the proposed use would reflect a continuance of that which exists at present, and therefore, would not hinder existing residents and visitors from moving through the area on local roadways and trails. Consequently, the development of the project site with the proposed use would not divide any established community. Therefore, no significant impacts under this issue are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project consists of the rehabilitation and utilization of the existing Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette, including installation of a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code, as well as installation of a shaded outdoor dining area, modular structures serving as restrooms, snack carts, and a mobile kitchen, and parking. The site itself primarily supports commercial development associated with the existing Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette and several retail establishments with associated infrastructure and unpaved parking areas and also supports narrow swaths of undeveloped land that are periodically cleared of vegetation in association with routine weed abatement activities and infrastructure maintenance. The project site is located within the Commercial land use designation and is surrounded by rural residential and commercial uses. The Countywide Plan lists the following Goals and Policies under the Land Use Element:

- 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.
 - Applicable policies (as discussed under Threshold I(c) under Aesthetics):
 - **Policy LU-2.1 Compatibility with existing uses.** We require that new development is located, scaled, buffered, and designed to minimize negative impacts on existing conforming uses and adjacent neighborhoods. We also require that new residential developments are located, scaled, buffered, and designed so as to not hinder the viability and continuity of existing conforming nonresidential development.
 - The proposed project is at a similar scale as the surrounding uses.
 - **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 County Development Code, may be required to maximize compatibility with surrounding land uses and community identity.
 - The proposed project is compatible with the land use map designation, with the approval of a CUP, which the County determined to be necessary due to the nature of the Soundstage and proposed outdoor uses, which would host a variety of uses that, according to the County Development Code Table 82-17 as it pertains to SD-RES uses, require a CUP.
 - **Policy LU-4.7 Dark skies.** We minimize light pollution and glare to preserve views of the night sky, particularly in the Mountain and Desert regions where dark skies are fundamentally connected to community identities and local economies. We also promote the preservation of dark skies to assist the military in testing, training, and operations.
 - The County has adopted the San Bernardino Night Sky Ordinance. All new developments, including the proposed project, may incrementally change conditions of nighttime views and the character of dark skies, but the project would be required to adhere to county standards for lighting and glare to ensure that impacts to night skies would be minimized to a level of less than significant (refer to Threshold I[c]).
 - **Policy LU-4.1 Context-sensitive design in the Mountain/Desert regions.** We require new development to employ site and building design techniques and use building materials that reflect the natural mountain or desert environment and preserve scenic resources.
 - The proposed project would be installed to be compatible with the types of surrounding uses, and furthermore enhance the present use of the site, rather than creating an entirely new site use.
 - **Policy NR-4.1 Preservation of scenic resources.** We consider the location and scale of development to preserve regionally significant scenic vistas and natural features, including prominent hillsides, ridgelines, dominant landforms, and reservoirs.
 - As discussed under this topic (refer to Threshold I[c]), the proposed project would not conflict with the preservation of scenic resources.
 - **Policy NR-4.3 Off-site signage.** We prohibit new off-site signage and encourage the removal of existing off-site signage along or within view of County Scenic Routes and State Scenic Highways.

- The proposed project would not install offsite signage, thus meeting the provisions of this policy. The proposed project would not result in a significant change in viewshed in the vicinity of any County Scenic Route (Pioneertown Road).

The proposed project would be consistent with the above goals and policies as documented in other appropriate sections of this document (e.g., dark skies in Section I, Aesthetics). A review of all other Countywide Plan Goals (Housing Element, Infrastructure & Utilities Element, Transportation & Mobility Element, Natural Resources Element, Renewable Energy & Conservation Element, Cultural Resources Element, Hazards Element, Personal & Property Protection Element, Economic Development Element, and Health & Wellness Element) indicates that the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project, is consistent with all applicable Goals, often with mitigation, as demonstrated by the findings in the pertinent sections of this Initial Study. The proposed project can be implemented without significant effects on the circulation system; all infrastructure exists at or can be extended to the site to support the proposed project; it can meet the requirements set forth in the Natural Resources Element pertaining to regional parks and biological resources; it will not generate significant air emissions or GHG emissions and it will meet noise design requirements with mitigation, and as a result it can meet all Safety Element requirements; and it implements the Health and Wellness Element objectives and goals. Therefore, the implementation of this project at this site will be consistent with surrounding land uses, and current use of the site. The proposed project would have a less than significant potential to conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. No further mitigation is required.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XII. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would 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 Countywide Plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

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

Impact Analysis

- a. *No Impact* – The proposed project is located within a site containing existing features that will be rehabilitated for the purpose of serving the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project. Thus, as the project presently serves a similar use to that which is proposed to be enhanced and expanded by the proposed project, the site does not contain any known important minerals resources. Furthermore, the Countywide Plan Mineral Resource Zones Map indicates that the proposed project is not located within an area containing delineated mineral resources (**Figure XII-1**). Therefore, the development of the site is not anticipated to result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

- b. *No Impact* –As stated above, the proposed project site does not contain any known mineral resources delineated by the County in its Countywide Plan (**Figure XII-1**) and presently serves a similar use to that which is proposed to be enhanced and expanded by the proposed project. As such, the development of the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project at the proposed site would not result in the loss of any available locally important resource recovery site delineated on a local Countywide Plan, specific plan or other land use plan, as no such delineations of this site are known. No impacts under this issue are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

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

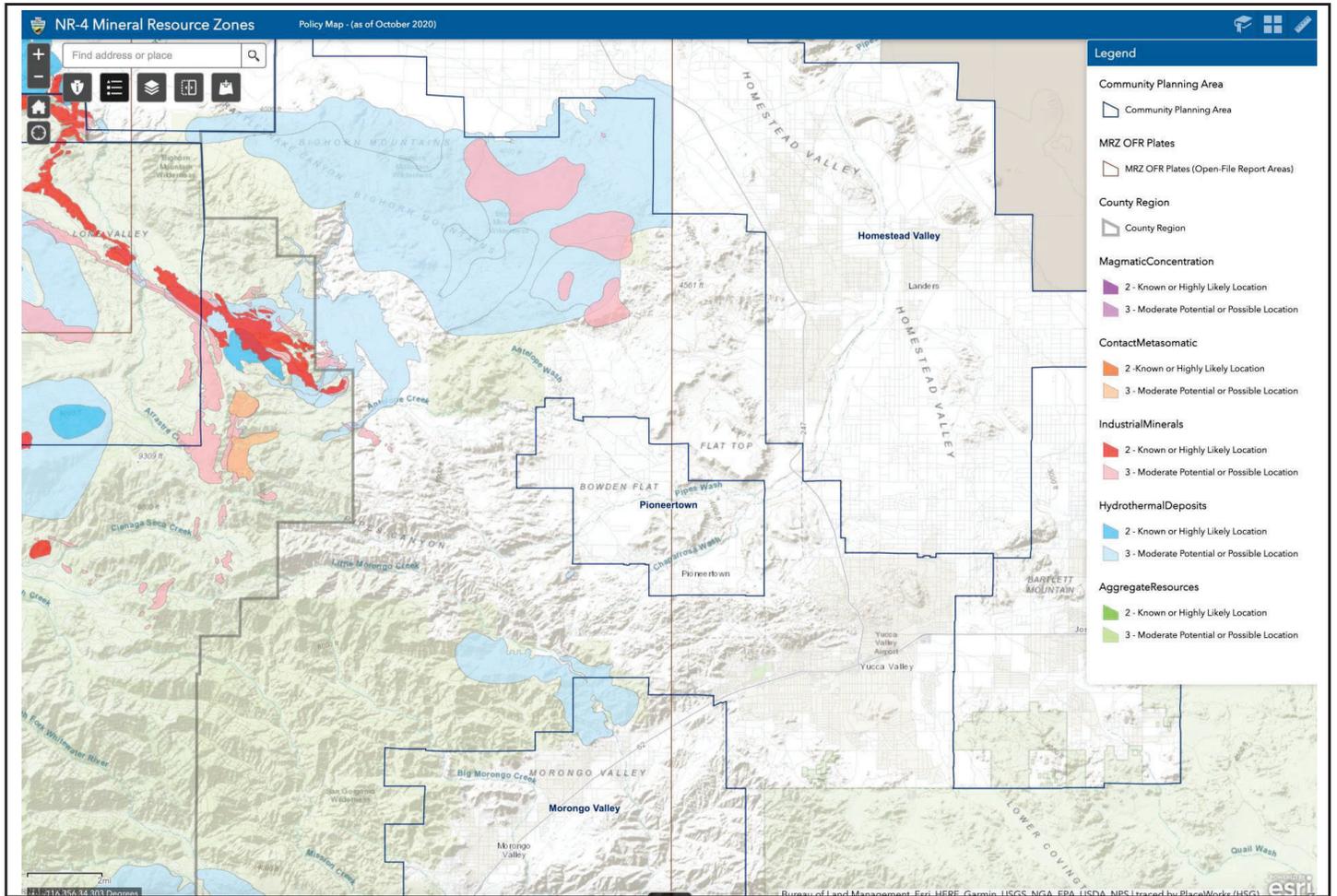


FIGURE XII-1

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Mineral Resource Zones

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIII. NOISE: Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of a project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XIII. NOISE

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located in the Noise Hazard Overlay District or is subject to severe noise levels according to the Countywide Plan Noise Element) Countywide Plan/Policy Plan 2020; San Bernardino County Development Code. A Noise Impact Study was prepared for the project by MD Acoustics, titled “*Pioneertown Mane Street Preservation and Improvement Plan– Noise Impact Study, Pioneertown – County of San Bernardino, CA,*” and dated on December 5, 2025 (**Appendix 5**).

Background

Noise is generally described as unwanted sound. The proposed project consists of rehabilitation and utilization of the existing Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette, including installation of a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code, as well as installation of a shaded outdoor dining area, modular structures serving as restrooms, snack carts, and a mobile kitchen, and parking. The site itself primarily supports commercial development associated with the existing Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette and several retail establishments with associated infrastructure and unpaved parking areas and also supports narrow swaths of undeveloped land that are periodically cleared of vegetation in association with routine weed abatement activities and infrastructure maintenance. The proposed project is surrounded by residential and commercial development in all directions. The background noise in the project area is low-to-moderate, given the location adjacent to Pioneertown, which experiences relatively high levels of tourism, and noise generated thereof. Background traffic noise along Pioneertown Road is documented on the San Bernardino Countywide Plan Noise Contour provided as **Figure XIII-1**. As such, traffic noise in this area is modest because Pioneertown Road is adjacent to the project site’s southern boundary.

The unit of sound pressure ratio to the faintest sound detectable to a person with normal hearing is called a decibel (dB). Sound or noise can vary in intensity by over one million times within the range of human hearing. A logarithmic loudness scale, similar to the Richter scale for earthquake magnitude, is therefore used to keep sound intensity numbers at a convenient and manageable level. The human ear is not equally sensitive to all sound frequencies within the entire spectrum. Noise levels at maximum human sensitivity from around 500 to 2,000 cycles per second are factored more heavily into sound descriptions in a process called "A-weighting," written as "dBA."

L_{eq} is a time-averaged sound level; a single-number value that expresses the time-varying sound level for the specified period as though it were a constant sound level with the same total sound energy as the time-varying level. Its unit of measure is the decibel (dB). The most common averaging period for L_{eq} is hourly.

Because community receptors are more sensitive to unwanted noise intrusion during more sensitive evening and nighttime hours, state law requires that an artificial dBA (A-weighted decibel) increment be added to quiet time noise levels. The State of California has established guidelines for acceptable community noise levels that are based on the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) rating scale (a 24-hour integrated noise measurement scale). The guidelines rank noise land use compatibility in terms of "normally acceptable," "conditionally acceptable," and "clearly unacceptable" noise levels for various land use types. The State Guidelines, Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure, single-family homes are "normally acceptable" in exterior noise environments up to 60 dB CNEL and "conditionally acceptable" up to 70 dB CNEL based on this scale. Multiple family residential uses are "normally acceptable" up to 65 dB CNEL and "conditionally acceptable" up to 70 CNEL. Schools, libraries and churches are "normally acceptable" up to 70 dB CNEL, as are office buildings and business, commercial and professional uses with some structural noise attenuation.

Local Acoustical Requirements

The San Bernardino County Development Code establishes standards concerning acceptable noise levels for both noise-sensitive land uses and for noise-generating land uses. Section 83.01.080 states the following:

- (c) **Noise Standards for Stationary Noise Sources.**
 - (1) **Noise Standards.** Table XIII-1 (Table 83-2 in the Municipal Code) describes the noise standard for emanations from a stationary noise source, as it affects adjacent properties.

Table XIII-1: Noise Standards for Stationary Noise Sources

Affected Land Uses (Receiving Noise)	Noise Level Limit (L_{eq} dBA)	
	7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.	10:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m.
Residential	55	45
Professional Services	55	55
Other Commercial	60	60
Industrial	70	70

- (2) Noise Limit Categories. No person shall operate or cause to be operated a source of sound at a location or allow the creation of noise on property owned, leased, occupied, or otherwise controlled by the person, which causes the noise level, when measured on another property, either incorporated or unincorporated, to exceed any one of the following:
 1. The noise standard for the receiving land use as specified in Subdivision (b) (Noise-Impacted Areas), above, for a cumulative period of more than 30 minutes in any hour.
 2. The noise standard plus five dB(A) for a cumulative period of more than 15 minutes in any hour.
 3. The noise standard plus ten dB(A) for a cumulative period of more than five minutes in any hour.
 4. The noise standard plus 15 dB(A) for a cumulative period of more than one minute in any hour.
 5. The noise standard plus 20 dB(A) for any period of time.

The noise level due to the proposed event venue will be compared to the standards provided in Table XIII-1. The noise level at the adjacent property lines must not exceed 55 dBA L_{eq} during daytime hours for residential uses and 60 dBA L_{eq} for commercial uses.

Per Section 83.01.080(g)(3), construction noise is exempt from 7AM to 7PM except Sundays and Federal holidays.

Construction Noise Standards

Neither the Countywide Plan nor Municipal Code established numeric maximum acceptable construction source noise levels at potentially affected receivers for CEQA analysis purposes. Therefore, a numerical construction threshold based on the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual¹⁶, is used for the analysis of daytime construction impacts, as discussed below. Due to the lack of standardized construction noise thresholds, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides guidelines that can be considered reasonable criteria for construction noise assessment. The FTA considers a daytime exterior construction noise level of 80 dBA L_{eq} as a reasonable threshold for noise-sensitive residential land use.

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – As stated under background noise above, the proposed project site is located in a low-to-moderate background noise environment. This is because the project site is located along Pioneertown Road, which experiences a modest level of traffic (refer to the noise contours provided as **Figure XIII-1** [existing] and **XIII-2** [future]). Further, the proposed project is located adjacent to Pioneertown, within which noise is generated by tourism drawn to this area.

Existing Noise Conditions

One 1-hour measurement was conducted at the project site on April 10, 2024. The project site is

¹⁶ FTA, 2018. Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, Federal Transit Administration

surrounded by Pioneertown commercial uses to the north, west, and east and vacant residential to the south. The results of the noise measurements are presented in Table XIII-2.

Table XIII-2: Short-Term Noise Measurement Data (dBA)¹

Location	Start Time	Stop Time	L _{eq}	L _{max}	L _{min}	L(2)	L(8)	L(25)	L(50)	L(90)
NM1	3:05 PM	4:05 PM	48.1	59.9	31.2	57	54	46.3	42.1	36.8

Notes:
 1. Short-term noise monitoring locations are illustrated in Appendix B.

Noise data indicate that the existing ambient noise level is approximately 48 dBA L_{eq}. This includes all the current activity from Pioneertown. **Exhibit XIII-1** shows the approximate measurement location.



Exhibit XIII-1: Measurement Locations

Short Term Construction Noise

Short-term construction noise impacts associated with the proposed project would occur in phases as the project site is developed. Table XIII-3, Typical Construction Noise Levels, shows the estimated noise levels for the various types of construction equipment that would be used on the project site.

Table XIII-3: Typical Construction Noise Levels

Construction Phase	Type of Equipment	Noise Levels (dBA) at 50 feet
Grading	Compactors	82
	Front Loaders	85
	Backhoes	80
	Trucks	88
Material Handling	Concrete Mixer	85
Stationary Equipment	Generators	81
	Compressors	81
Other Equipment	Vibrators	76
	Saws	76

Source: Referenced Noise Levels from the FTA Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Table 12-1). [https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/FTA Noise and Vibration Manual.pdf](https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/FTA_Noise_and_Vibration_Manual.pdf) (accessed 02/11/26)

The earth-moving sources are the noisiest type of equipment, typically ranging up to 88 dB at 50 feet from the source. The nearest sensitive receptor property line is approximately 180 feet south of the project’s southern boundary. At 180 feet from the source, the loudest potential construction source (88 dBA) would attenuate to 76.87 dBA at the nearest sensitive receptor property line.¹⁷ Temporary construction noise is exempt from the County Noise Performance Standards between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., except Sundays and Federal holidays. Project construction will be limited to daytime hours and specific days in compliance with the County’s Development Code. Utilizing the FTA Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment reference noise levels and applying the attenuation factor at a distance of 180 feet, the proposed project would not generate noise in excess of the FTA daytime exterior construction noise level of 80 dBA L_{eq} . Thus, the proposed project would be constructed in compliance with the County’s Noise Performance Standards and below the FTA construction noise threshold of 80 dBA L_{eq} , and therefore construction of the project would be less than significant.

In order to further minimize the construction related noise generation to **Mitigation Measures NOI-1 through NOI-5** are recommended. These measures are anticipated to reduce the construction-related noise levels at nearby receptors to the maximum extent feasible and ensure that construction noise falls below the identified 80 DBA L_{eq} construction noise level significance threshold. Through compliance with the above recommended mitigation measure, in addition to regulatory compliance, construction noise impacts of the project on surrounding uses would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Long-Term Operational Noise

The long-term or permanent change in noise consists of the additional trips and noise related to activities associated with full operation of the Pioneertown Soundstage Project. MD Acoustics (**Appendix 5**) evaluated the projected project noise and compared it to the existing condition and County Development Code. The future worst-case noise level projections were modeled using measured sound level data for the stationary on-site sources. The model incorporates the

¹⁷ Omni Calculator, 2026. Distance Attenuation Calculator. <https://www.omnicalculator.com/physics/distance-attenuation> (Accessed 02/10/26)

topography and buildings and shows how sound propagates to the surrounding area. The model includes SoundPLAN defaults for a night club, dance café with very loud music at 92 dBA Lw on the Soundstage, with the doors of the Soundstage open at all times. The transformer was modeled as a 25-50kVa transformer running constantly at 40 dBA at 8 feet. The outdoor dining area was modeled for daytime only, as the SoundPLAN defaults for a normal beer garden at 66 dBA per square meter, with the outdoor dining area at maximum capacity. Parking was modeled with SoundPLAN defaults, assuming one parking movement per hour for up to 55 spaces. See Appendix C of **Appendix 5** for the modeling inputs and outputs. The future worst-case noise level projections were modeled using measured sound level data for the stationary on-site sources.

The Noise Study (**Appendix 5**) evaluated the projected project noise and compared it to the existing condition and Development Code noise standards. Table XIII-4 below outlines the reference noise levels used to calibrate the models. Potential solutions to reduce the noise impact to adjacent residences were compared using these reference sound levels as a baseline condition and evaluated based on the noise level projections as shown in **Exhibit XIII-2**. Receptor 1 represents the commercially zoned bar to the west. Receptor 2 represents the commercially zoned bowling alley to the east. Receptor 3 represents the unoccupied residentially zoned land to the south. Further south of receptor 3 is an occupied residential property. Receptor 4 represents the commercially zoned motel to the northeast. Receptor 5 represents the commercially zoned church to the northwest.

Table XIII-4: Worst-case Predicted Day/Night Operational L_{eq} Noise Level

Receptor ¹	Day/Night Existing Ambient Noise Level (dBA, L _{eq}) ²	Day/Night Project Noise Level (dBA, L _{eq}) ³	Day/Night Total Combined Noise Level (dBA, L _{eq})	Day/Night Daytime Exterior Noise Limit (dBA, L _{eq})	Day/Night Change in Noise Level as Result of Project
1	48/38	47/43	51/44	60/60	3/6
2	48/38	59/59	59/59	60/60	11/21
3	48/38	46/45	50/45	55/45	2/7
4	48/38	38/36	48/40	60/60	0/2
5	48/38	43/40	49/42	60/60	1/4

Notes:
1. Receptors 1, 2, 4, and 5 represent adjacent commercial properties. Receptor 3 represents an adjacent vacant residential property.
2. See Appendix of Appendix 5 for the ambient noise measurement.
3. See Exhibit XIII-2 for the operational noise level projections at said receptors.

All projected noise levels meet the County code for daytime and nighttime noise limits. The commercial noise level is the loudest just east of the soundstage doors, up to 59 dBA L_{eq} during day and night hours. The residentially zoned properties will be up to 46 dBA L_{eq} during the day and 45 dBA L_{eq} at night.

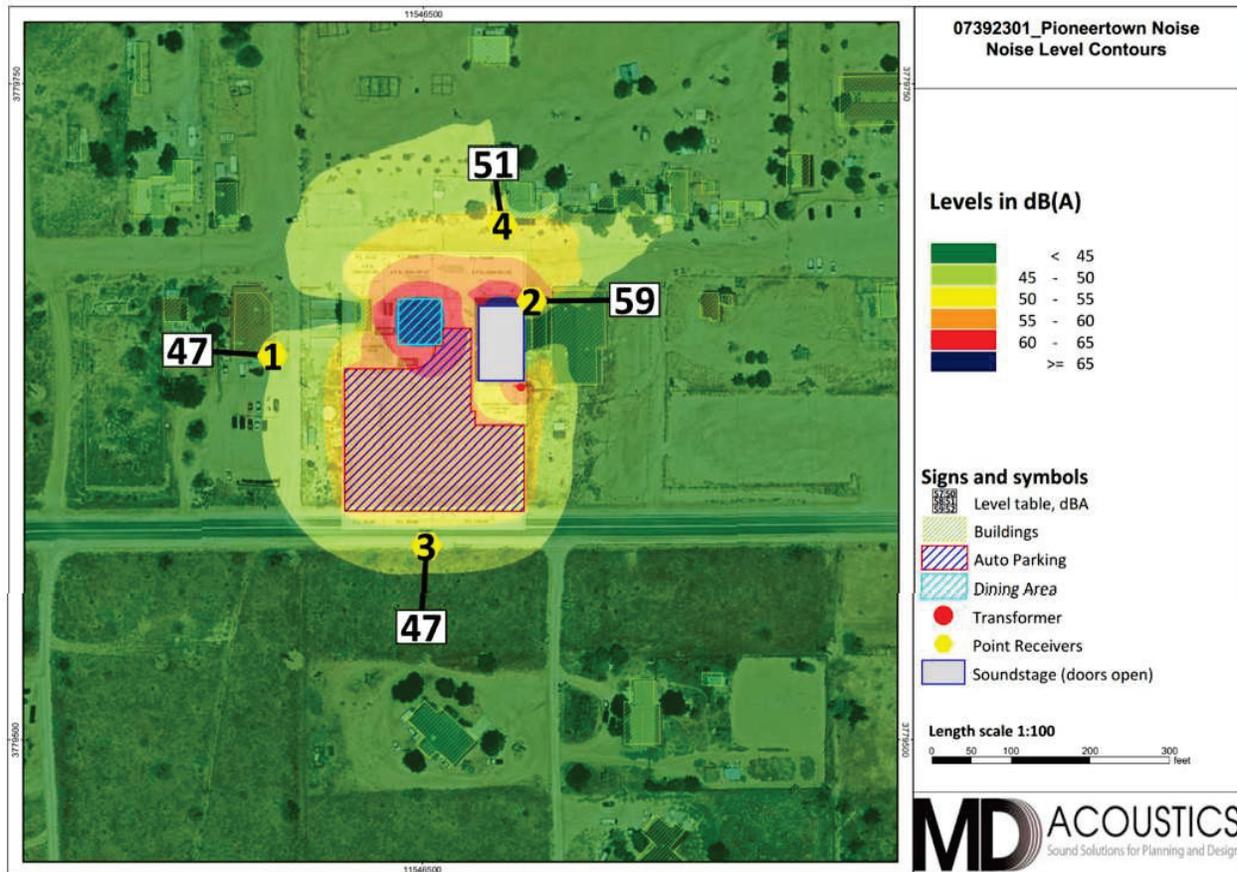


Exhibit XIII-2: Noise Contours

Thus, operational noise impacts would be less than significant, as nearby sensitive receptors would be protected from excessive noise generation by the proposed project.

Conclusion

With implementation of the mitigation measures proposed to address construction noise and ongoing activities described above, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of a project in excess of standards established in the local Countywide Plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation for both construction and operation of the proposed project.

- b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. The rumbling sound caused by vibration of room surfaces is called structure borne noises. Sources of groundborne vibrations include natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or human-made causes (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous or transient. Vibration is often described in units of velocity (inches per second) and discussed in decibel (VdB) units in order to compress the range of numbers required to describe vibration. Vibration impacts related to human development are generally associated with activities such as train operations, construction, and heavy truck movements.

The background vibration-velocity level in residential areas (from ongoing activities in a residential area such as cars driving by on a paved road, etc.) is generally 50 VdB¹⁸, while the groundborne vibration directly adjacent to an industrial facility requiring movement of heavy machinery might be greater. Groundborne vibration is normally perceptible to humans at approximately 65 VdB, while 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible. Construction activity can result in varying degrees of groundborne vibration but is generally associated with pile driving and rock blasting. Other construction equipment—such as air compressors, light trucks, hydraulic loaders, etc.—generate little or no ground vibration. Table XIII-5, Typical Vibration Impacts, shows the kind of vibration impact that can occur around typical construction sites.

Table XIII-5: Typical Vibration Impacts

Construction Activity	Distance to Nearest Structure (feet)	Duration	Calculated Vibration Level PPV (in/sec)	Damage Potential Level	Annoyance Criteria Level
Large Bulldozer	25	Continuous/Frequent	0.089	Extremely fragile historic buildings, ruins, ancient monuments	Distinctly Perceptible
Vibratory Roller	25	Continuous/Frequent	0.210	Historic and old buildings	Strongly Perceptible
Loaded Trucks	25	Continuous/Frequent	0.076	No Impact	Distinctly Perceptible

Source; Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, Federal Transit Administration, September 2018

The County Development Code offers guidance on vibration. County Development Code Section 83.01.090 provides guidance regarding how vibration should be measured and offers the following Standard:

Vibration standard. No ground vibration shall be allowed that can be felt without the aid of instruments at or beyond the lot line, nor shall any vibration be allowed which produces a particle velocity greater than or equal to two-tenths (0.2) inches per second measured at or beyond the lot line.

In the short term, it is possible that groundbreaking construction equipment and other equipment required to construct the whole of the project may have some potential to create some vibration at that traverses the property line, but given that heavy construction equipment is not planned to be used to construct the project, as described in the project description, it is not anticipated that vibration would occur at a strongly perceptible level at any nearby sensitive receptor. According to the County Development Code, construction is exempt from vibration regulations during the hours of 7 AM and 7 PM. As such, vibration related to construction activities would be less than significant because the project would limit construction to these hours, and further construction equipment that would be utilized would not generate substantial vibration.

In terms of groundborne vibration impacts associated with human annoyance, this analysis uses the

¹⁸ FTA, 2018. Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, Federal Transit Administration

FTA's vibration impact thresholds for sensitive buildings, residences, and institutional land uses under conditions where there are an infrequent number of events per day. These thresholds are 65 VdB at buildings where vibration would interfere with interior operations, 80 VdB at residences and buildings where people normally sleep, and 83 VdB at other institutional buildings.¹⁹ The 65 VdB threshold applies to typical land uses where vibration would interfere with interior operations, including vibration-sensitive research and manufacturing facilities, hospitals with vibration-sensitive equipment, and university research operations. Based on a review of the project footprint, such that the project site presently includes existing historic structures, it is anticipated that the 65 VdB threshold would be applicable to this project. The 80 VdB threshold applies to all residential land uses and any buildings where people sleep, such as hotels and hospitals. The 83 VdB threshold applies to institutional land uses such as schools, churches, other institutions, and quiet offices that do not have vibration-sensitive equipment but still have the potential for activity interference. Depending on how close an actual receptor location is to the project footprint, and the type of building the receptor, it is possible that the vibration levels at a receptor location could exceed the FTA's vibration thresholds for building damage and human annoyance. As such, based on the distance to the nearest sensitive receptors, including historic structure sensitive receptors onsite, vibration impacts during construction associated with the proposed project on existing nearby receptors would require mitigation through implementation of MM NOI-2. Implementation of MM NOI-2 would discourage the use of construction equipment that generates high levels of vibration within specific distances from existing land uses that are located near active construction areas and would ensure vibration field testing and subsequent minimization near occupied residences. This will reduce the construction-related vibration levels experienced by these existing off-site land uses to a level of less than significant.

- c. *No Impact* – The project site is located greater than 5 miles from any nearby airport. As shown on the Airport Safety & Planning Areas map prepared for the San Bernardino Countywide Plan (**Figure IX-2**), the proposed project is not located within an Airport Safety Review Area at any of the area airports (Yucca Valley Airport and Roy Williams Airport). Further, the proposed project is not located within the AR4-Low Altitude/High Speed Military Airspace Overlay. As the proposed project is not located within a noise contour for any area airport, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Program

NOI-1 The Applicant shall implement the following measures during construction:

- As necessary, the project applicant shall use supplemental measures to reduce the construction noise levels to comply with requirements specified in the County Development Code. These measures may include, but are not limited to, the erection of noise barriers/curtains, use of advanced or state-of-the-art mufflers on construction equipment, and/or reduction in the amount of equipment that would operate concurrently at the construction site.

¹⁹ FTA, 2006. Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/FTA_Noise_and_Vibration_Manual.pdf (Accessed 09/19/25)

- Place noise and groundborne vibration-generating construction activities whose specific location on a construction site may be flexible (e.g., operation of compressors and generators, cement mixing, general truck idling) as far as possible from the nearest noise- and vibration-sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, and hospitals.
- Minimize the effects of equipment with the greatest peak noise generation potential via shrouding or shielding to the extent feasible. Examples include the use of drills, pavement breakers, and jackhammers.
- Provide noise shielding and muffling devices on construction equipment per the manufacturer's specifications.
- Identify a liaison for surrounding residents and property owners to contact with concerns regarding construction noise and vibration. The liaison's telephone number(s) shall be prominently displayed at construction locations.
- Notify in writing all landowners and occupants of properties adjacent to the construction area of the anticipated construction schedule at least two weeks prior to groundbreaking.

Construction activities shall occur within the hours considered to be acceptable for construction by the applicable jurisdiction within which an individual project is constructed, except for emergencies.

NOI-2 The County shall require the Applicant's construction contractor(s) to implement the following measures:

- Ensure that the operation of construction equipment that generates high levels of vibration including, but not limited to, large bulldozers, loaded trucks, pile-drivers, vibratory compactors, and drilling rigs, is minimized to below 80 vibration decibels (VdB), within 45 feet of existing residential structures and 35 feet of institutional structures (e.g., schools) during construction. Use of small rubber-tired bulldozers shall be enforced within these areas during grading operations to reduce vibration effects.
- The construction contractor shall provide signs along the roadway identifying a phone number for adjacent property owners to contact with any complaint. During future construction activities with heavy equipment within 100 feet of occupied residences, vibration field tests shall be conducted at the property line near the nearest occupied residences. If vibrations exceed 80 VdB, the construction activities shall be revised to reduce vibration below this threshold. These measures may include but are not limited to the following: use different construction methods, slow down construction activity, or other mitigating measures to reduce vibration at the property from where the complaint was received.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with implementation of the above mitigation measures.

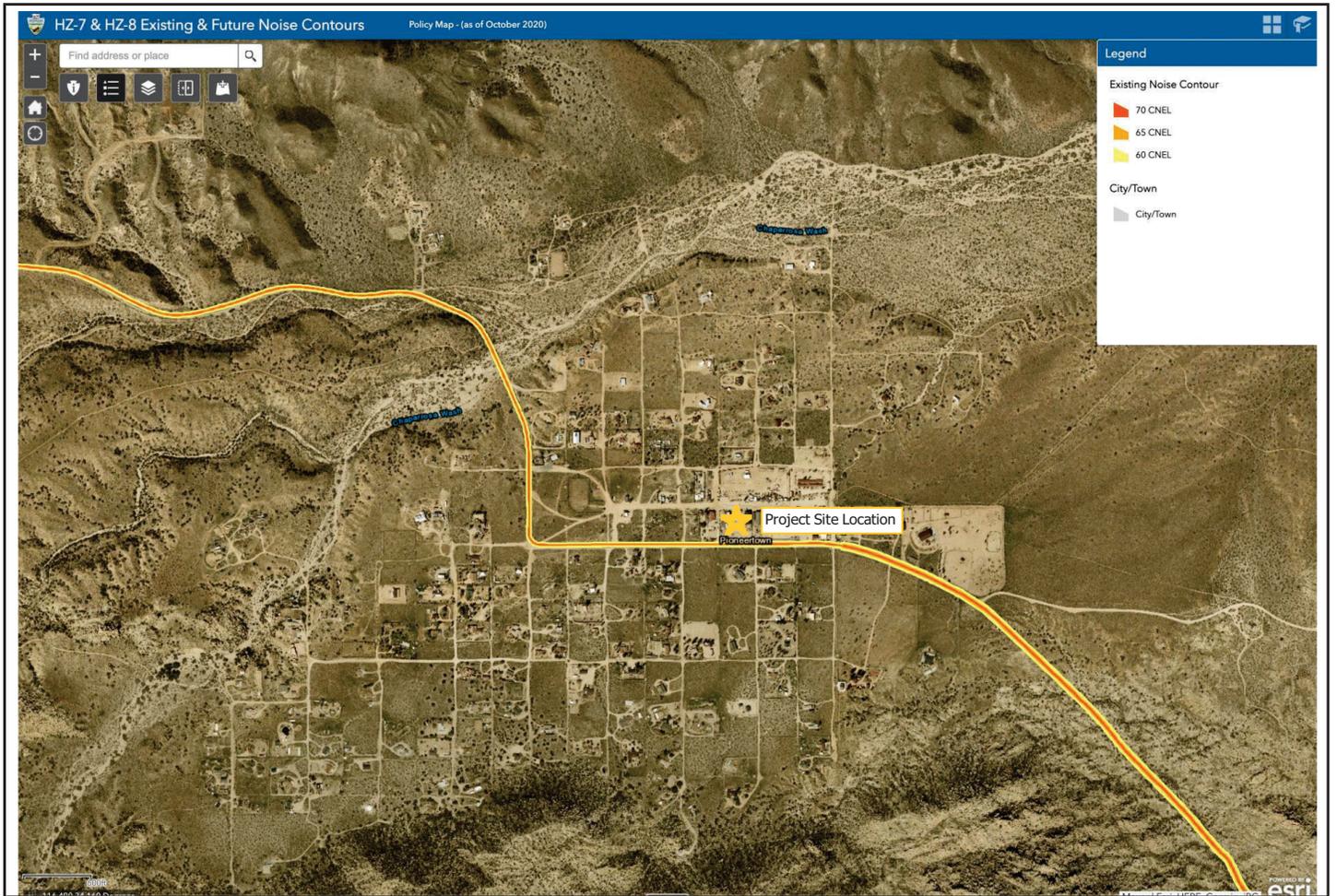


FIGURE XIII-1

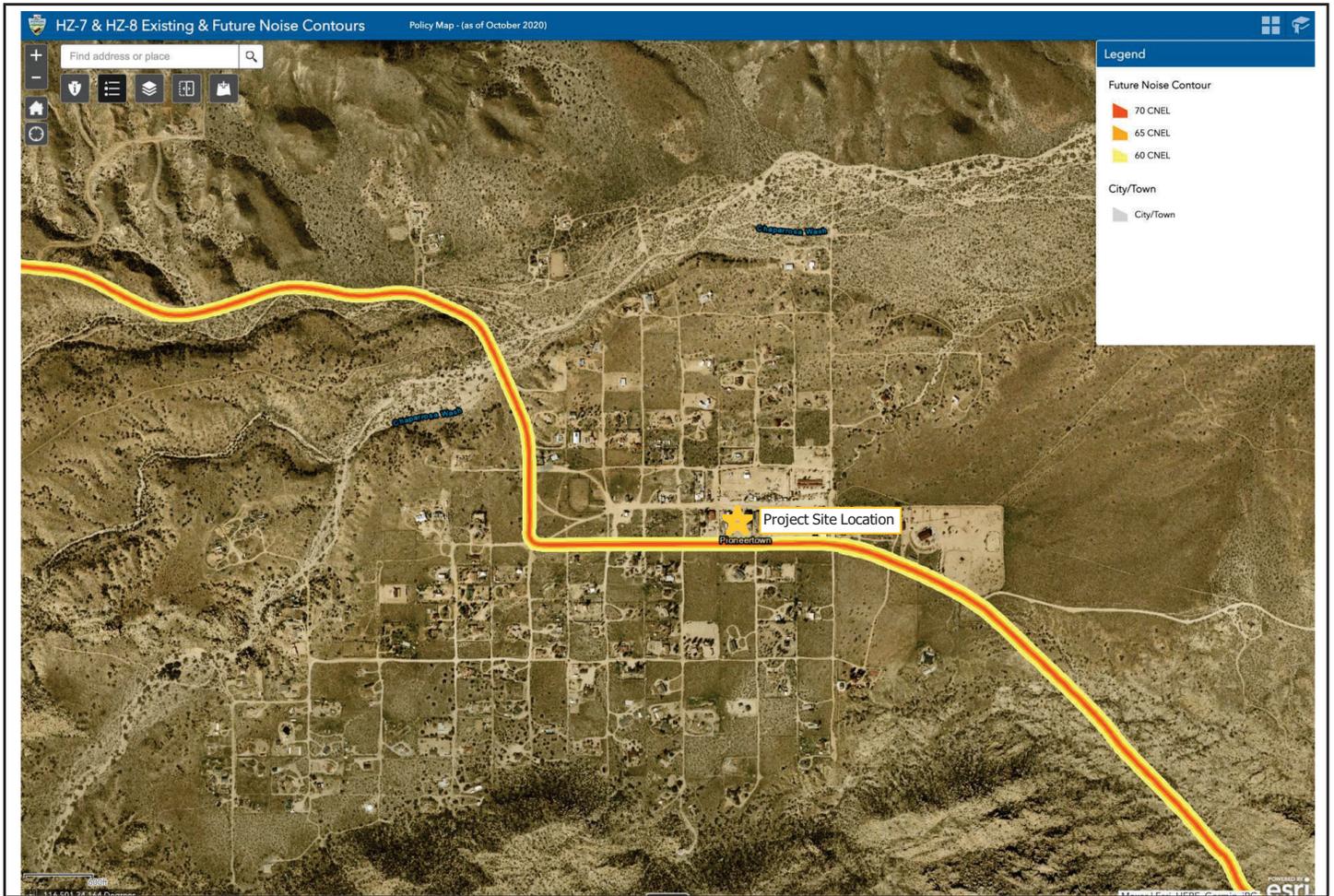


FIGURE XIII-2

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial 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"/>

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Implementation of the project will not induce substantial population growth in the area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure). The project site currently supports commercial development associated with the existing Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette and several retail establishments. The proposed project consists of rehabilitation and utilization of the existing Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette, including installation of a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code, as well as installation of a shaded outdoor dining area, modular structures serving as restrooms, snack carts, and a mobile kitchen, and parking. As such, the proposed project would constitute an expansion of the existing use of the site and would not involve new uses that would have the potential to generate substantial population growth. The proposed project would create a potential for 10 more permanent opportunities for employment during operation, as well as up to 40 part-time employment positions to serve the operations during events or provide seasonal work as applicable, and 15 temporary opportunities for employment in support of project construction. Accordingly, the proposed project would not result in a substantial number of new permanent positions in support of project operations. It is unknown whether the new employees will be drawn from the general area or will bring new residents to the project area, but it is anticipated that many of the employees will reside within San Bernardino County.

According to the Countywide Plan, the total population within unincorporated San Bernardino County was 304,300 persons in 2020, or 13.8% of the overall County population of 2,197,400. The San Bernardino Countywide Plan PEIR indicates that the population of unincorporated San Bernardino County is anticipated to grow to by 39,800 residents (to 344,100) by the year 2040. Accordingly, if all 10 of the new permanent workers required for project operations are new residents to unincorporated San Bernardino County, the project would result in less than a 1%

increase in permanent population. As such, the County has planned for growth in population through 2040, and should the project result in a temporary increase in population by 15 persons during construction, or by up to 50 persons during operations (full- and part-time positions) to support the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project, this growth would be well within the planned growth within the County as indicated by the Countywide Plan PEIR. Thus, based on the type of project, and the small increment of potential indirect population growth the project may generate, the population generation associated with project implementation will not induce substantial population growth that exceeds either local or regional projections.

- b. *No Impact* – There are no residences or persons residing within the project site, as the project site currently supports commercial development associated with the existing Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette and several retail establishments. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project will not displace substantial numbers of existing housing, or persons necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Thus, no impacts will occur and no mitigation is required.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES: 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:				
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project site is served by the San Bernardino County Fire Department, and the nearest Fire Station to the proposed project is Station #41, which is located about 6 miles to the southeast of the project site at 5 92284 Twentynine Palms Outerhighway S, Yucca Valley, CA 92284. Station #41 provides fire protection, fire prevention, and emergency medical services to the Pioneertown and Yucca Valley areas. The proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project would result in an expanded potential for incidentals related to the uses onsite as a result of the installation of outdoor dining/gathering pavilion, as described in the project description. The project will be served by fire equipment at Station #41, which would be capable of reaching the proposed project in the event of an emergency or fire in less than 7 minutes. It is not forecast that the proposed project would create activities that could increase demand for additional fire protection services beyond that which was forecast in the Countywide Plan for the local jurisdictions within the community of Pioneertown. The Countywide Plan determined that fire protection impacts would be less than significant pursuant to Policy PP 3.2, as planning for these stations is based on data evaluation and professional expertise. Implementing and funding new/expanded stations could occur in different ways, including annexing deficient service areas into districts, creating new districts, and pursuing a tax assessment to be approved by voters (Page 5.14-16). Based on the above information, the proposed project does not pose a significant fire or emergency response hazard, nor is the proposed project forecast to cause a significant demand for fire protection services. The project will be required to adhere to standard conditions by the San Bernardino County

Fire Department to ensure adequate fire flow at the proposed project site. These requirements are considered adequate measures to prevent any significant impacts under this issue, thus no mitigation is required.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The community of Pioneertown receives police services through the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department. The Department enforces local, State, and federal laws; performs investigations and makes arrests; administers emergency medical treatment; and responds to County emergencies. The Morongo Basin Sheriff’s Station is located at 63665 29 Palms Highway Joshua Tree, California 92252, which services the whole of the Morongo Basin, inclusive of much of the Mojave Desert. The Morongo Basin Station is the third largest Sheriff’s station in both area and total number of calls for law enforcement services in San Bernardino County. Within the station’s area of responsibility are the incorporated communities of Twentynine Palms and the Town of Yucca Valley, as well as the unincorporated communities of Morongo Valley, Landers, Johnson Valley, Joshua Tree, Wonder Valley, Pioneertown, Amboy, Cadiz and Flamingo Heights.²⁰

The project site is located within existing Sheriff patrol routes and future calls can be responded to within the identified priority call target response times. The proposed project will incrementally add to the existing demand for police protection services through the expansion of the existing site use. The proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project is anticipated to create a minimal demand for law enforcement protection services based on the type of uses and the general lack of activities that would substantially increase demand for such services, particularly as the proposed project would merely expand the existing use rather than creating an entirely new use creating an entirely new demand for police protection services. As such, the project is not expected to result in any unique or more extensive crime problems that cannot be handled with the existing level of police resources. No new or expanded police facilities would need to be constructed as a result of the project. Therefore, impacts to police protection resources from implementation of the proposed project are considered less than significant; no mitigation measures are required.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is anticipated to temporarily employ a maximum of 15 persons temporarily for the duration of construction and about 10 new permanent employees. As addressed above under issue Population and Housing, XV(a) above, the proposed project does not include any land uses that would substantially induce population growth and will not require a substantial temporary or permanent labor force. The development of Pioneertown Soundstage Project, as proposed, at this site is not anticipated to adversely impact schools. Furthermore, the State of California requires a portion of the cost of construction of public schools to be paid through a fee collected on residential, commercial, and industrial developments. The development impact fee mitigation program of the Morongo Unified School District provides for mitigating the impacts of the proposed project in accordance with current State law (SB 50). Thus, the proposed project will not generate a substantial increase in elementary, middle, or high school population, and since payment of school impact fees is a mandatory requirement, no further mitigation measures are required to reduce school impacts caused by the proposed project to a less than significant level.

²⁰ San Bernardino County. Morongo Basin Patrol Station. <https://wp.sbcounty.gov/sheriff/patrol-stations/morongo-basin/> (Accessed 06/18/25)

- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project would not include the development of any park or recreational facilities, and as a result, the proposed project would not directly add to the existing demand on local recreational facilities. The project will develop the Pioneertown Soundstage Project which will result in the creation of about 10 new permanent jobs. The project is not anticipated to generate any substantial direct demand for parks within the County, as this project would have minimal potential to induce population growth within the County. No nearby parks would be impacted by the proposed project, as there are none in close proximity to the project site. The project will contribute to the County’s General Fund through payment of property and sales tax, which is considered sufficient to offset any impacts to parks that result from implementing the project. Further, the proposed project would include a new outdoor dining/gathering pavilion that would serve private recreational/park needs. As such, this would offset the minimal potential for increased demand for park and recreation services within the County that may result from implementation of the proposed project and therefore, the proposed project will have a less than significant impact to parks and recreation facilities.
- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Other public facilities include library and general municipal services. According to the Countywide Plan, County library services are funded mostly through taxes—mainly property taxes and sales taxes. State, federal, and other government assistance, in addition to library fees, also fund the library. Since the project will not directly induce substantial population growth, it is not forecast that the use of such facilities will increase as a result of the proposed project. Thus, any impact under this issue are considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>

XVI. RECREATION

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – As addressed in the discussion under XIV, Population and Housing, above, the proposed project does not include a use that would substantially induce population growth. As stated in the discussion under Population and Housing, the project would create about 10 new positions of employment at the Pioneertown Soundstage Project; however, it is unknown what portion of the employees will be new residents. The proposed project will contribute to the County’s General Fund through payment of property and sales tax. Further, the proposed project would include a new outdoor dining/gathering pavilion that would serve private recreational/park needs. Refer to the discussion under Threshold XV(d), above. Given that the proposed project would not induce substantial population growth, that the project is not within land designated for recreational use, in addition to the availability of land for recreational use in the surrounding area, the project is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in the use of existing park and recreation facilities. Therefore, any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

- b. *No Impact* – The proposed project site is vacant and does not include any existing recreational facilities. The proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project will not require the development or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to cause an adverse physical effect on the environment as a result of construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) 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"/>

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

SUBSTANTIATION: San Bernardino County, July 2019. San Bernardino County Transportation Impact Study Guidelines. A Technical Memorandum entitled “*Pioneertown Mane Street Preservation and Improvement Plan Project Transportation Screening Assessment*” that was prepared by Ganddini Group, Inc., and is dated November 6, 2025. This report is provided as **Appendix 6** to this Initial Study.

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. The proposed project is located at 53585 Mane Street, Pioneertown, CA 92268. The Pioneertown Soundstage is located along Pioneertown Road in the unincorporated community of Pioneertown. The proposed project is presently not served by paved sidewalks along either Mane Street or Pioneertown Road along the northern and southern property boundaries. However, the project proposes to improve accessibility within the site, including ADA accessible entrances to each of the three proposed uses (Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette, and Outdoor Dining/Gathering Pavilion), and ADA parking adjacent to the Soundstage. Installation of sidewalk at this location is not a County requirement, and this area is not slated for pedestrian circulation improvements as shown on the San Bernardino Countywide Plan Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Map provided as **Figure XVII-1**. As a result, the proposed project would not conflict with pedestrian circulation. The proposed project is slated to be served by a Class II Bike Lane²¹ along Pioneertown Road, and the proposed project includes roadway dedication to the County that could be utilized to support the installation of a Class II Bike Lane in future. As a result, the proposed project would not conflict with bicycle circulation. The project site is not located within a service

²¹ Class II bicycle facilities are striped lanes that provide bike travel and can be next to a curb or parking lane. If next to a curb, a minimum width of five feet is recommended. A bike lane adjacent to a parking lane can be four feet in width. Bike lanes are exclusively for the use of bicycles and include bike lane signage, special lane lines, and pavement markings.

route for any area transit providers, and as such will not impact the transit circulation system. The proposed project would continue to be accessible by existing means of transport, with enhanced access to the site through the proposed driveway improvements installed by the project.

The project would generate construction traffic, which is temporary; during construction, the project is anticipated to generate no more than 30 round truck trips per day, and a maximum of 45 employee roundtrips per day (assumes 10-15 employees with potential for more than one roundtrip per day per employee); these trips would be spread throughout the day during construction. The net new trips generated by the change in land use of the Gazette from small office to coffee/ice cream shop and the new dining area are reviewed. The continued existing use of the Soundstage is exempt from the transportation screening assessment as an existing use. Table XVII-1 shows that the proposed project operational trip generation forecast is based on average rates obtained from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (11th Edition, 2021) for Land Use Codes 712 (Small Office), 926 (Food Cart Pod) and 936 (Coffee Donut Shop without Drive Through Window). It should be acknowledged that these trip generation rates are based on general urban/suburban settings, as opposed to the rural setting of the project site because of a lack of ITE trip generation in rural settings. Due to the small-town nature of Pioneertown, the proposed project land uses are primarily anticipated to serve visitors that will already be in the area and capture trips generated by the existing primary on-site uses such as the Soundstage and nearby uses such as Camp Pioneertown and Pioneertown Motel. Therefore, the majority of trips to/from the proposed uses are expected to be internal and/or pedestrian trips, and the vehicle trip estimates are likely overstated especially given the use of the general urban/suburban ITE data which provides a conservative estimate.

Pass-by Trip Adjustments

The project trip generation (**Appendix 6**) includes pass-by trip adjustments based on average pass-by rates obtained from the ITE Trip Generation Manual. Land uses such as shopping centers, restaurants, and coffee shops will often be located next to busy roadways to attract motorists already on the street. When there is no daily pass-by data provided in ITE Trip Generation Manual Appendices, the daily pass-by value is determined by the average of the AM peak and PM peak pass-by rates. Pass-by trips are included at the project driveways and applied after internal capture adjustments.

Net New Trip Adjustment

The project trip generation includes a reduction for the existing trips generated by the existing commercial structure (Gazette), which is proposed to be redeveloped as an ice cream/coffee shop.

Project Trips

As shown in Table XVII-1, the proposed project is forecast to generate a total of approximately 380 daily trips, including 24 trips during the AM peak hour and 15 trips during the PM peak hour. **Figure XVII-2** illustrates the forecast directional distribution patterns of the project generated trips. The project trip distribution patterns are developed from engineering judgement based on review of existing volume data, surrounding land uses, and the local and regional roadway facilities in the project vicinity.

Table XVII-1: Project Trip Generation

Trip Generation Rates									
Land Use	Source ¹	Land Use Variable ²	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Daily Rate
			% In	% Out	Rate	% In	% Out	Rate	
Small Office Building	ITE 712	TSF	83%	17%	1.64	34%	66%	2.16	14.39
Food Cart Pod	ITE 926 ³	FC	50%	50%	6.16	60%	40%	6.16	77.00
Coffee Donut Shop without Drive-Through Window	ITE 936 ³	TSF	51%	49%	91.02	50%	50%	31.53	485.48

Trips Generated									
Land Use	Source	Quantity	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Daily
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
<u>Existing to be removed</u>									
Small Office Building	ITE 712	0.831 TSF	1	0	1	1	1	2	12
<u>Proposed development</u>									
Food Cart Pod	ITE 926	2 FC	6	6	12	7	5	12	154
Coffee Donut Shop without Drive-Through Window	ITE 936	0.831 TSF	39	38	76	13	13	26	403
Pass-by Trips (83%AM, 81%PM, 44% Daily)	ITE 937 ⁵		-32	-31	-63	-11	-11	-21	-165
Subtotal			7	6	13	2	3	5	238
Subtotal Project Trips (Gross)			45	44	89	19	20	39	543
Total Pass-by Trips			-32	-31	-63	-11	-10	-21	-165
TOTAL NEW TRIPS GENERATED			13	12	25	9	8	17	392
TOTAL NET NEW VEHICLE TRIPS GENERATED			12	12	24	8	7	15	380

Notes:

1. ITE = Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Manual (12th Edition, 2025); ### = Land Use Code. All rates based on General Urban/Suburban setting.
2. TSF = Thousand Square Feet; FC = Food Carts.
3. ITE rates with data from San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Vehicular Traffic Generation Rates (April 2002). Where the daily or peak hour rate is not provided by ITE, the SANDAG percentage of peak hour to daily rate is used to calculate the missing data. Where the peak hour distribution is not provided by ITE, the SANDAG peak hour distribution is used.
4. Pass-by trips calculated in accordance with procedures in the ITE Trip Generation Manual (12th Edition, 2025). Daily pass-by is calculated using half of the AM and PM pass-by average rates.

The proposed project satisfies the County-established level of service (LOS) screening criteria for projects generating fewer than 50 peak hour trips. Therefore, the project does not warrant the preparation of a transportation impact study with LOS analysis based on the County-established LOS screening criteria. Thus, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including roadway facilities.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – SB 743 mandates that California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines be amended to provide an alternative to Level of Service for evaluating transportation

impacts. The amended CEQA guidelines, specifically Section 15064.3, recommend the use of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) for transportation impact evaluation.

The San Bernardino County adopted analytical procedures, screening tools and impact thresholds for VMT, which are documented in the San Bernardino County Transportation Impact Study Guidelines (July 2019) (County Guidelines). The County Guidelines provides details on appropriate criteria that can be used to identify when a proposed land use project is anticipated to result in a less than significant impact without conducting a more detailed analysis. Screening thresholds are broken into the following types:

- Project Type Screening
- Transit Priority Area (TPA) Screening
- Low VMT Area

A land use project needs only to meet one of the above screening thresholds to result in a less than significant impact. The proposed project appears to meet the Project Type Screening for the following reasons: The project consists of redeveloping an existing historically themed retail area with less than 10,000 square feet increase in retail services. The Office of Planning and Research (OPR)(now Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation) Technical Advisory provides a categorical exemption for existing facilities including additions to existing structures of up to 10,000 square feet. The community outdoor dining gathering pavilion provides supplemental services for the existing historically themed services. Based on the size and hours of operation of the supplemental services, they would not be significantly relevant outside the local area, and they provide retail services with less than 50,000 square feet for the local themed retail area. Therefore, this screening criteria is met and VMT impacts would be less than significant.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Access to the site will occur through the installation of two new driveways along Pioneertown Road, each will only serve as exit or entry only, along Pioneertown Road. The driveway entrance will utilize gravel to provide a compacted gravel access road and driveway in accordance with the fire department standards. Development of the project at this location would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses, as the proposed project will be constructed entirely within the boundaries of the project site. Site access is reviewed by the County, and as a result will be designed in accordance with County standards. Encroachment onto Pioneertown Road is not anticipated per the site plan (**Figure 3**). Thus, the proposed project will not experience substantial conflicts with surrounding traffic. There are no uses that would be impacted by construction equipment or construction trips on the adjacent roadways. Trucks delivering equipment can enter the site without major conflicts with the flow of traffic on the roadways used to access the site. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable fire code for construction and access to the site. Emergency response and evacuation procedures would be coordinated with the County, as well as the local police and fire departments. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses. No mitigation is required.
- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is not anticipated to result in inadequate emergency access. As shown on the Evacuation Route Map prepared for the San Bernardino Countywide Plan (**Figure IX-3**), the adopted evacuation routes in the area are Highway 62 to the

southeast of the project site, and Highway 247 to the east of the project site. A de facto evacuation route in the vicinity of the project site would be Pioneertown Road, which traverses through the community. The proposed project is not located along a County identified emergency route, nor would implementation of the project impede emergency response from accessing the site or surrounding area. Access to the site will occur through the installation of two new driveways along Pioneertown Road, each will only serve as exit or entry only, along Pioneertown Road. The driveway entrance will utilize gravel to provide a compacted gravel access road and driveway in accordance with the fire department standards. Site access is reviewed by the County, and as a result will be designed in accordance with County Development Code, California Fire Code, and San Bernardino County Fire standards. Encroachment onto Pioneertown Road resulting in construction- or operation-related road or lane closures is not anticipated per the site plan (**Figure 3**). As a result, impacts to emergency response and/or emergency evacuation plans are considered less than significant. Thus, because of the lack of adverse impact on local circulation no potential for significant impacts on emergency access are forecast to occur during construction or operation. No further mitigation is required.

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

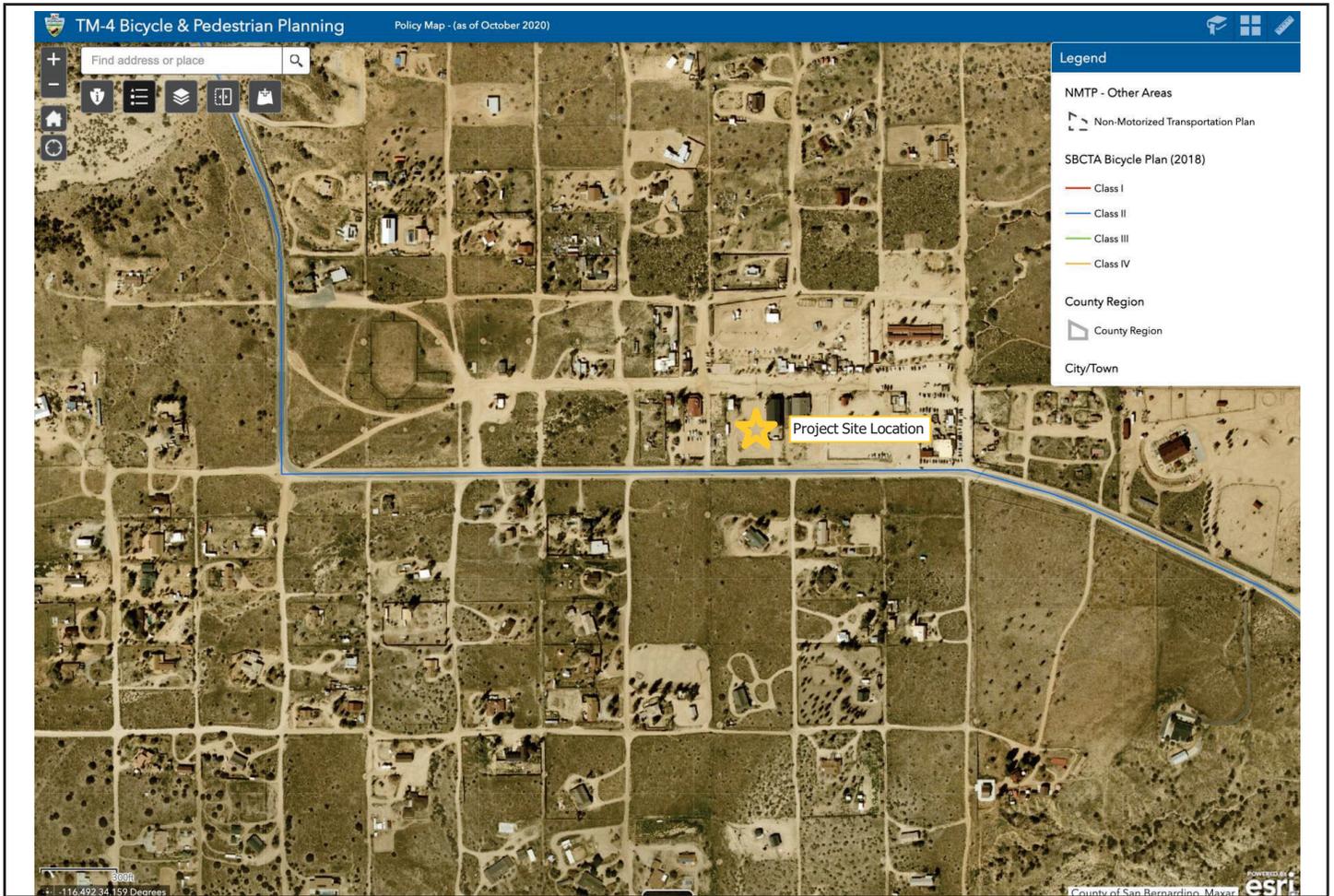


FIGURE XVII-1

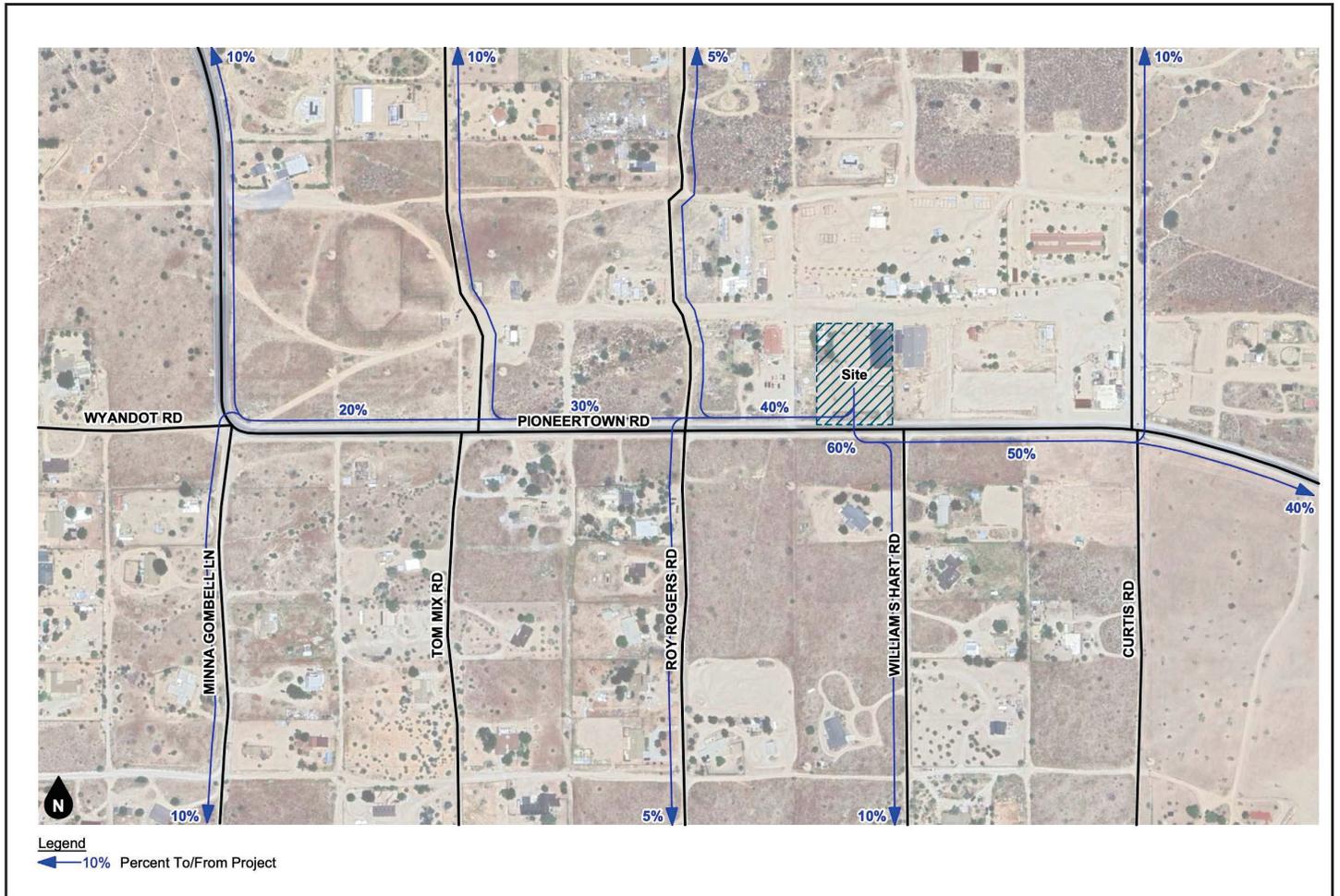


FIGURE XVII-2

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project cause a substantial change in the significance of tribal cultural resources, 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 the California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

SUBSTANTIATION: 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. Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

Impact Analysis

a&b. *Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated* – The County has been contacted by several Tribes under Assembly Bill (AB) 52 requesting to be consulted on applicable projects within the County. The Tribes with a historical presence in the Pioneertown area were contacted by the County through mailed letters to initiate the AB 52 process on December 6, 2023. These Tribes are: Soboba Band of Mission Indians, Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, and the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians. During the 30-day consultation period, the County received a response from the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, which indicated that the project is outside of the known Chemehuevi Traditional Use Area. As a result, consultation under AB 52 was not requested. Therefore, consultation has concluded with

no request from any Tribe to be included as a consulting party for this project. Therefore, with no input from any Tribes, the analysis and conclusions under the Cultural Resources Section above shall ensure that no significant impacts to any Tribal Cultural Resources occur. As such, **MM CUL-2**, which require earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of any cultural materials to be halted and for an onsite inspection to be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant. No further mitigation is required beyond that which was identified under Section V, Cultural Resources, above.

Mitigation Program

CUL-2 Should any cultural resources be encountered during construction of the project, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an on-site inspection shall be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the on-site archaeological professional, who is acceptable to the County and retained by the Applicant. The archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated with implementation of the above mitigation measures.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 stormwater 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

SUBSTANTIATION

Impact Analysis

- a) Water
Less Than Significant Impact – Domestic water is supplied to the Pioneertown area by the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works Special Districts Water and Sanitation Division (District), as Pioneertown is located within County Service Area 70 W4. There is already domestic water service provided to the existing use at the Pioneertown Soundstage Project site. No new water lines are anticipated to be installed, as the connections to the existing uses are sufficient to accommodate the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project. Further, water use at the project site is not anticipated to grow beyond a 10% increase under the expanded site use, and as a result, the District would not require new or expanded water service facilities to serve the proposed project. Therefore, development of the Pioneertown Soundstage Project would not result in a significant

environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities. Impacts are less than significant.

Wastewater

Less Than Significant Impact – The project would dispose of wastewater through the use of a new onsite septic system that would replace the existing system with an environmentally upgraded system. This system would be both more efficient than the existing system at processing septic waste, and further, would be developed to prevent septic leeching into the underlying soil or groundwater table. The proposed project would install a new septic system to accommodate wastewater from the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project. The new septic tank system will be capable of handling about 2,000 gallons of waste per day and will be developed in accordance with current California Plumbing Code (Part 5, Title 24, California Code of Regulations) standards, which sets parameters for private sewage disposal, and in compliance with the County Development Code, Article 6. At most, the septic systems would require emptying by a qualified septic plumber once every 2 years. These systems would collect the wastewater generated by onsite water uses, including wastewater disposal. Other than installing the internal wastewater collection lines, the proposed project is not anticipated to require relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater collection (sewer) lines to serve the proposed project, such that a significant impact would occur. No connections to the municipal wastewater collection system or a wastewater treatment plant are required. No municipal wastewater providers exist in the area, so none serve the project site, and as a result, septic must be utilized to process wastewater generated by the proposed project. Therefore, given that the proposed project would not result in significant impacts under any issue, as demonstrated throughout this Initial Study, development of the Pioneertown Soundstage Project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater facilities. Impacts are less than significant.

Stormwater

Less Than Significant Impact – As outlined in Threshold X(a) above, the Preliminary Hydrology Study (refer to **Appendix 4**) demonstrates that the proposed project would not significantly alter the volume of flows downstream of the project site. The proposed project would continue to drain from southwest to northeast, and the Preliminary Hydrology Study indicates that the proposed improvement in the area of concern do not increase the peak discharges and does not necessitate any attenuation of flows. It is also recommended that there is no need to do any improvements in the discharge points as peak flows remain virtually the same. Therefore, surface water would be adequately managed on site and as such, development of the proposed project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded stormwater facilities. Impacts are less than significant.

Electric Power

Less Than Significant Impact – SCE would provide electricity to the site and the power distribution system would be able to supply sufficient electricity to the site, particularly given that the site is presently served with this service. The proposed project will be supplied with electricity by SCE through the existing electrical connection located within the site. SCE will be able to continue to supply sufficient electricity because the project site would not generate substantial increase in energy demand such that expansion of SCE's existing or development of new energy generation facilities would be necessary. Energy use associated with project occupancy would be typical of a

commercial use, and would not require new or expanded electrical systems to accommodate energy demanded by the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project beyond that the project would be required to comply with the most recently adopted California Energy Code, and as part of the utilization and rehabilitation of the historic structures on site, would upgrade the existing electrical panel by installing a new electrical panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code. Therefore, development of the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded electric power facilities. Impacts are less than significant.

Natural Gas

No Impact – Development of the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project would not create a significant new demand for natural gas. The project site would not require any connection to natural gas to support project operations, as electricity would serve the full operations proposed at the project site. Therefore, development of the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded natural gas facilities. No impacts are anticipated.

Telecommunications

No Impact – Development of the proposed Pioneertown Soundstage Project would not require installation of new wireless internet service or phone service. The proposed project would utilize existing connections to wireless internet/phone services currently used at project site. Therefore, development of the project would not result in a significant environmental effect related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded telecommunication facilities. No impacts are anticipated.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under Threshold X(b). The project would be supplied with water by San Bernardino County Department of Public Works Special Districts Water and Sanitation Division (District) as it is located within County Service Area 70 W4.²² As of July 27, 2019, the water system now consists of one well and an emergency inter-tie to the Hi-Desert Water District's system and four water reservoirs with a combined storage capacity of 345,000 gallons (1.059 AF). At present, the proposed project represents one of the District's water connections, as the project would constitute the expansion of an existing use.²³ The proposed project would require continued use of water to support site uses. The current water use is about 0.12-acre feet per year (AFY), while the projected water use is not expected to change substantially, with only a potential 10% increase in water use projected for a total of 0.132 AFY. Existing water uses and conservation measures are anticipated to cover the demand for water by the proposed site use. As the District has identified sufficient capacity for its existing uses and furthermore has identified an emergency inter-tie with the Hi-Desert Water District's water system, which has identified in its 2020 UWMP sufficient supply to accommodate demand,²⁴ the San Bernardino County Special Districts 70-W4 municipal water system has available capacity to serve the proposed project. Thus,

²² San Bernardino County, 2025. County Service Area 70 W4 Pioneertown.

<https://specialdistricts.sbcounty.gov/water-sanitation/service-districts/csa-70w4/> (Accessed 05/23/25)

²³ San Bernardino County, 2024. County Service Area 70 W-4 2023 Consumer Confidence Report General District Information https://specialdistricts.sbcounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2024/06/CSA-70-W-4-Pioneertown_2024_Final.pdf (Accessed 05/23/25)

²⁴ Hi-Desert Water District, 2021. Hi-Desert Water District 2020 Urban Waer Management Plan.

<https://www.hdwd.com/DocumentCenter/View/807/Hi-Desert-WD-2020-UWMP-Final> (Accessed 06/19/25)

the proposed project would have a less than significant impact related to the availability of sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years. No mitigation is necessary.

- c. *No Impact* – The project would not 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. However, this is due to the fact that no municipal wastewater providers exist in the area, so none serve the project site. The project will be served by a new onsite septic system that would replace the existing system with an environmentally upgraded system. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.
- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Other than the small amount of construction wastes and waste associated with the visitors of the Pioneertown Soundstage Project, the project will not generate a substantial amount of solid wastes and will not adversely affect the existing solid waste disposal system. Further, the existing use of the site generates solid waste, and while this may increase with the expanded use of the site, it is not anticipated to increase substantially. At present, trash is handled onsite through the use of an onsite dumpster, and the solid waste provider is Burrtec. Based on the CalRecycle Estimated Waste Generation Rates,²⁵ the proposed project is estimated to generate solid waste as follows:

6,223 SF Pioneertown Soundstage: (restaurant generation rate applied)	0.005 pounds per day per SF
831 SF Pioneertown Gazette Cowboy Coffee and Creamery: (restaurant generation rate applied)	0.005 pounds per day per SF
225 SF Mobile Food Carts: (restaurant generation rate applied)	0.005 pounds per day per SF

= 36.395 pounds per day or 6.64 tons per year.

Waste is disposed of through municipal solid waste service provided by Burrtec Waste Company; solid waste is picked up every week through an onsite dumpster. According to the San Bernardino County Countywide Plan EIR, after waste is collected, it is delivered to the Landers Sanitary Landfill. The Landers Sanitary Landfill has adequate capacity to handle the waste generated at the Pioneertown Soundstage Project. According to the CalRecycle, the maximum permitted capacity of Landers Sanitary Landfill is 13,983,500 Cubic Yards (CY), while its remaining capacity is 11,063,811 CY; the Landers Sanitary Landfill can accept 1,200 tons per day.²⁶ The County based its environmental impact forecasts on the projected increase in solid waste generation of 280,626 pounds per day at Build-Out of the Countywide Plan in the East Desert Region. The proposed project would generate, in total, 36.395 pounds of waste per day, which, without the mandatory waste diversion of 75% required to comply with AB 939 and AB 341 by 2020, would consist 0.0032% of the increased solid waste generation within the East Desert Region of the County at Build-Out.

²⁵ CalRecycle, 2025. Solid Waste Generation Rates.
<https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/WasteCharacterization/General/Rates> (accessed 06/19/25)

²⁶ CalRecycle, 2025. Landers Sanitary Landfill (36-AA-057)
<https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/1882?siteID=2664> (accessed 04/20/25)

Construction would not require demolition of any structures, though it would require some renovation of the interiors of the existing Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette structures, and the removal of any construction and demolition waste (C&D) can be transported to a C&D waste collection facility, such as one of the many C&D collection facilities listed on San Bernardino County’s Construction & Demolition Waste Recycling Guide.²⁷ There is adequate capacity at the nearest landfill as well as in other landfills that serve the area to handle construction and operational waste from the proposed project. Any hazardous materials collected on the project site during construction of the project will be transported and disposed of by a permitted and licensed hazardous materials service provider. Furthermore, new projects will be constructed in accordance with the CALGreen Code, which requires a minimum of 65 percent of the “non-hazardous construction and demolition debris” (by weight or volume) to be recycled or reused. Therefore, it is expected that implementation of the project will be served by landfills with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project’s solid waste disposal needs. Any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant.

- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – All collection, transportation, and disposal of any solid waste generated by the proposed project is required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Solid waste produced in this area of the County is collected and transported by the Burrtec. The area is served by several nearby landfills, though the closest is Landers Landfill, which, as stated under Threshold XIX(d) above, have adequate capacity to serve the project. New projects will also store and collect recyclable materials in compliance with AB 341. Green waste will be handled in accordance with AB 1826. As this project would be developed after 2022, the project must comply with the County’s implementation plan for compliance with SB 1383, which establishes methane reduction targets for California. California SB 1383 sets goals to reduce disposal of organic waste in landfills, including edible food. The bill’s purpose is to reduce GHG emissions, such as methane, and address food insecurity in California. This requires jurisdictions to implement mandatory organic waste collection and recycling in a Statewide effort to divert organic waste from landfills with goals to:
- Reduce organic waste disposal by 50% by 2020 and 75% by 2025 and
 - Recover at least 20% of currently disposed surplus edible food by 2025.

Any hazardous materials collected on the project site during either construction or operation of the project will be transported and disposed of by a permitted and licensed hazardous materials service provider, as stated under Threshold VIII, Hazards and Hazardous Materials above. Furthermore, new projects will be constructed in accordance with the CALGreen Code, which, as stated under Threshold XIX(d), above, requires a minimum of 65 percent of the “non-hazardous construction and demolition debris” (by weight or volume) to be recycled or reused. As such, the construction contract for this project will require C&D material from rehabilitation of the Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette structures to be recycled in a manner that allows for reuse of these materials. All wood and other vegetation that is reusable shall be recycled or composted, where applicable.

²⁷ San Bernardino County, 2021. Construction & Demolition Waste Recycling Guide
<https://www.sbcountry.gov/uploads/DPW/docs/RecyclingGuide-2021.pdf> (accessed 09/20/25)

Thus, the amount and types of waste that will be generated both during construction and operation of the project, the potential impacts to the waste disposal systems are considered less than significant. Therefore, the project is expected to comply with all regulations related to solid waste under federal, state, and local statutes. No mitigation is necessary.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – According to the CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer Map (**Figure IX-4**), the proposed project is located in an area with Moderate wildfire risk and is located within a State Responsibility Area (SRA). The proposed project does not include the use of any flammable or explosive materials. As stated under Section XVII, Transportation, under Threshold (d), As shown on the Evacuation Route Map prepared for the San Bernardino Countywide Plan (**Figure IX-3**), the adopted evacuation routes in the area are Highway 62 to the southeast of the project site, and Highway 247 to the east of the project site. A de facto evacuation route in the vicinity of the project site would be Pioneertown Road, which traverses through the community. The proposed project is not located along a County identified emergency route, nor would implementation of the project impede emergency response from accessing the site or surrounding area. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable fire code and ordinance requirements for construction and access to the site. The project is located within a moderate fire hazard severity zone and impacts to emergency response and/or emergency evacuation plans are considered less than significant, especially given the low density of vegetation on and adjacent to the project site. No mitigation required.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project consists of rehabilitation and utilization of the existing Pioneertown Soundstage and Pioneertown Gazette, including installation of a new electrical

panel to meet the CBC and Fire Code, as well as installation of a shaded outdoor dining area, modular structures serving as restrooms, snack carts, and a mobile kitchen, and parking. The site itself primarily supports commercial development associated with the existing Pioneertown Soundstage, Pioneertown Gazette and several retail establishments with associated infrastructure and unpaved parking areas and also supports narrow swaths of undeveloped land that are periodically cleared of vegetation in association with routine weed abatement activities and infrastructure maintenance. The site itself is flat, and as a result, topography would not present exacerbated wildfire conditions. Further, as the site does not contain substantial vegetation, and will contain only maintained native vegetation once the proposed improvements are implemented, the onsite vegetation would not exacerbate wildfire conditions at the project site. Wind in the project area ranges from about 11 miles per hour (mph) to 13.3 mph,²⁸ and the National Weather Service defines a "gentle breeze" as 8-12 mph, with a "moderate breeze" as 13-18 mph.²⁹ As the project The proposed project is surrounded by residential and commercial development in all directions. Given the minimal potential for wildfire within the project site and project area because the proposed project is located only in a moderate FHSZ, rather than a high or very high FHSZ, and the lack of fuel necessary to result in uncontrolled spread of wildfire, there is a less than significant potential for the proposed project to expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project will utilize existing utility connections to support the expanded site use. As discussed under Threshold XIX(a), Utilities and Service Systems, above, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in a need for extension of utilities to serve the proposed project beyond those that are presently utilized in support of existing site operations. Construction itself is not anticipated to be a construction activity with significant fire risk, as the project site itself has been developed with only minimal vegetation. The proposed project would not result in any ongoing impacts to the environment that would exacerbate fire risk. Furthermore, the proposed project is a mixed commercial/restaurant use that will be designed in accordance with fire department recommendations and to County design standards. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant potential to exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant.
- d. *No Impact* – The proposed project is located within a site that is relatively flat. The discussion under Section VII, Geology and Soils, concluded that the project would not have a significant potential to experience landslides or slope instability, particularly given that this project area has not been delineated as containing potential for landslides or slope instability by the San Bernardino Countywide Plan. The proposed project is located in an area that has not been historically subject to flooding and based on the fact that the Preliminary Hydrology Study provided as **Appendix 4** indicates that the proposed improvements would not increase peak discharges and would not necessitate any attenuation of flows, the development of the Pioneertown Soundstage Project at this site is anticipated to have no potential to expose people or structures to significant risks,

²⁸ Wanderlog, 2025. Pioneertown Weather. <https://wanderlog.com/weather/70633/3/pioneertown-weather-in-march#:~:text=Historically%2C%20the%20wind%20in%20Pioneertown,mph%207.5%20mph%2014.9%20mph> (Accessed 09/20/25)

²⁹ National Weather Service, 2025. Estimating Wind Season. <https://www.weather.gov/pqr/wind> (Accessed 09/20/25)

including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
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 will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

The analysis in this Initial Study and the findings reached indicate that the proposed project can be implemented without causing any new project specific or cumulatively considerable unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts. Mitigation is required to control potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant impact level. The following findings are based on the detailed analysis of the Initial Study of all environmental topics and the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the previous text and summarized following this section.

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project has no potential to cause a significant impact to any biological or cultural resources. The project has been identified as having no potential to substantially degrade the quality of the natural environment, substantially reduce 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, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. The project requires mitigation to prevent significant biological resources impacts from occurring as a result of implementation of the project, including mitigation to minimize potential impacts to western Joshua tree and nesting birds through the implementation of **MMs BIO-1 and BIO-4**. This is because the proposed project site contains 6

Western Joshua Trees, **MMs BIO-1 through BIO-3** to protect the trees in place is necessary to minimize impacts to this species. Further, a pre-construction nesting bird clearance survey through **MM BIO-4** shall be conducted prior to ground disturbance to minimize impacts to nesting birds.

No archaeological sites or isolates were found to be located within the project boundaries during the field review of the project area. Thus, none of them requires further consideration. However, if potentially significant archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all work should be halted in the vicinity of the discovery until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance and integrity of the find, which will ensure that impacts to archaeological resources would be minimized to a level of less than significant. This shall be enforced through the implementation of **MM CUL-2**. Further, because the Pioneertown Mane Street Historic District is a Historic Property and a Historical Resource, any proposed project activities should be consistent with “plans for rehabilitation to ensure that the undertaking maintains consistency with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.”³⁰ Thus, **MM CUL-1** must be implemented to ensure that the standards for developing the proposed project align with the Secretary of Interior Standards, thereby ensuring that the proposed project preserves the historic nature of the structures on site, and thereby would not substantially alter a historic property such that a significant scenic impact would result. Thus, the proposed project would have a less than significant 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. Please see biological and cultural sections (Sections IV and V) of this Initial Study.

- b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project has 8 potential impact categories that are individually limited but may be cumulatively considerable. These are: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology & Soils, Hydrology & Water Quality, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources. The project is not considered growth-inducing, as defined by the *CEQA Guidelines*. These referenced issues require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level and ensure that cumulative effects are not cumulatively considerable. All other environmental issues were found to have no potential significant impacts without implementation of mitigation. The potential cumulative environmental effects of implementing the proposed project have been determined to be less than considerable and thus, less than significant impacts.
- c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project will achieve long-term community goals by providing additional opportunities for employment, and revenue generating uses within the Mojave Desert Region of San Bernardino County. Furthermore, this project will provide a use consistent with those that serve the growing tourism of Pioneertown. The short-term impacts associated with the project, which are mainly construction-related impacts, are less than significant with mitigation as prescribed, and the proposed project would be compatible with long-term environmental protection. The issues of Air Quality, Geology & Soils, and Noise require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce human impacts to a less than significant level. All

³⁰ 36 CFR part 68; see <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm> (Accessed 02/10/26)

other environmental issues were found to have no significant impacts on humans without implementation of mitigation. The potential for direct human effects from implementing the proposed project have been determined to be less than significant.

Conclusion

This document evaluated all CEQA issues contained in the latest Initial Study Checklist form. The evaluation determined that either no impact or less than significant impacts would be associated with the issues of Agriculture & Forestry, Energy, Greenhouse Gases, Hazards & Hazardous Materials, Land Use & Planning, Mineral Resources, Population & Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Utilities & Service Systems and Wildfire. The issues of Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology & Soils, Hydrology & Water Quality, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources require the implementation of mitigation measures as prescribed to reduce project specific and cumulative impacts to a less than significant level. The required mitigation has been proposed in this Initial Study to reduce impacts for these issues to a less than significant impact level.

Based on the evidence and findings in this Initial Study, San Bernardino County proposes to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Pioneertown Soundstage Project. A Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigation Negative Declaration (NOI) will be issued for this project by the County. The Initial Study and NOI will be circulated for 30 days of public comment. At the end of the 30-day review period, a final MND package will be prepared, and it will be reviewed by the County for possible adoption at a future County Planning Commission meeting, the date for which has yet to be determined. If you or your agency comments on the MND/NOI for this project, you will be notified about the meeting date in accordance with the requirements in Section 21092.5 of CEQA (statute).

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21083, 21083.05, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21095, and 21151, Public Resources Code; *Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino*, (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296; *Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors*, (1990) 222 Cal.App.3d 1337; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; *San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

Revised 2019

Authority: Public Resources Code sections 21083 and 21083.09

Reference: Public Resources Code sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3/ 21084.2 and 21084.3

SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

Air Quality

- AQ-1** The following measures shall be incorporated into project plans and specifications for implementation:
- Apply soil stabilizers such as hay bales or aggregate cover to inactive areas.
 - Prepare a high wind dust control plan and implement plan elements and terminate soil disturbance when winds exceed 25 mph.
 - Stabilize previously disturbed areas if subsequent construction is delayed.
 - Water exposed surfaces and haul roads 3 times/day.
 - Cover all stockpiles with tarps.
 - Replace ground cover in disturbed areas quickly.
 - Reduce speeds on unpaved roads to less than 15 mph.
 - Trenches shall be left exposed for as short a time as possible.
- AQ-2** The following signage shall be erected no later than the commencement of construction: A minimum 48 inch high by 96 inch wide sign containing the following shall be located within 50 feet of each project site entrance, meeting the specified minimum height text, black text on white background, on one inch A/C laminated plywood board, with the lower edge between six and seven feet above grade, identifying a responsible official for the site and local or toll free number that is accessible 24 hours per day:
- “[Site Name] {four-inch text}
[project Name/project Number] {four-inch text}
IF YOU SEE DUST COMING FROM {four-inch text}
THIS PROJECT CALL: {six-inch text}
[Contact Name], PHONE NUMBER {six-inch text}
If you do not receive a response, Please Call {three-inch text} The MDAQMD at 1-800-635-4617 {three-inch text}”
- AQ-3** During project construction a (minimum) 3,000-gallon water truck shall be available on-site at all times for dust control.
- AQ-4** During construction, wind breaks and/or fencing shall be developed in areas that are susceptible to high wind induced dusting.
- AQ-5** The Developer shall use a water truck to maintain moist disturbed surfaces and actively spread water during visible dusting episodes to minimize visible fugitive dust emissions. If the site contains exposed sand or fines deposits (and if the project would expose such soils through earthmoving), water application or chemical stabilization will be required to eliminate visible dust/sand from sand/fines deposits.
- AQ-6** The Developer shall formulate a high wind response plan that addresses enhanced dust control if winds are forecast to exceed 25-mph in any upcoming 24-hour period.

Biological Resources

- BIO-1** Construction fencing 4” or higher shall be installed around western Joshua Trees a minimum of 1’ around the trees that are within 50 feet of construction activities, unless a tree is located on a neighboring property and there is an existing fence between the neighboring property. Fencing shall be maintained throughout construction and shall be removed at the conclusion of construction. Signs shall be posted at each tree indicating protection of the trees.
- BIO-2** Heavy construction equipment shall not be operated or stored within the western Joshua tree protection area delineated by the construction fencing required by MM BIO-1, unless a tree is located on a neighboring property and there is an existing fence between the neighboring property. Construction equipment and materials shall be stored at least 50 feet from any western Joshua tree and to protect the tree’s root zone, no trenching, removal, or addition of soil shall occur within this same buffer.
- BIO-3** The western Joshua tree is a candidate threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act. Prior to the initiation of western Joshua tree removal, relocation, replanting, trimming, or pruning or any activity that may result in take of WJT, the Developer shall obtain California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) under Section 2081b of the CESA, or under the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA) of Fish and Game Code (§§ 1927- 1927.12). California Fish and Game Code section 86 defines “take” as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill”. Mitigation for CESA will occur at a minimum 1:1 or per the stem count per the WJTCA census in lieu fee.
- BIO-4** Regardless of the time of year, a preconstruction survey shall be performed to verify absence of nesting birds. A qualified biologist shall conduct the pre-activity survey within the Project areas (including access routes) and a 500-foot buffer surrounding the Project areas, no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of project activities, including, but not limited to clearing, grubbing, and/or rough grading to prevent impacts to birds and their nests. Pre-construction surveys shall focus on both direct and indirect evidence of nesting, including nest locations and nesting behavior. The qualified biologist shall make every effort to avoid potential nest predation as a result of survey and monitoring efforts. If nesting bird activity is present within the work area or the Project’s zone of influence (generally 100-300 feet), a no disturbance buffer zone shall be established by the qualified biologist to be marked on the ground around each nest. The buffer shall be a minimum of 500 feet for raptors and 300 feet for songbirds, unless a smaller buffer is specifically determined by a qualified biologist familiar with the nesting phenology of the nesting species. The buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. Active nest(s) and an established buffer distance(s) shall be monitored daily by the qualified biologist until the qualified biologist has determined whether the young have fledged or the Project has been completed. The qualified biologist has the authority to stop work if nesting pairs exhibit signs of disturbance. If there is no nesting activity, then no further action is needed for this measure. If an active nest is encountered during the Project construction, construction shall stop immediately

until a qualified biologist can determine (1) the status of the nest, and (2) when work can proceed without risking violation to state or federal laws.

Cultural Resources

CUL-1 The proposed project shall be designed to be consistent with the plans for rehabilitation to ensure that the undertaking maintains consistency with the “Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties” (36 CFR part 68; see <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>).

Further, the recommendations presented in CRM TECH’s Historic Building Study and CEQA-Compliance Analysis (Appendix 3b) shall be enforced and incorporated into the project design. These are:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Regarding the property treatment of historic buildings during “work that must be done to meet accessibility and life-safety requirements,” guidelines for implementing the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards offer the following recommendations that shall be implemented by the Developer of the project (Weeks and Grimmer 2017:69):

- Identify the historic building’s character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting which may be affected by accessibility code-required work.
- Comply with barrier-free access requirements in such a manner that the historic building’s character-defining exterior features, interior spaces, features, and finishes, and features of the site and setting are preserved or impacted as little as possible.
- Work with specialists in accessibility and historic preservation to determine the most sensitive solutions to comply with access requirements in a historic building, its site, and setting.
- Provide barrier-free access that promotes independence for the user while preserving significant historic features.
- Find solutions to meet accessibility requirements that minimize the impact of any necessary alteration for accessibility on the historic building, its site, or setting, such as compatible ramps, paths, and lifts.

The developer shall demonstrate consistency with 36 CFR part 68 standards in the plans for development submitted to the County, and plans must be approved by the County prior to construction.

CUL-2 Should any cultural resources be encountered during construction of the project, earthmoving or grading activities in the immediate area of the finds shall be halted and an on-site inspection shall be performed immediately by a qualified archaeologist. Responsibility for making this determination shall be with the on-site archaeological professional, who is acceptable to the County and retained by the Applicant. The archaeological professional shall assess the find, determine its significance, and make recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures within the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Geology and Soils

GEO-1 All mass grading, excavation, drilling, and trenching activities within the site, shall be monitored part-time for paleontological resources, on an as-needed basis, as determined by the project paleontologist. Prior to initiation of any grading, drilling, and/or excavation activities, a preconstruction meeting shall be held and attended by the paleontologist of record, representatives of the grading contractor and subcontractors, the project owner or developer, and a representative of the lead agency. The nature of potential paleontological resources shall be discussed, as well as the protocol that is to be implemented following discovery of any fossiliferous materials. A qualified paleontologist shall monitor earth disturbance activities for potential paleontological resource and shall have the authority and responsibility to halt or divert grading operations. The paleontological principal investigator shall notify the County of any fossil discoveries by email and/or phone call. The monitor shall be prepared to quickly salvage fossils, if they are unearthed, to avoid

construction delays, but must have the power to temporarily halt or divert construction equipment to allow for removal of abundant or large specimens.

Collected samples of sediment shall be processed to recover small fossils, and all recovered specimens shall be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage.

A report of findings, including an itemized inventory of recovered specimens, shall be prepared upon completion of the procedures outlined above. The report shall include a discussion of the significance of the paleontological findings, if any. The report and the inventory, when approved by San Bernardino County, would signify completion of the program to mitigate potential impacts on paleontological resources. Under these conditions, the proposed project may be cleared to proceed in compliance with CEQA provisions on paleontological resources.

Hydrology and Water Quality

HYD-1 The Applicant shall require that the construction contractor implement specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will prevent all construction pollutants from contacting stormwater and with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving offsite into receiving waters. These practices shall include a Plan that identifies the methods of containing, cleanup, transport and proper disposal of hazardous chemicals or materials released during construction activities that are compatible with applicable laws and regulations. BMPs to be implemented by the Developer include the following:

- The use of silt fences or coir rolls;
- The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins;
- The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff;
- The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site;
- The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads;
- The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and
- Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.

Noise

NOI-1 The Applicant shall implement the following measures during construction:

- As necessary, the project applicant shall use supplemental measures to reduce the construction noise levels to comply with requirements specified in the County Development Code. These measures may include, but are not limited to, the erection of noise barriers/curtains, use of advanced or state-of-the-art mufflers on construction equipment, and/or reduction in the amount of equipment that would operate concurrently at the construction site.

- Place noise and groundborne vibration-generating construction activities whose specific location on a construction site may be flexible (e.g., operation of compressors and generators, cement mixing, general truck idling) as far as possible from the nearest noise- and vibration-sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, and hospitals.
- Minimize the effects of equipment with the greatest peak noise generation potential via shrouding or shielding to the extent feasible. Examples include the use of drills, pavement breakers, and jackhammers.
- Provide noise shielding and muffling devices on construction equipment per the manufacturer's specifications.
- Identify a liaison for surrounding residents and property owners to contact with concerns regarding construction noise and vibration. The liaison's telephone number(s) shall be prominently displayed at construction locations.
- Notify in writing all landowners and occupants of properties adjacent to the construction area of the anticipated construction schedule at least two weeks prior to groundbreaking.

Construction activities shall occur within the hours considered to be acceptable for construction by the applicable jurisdiction within which an individual project is constructed, except for emergencies.

NOI-2 The County shall require the Applicant's construction contractor(s) to implement the following measures:

- Ensure that the operation of construction equipment that generates high levels of vibration including, but not limited to, large bulldozers, loaded trucks, pile-drivers, vibratory compactors, and drilling rigs, is minimized to below 80 vibration decibels (VdB), within 45 feet of existing residential structures and 35 feet of institutional structures (e.g., schools) during construction. Use of small rubber-tired bulldozers shall be enforced within these areas during grading operations to reduce vibration effects.
- The construction contractor shall provide signs along the roadway identifying a phone number for adjacent property owners to contact with any complaint. During future construction activities with heavy equipment within 100 feet of occupied residences, vibration field tests shall be conducted at the property line near the nearest occupied residences. If vibrations exceed 80 VdB, the construction activities shall be revised to reduce vibration below this threshold. These measures may include but are not limited to the following: use different construction methods, slow down construction activity, or other mitigating measures to reduce vibration at the property from where the complaint was received.

REFERENCES

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