



County of Santa Cruz

Department of Community Development and Infrastructure

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Matt Machado – Deputy CAO / Director

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FOR DETERMINATION OF CEQA EXEMPTION

I. OVERVIEW

Date:	September 17, 2025	Application Number:	241320
Project Name:	Anton Solana	Staff Planner:	Nathan MacBeth
Applicant:	Anton Thurber LLC	APN(s):	025-351-19
Owner:	Parise Pak	Supervisory District:	1 st

DocuSigned by:
X *Stephanie Hansen*
AS4306E78B5343D...

Environmental Coordinator

PROJECT LOCATION: The proposed project site is an in-fill site located on the northeastern corner of the Soquel Drive/Thurber Lane intersection within the community of Live Oak in unincorporated Santa Cruz County (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). Santa Cruz County is bounded on the north by San Mateo County, on the south by Monterey and San Benito counties, on the east by Santa Clara County, and on the south and west by the Monterey Bay and the Pacific Ocean. The project site is located within the County's designated Urban Services Line. The project site is not located within the coastal zone.

SUMMARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project consists of a mixed-use project comprised of a 100% affordable residential housing development, consisting of 173 workforce rental housing units (including two manager's units), approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial uses with surface parking, and associated common amenities, landscaping, and open space. The proposed uses would be located within five 3-, 4-, and 5-story buildings on an approximate 4.15-acre portion of a 6.26-acre site. The proposed project retains an existing onsite stream channel, riparian woodland, oak woodland and wet meadow habitat. A walking path is proposed adjacent to the east edge of the riparian corridor and would provide

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connections to Winkle Park located to the east of the project site. Figure 3 depicts the proposed site plan.

PLANNING POLICIES:

Zone District:	RF, C2	Special Designation:	N/A
General Plan:	R-UHF, C-C		
Urban Services Line:	☒ Inside	☐ Outside	
Coastal Zone:	☐ Inside	☒ Outside	

DISCRETIONARY APPROVAL(S) BEING CONSIDERED:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ General Plan Amendment | ☐ Coastal Development Permit |
| ☐ Land Division | ☐ Grading Permit |
| ☐ Rezoning | ☐ Riparian Exception |
| ☒ Development Permit | ☐ LAFCO Annexation |
| ☐ Sewer Connection Permit | ☒ Other: Design Review, Density Bonus Request |

OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL IS REQUIRED (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

<u>Permit Type/Action</u>	<u>Agency</u>
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CONSULTATION WITH NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES: Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

No California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the area of Santa Cruz County have requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1.

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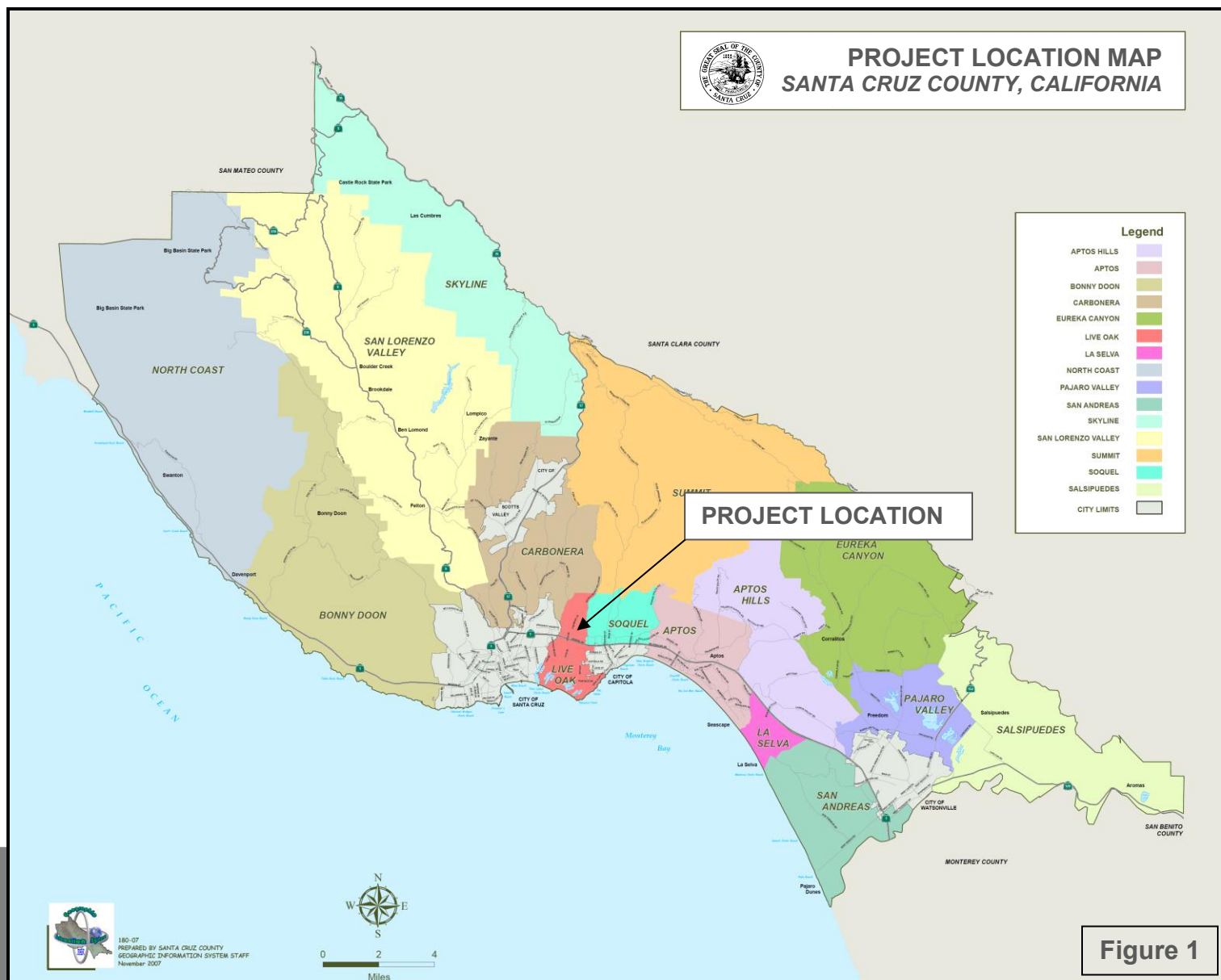


Figure 1

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SOURCE: Architectural Design Collaborative

Vicinity Location FIGURE 2

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SOURCE: Architecturl Design Collaborative

Project Site Plan Figure 3

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II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS:

Parcel Size (acres): 6.26 acres
 Existing Land Use: Vacant – Temporary seasonal uses (pumpkin/tree sales)
 Vegetation: Annual grassland, riparian woodland, oak woodland, wet meadow, non-native trees
 Slope in area affected by project: ☒ 0 - 30% ☐ 31 – 100% ☐ N/A
 Nearby Watercourse: Unnamed Stream
 Distance To: On project site

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND CONSTRAINTS:

Water Supply Watershed:	No	Fault Zone:	No
Groundwater Recharge:	No	Scenic Corridor:	No
Timber or Mineral:	No	Historic:	No
Agricultural Resource:	No	Archaeology:	No
Biologically Sensitive Habitat:	Yes	Noise Constraint:	No
Fire Hazard:	No	Electric Power Lines:	No
Floodplain:	No	Solar Access:	Yes
Erosion:	No	Solar Orientation:	West and south
Landslide:	No	Hazardous Materials:	Yes
Liquefaction:	No	Other:	None

SERVICES:

Fire Protection:	Central FPD	Drainage District:	Zone 5
School District:	Live Oak, Santa Cruz High	Project Access:	Soquel Drive, Thurber Lane
Sewage Disposal:	Santa Cruz Sanitation District	Water Supply:	City of Santa Cruz

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Permits and Proposed Uses. The proposed project consists of applications for a Conditional Site Development Permit, Conditional Use Permit, Design Review, and a request for reduction in development standards under State Density Bonus law (SDBL), to construct a residential-commercial mixed-use development and associated improvements.

Project Elements and Proposed Improvements. The proposed project is a mixed-use project comprised of 100% affordable workforce residential housing and neighborhood commercial uses. The proposed project includes 173 units of workforce rental housing (including two manager's units) and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial uses with surface parking and associated common amenities, utilities, landscaping, and open space. The project retains an existing stream channel and associated riparian corridor that comprises approximately one-third of the project site acreage. Figure 3 depicts the proposed site plan.

The residential and commercial uses would be located within five (5) buildings ranging from three (3) to five (5) stories in height and totaling approximately 234,859 square feet. Proposed Buildings A and B front Thurber Lane and are four (4) stories in height with a stepdown to three (3) stories near adjacent residential properties. Proposed Buildings D and E are located behind Buildings A and B on the west side of the riparian corridor. Proposed Building D is three (3) stories in height and Proposed Building E is five (5) stories in height. Proposed Building C is located on the southeast corner of the project site on Soquel Drive on the east side of the riparian corridor and is five (5) stories in height.

The residential units include a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, ranging in size from approximately 660 to 1,130 square feet. All of the units (excluding the two manager's units) are anticipated to be offered to extremely low-, very low- and low-income households earning between approximately 30-80% area median income, subject to final funding sources for the project.

Proposed amenities for the residents include a multi-purpose activity club room, fitness room, resident services room, laundry room, mail room, and reception areas, as well as space for Property Management and Resident Services staff. Proposed outdoor recreation amenities include an outdoor play area, lawn games including table games and cornhole, as well as benches, tables and picnic areas, and a dog run and pet relief area.

The proposed approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space would be located within proposed Building B at the southern end of the project site at the Thurber Lane/Soquel Drive intersection. The tenant of the neighborhood commercial space has not yet been identified, however, the future use is expected to be open to the public seven (7) days a week, during normal business hours.

Site Access, Parking and Circulation Improvements. Access to the proposed project would be provided via an entrance off of Thurber Lane at the northern end of the project site and via two entrances off of Soquel Drive as shown on Figure 3. A total of 257 off-street parking spaces are proposed, of which 26 spaces would be EV charging spaces with an additional 103 spaces that could become EV charging spaces in the future. The parking spaces located on the east side of the western driveway at Soquel Drive would be joint use parking serving

both the commercial and residential uses; spaces would be assigned to future residents outside commercial business hours. A total of 222 bicycle spaces are proposed, including 206 indoor secure bike rooms and 16 outdoor spaces.

The proposed project is eligible to utilize the parking requirement of the SDBL, which requires the provision of 1 parking space per one-bedroom unit and 1.5 parking spaces per two- and three-bedroom unit, inclusive of parking for persons with disabilities and guests. The required parking for the project under the SDBL is 237 spaces, and the project exceeds the SDBL parking requirement by providing 257 onsite parking spaces.

Utilities. Water and sewer connections would be made to existing lines located at the northwest corner of the project site along Thurber Lane, and at the southeast corner of the project site along Soquel Drive. The onsite stormwater system would route all stormwater runoff to bioretention basins for water quality treatment and storage in gravel sections prior to regulated discharge into downstream storm drains. Existing overhead utilities on the east side of Thurber Lane will be relocated and placed underground within a newly established utility easement running the entire property frontage of Thurber Lane.

Open Space, Recreational Amenities, and Landscaping. The proposed project retains an existing onsite stream channel, riparian corridor, and wet meadow habitat in open space, comprising approximately 2.1 acres. The proposed project includes a 10-foot setback between the development and the riparian corridor and includes a 3.5'± high two rail fence with access gates at the buffer zone edge to protect the riparian corridor. Approximately 0.36 acres of non-native/invasive species would be removed outside of the riparian woodland, and potential future partial riparian restoration may include removal of other non-native species and potential replanting with native species, subject to approval from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

A walking path is proposed adjacent to the east edge of the riparian corridor within the 10-foot setback and would provide connections to Winkle Park located to the northeast of the project site. In addition to the path, proposed recreational amenities include a play area in the northeastern portion of the site, sitting areas with benches, a turf area for passive recreation, and an off-leash dog area. It is noted that while the proposed walking path would provide a convenient connection to Winkle Park, the proposed project would fall short of the open space requirement in Santa Cruz County Code (SCCC) Section 13.11.323-3. The project would provide 20,206 square feet of open space whereas County Code requires, based on the number of proposed residential units, 5,190 square feet of private open space and 41,000 square feet of common open space. While the project falls short of the open space requirement, a SDBL concession/waiver is requested to account for the shortage of onsite open space. Additionally, the project has been designed to avoid development within the riparian area traversing the site, which preserves approximately 88,000 square feet of open space.

New landscaping would be planted throughout the project site. Proposed landscape improvements would conform to the County's Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance. Landscaping would include a mix of trees, including oak trees, flowering accent trees and broadleaf canopy trees, shrubs, perennial grasses, and ground covers. A row of trees would be planted along the eastern perimeter of the project site boundary adjacent to existing residential uses. The proposed project is anticipated to remove five oak trees, which would be replaced on site at a ratio of 5:1. The landscape planting palette incorporates some common riparian plants found in Santa Cruz County, per the County's tree replacement list. Further, the project would be conditioned to ensure all landscaping would not conflict with the recommendations and findings of the biotic report including restoration of the riparian corridor (where appropriate).

Request for Reduction in Development Standards under State Density Bonus Law. The proposed project includes a density bonus request pursuant to California Government Code sections 65915 – 65918, which was enacted in 1979 to encourage the provision of affordable housing units in the state by offering a combination of benefits to developers. For projects that include the requisite number of affordable housing units, and upon the request of an applicant, jurisdictions are required to (i) allow more dwelling units to be built than otherwise allowed by the applicable zoning designation; (ii) provide “incentives or concessions,” such as reduced development standards that result in actual and identifiable cost savings for the project; (iii) provide “waivers or modifications” of development standards that would physically preclude the project from being constructed; and (iv) allow reduced parking requirements. Jurisdictions are generally obligated to grant a density bonus and incentives, concessions, waivers, or reductions in development standards to the applicant so long as the proposed development complies with the applicable affordability requirements and the waivers or incentives/concessions meet certain standards.

The proposed project qualifies as a Housing Development under Government Code Section 65915(i), which defines a project as being five (5) or more units. The proposed project does not request additional residential units under the provisions of State law. However, consistent with Government Code section 65915(b)(1)(G), the Applicant proposes 100% of the total units for lower income households, exclusive of two managers units, for which the project shall receive an unlimited number of waivers and two incentives or concessions pursuant to SDBL.

The project site is constrained due to the presence of a stream channel and riparian corridor that would be protected as part of the proposed project, thus eliminating development of approximately 2.11 acres of the project site. In order to preserve these resources and maximize the housing yield envisioned by the County's adopted Housing Element, the proposed project requests the following waivers:

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- 1) Reduction of minimum density standard from 34 to 28 dwelling units (du)/acre. A reduction to the required provision of 75% of the minimum density prescribed in General Plan Policy HE-1.3;
- 2) Increase in permitted building height from 40 to 69 feet;
- 3) Increase in permitted number of stories from 3 to 4-5;
- 4) Reduction in minimum front yard setback from 10 to 6.5 feet (Soquel Drive);
- 5) Reduction to minimum street side setback from 8 to 2.9 feet (Thurber Lane);
- 6) Waiver of the third story inset/stepbacks;
- 7) Increase allowed percentage of residential use from 80% to 98.2%;
- 8) Decrease commercial frontage from 50% to 30.6% on Thurber Lane 50% and 3.8% on Soquel Drive;
- 9) Decrease minimum common usable open space from 15% to 5% or 12,759 square feet;
- 10) Exception to allow tandem parking;
- 11) Reduction of minimum parking lot shade coverage by from 50% to 48%;
- 12) Reduction of minimum parking lot trees of a minimum of one tree per 5 parking spaces (37.8 trees) by 10.8 trees for a total of 27 trees;
- 13) Reduction of minimum pathway width from 10 to 6 feet;
- 14) Exception to driveway alignment on Soquel Drive-proposed driveway alignment is located east of Chanticleer Drive to avoid hazardous turning movement conflicts; and
- 15) Elimination of requirement for planting of street trees along Thurber Lane and Soquel Drive due to conflicts with existing utility lines to remain in the landscape strip.

The proposed project also requests the following two incentives/concessions:

- 1) Revision of street section standard dimensions along 124± feet of the Soquel Drive frontage as follows: elimination of landscape strip and construction of 6.5-foot attached sidewalk at riparian crossing to protect existing riparian area; and
- 2) Modify requirement for restoration of existing degraded habitats, including potential salvage/transplanting of oak trees to potential partial restoration of riparian corridor, to include no transplantation of oak trees and reduction of replanting ratio from 10:1 for trees larger than 24 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) to replanting all removed oaks at a 5:1 ratio.

Construction Schedule. Construction is anticipated to occur over a period of approximately 22 months, commencing in early 2027. Construction would require approximate cut and fill volumes of approximately 3,400 cubic yards and 19,725 cubic

yards, respectively, with a net volume of approximately 16,325 cubic yards of imported fill. The project would be required to obtain preliminary grading approval subject to conditions and Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure impacts resulting from grading would be minimized.

The proposed project would implement the following construction-related project design feature (PDF) intended to reduce diesel-related air emissions during construction. PDF-AQ-1 would be required as a County-imposed Condition of Approval to ensure it is implemented during construction of the proposed project.

Condition of approval PDF-AQ-1: All diesel-fueled off-road construction equipment greater than 75 horsepower shall be zero-emissions or equipped with California Air Resources Board (CARB) Tier 4 Final or Interim compliant engines. Alternatively, CARB Tier 2 or 3 compliant engines may be used if CARB Level 3 Verified Diesel Emissions Control Strategy (VDECS) filters are added to each piece of off-road diesel-fueled equipment.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The proposed project is located at the northeastern corner of the Soquel Drive and Thurber Lane intersection within the community of Live Oak in unincorporated Santa Cruz County (see Figure 2). The project site is located on an approximate 6.2-acre (269,773-square-foot) parcel. The project site is bounded by single-family residential units on the north, single-family residential uses and park/open space on the east, Soquel Drive and commercial and medical office uses on the south, and Thurber Lane and commercial and multifamily residential units on the west.

The project site is located within a developed area and is within the County-designated Urban Services Line (USL) and as indicated above, is located outside of the coastal zone. The surrounding area is developed with a mix of commercial, medical office and residential uses along Soquel Drive and Thurber Lane. Residential uses in the vicinity of the project site include single-family and multifamily housing. The Sutter Hospital Maternity and Surgery Center of Santa Cruz is located southeast of the project site across Soquel Drive, and the Dignity Health-Dominican Hospital is located further west of the project site along Soquel Drive. Winkle Farm County Park is located east of the project site.

The project site is currently vacant and gently slopes from northwest to southeast. The project site is comprised of riparian woodland, oak woodland, wet meadow, non-native trees and annual grassland with an unnamed ephemeral stream channel running through the eastern portion of the project site in a predominantly north-south direction. The southwestern portion of the project site is routinely used temporarily for events, such as pumpkin sales, Christmas/holiday tree sales, and rummage sales.

The project site is identified in the County of Santa Cruz General Plan as Residential – Urban High Flex on the north portion and Community Commercial on the south portion. The project site was analyzed for the potential to construct/use as a mixed use development in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the Sustainability Policy and Regulatory Update (Sustainability Update), a major revision of the County’s General Plan and Zoning regulations approved in 2022. The EIR characterized the site’s waterway as an ephemeral stream. Impacts resulting from the development of the project site would need to conform with the standards/mitigations previously identified during the preparation of the Sustainability Update EIR.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. Introduction and Background

In analyzing a proposed project, the County may consider whether existing environmental documents already provide an adequate analysis of potential environmental impacts. An earlier analysis may be used where, pursuant to tiering, a program environmental impact report (EIR), or other California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions, it can be determined that one or more effects have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration (State CEQA Guidelines section 15063(b)(1)(C)). If an earlier analysis is used, the Initial Study checklist discussion should identify: a) the earlier analyses and state where they are available for review; b) identify which effects were 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; and c) 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.

CEQA also allows a lead agency to avoid repeating analyses that were already provided in a certified General Plan EIR for a development project that is consistent with the General Plan. Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and its parallel CEQA Guidelines provision, section 15183, provide for streamlined environmental review or exemption for projects consistent with the General Plan for which an EIR was certified. Pursuant to section 21083.3, subdivision (b), if a development project is consistent with the General Plan for which an environmental impact report was certified, the application of CEQA shall be limited to effects on the environment which are “peculiar to the parcel or to the project” and which were not addressed as significant effects in the prior environmental impact report, or which substantial new information shows will be more significant than described in the prior environmental impact report. Subdivision (d) further indicates that an effect of a project upon the environment shall not be considered “peculiar to the parcel or to the project,” “if uniformly applied development policies or standards” have been previously adopted by the city or county, with a finding based upon substantial evidence, that the

development policies or standards will substantially mitigate that environmental effect when applied to future projects, unless substantial new information shows that the policies or standards would not substantially mitigate the environmental effect. CEQA Guidelines section 15183, subdivision (f), adds that “[w]here a city or county, in previously adopting uniformly applied development policies or standards for imposition on future projects, failed to make a finding as to whether such policies or standards would substantially mitigate the effects of future projects, the decision-making body of the city or county, prior to approving such a future project pursuant to this section, may hold a public hearing for the purpose of considering whether, as applied to the project, such standards or policies would substantially mitigate the effects of the project.” Under these provisions of CEQA, a project that is consistent with a General Plan that was adopted pursuant to a certified EIR, could be potentially partially or wholly exempt from further CEQA analyses.

Section 15183 provides more detailed guidance than can be found in Public Resources Code section 21083.3 itself. Section 15183, subdivision (b), states that if a project is consistent with an agency’s General Plan for which an EIR has been certified, the agency shall limit its examination of environmental effects to those which the agency determines, in an initial study or other analysis:

- (1) Are peculiar to the project or the parcel on which the project would be located;
- (2) Were not analyzed as significant effects in a prior EIR on the zoning action, general plan, or community plan, with which the project is consistent;
- (3) Are potentially significant offsite impacts and cumulative impacts which were not discussed in the prior EIR prepared for the general plan, community plan, or zoning action; or
- (4) Are previously identified significant effects which, as a result of substantial new information which was not known at the time the EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the prior EIR. (State CEQA Guidelines section 15183(b).)

Guidelines section 15183, subdivision (c), further provides that “if an impact is not peculiar to the parcel or to the project, has been addressed as a significant effect in the prior EIR, or can be substantially mitigated by the imposition of uniformly applied development policies or standards...then an additional EIR need not be prepared for the project solely on the basis of that impact.” “[D]evelopment policies or standards need not apply throughout the entire city or county, but can apply only within the zoning district in which the project is located.... Moreover, such policies or standards need not be part of the general plan or any community plan, but can be found within another pertinent planning document such as a zoning ordinance.” (Guidelines, section 15183, subd. (f).)

B. Use of Earlier Analyses

On December 13, 2022, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors adopted the Sustainability Policy and Regulatory Update (Sustainability Update) after certifying an EIR prepared for the Update. The Sustainability Update was a comprehensive update to the County's General Plan/Local Coastal Program (LCP) and consists of amendments to the County's existing General Plan/LCP, including four updated General Plan elements, amendments to sections of the SCCC, adoption of County Design Guidelines, and land use and/or zoning map amendments to implement map corrections and identify opportunity sites and vacant and underutilized properties. The General Plan/LCP amendments include four revised/updated elements: Built Environment (BE) (formerly Land Use), Access + Mobility (AM) (formerly Circulation), Agriculture, Natural Resources + Conservation (ARC) (formerly Conservation and Open Space), and Parks, Recreation + and Public Facilities (PPF) Element. The Sustainability Update also eliminated the former Community Design Element, which was incorporated into the BE Element.

The Sustainability Update EIR includes the Draft EIR volume (April 2022) and the Final EIR volume (August 2022). The Sustainability Update EIR reviewed all of the topics included on the Appendix G environmental checklist in the State CEQA Guidelines as well as all sections required to be included in an EIR.

The Sustainability Update EIR is a "program" EIR prepared pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines section 15168, which reviewed environmental impacts associated with future development and buildout within the unincorporated county areas that would be accommodated by the General Plan/LCP. A program EIR can be used for subsequent projects implemented within the scope of the program/plan. Typically, site-specific or new significant impacts that weren't addressed in the program EIR would be evaluated in an Initial Study, leading to preparation of a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or EIR. Mitigation measures adopted for the General Plan also would be a part of future development projects, as relevant, and supplemented, as may be necessary, with any site-specific mitigation measures identified in the project-specific environmental review process.

As indicated above, pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3, certain (or potentially all) aspects of a development project that are consistent with a General Plan for which an EIR was certified may be exempt from additional CEQA analyses (i.e., negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or EIR) of issues that were adequately covered in the General Plan EIR. The project site is partially designated Residential-Urban High

Flex (R-UHF) in the County's General Plan/LCP that has a density range of 22-45 units per acre. According to the General Plan/LCP Policy BE-2.1.6, the R-UHF designation:

characterizes residential development at 22 to 45 units per gross acre within the USL, served by a full range of urban services, located within or with easy access to activity centers, multimodal corridors, mobility hubs, and on key opportunity sites. R-UHF is appropriate for compact units in housing types such as quadplexes, apartment buildings, townhomes, and condominiums. Ground floor commercial use is allowed if compatible with surrounding land uses.

The southern portion of the project site is designated Community Commercial (C-C) in the General Plan/LCP. This designation:

characterizes concentrated commercial uses within the USL/Rural Services Line (RSL) that serve the general shopping, entertainment, service, and office needs of community or region-wide market areas. C-C is appropriate for retail sales, personal services, offices, hotels, schools, restaurants, entertainment venues, and similar types of community and visitor-serving activities, as well as mixed-use commercial/residential development and public/quasi-public uses.

The proposed project consists of 173 residential rental units located within five (5) buildings on approximately 4.15 acres of the 6.26-acre project site. The proposed residential use is consistent with the General Plan/LCP designations that allow compact residential units, including multifamily apartment buildings, and mixed-use development. The proposed project density represents approximately 44 units per acre, which is within the density range permitted for this General Plan/LCP land use designation. The approximately 1,800 square feet of proposed neighborhood commercial use is also consistent with the General Plan/LCP Community Commercial designation that allows commercial uses. Thus, the proposed project uses and density are consistent with the General Plan/LCP land use designations for which an EIR was prepared and certified in December 2022, and meets the provisions of CEQA section 21083.3(b) with regards to project consistency with the County's adopted General Plan/LCP.

The Sustainability Update EIR considered the impacts of new development, as well as, repurposing, intensifying, and redeveloping existing developed parcels in the unincorporated county as a whole and considered construction of new housing units and non-residential uses throughout the unincorporated county. The EIR estimates that the Sustainability Update has the potential to accommodate approximately 4,500 housing units throughout the county over existing conditions with approximately 75% projected to occur within urban areas. The EIR also estimates the potential to accommodate approximately 6,210,000 square feet of non-residential uses, with approximately 60% expected to occur within urban areas (County of Santa Cruz 2022b-Draft EIR volume). These forecasts

provide an estimate of potential growth that could occur as a result of adoption and implementation of the Sustainability Update, for the purpose of evaluation in the EIR. This estimate of growth may or may not occur, and this estimate does not establish a limit to development. Annual limits for residential units are set by the County pursuant to Measure J and SCCC provisions as explained in Section 4.13.2.3 of the EIR. Additionally, some of this projected development and growth would occur under the existing General Plan/LCP without adoption of the Sustainability Update.

Since the base year (2021) of analysis for projections used in the Sustainability Update EIR, approximately 680 residential units and 17,647 square feet of retail commercial uses have been permitted throughout the unincorporated area. Thus, the project's proposed 173 residential units and other constructed and approved residential units would result in a net increase in approximately 853 residential units and 19,447 square feet of retail commercial uses, respectively, which would be well within the remaining residential buildout estimates of 4,500 residential units considered in the county-wide Sustainability Update EIR impact analyses. It is also noted that the proposed project is within the development estimated for the Live Oak planning area in which the proposed project is located. The Sustainability Update EIR estimated 2,002 new residential units and approximately 37,200 square feet of new retail commercial uses in the Live Oak planning area. Approximately 248 residential units and 1,800 square feet of retail commercial space has been permitted in the Live Oak planning area since the base year of analysis for the Sustainability Update EIR. Thus, the proposed project uses also would be well within the remaining residential and retail commercial buildout estimates within the Live Oak planning area.

In addition, the project site was one of 23 parcels that were proposed for General Plan/LCP land use designation and/or zone district amendments and evaluated at a program level in the Sustainability Update EIR. Future potential development of the project site was identified, and potential biological resource and hydrological impacts potentially arising from future development of the site were specifically evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR. The Sustainability Update EIR specifically evaluated the project site would accommodate development consistent with the proposed General Plan Amendments from C-O, C-N, O-U to RF-UHF and C-C and rezonings from PA and C-1 to RF and C-2.

C. Environmental Checklist Review

The purpose of the checklist presented on the following pages is to evaluate the impact categories covered in the County's certified Sustainability Update EIR to determine whether the project's impacts have been adequately analyzed in the EIR or whether any new significant impacts peculiar to the project or project site would result. Where an impact resulting from the project was adequately analyzed previously, the review provides a cross-reference to the pages in the Sustainability Update EIR where information and analysis may be found relative to the environmental issue listed under each topic. The

checklist also identifies whether the project involves new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR or new significant impacts peculiar to the project or project site. As indicated above, an impact would not be considered “peculiar” to the project or project site if uniformly applied development policies or standards would substantially mitigate an environmental effect. Therefore, the following review includes mitigation measures identified in the Sustainability Update EIR that would be applicable to the project site or project and/or relevant applicable development policies or standards that would be applied to the proposed project.

The Sustainability Update EIR is on file at the County’s Community Development and Infrastructure Department, 701 Ocean Street, Fourth Floor, Santa Cruz, California from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The document also is available for review on the County’s website at:

<https://cdi.santacruzcountyca.gov/UPC/GetInvolved/CEQAInitialStudiesEIRs/ArchivedCEQADocuments.aspx>.

D. Conclusion

Based on the following review, it has been determined that the County’s Sustainability Update EIR has adequately addressed the following issues, and no further environmental review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3: aesthetics (scenic views, scenic resources, light and glare); agricultural and forest resources; air quality (conflicts with Air Quality Management Plan, project emissions, sensitive receptors, odors); biological resources (wildlife movement, conflicts with local ordinances protecting biological resources, conflicts with plans); cultural resources (historical resources); energy; geology and soils (fault rupture, paleontological resources); greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (GHG emissions, conflicts with plans); hazards/hazardous materials (use/disposal of hazardous materials, exposure to hazardous materials, airport safety); hydrology-water quality (groundwater, flood risk, conflicts with plans); land use; mineral resources; noise (vibration, airport noise); population and housing; public services; recreation; transportation (conflicts with program or policy, conflict with CEQA Guidelines regarding vehicle miles traveled, hazardous design, emergency access); utilities; wildfire; and cumulative impacts.

The following site-specific impacts have been analyzed and determined to be less than significant due to substantial mitigation resulting from General Plan/LCP policies, zoning regulations and/or development standards that are uniformly applied to development projects by the County: aesthetics (visual character); biological resources (special status species, sensitive habitat, nesting birds); cultural resources (archaeological resources, human burials); geology and soils (seismic hazards, non-seismic hazards, erosion, soils); hazards/hazardous materials (accidental release of hazardous materials); hydrology-water

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quality (water quality, drainage); noise (noise increase) and tribal cultural resources. Thus, pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and State CEQA Guidelines section 15183, no further environmental analysis is required.

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E. Checklist and Discussion

1. AESTHETICS				
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update EIR Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	DEIR pp. 4.1-1 to 4.1-2, 4.1-13 to 4.1-15	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-5.1.2, 5.1.3, SCCC Chapter 13.11 site design regulations
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	DEIR pp. 4.1-2 to 4.1-3, 4.1-15 to 4.1-17	No	No	SCCC sections 13.11.072 & 13.20.130(C); SCCC Chapter 13.20 design criteria in coastal zone and scenic areas; SCCC Chapter 16.34-Significant Tree Protection
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality 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 and other regulations governing scenic quality?	DEIR pp. 4.1-4 to 4.1-6, 4.1-17 to 4.1-22	No	No	Design Review pursuant to SCCC Chapter 13.11: Site, Architectural, and Landscape Design Review, SCCC Chapter 13.20 design criteria in coastal zone and scenic areas
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	DEIR pp. 4.1-5 to 4.1-6, 4.1-23 to 4.1-24	No	No	SCCC sections 13.10.324.1[F], 13.10.363, 13.10.554, 13.10.581, 13.10.637, 13.10.650, 13.10.685; SCCC section 13.11.070(C)(4) that requires light to be directed on site to prevent offsite lighting;

(a) Scenic Views. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates scenic view areas include: vistas from designated scenic roads, Coastal Special Scenic Areas, and unique hydrologic, geologic, and paleontological features. The ARC Element also indicates that ocean views, agricultural fields, wooded forests, open meadows, ridgetops, and mountain hillside views are also public scenic assets that should be identified and considered during development review permit processes (ARC-5.1.1). Development projects proposed in visual resource areas are required to be designed to protect these resources (ARC-5.1.2) and to protect scenic vistas (ARC-5.1.3). Protection of scenic ocean views

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and agricultural vistas also are required as part of future development projects (ARC-5.1.6 and ARC-5.1.5, respectively).

The Sustainability Update EIR, which comprehensively addressed impacts to scenic views associated with new development, concluded that most of the future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would occur within the County's USL in areas that are already developed and generally located away from the coast or significant public scenic views. Table 4.1-1 in the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) summarizes policies that serve to avoid or minimize impacts related to substantially adversely affecting a scenic view. The Sustainability Update EIR also indicates that County regulations in the SCCC require that development in the coastal zone be sited and designed to protect scenic coastal public views and significant trees, and site design regulations in SCCC Chapter 13.11 seek to protect scenic areas, hilltops and ridgelines, and the public viewshed throughout the County. Title 16 regulations for development in natural resource areas and hazardous areas also would protect scenic vistas. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that with compliance with local regulations, implementation of the Sustainability Update policies and implementation strategies summarized on Table 4.1-1 in the EIR, and required future environmental review of specific development projects, future development would avoid adverse impacts to scenic views, resulting in a less-than-significant impact to scenic views.

The project site is located within an existing developed residential/commercial neighborhood within Live Oak planning area and within the County's designated USL. The project site is not located within the coastal zone. According to the County's Geographical Information System (GIS) data base (County of Santa Cruz 2025), the project site is identified as being located within a scenic area. Highway 1 is designated as a scenic road in the County's General Plan/LCP and is located approximately 1,200 feet south of the project site. The views along Highway 1 in the vicinity of the project site are predominantly characterized by a mix of commercial and non-residential development. The project site is located within a developed area and is not visible from Highway 1 due to intervening development and existing trees. However, there are no scenic views from Highway 1 in this area, such as ocean or coastal views, hillside areas, wooded areas, or agricultural fields.

Some of the upper stories of the proposed project buildings may be visible as part of the distant views from Highway 1. However, the proposed project buildings would not block, obstruct or otherwise affect a scenic view as none exist in the project vicinity. In addition, the intervening properties between Highway 1 and the project site could be redeveloped in the future, which would result in development that could block views of any visible upper stories of the proposed project buildings. The proposed project would not have an adverse effect on a scenic view as none have been identified, mapped or observed that include, or are in the vicinity of, the project site. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding scenic views than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental

analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Scenic Resources. There are no highways that have been officially designated as State Scenic Highways¹ in the vicinity of the project site. However, the Sustainability Update EIR indicated that there are six (6) Eligible State Scenic Highways that have the potential to be officially designated in the future. These include:

- Highway 1 - Monterey to San Mateo county lines
- Highway 9 – Highway 1 near Santa Cruz to the Santa Clara county line
- Highway 17 – Highway 1 near Santa Cruz to the Santa Clara county line
- Highway 35 - Highway 17 to the Santa Clara county line
- Highway 152 – Highway 1 to the Santa Clara county line at Hecker Pass
- Highway 236 – Highway 9 near Boulder Creek to SR 9 northeast of Big Basin Redwoods State Park (AMBAG 2021).

The County's General Plan/LCP identifies seven (7) state highway segments and 27 county roads that "are valued for their vistas," which include and generally coincide with state highways identified as potentially eligible for scenic highway status. Additionally, the General Plan/LCP ARC Element indicates that the County is highly scenic and supports scenic vistas and diverse scenic resources, including ocean vistas along the entire coastline, open agricultural lands along the northern coasts and in the southern part of the county, redwood forests, and the rolling hillsides and ridgetops of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Scenic resources also include redwood forests, coastal cliffs and estuaries, rivers, streams, watersheds, reservoirs, special geologic formations such as sandhill outcroppings, and selected vegetative communities. Steep slopes and high elevations are identified for their potential to provide scenic vistas. The General Plan/LCP designates "Coastal Special Scenic Areas" to include: a) Bonny Doon sandstone formations, generally found within the borders of Pine Flat Road, Laguna Creek, Ice Cream Grade, and Martin Road; b) the area enclosed by the Swanton Road and Highway 1; and (c) the Swanton Road Coastal Special scenic area north of Last Chance Road toward Highway 1.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that future development and redevelopment throughout the County, primarily within urban areas within the County's USL, could potentially impact scenic resources. As indicated in the EIR, the General Plan/LCP includes policies that designate and define visual resource areas having regional public importance, which include: vistas from designated scenic roads, Coastal Special Scenic Areas, and unique hydrologic, geologic, paleontological features, as well as ocean views, agricultural fields, wooded forests, open meadows, ridgetops, and mountain hillside. Table 4.1-2 in the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume)

¹ California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2023. Scenic Highways. Accessed February 18, 2025 at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>.

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summarizes policies that serve to avoid or minimize impacts related to scenic resources. Title 16 regulations for development in natural resource areas and hazardous areas also serve to protect scenic vistas, and provisions in Chapter 13.11 of the SCCC call for retention of significant natural vegetation on site, mature trees, rock outcroppings and other natural features. The EIR concluded that with implementation of the Sustainability Update policies and implementation strategies summarized on Table 4.1-2 and regulations in the SCCC for design review, zoning district development standards, compliance with regulations in natural resource areas, and environmental review of specific development projects, future development would not result in an adverse impact to scenic resources, and impacts would be less than significant.

Future development on any property located adjacent to County-designated scenic roads, including Highway 1, would be subject to review and compliance with County policies and design regulations that address siting and design of development adjacent to scenic roads. Specifically, as summarized in Table 4.3-2 of the EIR, ARC Policies 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 require that new development that is visible from urban scenic roads must “respect, preserve or improve the visual quality through siting, architectural design, landscaping and appropriate signage.”

As indicated above, the project site is located approximately 1,200 feet north of Highway 1 and is separated from Highway 1 by intervening, mostly developed properties. The project site is not located immediately adjacent to a County-designated scenic road nor is it located within a designated “coastal special scenic area” or any area identified as having scenic resources. As indicated in subsection (a) above, the upper portion of some of the proposed buildings may be visible from Highway 1, but the project site would be largely screened from view by intervening development and any potential views would be of limited duration and scope. The proposed project would not obstruct views of scenic views, such as ocean views, ridgetops or hillside views, as none exist in the project vicinity. Furthermore, the proposed project retains the existing onsite stream channel and riparian corridor as open space as part of the site plan, which is consistent with General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-5.1.8 to preserve natural landforms.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that future development accommodated by the Plan could adversely affect scenic resources but could be mitigated with adherence to local regulations that require protection of scenic resources, including design review of projects adjacent to designated scenic highways and county roads, and impacts to scenic views would be minimized, resulting in a less-than-significant impact. The proposed project is subject to the County’s design review process and Design Guidelines, and compliance with design and site review requirements set forth in the SCCC Chapter 13.11, Site, Architectural and Landscape Design Review, would be considered application of a uniformly applied development standard. Thus, the project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to scenic resources than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Furthermore, as indicated above, the proposed project would not result in impacts to scenic views. However, the project would be subject to design review to ensure

compliance with County development standards. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(c) Effects on Visual Character. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that while future development could potentially result in impacts to the existing visual character of surrounding areas in non-urbanized locations, compliance with SCCC requirements to mitigate significant visual impacts of new development on coastal or other public scenic views through screening, landscaping, and other measures would prevent substantial degradation of the visual quality of these areas. In urbanized areas, future development would be required to comply with the County's design review procedures and requirements, including adherence to the new County Design Guidelines and Site Development Permit requirements, and thus, would not conflict with applicable zoning and regulations governing scenic quality of urban areas. Therefore, with implementation of the General Plan/LCP policies as summarized in Table 4.1-3 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) and SCCC provisions related to project design and design review, including the Design Guidelines adopted as part of the Sustainability Update, the EIR concluded that future development would not adversely impact scenic resources or conflict with policies and regulations governing scenic quality, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

The project site is located within an existing developed area within the County's USL. Views in the project vicinity are characterized by a mix of commercial, medical-related, and residential development. The proposed project would result in construction of five (5) buildings ranging in height from 40-70 feet (3 to 5 stories). While the proposed buildings with 4-5 stories would be taller than other buildings in the vicinity, the proposed buildings closest to neighboring residents include lower heights on those portions of the buildings. In urban areas outside of the coastal zone, there are no specific regulations governing scenic quality, although projects are subject to the County's design review requirements. The proposed project is subject to the County's design review requirements and where appropriate, obtain a waiver or concession pursuant to SDBL, therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with applicable zoning and regulations governing scenic quality, which is the standard for review in urban areas.

The proposed project does request a waiver to allow building heights higher than allowed in the County's zoning regulations. The court decision in *Wollmer v. City of Berkeley* expressly held that the waivers required to grant a density-bonus-eligible project did not result in planning and zoning inconsistencies that disqualified the project from the categorical exemption for in-fill development, because the mandatory nature of the waivers meant that those waived standards were inapplicable to the project. The Court found that "taking these laws together as they operate in the context of a density bonus project, it is clear that the waived zoning standards are not "applicable" and that the requirements of Guidelines section 15332, subdivision (a) were met."

As previously indicated, the proposed project would be subject to design review regulations. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that future development could result in adverse impacts to

the visual quality but could be mitigated with adherence to local regulations and design review requirements, including compliance with design and site review requirements set forth in the SCCC Chapter 13.11, which would be considered application of a uniformly applied development standard. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to visual quality than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project with the application of uniformly applied development standards. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(d) Light and Glare. The Sustainability Update EIR identifies potential sources of light and glare, and concluded that future development could result in exterior lighting and potential sources of glare, but new development would be subject to SCCC requirements, including section 13.11.074 (D)(1), which requires that all site, building, security, and landscape lighting be directed onto the site and away from adjacent properties and not be visible from adjacent properties. Light sources can be shielded by landscaping, structure, fixture design or other physical means. Building and security lighting shall be integrated into the building design. The regulations also specify that all lighted parking and circulation areas shall utilize low-rise light standards or light fixtures attached to the building. Light standards to a maximum height of 15 feet are allowed. The EIR concluded that future development projects would be required to comply with existing SCCC requirements regarding lighting, which would prevent creation of substantial new sources of light. In addition, the project would be conditioned to ensure no impacts to biotic resources would result from the presence of artificial light. Specifically, the project shall avoid the installation of any non-essential artificial lighting. If artificial lighting is necessary, the project shall avoid or limit the use of artificial lights during the hours of dawn and dusk, when many wildlife species are most active. B. All essential outdoor lighting shall be limited through the use of timers and/or motion sensors. C. All essential outdoor lighting shall be shielded, cast downward, and directed such that it does not shine off the property into surrounding protected habitat areas, other parcels, or the night sky. The Sustainability Update concluded that with compliance with County regulations, future development projects would avoid impacts related to creation of substantial light or glare, resulting in no impact. Therefore, with the additional conditions regarding lighting, no impact is anticipated to result from the proposed development.

The proposed project includes exterior lighting for buildings, parking areas, and pedestrian path. Proposed lighting has been designed and sited to be directed onto the project site, away from adjacent properties. Building and security lighting has been integrated into the building design and low-rise light poles or fixtures have been incorporated into the parking areas and along the outer edge of pedestrian pathways. No lighting is proposed within the retained/preserved riparian corridor. The proposed lighting would be similar to other multifamily residential and mixed-used developments, designed to be directed on site. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding generation of light and glare

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than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

2. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	DEIR pp. 4.2-1 to 4.2-4, 4.2-18 to 4.2-25 FEIR pp 3-2	No	No	MM AGR-1; SCCC sections 13.10.313(E), 13.10.314, 13.10.632-13.10.644
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	DEIR pp. 4.2-4 to 4.2-5, 4.2-25 to 4.2-26	No	No	SCCC sections 13.10-312, 13.10.471-473
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))?	DEIR pp. 4.2-7, 4.2-28 to 4.2-29	No	No	SCCC section 13.10.371-378; SCCC Chapter 16.52
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	DEIR pp. 4.2-7, 4.2-28 to 4.2-29	No	No	SCCC section 13.10.371-378; SCCC Chapter 16.52
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?	DEIR pp. 4.2-26 to 4.2-29	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-1.4.4, ARC-1.4.5, ARC-1.4.13, ARC-1.4.14, SCCC section 13.10.313 for agricultural buffer requirements

(a) Conversion of Prime Agricultural Land. There are approximately 18,900 acres of land that are designated Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland in the California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) within unincorporated Santa Cruz County. The Sustainability Update EIR, which comprehensively addressed impacts to

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agricultural lands as a result of future development, concluded that future structural development as a result of the Sustainability Update could result in limited conversion of Important Farmlands as defined by the state's FMMP. The EIR found that the Sustainability Update retains policies to limit conversion, as well as inclusion of other controls that would serve to avoid or minimize impacts related to conversion of Important Farmland as summarized in Table 4.2-4 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) in addition to compliance with SCCC regulations. However, the EIR found that should a future residential, agricultural support facility, or public/quasi-public project result in the conversion of Important Farmlands, the impact would be considered potentially significant, even though the total amount likely would be minimal. Mitigation Measure AGR-1, which is included in the Sustainability Update EIR, would reduce the impact related to conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, but not to a less-than-significant level, and the impact of conversion of these farmlands would be significant and unavoidable.

The project site is located within the Live Oak planning area within the County-designated USL within a developed area. The project site does not contain prime farmland or other agricultural lands as mapped on the State Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) (Sustainability Update EIR Figure 4.2-1). The project site is not designated for agricultural uses in the County's General Plan/LCP and is not located adjacent to agricultural lands that are in production or designated for such use. The proposed project would not result in conversion of agricultural lands as designated in the FMMP. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to conversion of agricultural land than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Conflict with Agricultural Zoning or Williamson Act Contracts. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that the amendments to General Plan/LCP policies related to agricultural resources and accompanying changes to the SCCC would ensure that the zoning regulations are consistent with the General Plan/LCP. The Sustainability Update includes an implementing strategy to support and monitor compliance with Agricultural Preserve (Williamson Act) contracts and a covenant enforceable by the County to protect the use of commercial agricultural land for agricultural uses (ARC-1.2b). The EIR concluded that the Sustainability Update would not result in conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use or Williamson Act Contract resulting in no impact.

The project site is not designated for agricultural uses in the County's General Plan/LCP or zoned for agricultural uses and is not located adjacent to agricultural lands. The project site is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract. Thus, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural uses or a Williamson Act Contract, would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental

analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(c-d, e) Conflicts with Forest/Timberland Zoning and/or Conversion of Forest/Timberland. The Sustainability Update EIR found that the majority of the growth anticipated would occur within the County's existing USL and would not affect forest or timber lands and that County policies and regulations that seek to maintain and protect timberlands and limit residential development as summarized in Table 4.2-6, would serve to avoid or minimize potential impacts to forest and timber lands. The EIR concluded that with implementation of County General Plan/LCP policies and regulations, including SCCC Chapter 16.52 that regulates timber harvesting, the Sustainability Update would not conflict with or cause rezoning of forest or timber lands, resulting in no impact.

The project site is not zoned Timberland Preserve or Timber Production (TP) and is not located adjacent to or near lands with timber resources. The proposed project would not result in or indirectly lead to conversion of timber lands or conflict with or lead to rezoning of lands zoned TP as such lands do not exist in the vicinity of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts on forest resources, would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(e) Indirect Conversion of Agricultural Lands. The Sustainability Update EIR reviewed the types of conflicts that are typically found with non-agricultural development adjacent to or in proximity to lands in agricultural production, which can then indirectly lead to conversion of agricultural lands. The EIR found that General Plan/LCP policies and SCCC regulations require agricultural buffers and other measures to reduce potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses as summarized in Table 4.2-5 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). Therefore, the EIR concluded that with implementation of and compliance with County policies and regulations, potential indirect conversion of agricultural lands due to potential conflicts and/or introduction of services would be considered a less-than-significant impact.

As indicated above, the project site is not located adjacent to agricultural lands, and, according to the County's GIS data base, the project site is not located within 200 feet of a property designated or zoned for agriculture. Thus, the proposed project would not result in potential conflicts with agricultural uses that could lead to conversion of prime agricultural lands, would not result in indirect impacts that could lead to conversion of agricultural lands, would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

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3. AIR QUALITY ²	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	DEIR pp. 4.3-17 to 4.3-18, 4.3-22 to 4.3-23	No	No	None
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?	DEIR pp. 4.3-23 to 4.3-27 to 4.3-30	No	No	None
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	DEIR pp. 4.3-27 to 4.3-30	No	No	None
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	DEIR pp. 4.3-30 to 4.3-31	No	No	SCCC section 13.10.313 for agricultural buffer requirements

(a) Conflict with Air Quality Management Plan. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that in 1991, the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD), formerly the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD), adopted the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) for the Monterey Bay Region in response to the California Clean Air Act of 1988, which established specific planning requirements to meet the ozone standards. The most recent update, the 2012-2015 Air Quality Management Plan (2016 AQMP), was adopted in 2017. The 2016 AQMP relies on a multilevel partnership of federal, state, regional, and local governmental agencies. The 2016 AQMP documents the MBARD's progress toward attaining the state 8-hour ozone standard, which is more stringent than the state 1-hour ozone standard.

The EIR further reported that MBARD's "CEQA Guidelines" consider inconsistency with the AQMP to be a significant cumulative adverse air quality impact. The AQMP is prepared to address attainment of the state ambient air quality standards (AAQS) and maintenance of the federal AAQS. The plan accommodates growth by projecting growth in emissions based on different indicators. For example, population forecasts adopted by the AMBAG are used to forecast population-related emissions. Through the planning process, emissions growth is offset by basin-wide controls on stationary, area, and transportation sources of air pollution. Thus, population-related emissions have been forecast in the AQMP using population forecasts adopted by AMBAG,

² Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

and population-changing projects which are consistent with these forecasts are consistent with the AQMP. Projects that are not consistent with the AQMP's population projections have not been accommodated in the AQMP and would have a significant cumulative impact on regional air quality unless emissions are totally offset.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that potential development that could be accommodated by the Sustainability Update and which was evaluated in the EIR would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan as dwelling unit estimates and population were within population estimates included in the AQMP. The current AQMP is based on AMBAG's 2014 Regional Growth Forecast (AMBAG 2014), which includes projections to year 2035.

Since the base year (2021) of analysis for projections used in the Sustainability Update EIR, approximately 680 residential units and 17,647 square feet of retail commercial uses have been permitted throughout the unincorporated area. Thus, the project's proposed 173 residential units and other constructed and approved residential units would result in a net increase in approximately 853 residential units and 19,447 square feet of retail commercial uses, respectively, which would be well within the remaining residential buildout estimates of 4,500 residential units considered in the county-wide Sustainability Update EIR impact analyses. Future development would be within the scope of impact analyzed within the Sustainability Update EIR, for which a less-than-significant impact was identified related to potential conflicts with the AQMP. Thus, the proposed project would not result in impacts related to conflicts with the AQMP, would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Project Criteria Pollutant Emissions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established ambient air quality standards that are the maximum levels of ambient (background) air pollutants considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety to protect public health and welfare. Criteria pollutants include ozone (O₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), inhalable particulates (PM₁₀), fine particulates (PM_{2.5}), and lead. High O₃ levels are caused by the cumulative emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x), which react under certain meteorological conditions to form O₃. In California, sulfates, vinyl chloride, hydrogen sulfide, and visibility-reducing particles are also regulated as criteria air pollutants. An area is designated as "in attainment" when it is in compliance with the federal and/or state standards, as further discussed below.

The project site is located within the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), which is under the jurisdiction of the MBARD and includes Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties. The NCCAB is designated attainment for the federal PM₁₀ and SO₂ standards, and is designated attainment/unclassified for the other federal standards. The NCCAB is designated attainment for

the state PM_{2.5}, NO₂, SO₂, and lead standards, and is designated unclassified for CO in Santa Cruz County. The NCCAB has nonattainment designations for state O₃ and PM₁₀ standards.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that future development by the Sustainability Update could result in air pollutant emissions, including ROG, NO_x, particulate matter, and CO from vehicular traffic, area sources, and energy sources (i.e., natural gas appliances, and space and water heating), as well as during construction of future development projects. The EIR indicated that the scale and timing of construction of development accommodated by the Sustainability Update is unknown, but that the MBARD CEQA Guidelines provide screening levels for potential significant impacts, and projects that cover 2.2 acres or more may be required to implement dust suppression measures during construction unless future project-level construction-emissions modeling indicates that pollutant thresholds established by the MBARD would not be exceeded. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that with implementation and application of MBARD recommended measures, if required, potentially significant project-specific construction emissions would be reduced to less than significant.

With regard to operational emissions resulting from future development, the Sustainability Update EIR found that vehicular emission rates are anticipated to lessen in future years due to continuing improvements in automobile and fuel efficiency programs implemented by the State of California, and the MBARD's latest AQMP forecasts a substantial reduction in emissions through 2035. Regarding energy sources, the EIR indicated that new development would be required to comply with the applicable building codes (in effect at the time of construction, which include energy-efficient requirements that are anticipated to become more stringent. In addition, the EIR found that compliance with General Plan/LCP policies summarized in Table 4.3-4 in the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) would help reduce vehicle-related emissions. The Sustainability Update includes policies that set forth measures to avoid and minimize adverse impacts on air quality, including prioritizing connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, infrastructure for electric vehicles, siting new development to facilitate access to transit, and reduction of vehicle trips and emissions. Additionally, existing Public Safety Element policies identified in the EIR require future development projects to implement applicable MBARD control measures and/or air quality mitigations in the design of new projects as set forth in MBARD's CEQA Guidelines. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that construction and operational emissions impacts resulting from future development would be less than significant.

The proposed project would indirectly generate air pollutant emissions through new vehicle trips, as well as emissions during construction. The proposed project would not result in stationary emissions. The proposed 173 residential units and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial uses is at a level that is below the MBARD's screening level for the amount of residential units and commercial development that could result in potentially significant ozone impacts (MBARD 2008).

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Project construction could result in generation of dust and PM₁₀ emissions as a result of project site excavation and grading. According to MBARD's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (MBARD 2008), construction activity on 8.1 acres per day with minimal earthmoving or 2.2 acres per day with grading and excavation are assumed to be below the MBARD's PM₁₀ significance threshold of 82 pounds per day. The proposed project's area of proposed development of approximately 4.15 acres exceeds 2.2 acres and, therefore, air emissions were modeled for project construction and operations using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2022.1.1.29.

Internal combustion engines used by construction equipment, trucks, and worker vehicles would result in emissions of ROG, NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Emissions would also be generated by entrained dust, which results from the exposure of earth surfaces to wind from the direct disturbance and movement of soil. CalEEMod calculates maximum daily emissions for summer and winter periods. The proposed project would implement PDF-AQ-1, which would require all diesel-fueled off-road construction equipment greater than 75 horsepower to be zero-emissions or equipped with CARB Tier 4 Final or interim compliant engines, which was factored into the emissions modeling.

The maximum daily construction emissions for both summer and winter periods for the proposed project are summarized in Table 1. As shown, short-term construction criteria pollutant emissions generated by the proposed project would not exceed the respective MBARD thresholds for construction criteria air pollutant emissions.

Operation of the proposed project would result in emissions of criteria pollutants from area sources (i.e., consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment), energy sources (electricity and natural gas usage), and mobile sources (vehicle use). The estimated maximum daily operational emissions for both summer and winter periods for the proposed project are summarized in Table 2.

Table 1. Estimated Maximum Daily Construction Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions						
Year	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
<i>pounds per day</i>						
Summer						
2026*	7.27	24.20	44.35	0.07	4.70	1.96
2027	6.17	7.19	12.57	0.01	0.45	0.19
Winter						
2026	6.74	23.55	41.87	0.07	7.90	4.07
2027	6.70	11.34	23.38	0.03	1.35	0.41
Maximum Daily Emissions	7.27	24.20	44.35	0.07	7.90	4.07
<i>MBARD Threshold</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Threshold Exceeded?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	N/A

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; MBARD = Monterey Bay Air Resources District; N/A = not applicable; NO_x = oxides of nitrogen; PM₁₀ = coarse particulate matter; PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter; ROG = reactive organic gases; SO_x = sulfur oxides. The values shown are the maximum summer or winter daily emissions results from CalEEMod.

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*This would be the earliest date construction would be initiated, which represents the worst-case scenario for criteria air pollutant emissions because equipment and vehicle emission factors for later years would be slightly less due to more stringent standards for in-use off-road equipment and heavy-duty trucks, as well as fleet turnover replacing older equipment and vehicles in later years.

Source: Dudek

Table 2. Estimated Maximum Daily Operational Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions						
Year	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
<i>pounds per day</i>						
Summer						
Mobile	4.06	2.28	22.07	0.04	3.60	0.94
Area	6.65	0.10	10.52	<0.01	0.01	<0.01
Energy	0.07	1.17	0.51	0.01	0.09	0.09
Total	10.78	3.55	33.10	0.05	3.70	1.03
Winter						
Mobile	4.02	2.65	23.85	0.04	3.60	0.94
Area	5.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Energy	0.07	1.17	0.51	0.01	0.09	0.09
Total	9.81	3.82	24.36	0.05	3.70	1.03
Maximum Daily Emissions	10.78	3.82	33.10	0.05	3.70	1.03
<i>MBARD Threshold</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>550</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Threshold Exceeded?	No	No	No	No	No	N/A

Notes: CO = carbon monoxide; MBARD = Monterey Bay Air Resources District; N/A = not applicable; NO_x = oxides of nitrogen; PM₁₀ = coarse particulate matter; PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter; ROG = reactive organic gases; SO_x = sulfur oxides. The values shown are the maximum summer or winter daily emissions results from CalEEMod.

Source: Dudek

As shown in Table 2 above, operational criteria pollutant emissions generated by the proposed project would not exceed the respective MBARD thresholds for operational criteria air pollutant emissions. Therefore, the project-level review finds that potential criteria air pollution emissions resulting from the proposed project would not exceed MBARD's adopted CEQA significance thresholds, and the proposed project would not violate current air quality standards or result in a cumulatively considerable increase in criteria air pollutants. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding air emissions than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

In addition, according to the MBARD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, projects that are consistent with the AQMP would not result in cumulative impacts as regional emissions have been factored into the AQMP. The MBARD prepares air quality plans address attainment of the state and federal emission standards and incorporate growth forecasts developed by AMBAG as described above. As indicated in subsection 3(a) above, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the AQMP, which takes into account cumulative development within the

county. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable criteria pollutant increase.

(c) Sensitive Receptors. For CEQA purposes, and according to MBARD's CEQA Guidelines, a sensitive receptor is defined as any residence, including private homes, condominiums, apartments, and living quarters; education resources such as preschools and kindergarten through grade 12 schools; daycare centers; and healthcare facilities such as hospitals or retirement and nursing homes. A sensitive receptor includes long term care hospitals, hospices, prisons, and dormitories or similar live-in housing (MBARD 2008).

The Sustainability Update EIR reviewed potential CO and toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions that might affect sensitive receptors. This includes diesel particulate matter (DPM), which is a state-designated TAC. The EIR indicated that CARB adopted, and has been implementing, a diesel risk reduction plan to reduce the cancer risk associated with DPM, and that construction-related emissions are temporary. Concentrations of mobile-source DPM emissions are typically reduced by 70% at a distance of approximately 500 feet. In addition, current models and methodologies for conducting health risk assessments are associated with longer-term exposure periods of 9, 40, and 70 years, which do not correlate well with the temporary and highly variable nature of construction activities. In addition, operation of heavy-duty diesel construction equipment is subject to CARB Airborne Toxics Control Measure for in-use diesel construction equipment to reduce DPM emissions, and any operation of diesel trucks are also subject to a CARB Airborne Toxics Control Measure. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would not significantly contribute to a CO hotspot and would not indirectly generate construction-related TAC emissions and associated health risk, resulting in a less-than-significant impact. Furthermore, the EIR found that existing air quality protection policies and other policies amended as part of the Sustainability Update would reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and/or air emissions as summarized in Table 4.3-4 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), which also are consistent with the goals of the MBARD's AQMP.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that compliance with existing General Plan/LCP Public Safety Element policies, which require future development projects to implement applicable MBARD control measures and/or air quality mitigations in the design of new projects as set forth in the MBARD's CEQA Guidelines, as well as project-specific environmental review required under CEQA, would ensure that TACs would be assessed and minimized, and sensitive receptors would be located away from sources of air pollution. Therefore, the EIR determined that the Sustainability Update would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, and the impact would be less than significant.

The project site is located within a mixed commercial and residential neighborhood that also supports medical offices and two hospitals. Existing residences, which are considered sensitive receptors, are located to the north, west, and east of the project site. The Sutter Hospital Maternity

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and Surgery Center of Santa Cruz is located southeast of the project site across Soquel Avenue, and the Dignity Health-Dominican Hospital is located further west of the project site along Soquel Drive. The proposed mixed-use residential project would not introduce a new source of stationary emissions. However, project construction would result in TAC emissions, i.e., DPM, related to use of off-road equipment and trucks during construction.

A construction health risk assessment (HRA) was prepared to determine the potential cancer risk and non-cancer health impacts to existing sensitive receptors proximate to the project site that would be exposed to TAC emissions from project construction (Dudek 2025). Sensitive receptors nearest to the project site would be single-family residential homes located adjacent to the project site on the north and east, multifamily residences to the west of the site across Thurber Lane, as well as medical facilities across Soquel Drive to the south of the project site, all of which were accounted for in the HRA as was Winkle Park located northeast of the project site. As the project would not result in stationary emissions, it would not result in substantial long-term sources of TACs during operations.

Health effects from carcinogenic air toxics are usually described in terms of cancer risk. The MBARD has established the following thresholds of significance for TAC emissions from construction and operations (MBARD, 2008):

- Probability of contracting cancer for the maximally exposed individual equals or exceeds 10 in 1 million people.
- Hazard Index for acute and chronic non-carcinogenic TACs equals or exceeds 1 for the maximally exposed individual.

“Incremental cancer risk” is the net increased likelihood that a person continuously exposed to concentrations of TACs resulting from a project over a 9-, 30-, and 70-year exposure period would contract cancer based on the use of standard Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) risk-assessment methodology (2015). In addition, some TACs have non-carcinogenic effects. TACs that would potentially be emitted during construction activities would be DPM, emitted from heavy-duty construction equipment and heavy-duty trucks. Heavy-duty construction equipment and diesel trucks are subject to CARB air toxic control measures to reduce DPM emissions.

Construction DPM exposure was assumed to begin in the third trimester of pregnancy (to accommodate the increased susceptibility of exposures in early life) for a duration of approximately 1.76 years of construction. Additionally, the HRA accounted for implementation of the project-proposed measure (PDF-AQ-1), which would require all diesel-fueled off-road construction equipment greater than 75 horsepower to be zero-emissions or equipped with CARD Tier 4 Final or interim compliant engines.

Table 3 summarizes the results of the HRA. As shown in Table 3, short-term construction emissions from the proposed project would result in a potential incremental increase in cancer risk and Chronic Hazard Index, however, emissions would be below the respective MBARD thresholds at the “Maximum Exposed Individual Resident” (MEIR). Further, all other receptors in the area would be exposed to potential health risk less than these levels (Dudek 2025).

Table 3. Estimated Maximum Daily Operational Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions				
Impact Parameter	Units	Project Impacts	MBARD Threshold	Level of Significance
MEIR – Cancer Risk	Per Million	3.66	10	Less than Significant
MEIR – Chronic Hazard Index	Not Applicable	0.0024	1	Less than Significant

Notes: MEIR = maximally exposed individual resident; MBARD = Monterey Bay Air Resources District.
Source: Dudek

Thus, the proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollution concentrations that would result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(d) Odors. According to the Air District’s CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (MBARD 2008), objectionable odors include sulfur compounds and methane, and land uses associated with odor complaints typically include landfills, rendering plants, agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, and refineries. The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development occurring as a result of the Sustainability Update would generate odors from vehicles and/or equipment exhaust emissions during construction. Odors would be attributable to concentrations of unburned hydrocarbons from tailpipes of construction equipment, architectural coatings, and asphalt pavement application. Such odors would disperse rapidly and generally occur at magnitudes that would not affect substantial numbers of people, and the EIR concluded that these types of odors would result in a less-than-significant impact.

The proposed project’s residential and neighborhood commercial uses are not the type of uses typically associated with odors deemed objectionable as described above. Short term construction-related emissions from construction equipment would not result in generation of substantial odors as assessed in the Sustainability Update EIR. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to odors than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required regarding impacts pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

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4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
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?	DEIR pp. 4.4-11 to 4.4-12, 4.4-29 to 4.4-31, DEIR Appendix E, FEIR pp 3-3 to 3-4	No	No	General Plan /LCP Policy ARC-3.1.10, SCCC Chapter 16.32
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?	DEIR pp. 4.4-12 to 4.4-16, 4.4-32 to 4.4-37, FEIR pp. 3-4	No	No	MM BIO-2B, General Plan /LCP Policy ARC-3.1.10, SCCC Chapters 16.30 and 16.32
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?	DEIR pp. 4.4-13 to 4.4-15, 4.4-32 to 4.4-35	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-3.1.10, SCCC Chapters 16.30 and 16.32
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?	DEIR pp. 4.4-16 to 4.4-17, 4.4-29 to 4.4-31, 4.4-37 to 4.4-38	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-1.1.13, SCCC Chapter 16.30
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	DEIR pp. 4.4-39	No	No	SCCC Chapter 16.34
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?	DEIR pp. 4.4-39 to 4.4-40, FEIR pp. 3-4 to 3-5	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	SCCC Chapter 16.32

(a) Special-Status Species, Sensitive Habitat. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that a total of 93 special-status plant and 55 special-status wildlife species have been documented within the County. Federally designated critical habitat is present in a number of locations, including designated critical habitat for eight (8) wildlife species and four (4) plant species.

The Sustainability Update EIR indicated that future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update could potentially result in significant impacts, either directly, or through modifications to habitat that supports special status plant and/or wildlife species. However, the Sustainability Update includes policies to protect special status species as summarized in Table 4.4-3. Policy ARC-3.1.10 specifically requires protection of rare, endangered, and threatened species. Chapter 16.32 of the SCCC requires preparation of biotic assessments and biotic reports where potential rare, endangered or threatened species may occur, and requires development proposals to mitigate potentially significant impacts. Furthermore, other state and federal regulations require protection of special status species and nesting birds. The EIR concluded that with compliance with federal, state and local regulations and implementation of the Sustainability Update policies and implementation strategies summarized in Table 4.4-3 of the EIR, potential impacts to special status species due to future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update would be less than significant.

The Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) specifically analyzed potential impacts of development at the project site (Impact BIO-2B), which also included a reconnaissance site survey of the project site. The impact analysis identified the potential for special status species to occur on the project site. However, the EIR concluded that a biotic assessment required as part of future development-specific reviews in accordance with County regulations, would provide measures that would become Conditions of Approval, which would avoid and minimize impacts to special status species.

As set forth in the Sustainability Update EIR and required by regulations in the SCCC, preparation of a biotic assessment was completed for the proposed project (Biotic Resources Group 2024). This report has been reviewed and accepted by the Community Development and Infrastructure Department in January 2025. An assessment of biological resources on the project site was conducted in fall 2022 and spring 2024 to document plant and wildlife resources, and a biotic report was completed by Biotic Resources Group in August 2024. The property supports five habitat types: annual grassland, riparian woodland, oak woodland, wet meadow, and other tree groves. The project site is not located within any designated critical habitat for any federally listed species (Biotic Resources Group 2024).

No rare or locally unique plant species were found to occur on the project site based on the fall and spring season surveys. The property was found to support the San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*), which is a California Species of Special Concern. One woodrat house was observed in the riparian corridor, and the Sustainability Update Draft EIR identified others in the eucalyptus grove portion of the riparian corridor. However, the proposed

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project would not impact the San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat as it occurs in the riparian corridor that is proposed to be preserved as part of the proposed project, and no development or associated activities would occur in the riparian corridor (Biotic Resources Group 2024).

The eucalyptus grove on the project site has suitable habitat for Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), which was proposed for listing as a federally threatened species in December 2024. However, the biotic report indicates that the project site has not been identified as an overwintering site, and the closest recorded overwintering sites are near Brommer Street and Capitola Avenue and at Twin Lakes State Park, both south of Highway 1 and the project site. As no project development would occur within the eucalyptus grove, no impacts to this species are anticipated (Biotic Resources Group 2024) as a result of the proposed project.

Other special status species potentially on the project site include nesting olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*), a California Special Status Species. Potential impacts to migratory nesting birds are assessed below in Section V.4.(d).

The project site may also support two (2) types of bat species that are California Species of Special Concern: pallid bat (*Antrozous pallida*) and western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillei*). Tree removal could result in a loss of active bat roost sites, including maternity bat roosts, or abandonment of bat roosts through noise or vibrations. The Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) determined that compliance with County regulations requiring biotic assessments, and implementation of mitigation measures if any significant impacts were identified, would mitigate potentially significant impacts. The Sustainability Update EIR's Impact BIO-2B analysis specifically evaluated the project site and noted the potential for roosting bats to occur on the project site. The EIR concluded that project-specific development review on the project site when a development plan was proposed, would be subject to County requirements for preparation of a biotic assessment, and states that Conditions of Approval to avoid and minimize impacts to these species would be developed through biotic review and approval. Pursuant to SCCC section 16.32.080, the project's Biotic Report recommends the following measure, which will be included as a project Condition of Approval per the County's biotic report review (County of Santa Cruz January 2025):

CONDITION OF APPROVAL: No earlier than two weeks prior to the anticipated start of construction activities, a bat specialist should survey the trees in and immediately adjacent to the work areas for roosting bats. If present, implement recommendations of the bat specialist, which could include buffer zones and/or scheduling constraints, depending on whether maternity, bachelor, wintering or night roosts are identified.

Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to special status than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project with the application of uniformly applied development standards contained in Chapter 16.32 of the SCCC, which requires preparation of

biotic assessments and biotic reports where potential rare, endangered or threatened species may occur, and requires development projects to mitigate potentially significant impacts. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required regarding impacts pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Sensitive Habitat. The Sustainability Update EIR indicated that sensitive habitats include the following: (1) vegetation communities designated as sensitive by CDFW (CDFW sensitive natural communities); (2) riparian communities and aquatic resources, including wetlands; and (3) County-designated sensitive habitats, many of which overlap with the other two categories. The General Plan/LCP and Chapter 16.32 of the SCCC also define “sensitive habitat,” and in addition to riparian and aquatic sensitive habitat, other specified unique biotic communities are identified. Sensitive wetland and aquatic habitats are assessed below in Section V.4.(c).

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development and redevelopment throughout the County, would primarily occur within urban areas and within the County’s USL, which are already largely developed. However, there may be some areas where future developments are within or adjacent to riparian and/or other sensitive habitats. The EIR concluded that future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update could impact sensitive habitats, including riparian habitat. However, in areas where parcels contain or are adjacent to sensitive habitats, the EIR found that future development of these parcels would be subject to federal and state regulations protecting sensitive habitats and County regulations in SCCC Chapters 16.30 and 16.32, which require protection of sensitive habitats.

In particular, County General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-3.1.4 indicates that sensitive habitats are protected through implementation of SCCC Chapters 16.32, Sensitive Habitat Protection, and 16.30, Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection, and General Plan/LCP implementation strategies require retention of these regulations (ARC-3.1f [Sensitive Habitat] and ARC-3-3a [Riparian and Wetland]). Policies ARC-3-1.6 and 3.1.7 protect sensitive habitats against disruption of habitat values through development siting and conditions. Chapter 16.30 establishes required riparian setbacks for new development based on stream characteristics. Chapter 16.32 requires preparation of biotic assessments and biotic reports where impacts to sensitive habitats may occur, and requires development proposals to mitigate potentially significant impacts. General Plan/LCP policies and regulations in Chapter 16.32 require mitigation to protect identified sensitive habitat areas. Furthermore, policies to protect sensitive habitats, as summarized in Table 4.4-4 in the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), would protect sensitive habitats against disruption of habitat values through future review of development siting. Therefore, the EIR concluded that with adherence to local and state regulations, and implementation of General Plan/LCP policies and implementation strategies summarized on Table 4.4-4, as well as required future environmental review of specific development projects, potential impacts to sensitive habitats, including riparian, due to future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update, would be less than significant.

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The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that new development accommodated by the Update would result in construction that could result in impacts to sensitive habitats. However, the EIR concluded that with compliance with federal, state and local regulations, implementation of the proposed Sustainability Update policies and implementation strategies summarized in Table 4.4-4, potential impacts to riparian, wetland, and other sensitive habitats due to future development would be less than significant.

The Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) specifically analyzed potential impacts to riparian and wetland habitats as a result of future development at the project site (Impact BIO-2B). The evaluation considered two scenarios: one in which the onsite stream channel and riparian corridor would be retained, and a second scenario in which the onsite would be filled in and replaced with an underground storm drain. The EIR concluded that no impacts to riparian habitat would occur on the first scenario, but potentially significant and unavoidable impacts to riparian habitat would occur under the second scenario.

As previously indicated, the project site supports an unnamed, ephemeral stream channel, which enters the project site at the northeastern property line and flows in a predominantly north-south direction, exiting the project site at Soquel Drive. The project site was assessed in the Sustainability Update EIR, and the Draft EIR reported that a previously conducted assessment of the stream channel by County staff characterized it as an arroyo with a riparian corridor that is “otherwise disturbed” as per County Code section 16.30.040 and determined a 10-foot riparian buffer from the top of the arroyo would be required as part of a development project on the site. The Draft EIR also stated that the stream channel is not immediately connected to an upstream or downstream open channel or riparian corridor (County of Santa Cruz 2022b-Draft EIR volume).

The SCCC requires preparation of a biotic assessment, and one was prepared for the project by Biotic Resources Group (2024) and reviewed and accepted by the County (2025). The report indicates that the riparian corridor including the open water/channel bed of the ephemeral stream channel, is a sensitive habitat. The onsite channel supports a band of riparian woodland; this woodland is rooted along the banks, as well as outward of both banks. The canopy of woodland trees extends outward from the top of bank. The vegetation is a mosaic of native and non-native trees. Native trees include coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), box elder (*Acer negundo*), and red alder (*Alnus rubra*). Non-native tree species are also prevalent; silver wattle acacia (*Acacia dealbata*) intermix with the willows and oaks. Blue gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*) dominate the upstream woodland (Biotic Resources Group 2024).

The proposed project retains the onsite stream channel and associated riparian corridor. The proposed project also provides a 10-foot riparian setback area from the edge of vegetation as required pursuant to SCCC regulations. A 3.5-foot-high two-rail fence is proposed at the outer edge of the buffer. Therefore, the proposed project would protect the sensitive riparian habitat in accordance with County policies and regulations, and would not result in direct or indirect impacts to sensitive riparian habitat. Furthermore, as indicated in Section III above, approximately 0.36

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acres of non-native/invasive species would be removed outside of the riparian woodland, and potential future partial riparian restoration may include removal of other non-native species and potential replanting with native species, subject to approval from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

The project biotic assessment identified two other sensitive habitats on the project site: wet meadow and oak woodland (Biotic Resources Group 2024). Coastal oak woodland and wet meadow were identified in the Sustainability Update Draft EIR as sensitive in the Draft EIR (Table 4.4-2). The wet meadow habitat is discussed in the following subsection (c), Wetlands.

The project site supports oak woodland. The 4.15-acre portion of the project site proposed for development is characterized by the presence of six (6) coast live oak trees, located to the east of the existing onsite stream channel. The oak woodland is considered sparse, due to the spacing of the trees and degraded understory (i.e., lack of shrubs or small trees typical to dense oak woodland) (Biotic Resources Group 2024). One (1) small area, containing one (1) tree, is present along the eastern property line in the northeastern portion of the project site. The other small area of oak woodland is comprised of five (5) oak trees in the southeastern portion of the project site, and the trees range in diameter from approximately 8 inches to 12 inches (Biotic Resources Group 2024).

The Sustainability Update Draft EIR indicates that the coastal oak woodland vegetation type is extremely variable and describes oak woodland on drier sites as having widely spaced trees, forming an open woodland or savannah. When trees are scattered and form an open woodland, the understory is grassland, sometimes with scattered shrubs (County of Santa Cruz 2022b-Draft EIR volume). The oak woodland on the project site would be considered a sensitive habitat pursuant to County policies and regulations and as described in the Sustainability Update EIR.

The proposed project retains oak woodland (one [1] oak tree) along the eastern property line in the northern portion of the project site. However, the proposed project includes construction of proposed Building C in the southeastern area of the project site that supports a small oak woodland comprised of five (5) trees as described above. Removal of these trees would remove approximately 2,280 square feet of tree canopy. The project plans propose to incorporate oak trees into the project's landscaping and show an approximately 4,000-square-foot area for planting/restoring oak woodland in the southeastern portion of the project site as recommended in the Biotic Report, and at a 5:1 replacement ratio. As indicated above, the Sustainability EIR concluded that potential impacts to sensitive habitats resulting from future development would be subject to County requirements for preparation of a biotic assessment, and states that Conditions of Approval to avoid and minimize impacts to sensitive habitats would be developed through biotic review and approval. Pursuant to SCCC section 16.32.080, the proposed project's Biotic Report recommends the following Condition of Approval per the County's biotic report review (January 2025):

CONDITION OF APPROVAL: Require implementation of a native oak woodland restoration/enhancement plan that provides a 3:1 oak tree replacement (for trees five to

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11.5 inches DBH). This ratio would require planting of a minimum of 15 oaks within an area to be designated for oak woodland restoration that encompasses an area of at least 2,280 square feet, such that over time the existing oak woodland canopy is recreated on site. The restoration plan shall specify restoration/enhancement occur prior to, concurrent with, or within one year after project development. The primary actions would be removal of non-native landscape trees and installation of native oak woodland trees and shrubs. Restoration/enhancement areas shall be maintained and monitored for 5 years, with annual monitoring results submitted to the County each year.

The proposed project would not result in impacts to sensitive riparian habitat. The proposed project would incorporate oak trees into the project's landscaping and would implement an oak restoration/enhancement plan for impacts to onsite oak woodland in accordance with recommendations in the Biotic Report in the area shown on proposed project plans. Thus, the proposed project would not result in any new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to sensitive oak woodland habitat than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project with the application of uniformly applied development standards contained in Chapters 16.30 and 16.32 of the SCCC, which require preparation of biotic assessments and biotic reports where potential sensitive habitat may occur, and requires development projects to mitigate potentially significant impacts. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required regarding impacts pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(c) Wetlands. The Sustainability Update EIR indicated that aquatic resources include waters of the United States regulated under the federal Clean Water Act; waters of the State regulated under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act; and rivers, streams, and lakes regulated under section 1602 of the CFGC. In addition, wet meadow was identified as a sensitive habitat type in the EIR.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development and redevelopment throughout the County, would primarily occur within urban areas and within the County's USL, which are already largely developed. However, there may be some areas where future developments within or adjacent to wetland habitats. The EIR concluded that future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update could impact sensitive wetland habitats. However, in areas where parcels contain or are adjacent to streams or wetlands, the EIR found that future development of these parcels would be subject to federal and state regulations protecting sensitive habitats, including wetlands, and County regulations in SCCC Chapters 16.30 and 16.32, which require protection of sensitive wetland and aquatic habitats.

The Sustainability Update EIR also found implementation of Sustainability Update policies also would serve to protect wetlands. In particular, Policy ARC-3.1.4 indicates that sensitive habitats are protected through implementation of SCCC Chapters 16.32, Sensitive Habitat Protection, and 16.30, Riparian Corridor and Wetlands Protection, and General Plan/LCP implementation strategies require retention of these regulations (ARC-3.1f [Sensitive Habitat] and ARC-3-3a

[Riparian and Wetland]]. Policies ARC-3-1.6 and 3.1.7 protect sensitive habitats against disruption of habitat values through development siting and conditions. SCCC Chapter 16.30 establishes required wetland setbacks for new development based on stream characteristics, and Chapter 16.32 requires preparation of biotic assessments and biotic reports where impacts to wetlands may occur, and requires development proposals to mitigate potentially significant impacts. General Plan/LCP policies and regulations in Chapter 16.32 require 100-foot wetland buffers to protect these sensitive habitat areas. Furthermore, policies to protect sensitive habitats, as summarized in Table 4.4-4 in the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), would protect sensitive habitats against disruption of habitat values through future review of development siting. Therefore, the EIR concluded that with adherence to local and state regulations, and implementation of General Plan/LCP policies and implementation strategies summarized on Table 4.4-4, as well as required future environmental review of specific development projects, potential impacts to wetlands due to future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update would be less than significant.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that new development accommodated by the Update would result in construction that could result in impacts to sensitive habitats. However, the EIR concluded that with compliance with federal, state and local regulations, implementation of the proposed Sustainability Update policies and implementation strategies summarized in Table 4.4-4, potential impacts to riparian, wetland, and other sensitive habitats due to future development would be less than significant.

As indicated above in subsection (b), the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) specifically analyzed potential impacts to riparian and wetland habitats as a result of future development at the project site (Impact BIO-2B). The evaluation considered two scenarios: one in which the onsite stream channel and riparian corridor would be retained, and a second scenario in which the onsite stream channel would be filled in and replaced with an underground storm drain. The EIR concluded that no impacts to riparian habitat would occur on the first scenario, but potentially significant and unavoidable impacts to riparian and wetland habitat would occur under the second scenario.

The SCCC requires preparation of a biotic assessment, and one was prepared for the proposed project by Biotic Resources Group (2024). The biotic assessment indicates that the onsite stream channel was found to support federal jurisdictional areas. Federal jurisdiction typically extends to the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of waterway; however, jurisdiction can also include adjacent wetlands (vegetated areas above OHWM) if there is a hydrologic connection.

A wet meadow area was also observed along the west side of the riparian corridor. The wet meadow is located amid a willow-dominated area. Isolated (separate) from the stream channel, the meadow supports wet-tolerant native plant species, which is dominated by iris-leaved rush (*Juncus xiphioides*) (Biotic Resources Group 2024).

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A subsequent wetland assessment was prepared for the proposed project, which included review of existing studies and field surveys. The assessment concluded that none of the areas sampled on the project site qualify as wetland pursuant to the wetland identification methodology under Sections 404 and 401 of the Federal Clean Water Act, the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, or the wetland definition relied upon by Santa Cruz County. Furthermore, the large majority of the project site that is dominated by the grassland community lacks evidence of wetland hydrology and hydric soils, so it is reasonable to conclude that this grassland community occurs in uplands (Dudek 2024c).

The proposed project would preserve both the stream channel and wet meadow area and would not result in direct or indirect impacts to these areas. The wet meadow would not be used for stormwater treatment, but would be managed as a protected area (Biotic Resources Group 2024). Impervious surfaces are proposed to drain to a bioretention area for stormwater treatment, and after treatment would be discharged to the wet meadow to match existing flows as determined in project studies (Biotic Resources Group 2024).

Thus, as the proposed project would preserve the stream channel, riparian corridor and wet meadow area, the project as proposed would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding sensitive wetland habitat than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required regarding impacts pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(d) Wildlife Movement/Breeding. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that generally, mountainous watersheds, creeks, streams, and other riparian areas serve as the primary wildlife corridors within the County and are generally more present or natural in the north coast and mountain areas of the County. In the urbanized and southern portions of the County, where the proposed project is located, wildlife corridors are typically limited to rural areas toward the north and east, away from developed areas of the County. All streams and associated riparian vegetation in the County are also considered wildlife corridors for native fish and wildlife.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development as a result of the Sustainability Update would primarily occur on vacant infill sites or underutilized properties within the County's USL. The primary wildlife movement corridors are located along major watercourses and within undeveloped, open space lands in the Santa Cruz Mountains, where little new development other than potential single-family homes on large lots would be constructed. Projects adjacent to watercourses would be subject to setback requirements set forth in SCCC Chapter 16.30 and federal and state regulations protecting streams and riparian habitat and thus protecting wildlife movement habitat. In addition, the EIR found that General Plan/LCP policies intended to protect wildlife movement as summarized in Table 4.4-5 in the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), would avoid or minimize impacts related to wildlife movement or nesting birds.

The Sustainability Update EIR also found that construction activities associated with future development could also affect nesting birds, if any are present during construction activities, including tree removal, which could disrupt nesting activities. This could lead to injury to individuals and/or abandonment of nests. However, the EIR found that with required compliance with existing federal, state, and local regulations, and implementation of General Plan/LCP policies and implementation strategies summarized in Table 4.4-5 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), potential impacts to wildlife movement and/or breeding or nesting, due to future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update, would be less than significant.

An existing stream channel and riparian corridor are present on the project site. However, the area would be retained as part of the proposed project with provision of riparian setbacks in accordance with County regulations. Wildlife movement along this area would be maintained, although as noted in the Sustainability Update EIR, the onsite stream channel is not immediately connected to an upstream or downstream open channel or riparian corridor. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding wildlife movement than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

The project site may support roosting bats, which are addressed above in subsection (a), and likely supports nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). The proposed project involves the removal of 43 trees of the 278 trees present on the project site. All trees on the project site could provide potential nesting habitat for migratory birds which are protected by the MBTA and the California Fish and Game Code (CFGF). Tree removal during the breeding season (generally February 15 to August 31) has the potential to destroy bird nests, eggs or chicks if any are present during the removal. Compliance with the MBTA would require that either a pre-construction nesting survey be conducted to confirm that no nesting birds protected under the MBTA are present if trees are removed during the nesting season or to remove trees outside of the nesting season. Compliance with required regulations would ensure the proposed project does not result in a significant impact.

The County typically requires as a standard condition of project approval that pre-construction nesting surveys be conducted for projects with tree removal, ground disturbance where ground nesting may occur, and/or where nesting birds may be indirectly impacted in order to avoid and protect nesting birds. This would be considered application of a uniformly applied development standard. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that construction activities associated with future development could affect nesting birds, if any are present during construction activities, including tree removal, which could disrupt nesting activities and lead to injury to individuals and/or abandonment of nests. However, the EIR found that with required compliance with existing federal, state, and local regulations, implementation of General Plan/LCP policies and

implementation strategies summarized in Table 4.4-5 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), and application of standard conditions of approval to conduct pre-construction nesting surveys, potential impacts to nesting, due to future development would be less than significant. The condition is included in the project Biotic Report's recommendations and will be included as a project Condition of Approval per the County's biotic report review (January 2025).

CONDITION OF APPROVAL: A pre-construction nesting bird survey by a qualified biologist shall be conducted if tree removal and/or construction occur within the bird breeding season (March 1 – July 31) within one week before the scheduled start of the project. The nesting survey shall cover the entire property. In the event active nests are observed, the nest site shall be flagged, and a buffer shall be established to prevent nest failure. The buffer widths shall be determined by the qualified biologist, based on species, site conditions and anticipated construction activities. Active nests should be monitored at a frequency determined by the monitoring biologist, but at a minimum of once per week, until the nestlings have fledged. In the event that construction activities appear to be interfering with nest maintenance (e.g., feedings and incubation), the buffers shall be enlarged or construction activities postponed, until the young have fledged, as determined by the qualified biologist.

Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to nesting birds than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project with the application of uniformly applied development standards. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(e) Conflicts with Local Policies and Ordinances. The County's General Plan/LCP ARC Element includes objectives and policies pertaining to biological resources. In addition, the SCCC has regulations to protect riparian corridors and wetlands (Chapter 16.30), to protect sensitive habitats (Chapter 16.32), and to protect significant trees (Chapter 16.34). Chapter 16.34 regulates the removal of "significant" trees in the coastal zone and establishes the type of trees to be protected, the circumstances under which they may be removed, and the procedures for obtaining a permit for their removal.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that potential future development would occur throughout the County, but primarily within urban areas and within the County's USL. The EIR reported that some parcels within the coastal zone may contain trees protected under SCCC Chapter 16.34, Significant Trees Protection, and that any future development proposing the removal of such trees within the coastal zone would need to apply for a tree removal permit and would be required to mitigate for loss of trees by replacing them with trees acceptable to the County Planning Department. Therefore, the EIR concluded that with implementation of General Plan/LCP policies and implementation strategies and adopted County Code regulations, conflicts with local regulations would be avoided, resulting in no impact. Furthermore, SCCC section 13.11.070,

Design Review Standards, requires review of trees to be removed by a licensed arborist or landscape architect and that mature trees be replaced with exception of tree removal associated with an approved restoration plan.

As indicated in subsections (a-c) above, the proposed project would not result in conflicts with County policies and regulations for protection of riparian and sensitive habitats. The project site is not located in the coastal zone and is not subject to provisions of County regulations regarding protection of significant trees. The proposed project would result in the removal of 43 trees, but none are considered significant trees under County regulations as the project site is not located within the coastal zone. Thirteen (13) of the 43 trees to be removed are less than six inches in diameter, required for retention pursuant to SCCC Chapter 13.11. The project proposes replanting approximately 150 trees to replace the 43 trees that would be removed. The majority of onsite trees (approximately 235 trees) would be retained as part of the retained/protected riparian corridor. Thus, the proposed project has been designed to avoid removal of trees, to the greatest extent feasible, including avoiding removal of trees within the riparian corridor, which is considered a sensitive habitat. Trees to be removed that require replacement would be replaced on the project site and distributed throughout the project site. In addition, the five (5) coast live oak trees to be removed would be replanted onsite at a 5:1 tree replacement.

The proposed project would not result in conflicts with County policies or regulations protecting trees and biological resources as explained above and in the preceding sections. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(f) Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP). The Sustainability Update EIR (Draft and Final volumes) reported that approximately twenty (20) approved Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) have been issued within Santa Cruz County in the last 15+ years under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) to entities undertaking projects that might result in take of an endangered or threatened species, of which three (3) are currently active in unincorporated county areas. There are no known Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs) in the county. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that with implementation of General Plan/LCP policies and code sections in the SCCC, future development would not conflict with the provisions of an approved HCP, and there would be no impact. (Section 4.4.3.3, Impact BIO-5.)

The project site is not located in an area subject to an HCP, NCCP or other approved conservation plan (Biotic Resources Group 2024). Thus, the proposed project would not conflict with an approved HCP, would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

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5. CULTURAL RESOURCES	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	DEIR pp. 4.5-20 to 4.5-24	No	No	MM CUL-1 MM CUL-2 General Plan/LCP Policies ARC-8.2p, SCCC Chapter 16.42
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	DEIR pp. 4.5-24 to 4.5-25	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policies ARC-8.1.1, ARC-8.1.3, ARC-8.1.4, ARC-8.1.5, SCCC Chapter 16.40
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	DEIR pp. 4.5-24 to 4.5-25	No	No	SCCC Chapter 16.40

(a) Historical Resources. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that there are 17 federally and state-listed historical resources in the unincorporated county, as well as 266 parcels identified by the County as being local historical resources as designated by the Historic Landmark Combining District. The EIR indicated that future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update could be in areas with known historical sites or in areas where structures have not yet been evaluated for historical significance. Buildings that are over the age of 50 years old and are proposed for modification or alteration in the future would require evaluations to determine eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and/or National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and if found eligible, the building would be considered a historical resource under CEQA. The EIR found that future potential redevelopment of existing developed sites may result in alteration or removal of historical structures, affecting the significance of historical values if the structure is considered an historical resource under CEQA definitions.

The EIR indicated that the Sustainability Update's ARC Element of the County's General Plan/LCP includes policies that would serve to reduce potential future impacts to historical resources as summarized in Table 4.5-4 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). For development activities on properties containing historic resources, policies require protection, enhancement, and/or preservation of the resource, and plans for protection/preservation are required on properties with a designated historical resource. The Sustainability Update requires review of applications for demolition of any structure more than 50 years old to determine whether the structure is an historical resource under CEQA (ARC-8.2p). County policies also protect and preserve historical resources (ARC-3.2.3 and ARC-8.2.4). Additionally, compliance with local regulations provided in SCCC Chapter 16.42 regarding historic alteration or demolition would also

serve as the mechanism for review of projects that may alter existing historical resources as designated by the Historic Landmark Combining District.

The Sustainability Update EIR determined that, through compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, and implementation of mitigation measures identified through project-level CEQA reviews and County-required historical evaluations for any structure over 50 years old, the potential for adverse effects to historical resources would be identified, and mitigation would be required if a significant impact were identified. Nonetheless, the EIR found that preservation, reuse, maintenance, and/or avoidance of historical resources may not always be feasible, especially with potential redevelopment and intensification of uses in the County's USL, and recordation of a significant historical resource, alone, would not constitute adequate mitigation for a substantial adverse change to that resource. Therefore, because the potential for future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update to cause a substantial adverse change to an historical resource could not be precluded, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that impacts to historical resources could be potentially significant.

The Sustainability Update EIR included Mitigation Measure CUL-1, which would require the review of listed, eligible, or unevaluated sites or structures over 50 years old to determine whether a historical resource exists, and if so, provide mitigation to reduce potentially significant impacts to a less-than-significant level. Mitigation would include compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards pursuant to CEQA guidelines 15064.5(b)(3). However, since the Sustainability Update EIR is a program-level analysis and no specific development projects were proposed, the EIR indicated that it is not possible to determine whether individual projects would be able to attain compliance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards.

The Sustainability Update EIR also included MM CUL-2, which provides onsite preservation guidance, and in the event a structure or resource cannot be preserved, it ensures that actions would be taken to appropriately record and document an identified historical resource. While the potential for adverse effects on historical resources would be substantially reduced with MM CUL-2, the Sustainability Update EIR acknowledges that recordation of the resource would not constitute adequate mitigation for a substantial adverse change to that resource. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR analysis conservatively concluded that the potential impacts to historical resources due to future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update would be potentially significant and unavoidable.

The project site is vacant and does not have any existing structures. The proposed project would not result in demolition of potential historical structures and therefore would not have an adverse effect on historical resources. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to historical resources than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b-c) Archaeological Resources. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that sensitive archaeological areas are found throughout the County in all planning areas. The EIR found that grading, trenching, and other subsurface construction activities associated with future development could damage or destroy known archaeological resources or potentially encounter unknown archaeological resources during construction, especially in identified sensitive areas. The same development activities also have the potential to disturb or destroy Native American burial sites if known or encountered during future construction. As described in the EIR, future development proposals located within archaeologically sensitive areas defined by the County would be required to prepare archaeological investigations.

The EIR found that the Sustainability Update's ARC Element of the County's General Plan/LCP includes policies and implementation strategies, which would serve to reduce impacts related to archaeological resources and human burials as summarized in Table 4.5-3 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). The General Plan/LCP includes policies that require preparation of archaeological investigations for any project located within a sensitive archaeological area (ARC-8.1.1) as do requirements set forth in SCCC 16.40. Identified archaeological sites must be protected (ARC-8.1.3) and evaluated (ARC-8-1.4). Additionally, the County's accidental discovery policy (ARC-8.1.5) and procedures (SCCC Chapter 16.40) would also apply to properties in the study area in the event construction encounters unidentified archaeological deposits. Similarly, County policies and regulations, as well as state regulations, require construction to be stopped in the event that human remains are found, and state law requires that the County Coroner be notified in the event of this occurrence. If human remains are identified, state law sets forth the procedures for contacting the Native American Heritage Commission and Native American tribes. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with compliance with County policies and state and local regulations, potential impacts to archaeological resources and/or accidental human remains during construction of future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update would be less than significant.

The project site is not identified as being in an archaeologically sensitive area according to the County's GIS data base, and an archaeological investigation is not required. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts to archaeological resources. As indicated above, any unknown resources that may be discovered during construction would be subject to County requirements to halt work and evaluate the find as set forth in SCCC Chapter 16.40, which would be considered application of a uniformly applied development standard or a condition of the project. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to archaeological resources than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR with application of uniformly applied development standards and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3.

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6. ENERGY		Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:					
a	Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	DEIR pp. 4.6-10 to 4.6-15	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy BE-4.2
b)	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	DEIR pp. 4.6-15 to 4.6-16	No	No	None

(a) Energy Use. The Sustainability Update EIR evaluated potential energy demand associated with future estimated residential and non-residential development potentially accommodated by the Sustainability Update and provided a quantified estimate of consumption of electricity, natural gas, and petroleum. The EIR found that energy demand would increase as a result of future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update. However, future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would be required to comply with the efficiency standards of the California Building Code (CBC) (Title 24 Part 6 and Part 11), and the EIR concluded that additional energy demand as a result of development resulting from the Sustainability Update would not be unusual or wasteful as compared to overall local and regional demand for energy resources. In addition, the Sustainability Update included a number of amended policies in the County's General Plan/LCP that seek to improve energy efficiency and encourage alternative energy, as summarized in Table 4.6-2 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), which would also serve to reduce/minimize energy consumption. Furthermore, motor vehicles are expected to use decreasing amounts of petroleum over time, primarily due to advances in fuel economy and the increasing use of electric vehicles. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that electricity, natural gas, and petroleum consumption, from future development as a result of the Sustainability Update, would not be considered inefficient or wasteful, and impacts would be less than significant.

Construction of the proposed project would require consumption of nonrenewable energy resources, primarily in the form of fossil fuels (including fuel oil, natural gas, and gasoline) for automobiles and construction equipment, and other resources including, but not limited to, lumber, sand, gravel, asphalt, metals, and water. It is expected that nonrenewable energy resources would be used efficiently during future construction accommodated by the proposed project. Therefore, the amount and rate of consumption of such resources during construction of the proposed project would not result in the unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful use of energy resources.

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As indicated in Section V.B, the proposed mixed-use residential project is within the development estimates considered in the Sustainability Update EIR, and thus, within the scope of the analysis in the EIR for which a less-than-significant impact was identified. The proposed project would be subject to approval of building plans that meet the CBC and SCCC requirements, as well as compliance with County policies that promote energy conservation and alternative energy sources. Additionally, the proposed project would include rooftop solar panels on all five (5) proposed buildings. The proposed project's low-impact development design for stormwater treatment, energy efficient building design, passive heating/cooling strategies, water efficient fixtures and irrigation, and green building materials support the County's sustainability goals and encourage energy conservation.

The SCCC mandates adherence to CALGreen requirements for electric vehicle (EV) parking. The proposed project provides 50% (26 EV and 103 EV-ready spaces) of the proposed 257 parking spaces as EV-capable spaces as required. Furthermore, 25% of these EV-capable spaces must be equipped with Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE). The project exceeds this amount with 103 EVSE spaces that are proposed. This would ensure compliance with CALGreen standards and to promote sustainable transportation initiatives (Hexagon 2025).

The proposed project would not result in wasteful or inefficient consumption of energy and therefore would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding energy use than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

b) Conflicts with Plans. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that Part 6 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations establishes energy efficiency standards for residential and non-residential buildings constructed in California to reduce energy demand and consumption. Part 6 is updated periodically (every 3 years) to incorporate and consider new energy efficiency technologies and methodologies. Title 24 also includes Part 11, the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen). CALGreen institutes mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up, new construction of commercial and state-owned buildings. The Sustainability Update EIR found that development facilitated by the Sustainability Update would meet any applicable Title 24 and CALGreen standards to reduce energy demand and increase energy efficiency.

Additionally, as described in the Sustainability Update EIR, Central Coast Community Energy (3CE) started providing clean energy within the Santa Cruz County as of 2018. 3CE is on a pathway to 60% clean and renewable energy by 2025 and 100% clean and renewable energy by 2030, as indicated in the EIR. The EIR determined that overall, the procurement of energy through 3CE and the projected 100% clean and renewable energy sourcing by 2030 would give customers the option of purchasing this clean energy 15 years ahead of California's Senate Bill (SB) 100

requirement of zero carbon energy by 2045. The County also adopted its Climate Action Strategy in 2013 and its Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) in 2022, which outline the County’s course of action to reduce GHG emissions produced by governmental operations and community activities within unincorporated Santa Cruz County, and includes energy-consumption-reduction measures. Regarding energy conservation, the CAAP includes strategies for the elimination of fossil fuel use in new and existing buildings. The County has implemented a variety of strategies from the CAAP to achieve GHG reductions, efforts which will continue in the future.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, because the land uses to be developed under the Sustainability Update would comply with all applicable energy standards and regulations, and that policies within the Sustainability Update’s General Plan/LCP amendments also focus on compact growth, efficient energy use, and renewable energy, the Sustainability Update, and future development would result in a less-than-significant impact associated with the potential to conflict or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

As indicated above, the proposed mixed-use residential/commercial project is within the scope of impact analyzed within the Sustainability Update EIR. The proposed project would not result in conflicts with or obstruct implementation of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The proposed project would comply with building code requirements described above. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS		Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR			
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?	DEIR pp. 4.7-18 to 4.7-20	No	No	General Plan/LCP Public Safety Policies 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.5, 6.1.9, 6.1.10, 6.1.11, 6.1.12 SCCC Chapters 12.10, 16.10

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7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	DEIR pp. 4.7-18 to 4.7-20	No	No	General Plan/LCP Public Safety Policies 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.5, 6.1.8, 6.1.9, 6.1.10, 6.1.11, 6.1.12 SCCC Chapters 12.10, 16.10
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	DEIR pp. 4.7-18 to 4.7-20	No	No	General Plan/LCP Public Safety Policies 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.4 SCCC Chapters 12.10, 16.10
iv) Landslides?	DEIR pp. 4.7-18 to 4.7-20	No	No	General Plan/LCP Public Safety Policies 6.1.9, 6.2.1, 6.2.5, 6.2.7
b) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	DEIR pp. 4.7-21 to 4.7-23	No	No	General Plan/LCP Public Safety Policies 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.5 SCCC Chapters 12.10, 16.10
c) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	DEIR pp. 4.7-24 to 4.7-25	No	No	General Plan/LCP Public Safety Policies 6.3.2, 6.3.3, 6.3.4, 6.3.5, 6.3.7, 6.3.8 SCCC Chapters 16.20 and 16.22
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	DEIR pp. 4.7-25 to 4.7-26	No	No	SCCC Chapter 12.10
e) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	DEIR pp. 4.7-18 to 4.7-20	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-6.1.1, SCCC Chapter 16.44

(a) Seismic Hazards. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that Santa Cruz County is located in a seismically active region of California, between two (2) major Holocene-active faults, including the San Andreas Fault, located along the northeast County boundary, and the San Gregorio Fault, located along the northwest County coast. The EIR found that future development as a result of

the Sustainability Update could occur on lands subject to seismic hazards, including active faulting, off-fault ground cracking, liquefaction, lateral spreading, seismically induced landslides, differential settlement, and collapsible soils. However, anticipated future development would not cause or exacerbate the potential for such seismic hazards to occur.

General Plan/LCP Public Safety Element Policies 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, and 6.1.6 require completion of geotechnical reports prior to construction of discretionary projects, projects within fault zones, and reservoirs. Buildings would be required to be designed in accordance with the latest edition of the CBC, which sets forth structural design parameters for buildings to withstand seismic shaking without substantial structural damage. General Plan/LCP policies indicate that required geologic reviews shall examine all potential seismic hazards. General Plan/LCP Policies 6.1.8 and 6.1.11 require that projects be set back from active faults and be designed to withstand an earthquake on the San Andreas Fault. In addition, Policy 6.1.12 provides minimum lot sizes for new parcels located in State-designated active fault zones or County-designated seismic review zones. Each of these policies seek to reduce the potential for loss of life, injury, and property damage due to faulting, seismically induced ground shaking, and seismically induced ground failure.

Under existing County regulations, future development applications would be reviewed by the County to ensure compliance with the County's Building Regulations, Geologic Hazards Ordinance, and Grading Ordinance (Chapters 12.10, 16.10, and 16.20 of the SCCC, respectively), and would be required to provide adequate engineering design to address or avoid unstable earth conditions. The County Building Code, adopted as Chapter 12.10 of the SCCC, implements the 2022 California Building Code (CBC) and contains standards and regulations relating to seismic safety and construction standards for building foundations. Conformance with the CBC, as required by state law, and the County, would ensure the maximum practicable protection available for structures and their foundations. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that potential impacts related to seismic hazards as a result of future development would be less than significant with adherence to existing regulations and policies, including preparation of a project-specific geotechnical report and adherence to the CBC, as incorporated into the SCCC.

The project site is not located within a mapped fault zone or area subject to seismic hazards. The closest faults to the project site are the Zayante-Vergeles Fault (approximately 6 miles northeast), San Andreas Fault (approximately 9 miles northeast), Monterey Bay-Tularcitos Fault (approximately 9 miles southwest), and San Gregorio Fault (approximately 12 miles west-southwest) (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024b). The geotechnical investigation prepared for the proposed project in August 2024 (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024b) determined that fault surface rupture hazard is not a significant geologic hazard at the project site, and that the potential for liquefaction and lateral spreading are low. The geotechnical investigation provides seismic design and foundation and other recommendations to withstand seismic shaking.

In accordance with County requirements, a project geotechnical investigation was conducted, and implementation of recommendations as required by the County would be considered application

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of a uniformly applied development standard. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to seismic hazards than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR with application of uniformly applied development standards and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Non-Seismic Geologic Hazards. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that some areas of the county are subject to other non-seismic geologic hazards including landslides and soil collapse in mountainous areas and coastal erosion including landslides, coastal bluff retreat, and unstable soils in coastal areas. As indicated in the Sustainability Update EIR, the County is not in an area of regional ground subsidence and no subsidence-related impacts would occur. The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update could occur in areas subject to coastal erosion that could result in bluff retreat, landslides and unstable soils and in areas of steep slopes and potential slope instability. Impacts would be minimized through required adherence to the SCCC, including the County's Building Regulations, Geologic Hazard Code, Grading Ordinance, and Erosion Control Ordinance, as well as the General Plan/LCP policies summarized in Table 4.73 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume).

Public Safety Element Policies 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 would require completion of geologic hazards assessments for projects that may be affected by slope instability or other geologic hazards. Policies 6.2.5, 6.2.6, 6.2.10, and 6.3.1 would place restrictions on properties with steep slopes, potentially unstable slopes, or other geologic hazards. Policy 6.1.9 would require owners to record a Notice of Hazards disclosing geologic hazards on the property, and Policy 6.2.4 would allow the County to deny grading permits if it is found that geologic hazards cannot be satisfactorily mitigated. With respect to coastal erosion and slope instability, Policy 6.2.11 would require a geologic hazards assessment for development within coastal hazard areas, including all development within 100 feet of a coastal bluff.

Furthermore, the Sustainability Update EIR found that project grading and construction would be required to adhere to SCCC requirements. Pursuant to the County's Building Code (SCCC Chapter 12.10), along with the County's Geologic Hazard Code (SCCC Chapter 16.10), Grading Ordinance (SCCC Chapter 16.20), and Erosion Control Ordinance (SCCC Chapter 16.22), development completed in association with the proposed project would be required to avoid exposure to unstable earth and unsuitable soil conditions. The County Planning Department and Building & Safety Division would enforce County development standards that require a geological study and/or soils engineering report, in addition to erosion control measures, which would substantially reduce landslide impacts. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with compliance with County policies and state and local regulations, future development would not result in new development on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or that would become unstable

as a result of the proposed project, and potential impacts related to non-seismic geologic hazards would be less than significant.

The project site is not located within the coastal zone or in an area subject to non-seismic geologic hazards. The project site is relatively flat and is not located near areas of steep slopes. The project geotechnical investigation did not identify potential for landslides to affect the project site. However, the project geotechnical investigation identified unstable soil conditions related to presence of undocumented fill and localized soft surficial soils. The project geotechnical investigation provides recommendations for removal of undocumented fill and measures to address soil constraints. The project proposes to excavate approximately 3,400 cubic yards (cy) of earth material with placement of approximately 19,725 cy of fill material. The project would be conditioned to ensure grading activities comply with the General Plan/LCP policies and SCCC requirements, including best practices to manage grading, erosion, and stormwater runoff including recommendations of the project engineer.

The project site is subject to the non-seismic hazards related to unstable soils. However, in accordance with County requirements, a project geotechnical investigation was performed, and implementation of recommendations would be required by the County, which is considered application of a uniformly applied development standard. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to non-seismic geologic or soils hazards than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project with the application of uniformly applied development standards. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(c) Erosion. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that most of the soils in the County consist of loamy sands and sandy loams, which are susceptible to erosion. The EIR found that future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would result in ground disturbance during clearing and grading, which could in turn result in soil erosion and loss of topsoil, particularly on steep slopes. Grading and construction activities occurring as a result of future development would be required to adhere to General Plan/LCP policies and SCCC requirements, including best practices to manage grading, erosion, and stormwater runoff. General Plan/LCP policies that would serve to reduce soil erosion and loss of topsoil are summarized in Table 4.74 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). Specifically, Public Safety Element Policies 6.3.2 and 6.3.3 require mitigation measures to reduce and prevent soil impacts. Policies 6.3.7, 6.3.8, and 6.3.12 require minimization of grading and vegetation removal.

Development projects also would be subject to grading and erosion control requirements set forth in the SCCC. Under existing regulation, all related development, grading and building permits would be reviewed by the County to ensure compliance with the County's Building Regulations, Geologic Hazards Ordinance, Grading Ordinance, and Erosion Control Ordinance (Chapters 12.10, 16.10, 16.20, and 16.22 of the SCCC, respectively) and would be required to provide adequate

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engineering design to address or avoid unstable earth conditions. In addition, for development that includes ground disturbance of more than one acre, grading and construction would be completed in compliance with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Construction General Permit, which would minimize soil erosion and offsite transport of soils through implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and BMPs.

Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with compliance with County policies and state and local regulations, future development resulting from implementation of the Sustainability Update would result in a less-than-significant impact related to soil erosion and loss of topsoil.

Soils on the project site consist primarily of Watsonville loam with a small area of Elkhorn sandy loam. According to the Soil Survey of Santa Cruz County the erosion hazard is slight for Watsonville loam and slight to moderate for Elkhorn sandy loam. Construction of the proposed project would result in removal of trees, site preparation, and grading. Proposed project grading would result in excavation of approximately 3,400 cy of earth material with placement of approximately 19,725 cy of fill material. Grading and ground disturbance could potentially result in erosion during construction of the proposed project. However, project plans include an erosion control plan that would be implemented during construction. Erosion control measures on the plan include, but are not limited to use of fiber rolls, wattles, sand bags, and silt fences to protect the onsite stream channel; covering stockpiled soils and materials with sheeting or tarps held in place with berms, fiber rolls, or wattles when not in use; and providing all drainage inlets with sediment traps or sediment barriers.

The project site is not located within an area subject to high erosion hazard, but construction would occur adjacent to an unnamed stream channel on the project site. Implementation of an erosion control plan, as required by County regulations and proposed by the project, would prevent excessive erosion during construction and inadvertent transport of sediments into the onsite stream channel. Once constructed, the proposed project would not result in a loss of topsoil. In accordance with County requirements, a grading permit and erosion control plan are required pursuant to SCCC Chapters 16.20 and 16.22 and would be considered application of a uniformly applied development standard. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to erosion than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project with the application of uniformly applied development standards for required grading permit and erosion control plan. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183. See subsection 10(a) below regarding potential water quality impacts due to grading and earthwork associated with the proposed project.

(d) Expansive Soils. Expansive soils are clay-rich deposits that expand when wet and contract when dry. Alternating soil expansion and contraction can result in distress and damage to overlying

structure foundations and/or infrastructure. The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update could potentially be located on expansive soil but, with incorporation of standard geotechnical engineering, in compliance with the County Building Regulations and the CBC, would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. Structural designs and construction implementation in accordance with standard geotechnical/soils investigations can mitigate impacts posed by expansive soils. The County Building Code and CBC (Chapter 18) requires preparation of a geotechnical report for most new structures. Therefore, the EIR determined that the impact related to expansive soils due to future development resulting from the Sustainability Update would be less than significant.

According to the County's GIS database, a portion of the project site contains expansive soils. The project geotechnical report conducted testing and found that the expansion potential of surficial soils is low. Per requirements of SCCC Chapter 12.10, the proposed project design would conform to recommendations set forth in the project geotechnical investigation, which would be considered application of a uniformly applied development standard. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to expansive soils than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project with the application of uniformly applied development standards regarding soils conditions. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(e) Paleontological Resources. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that four (4) areas within the County are identified as being "Significant Hydrological, Geological, and Paleontological Features:" Majors Creek Canyon, Martin Road, Table Rock, and Wilder Creek. Seven (7) areas within the county are likely to have rare or unique geological and paleontological resources related to their scarcity, scientific or educational value, aesthetic quality, or cultural significance. The largest of these areas is located between the Lompico and Glenwood areas in the Santa Cruz Mountains and Scotts Valley. Another area is located within the north coast and urban areas on the northwestern edge of the City of Santa Cruz. The remaining five (5) areas are all located within the north coast area, with two (2) occurring close together north of Bonny Doon, and three (3) located on marine terraces along the coast between Davenport and the City of Santa Cruz.

The Sustainability Update EIR determined that potential development that could occur under the Sustainability Update could potentially damage or destroy unique geologic features or paleontological resources, if present. However, the EIR indicates that implementation of General Plan/LCP policies summarized in Table 4.7-5 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) would serve to avoid or reduce potential impacts to these features. Additionally, the SCCC Chapter 16.44 seeks to protect paleontological resources and provides methods and regulations for the identification and treatment of paleontological resources within the County, including preparation of a paleontological survey for specified developments in areas of known paleontological resources, and implementation of measures to protect resources during ground disturbing development activities. Therefore, the EIR concluded that, with implementation of these policies and

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regulations, future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would have a less-than-significant impact on unique geologic features and paleontological resources.

The project site is not located within an area identified as being sensitive for paleontological resources. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding paleontological resources than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	DEIR pp. 4.8-29 to 4.8-32	No	No	CAS and CAAP GHG Reduction Measures General Plan/LCP Policies BE-4.1.3, BE-4.1.5, BE-4.2.6, BE-4.2.9, ARC-1.5.1, ARC-2.1.5, ARC-2.1.6, AM-1.1.8, AM-1.1.1g, AM-6.2.3, AM-1.2.1, AM-1.1.5, AM-1.1.4, AM-6.2.2, AM-1.1.10 Public Safety Policy 6.8.90
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	DEIR pp. 4.8-32 to 4.8-37	No	No	CAS and CAAP GHG Reduction Measures

(a) Greenhouse Gas Emissions. As reported in the Sustainability Update, climate change refers to any significant change in measures of climate—such as temperature, precipitation, or wind patterns—lasting for an extended period of time (decades or longer). Globally, climate change has the potential to affect numerous environmental resources through uncertain impacts related to future air temperatures and precipitation patterns. In California, climate change impacts have the potential to affect sea-level rise, agriculture, snowpack and water supply, forestry, wildfire risk, public health, frequency of severe weather events, infrastructure, and electricity demand and supply. The primary effect of global climate change has been a rise in average global tropospheric temperature, which is fully explained in the Sustainability Update EIR.

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A greenhouse gas (GHG) is any gas that absorbs infrared radiation in the atmosphere; in other words, GHGs trap heat in the atmosphere. As defined in California Health and Safety Code section 38505(g), for purposes of administering many of the State's primary GHG emissions reduction programs, GHGs include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), and nitrogen trifluoride (see also Cal. Code Regs. Title 14, § 15364.5).³ Some GHGs, such as CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O, occur naturally and are emitted into the atmosphere through natural processes and human activities. Of these gases, CO₂ and CH₄ are the predominant GHGs emitted from human activities. The Sustainability Update reported that the County of Santa Cruz developed GHG emissions inventories from government operations and from community activities in unincorporated areas of the county, originally prepared for 2005 and updated for 2009, the latest year in which a complete dataset for the County is available, and overall County GHG emissions decreased from 2005 to 2009.

The state has taken a number of actions to address climate change. The Legislature enacted Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (California Health and Safety Code sections 38500-38599 et seq.) that provided initial direction on creating a comprehensive multiyear program to limit California's GHG emissions at 1990 levels by 2020, and initiate the transformations required to achieve the state's long-range climate objectives. SB 32 and AB 197 (enacted in 2016) are companion bills. SB 32 codified the 2030 emissions-reduction goal of EO B-30-15 by requiring CARB to ensure that statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030.

One specific requirement of AB 32 is for CARB to prepare a "scoping plan" for achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reductions by 2020 (California Health and Safety Code section 38561[a]), and to update the plan at least once every 5 years. In 2008, CARB approved the first scoping plan: The Climate Change Proposed Scoping Plan: A Framework for Change (Scoping Plan). The Scoping Plan included a mix of recommended strategies that combined direct regulations, market-based approaches, voluntary measures, policies, and other emission-reduction programs calculated to meet the 2020 statewide GHG emission limit and initiate the transformations needed to achieve the state's long-range climate objectives. In 2017, an update of the Scoping Plan included strategies and priorities for meeting climate change goals for 2030.

Subsequent to preparation of the Sustainability Update EIR, the Scoping Plan was updated. The current 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan) was approved by CARB on December 15, 2022. The 2022 Scoping Plan lays out a path not just to carbon neutrality by 2045, but also to the 2030 GHG emissions reduction target. The scenario modeling indicates that, if the plan described in the Proposed Scenario is fully implemented, and done so on schedule, the State would cut GHG emissions by 85% below 1990 levels, result in a 71% reduction in smog-

³ Climate-forcing substances include GHGs and other substances such as black carbon and aerosols.

forming air pollution, reduce fossil fuel consumption by 94%, and create 4 million new jobs, among other benefits (CARB 2022a).

The 2022 Scoping Plan details “Local Actions” in Appendix D, which includes recommendations intended to build momentum for local government actions that align with the State’s climate goals, with a focus on local GHG reduction strategies (commonly referred to as climate action planning) and approval of new land use development projects, including through environmental review under CEQA. Appendix D recognizes consistency with a CEQA-qualified GHG reduction plan such as a Climate Action Plan as a preferred option for evaluating potential GHG emission impacts under CEQA (CARB 2022b).

In February 2013, the County Board of Supervisors approved the County’s Climate Action Strategy (CAS) which includes targets for GHG reduction from the transportation, energy, and solid waste sectors, outlines strategies and implementing actions to achieve the targets, and provides a vulnerability assessment and eight climate adaptation goals intended to reduce vulnerability to climate change.

In 2022, subsequent to the certification of the Sustainability Update EIR, the County adopted an updated Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) that provides actionable steps towards reducing GHG emissions, adapting to climate hazards, and ensuring the safety and well-being of those most vulnerable to climate change. Regarding energy conservation, the CAAP includes strategies for the elimination of fossil fuel use in new and existing housing. Combined with the 100% renewable electrical energy provided by SCE by 2030, implementation of these strategies would reduce or eliminate GHG emissions in new and existing housing. The CAAP recognizes that providing housing to meet community needs, focusing on infill housing within urban areas, can help to mitigate climate change, by reducing driving times and utilizing existing infrastructure.

The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would result in the generation of GHG emissions from off-road equipment and vehicles during construction; however, because the scale and timing of future development was unknown, the EIR did not quantify construction GHG emissions. The EIR included an estimate of operational GHG emissions that would be generated by future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update from area, energy, mobile, waste, and water sources. While GHG emissions from area, energy, waste, and water sources would be higher under the Sustainability Update relative to existing (2019) conditions, GHG emissions from mobile sources would be lower under the Sustainability Update than existing conditions due to cleaner on-road mobile sources in the future. As a result of the reduction in mobile source emissions, the Sustainability Update EIR found that overall GHG emissions generated by future development as a result of the Sustainability Update in 2040 would be approximately 195,109 MT CO_{2e} per year less than existing (2019) conditions. In addition, as identified in Table 4.8-5 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), the Sustainability Update included several amended policies in the County’s General Plan/LCP that seek to increase energy efficiency and reduce VMT and GHG

emissions, such as through the support of zero-emission vehicles and charging infrastructure and alternative transportation options. Therefore, the EIR concluded that the Sustainability Update and resulting development would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that would have a significant impact on the environment, resulting in a less-than-significant impact related to the generation of GHG emissions.

The proposed project would result in construction and operation of 173 residential units and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space. This level of proposed development would be within the overall amount of remaining residential development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR as described in Section IV.B. Because the proposed project size is within the total amount of potential residential development and level of GHG emissions analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

It is noted that the proposed project includes rooftop solar panels on all five (5) proposed buildings. The proposed project's low-impact development design for stormwater treatment, energy efficient building design, passive heating/cooling strategies, water efficient fixtures and irrigation, green building materials, and provision of EV parking spaces support the County's sustainability goals and help reduce GHG emissions.

(b) Conflicts with Applicable Plans. The Sustainability Update EIR included an analysis of the potential for the Sustainability Update to conflict with relevant plans that include GHG reduction strategies, including the County of Santa Cruz CAS, AMBAG's 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), and CARB's Scoping Plan. The analysis in the Sustainability Update EIR determined that the Sustainability Update would not conflict with the goals and GHG reduction strategies contained in these plans, resulting in a less-than-significant impact. Subsequent to the certification of the EIR, updates were made to the AMBAG 2045 MTP/SCS (adopted in June 2022) and 2022 CARB Scoping Plan (approved in December 2022). The major goals of the AMBAG 2045 MTP/SCS are the same as those evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR for the 2040 MTP/SCS, which found that the Sustainability Update would not inhibit AMBAG from achieving any of the goals.

The 2022 Scoping Plan identifies measures for cutting GHG emissions and reducing the utilization of fossil fuels within California, transitioning to zero-emission transportation, and phasing out the use of petroleum and natural gas used for heating homes and buildings. It also sets a more aggressive goal to reduce carbon emissions by 48% below 1990 levels in 2030, which represents an 8% increase from the current SB 32 target of a 40% reduction. The Plan identifies three (3) priority areas for local governments including electrification of transportation, reducing VMT, and decarbonization of buildings. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, development

accommodated by the Sustainability Update would comply with all regulations adopted in furtherance of the Scoping Plan to the extent required by law and to the extent that they are applicable. Therefore, the EIR concluded that the Sustainability Update would result in a less-than-significant impact related to potential conflicts with GHG reduction plans.

As described above, the County also adopted its first CAS in 2013, which identifies specific strategies to reduce GHG emissions and energy consumption. In 2022, subsequent to the certification of the Sustainability Update EIR, the County adopted an updated CAAP that provides actionable steps towards reducing GHG emissions, adapting to climate hazards, and ensuring the safety and well-being of those most vulnerable to climate change. Regarding energy conservation, the CAAP includes strategies for the elimination of fossil fuel use in new and existing buildings and seeks to reduce VMT through higher density zoning for housing development along transit corridors. The Plan also seeks to enhance carbon sequestration strategies through conservation and restoration of natural habitats and increasing urban tree canopy. Combined with the 100% renewable electrical energy provided by 3CE by 2030, implementation of these strategies would reduce or eliminate GHG emission in new and existing buildings. The CAAP recognizes that providing housing to meet community needs and focusing on infill housing within urban areas, can help to mitigate climate change by reducing driving times and utilizing existing infrastructure.

The proposed project includes development of a mixed-use residential/commercial development in an urban area that would provide 100% affordable housing, consistent with one of the CAAP's goals to provide affordable housing. The proposed project includes solar arrays, energy efficient building design, and passive heating/cooling strategies, consistent with the CAAP's strategies to reduce fossil fuel use. Furthermore, the proposed project's location along a major arterial with transit service and provision of onsite electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and bicycle parking would help promote use of alternative transportation modes and reduce VMT, consistent with measures described above. The proposed project also protects approximately 2.15 acres of onsite riparian corridor, consistent with the CAAP's conservation and restoration strategies. Given the foregoing, the proposed project would not result in impacts related to conflicts with plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

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9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update EIR Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	DEIR pp. 4.9-17 to 4.9-19	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.100 (Hazardous Materials–Hazardous Waste–Underground Storage Tanks)
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?	DEIR pp. 4.9-19 to 4.9-20	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.100 (Hazardous Materials–Hazardous Waste–Underground Storage Tanks)
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within ¼ miles of an existing or proposed school?	DEIR pp. 4.9-20 to 4.9-21	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.100 (Hazardous Materials–Hazardous Waste–Underground Storage Tanks)
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?	DEIR p. 4.9-21	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.100 (Hazardous Materials–Hazardous Waste–Underground Storage Tanks)
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?	DEIR pp. 4.9-21 to 4.9-22	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	SCCC Chapter 13.12, Airport Combining Zone District
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	DEIR pp. 4.15-32, 4.17-18 to 4.17-19	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.9 (Fire Code)

(a) Use of Hazardous Materials. The Sustainability Update EIR identifies a variety of commercial, industrial, and other land uses (i.e., agricultural uses) that involve the handling, storage, and disposal of potentially hazardous materials. Commercial manufacturing, petroleum exploration, industrial fabrication, biotechnology, gas stations and other automotive-service-related businesses,

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and utilities may use potentially hazardous materials, including petroleum-based fuels, chlorinated solvents, acrylic coatings, corrosive or caustic additives, as well as chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. Non-retail, medical, commercial service and light industrial land uses such as auto services, storage, landscape/timber businesses, research and development, manufacturing, and processing uses are concentrated in the vicinity of the project site near 41st Avenue, Highway 1, and Soquel Drive, as well as pockets in Live Oak. The County does not currently have heavy industrial land uses aside from quarries in the San Lorenzo Valley, Carbonera, and the North Coast, four (4) of which are still active.

The Sustainability Update EIR addressed impacts associated with the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, and concluded that potential future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update could result in land uses that involve the routine use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials, including pesticide use in agricultural operations, biological or other hazardous waste in medical facilities, and common hazardous household products in residential uses. In particular new industrial development expected to be primarily within the County's USL in the south county area with smaller areas in the San Lorenzo Valley and North Coast, would be expected to use some hazardous materials and generate hazardous waste. The Sustainability Update EIR found that the type of industry and business that currently exist within the county and which are supported in the Sustainability Update are not the type that would be significant sources of hazardous material use or generators of substantial amounts of hazardous waste.

The Sustainability Update EIR notes that strict federal and state regulations are in place for the transport of hazardous materials and wastes, and state and local regulations for the storage and handling of hazardous materials, including SCCC Chapter 7.100, which requires Hazardous Materials Business Plans (HMBPs) for quantities of hazardous materials that are less than the state thresholds. Table 4.93 of the Sustainability Update EIR summarizes policies and actions in the Public Safety Element of the County's General Plan/LCP that would serve to reduce impacts related to the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with adherence to applicable regulations, as well as implementation of existing General Plan/LCP policies, the impact related to routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

The proposed project consists of a mixed-use residential project, consisting of primarily residential uses with a small amount of neighborhood commercial uses. These uses typically would not involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or wastes, other than routine use of household and small business cleaning supplies, and would not result in construction of new industrial or other types of uses that would use and/or dispose of hazardous materials. The proposed project would not result in the creation of a public health hazard through routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials. During project construction, the use of hazardous materials in the form of fuel storage may be required. The project would be conditioned to ensure the handling of

hazardous materials is done so in accordance with Federal, state and local regulations. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Upset or Accidental Release of Hazardous Materials. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the county contains current and former land uses involving hazardous materials, resulting in the potential for past and/or ongoing site contamination. Hazardous materials may be found in the materials of older buildings (e.g., asbestos-containing materials [ACMs], lead-based paint [LBP], or polychlorinated biphenyls [PCBs]), or may have been used routinely in the operation of land uses such as auto repair shops, agricultural fields, medical offices, dry cleaners, and photo processing centers. In addition, there are numerous sites throughout the county where known releases of hazardous materials have occurred in the past (e.g., leaking underground storage tank [LUST] sites), which are primarily concentrated in urban areas and documented in databases of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

The Sustainability Update EIR addressed impacts associated with reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials and concluded that potential future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update could expose the public to hazardous materials due to siting near contaminated soils or groundwater, airborne releases, or accidental releases. Remediation of contaminated sites occurring through new development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would ultimately reduce the future risk of hazardous materials releases in remediated areas, but site cleanup could entail transport of hazardous materials off site, which could result in accidental release. Businesses that generate airborne toxic emissions would be subject to MBARD's Rule 1000, requirements for regulating sources of TACs. This includes preparation of a health risk assessment in situations where TACs may exceed regulatory thresholds.

Demolition or renovation of existing buildings which may contain hazardous materials, such as asbestos or lead-based paint, that would also be subject to regulations, including Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards to protect workers, MBARD's Rule 306 for reporting and investigation of certain buildings with asbestos as established under federal law, and the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants set forth in 40 CFR Part 61 to prevent "visible emissions" of asbestos when buildings are demolished or retrofitted. Under federal law, a building must be inspected for asbestos prior to demolition or renovation, and federal and state agencies must be notified prior to demolition. According to the CARB, removal and disposal of asbestos procedures and controls must be specified in the notification form. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with adherence to applicable regulations, the impact related to upset or accident conditions leading to release of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

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A Phase I/II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was conducted at the project site and found that the project site has been mostly undeveloped, except for small structures in the southeastern portion of the project site that were present during the early 1900s. The northern approximate one-half of the project site was occupied by an orchard during the 1940s and 1950s (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024c).

Soil sampling of the project site was performed to evaluate potential impacts associated with prior agricultural uses, former structures, and undocumented fill placed near the southwest corner of the project site. Laboratory analyses of the soil samples collected near the former structures detected lead in a few soil samples at concentrations that exceeded its residential Environmental Screening Level (ESL) established by the California State Water Resources Control Board and appears limited to the upper approximate one (1) foot of soil in the general area where former structures were located near the southeast corner of the project site. The Phase I/II ESA recommends that this soil be over-excavated and disposed of at a landfill (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024c).

The Phase I ESA indicated that between approximately 1971 and the late 1980s, the property adjacent to the project site to the west of Thurber Lane was developed with a gas station, and petroleum-impacted soils were encountered during construction of the current building on that adjacent site. The Phase II ESA determined that the likelihood of the project site being impacted by known releases at the former gas station is low. Soil vapor sampling was performed near the western project site boundary and no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were detected in the soil vapor samples, except for benzene at $3.3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, slightly exceeding its ESL of $3.2 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024c). Benzene is a petroleum hydrocarbon that will readily biodegrade under aerobic (oxygenated) subsurface conditions due to microbial activity in soil. The Phase II ESA determined that the likelihood of significant vapor intrusion of benzene into future structures is low, and that vapor mitigation measures for the proposed mixed-use development do not appear warranted (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024c).

The proposed project is not located on a site with potential hazardous materials or waste that could be released, except that the soil adjacent to previous onsite structures that were painted with lead-containing paint could become impacted with lead as a result of the weathering and/or peeling or painted surfaces. As indicated above, the Phase I/II ESA recommends the soil be over-excavated prior to development of the proposed project and disposed of at a landfill and that post-excavation soil samples be collected to document the remaining in-place soil quality. The proposed project would be conditioned to implement recommendations in the Phase I/II ESA, including recommendations for remediation through soil removal, prior to grading activities, which would be considered application of uniformly applied development standards. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR with application of uniformly applied development standards and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further

environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(c) Hazardous Materials Use or Emissions Near Schools. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the County contains 10 public school districts with several public schools, as well as a number of private schools, charter schools, alternative education schools, and the University of California and Cabrillo College campuses.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which comprehensively addressed impacts associated with hazardous materials use or emissions near schools, concluded that potential future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update that uses hazardous materials or emits TACs within 0.25 miles of school facilities could expose students to these materials. However, as discussed above, hazardous material use is regulated by a number of state and local agencies providing for proper storage, use, and disposal of these materials, and TACs are regulated by the MBARD to prevent exceedances of regulatory thresholds which could result in public health impacts. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with adherence to applicable regulations, the impact related to hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous materials with 0.25 miles of schools would be less than significant.

The project site is not within one-quarter (0.25) mile of an existing or proposed school. The nearest public school to the project site is Harbor High School, located approximately 0.65 miles west of the project site; a private preschool is located approximately 0.37 miles west of the project site. The proposed project would not result in stationary emission sources or hazardous emissions or involve uses that handle acutely hazardous materials. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(d) Hazardous Materials Sites. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that there are numerous sites within the County that are included on the list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5 (i.e., the Cortese List). At the time of the publication of the Sustainability Update EIR, the County contained 150 sites on the Cortese List, most of which were LUST sites. The Sustainability Update EIR, which comprehensively addressed impacts associated with Cortese List sites, concluded that any future development project that may occur as a result of the Sustainability Update would be required to identify whether a proposed site is on the Cortese List as part of the CEQA environmental review process, and if so, would be required to complete site remediation measures in accordance with state and/or federal laws. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with adherence to applicable regulations, the impact related to development on a site that is included on the Cortese List would be less than significant.

The project site is not located on a list of hazardous sites compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5 (Cortese List) (California Environmental Protection Agency 2025), and therefore would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment due to such listing. Furthermore, a Phase I/II ESA was conducted for the project site, but did not find evidence of or identify “Recognized Environmental Conditions” on the project site that would warrant further site investigation (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024b). Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(e) Airport Safety. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the county contains one (1) public airport and three (3) private airports: the public Watsonville Municipal Airport at 100 Aviation Way, the private Monterey Bay Academy airport at 681 Beach Drive, the private Las Trancas Airport at 3564 SR 1, and the private Bonny Doon Village Airport at 8647 Empire Grade. SCCC Chapter 13.12, Airport Combining Zone District, regulates land uses and development standards within six (6) safety zones surrounding the Watsonville Municipal Airport.

The proposed project is not located within two (2) miles of a public airport or near a private airport and is not within an airport land use plan. Watsonville Airport is located approximately 14.5 miles southeast of the project site. The proposed project would result in no impact regarding creation of a safety hazard or exposure to excessive noise due to location within two (2) miles of an airport. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(f) Emergency Response Plan. See discussion in Section V.E. 17(d).

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY				
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	DEIR pp. 4.10-33 to 4.10-38, FEIR pp. 3-10 to 3-11	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-4.1.14, SCCC Chapters 7.79, 16.20, 16.22
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with	DEIR pp. 4.10-38 to 4.10-43,	No	No	None

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Would the project:				
groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	FEIR pp. 3-11			
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:	DEIR pp. 4.10-43 to 4.10-47	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy PPF-4.4.1, ARC-4.2.12, SCCC Chapter 7.79
(i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite;	DEIR pp. 4.10-45	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.79
(ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	DEIR pp. 4.10-45	No	No	SCCC Chapters 7.79, 16.10, 16.13
(iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	DEIR pp. 4.10-43-4.10-47	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.79
(iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	DEIR pp. 4.10-45	No	No	None
d) In flood hazard, tsunami or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	DEIR pp. 4.10-47 to 4.10-48	No	No	SCCC Chapters 16.10 and 16.13
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	DEIR pp. 4.10-47 to 4.10-49	No	No	None
f) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	DEIR pp. 4.10-49 to 4.10-51	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy PPF-4.2.4, PPF-4.2.9, SCCC Chapter 7.38

(a) Water Quality/Discharges. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that there are numerous streams throughout the County, which total over 850 miles; the San Lorenzo River and Pajaro River are the two (2) rivers in the county. The mountainous topography of the County encompasses 15 principal watersheds. The Sustainability Update EIR describes existing surface and groundwater quality issues in the county, including impaired surface waters designated under the Clean Water Act. Surface water quality can be affected by pollution from point sources, such as discharge from industrial facilities, or from nonpoint sources, such as pollutants or contaminants that are carried by stormwater runoff. Within the County, water quality degradation also can result from erosion, which leads to sedimentation, as well as from urban contaminants in urban stormwater runoff, pesticides and fertilizers in runoff from agricultural lands, and infiltration from faulty septic systems. Stormwater pollutants present in the watersheds of the County include metals, solvents, paint, concrete, masonry products, detergents, vehicle fuels and fluids, oil and grease, pesticides and herbicides (organic compounds and nutrients), debris and litter, bacteria, pathogens and oxygen demanding compounds, and sediment and silt. Groundwater quality can be adversely affected by a range of constituents, including minerals, pathogens, nitrates, and toxic materials as explained in the Sustainability EIR.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development that could be accommodated by the Sustainability Update could result in potential water quality degradation due to increased stormwater runoff with associated urban contaminants and potential erosion due to grading and construction disturbances. However, the EIR concluded that all future development projects would be required to adhere to the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements as enforced by the County. Future development projects would be required to prepare and submit stormwater management plans that show compliance with the County's stormwater and water quality control requirements established in Chapter 7.79 of the SCCC, which also requires all new development to implement BMPs to prevent, control, and reduce stormwater volume, runoff rate and pollutant load and to minimize contribution to pollution or contamination of the storm drain system, receiving waters, groundwater or a body of standing water. All new development also would be required to comply with County grading and erosion control regulations in the SCCC. SCCC section 7.79.110 also states that all new development and redevelopment shall mitigate impacts due to development and implement BMPs per the County of Santa Cruz Design Criteria and SCCC Chapters 16.20 and 16.22 to control the volume, runoff rate, and potential pollutant load of stormwater runoff from new development and redevelopment projects to minimize the generation, transport, and discharge of pollutants, prevent runoff in excess of predevelopment conditions, and maintain predevelopment groundwater recharge.

In addition, implementation of existing and proposed General Plan/LCP policies summarized in Table 4.10-5 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), also would serve to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts of future development related to water quality degradation, including potential impacts to waters of Monterey Bay. In particular, Policy ARC-4.1.14 requires development to be designed to minimize water pollution from urban runoff.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded, that with implementation of County policies and compliance with state regulations and local regulations, including the post-construction requirements of Central Coast RWQCB and County stormwater regulations, future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would avoid or minimize adverse water quality effects associated with stormwater runoff, erosion, and discharges, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

The proposed project does not involve any discharges that would violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. The project site is currently undeveloped, and the proposed project would result in an increase of impervious surfaces of approximately 144,120 square feet with approximately 124,700 square feet of pervious area (BKF Engineers 2025). New impervious surfaces could increase the delivery of urban pollutants to the onsite stream channel and downstream storm drains that are typically carried from paved roads, driveways, and parking lots. However, a project stormwater plan has been prepared that details drainage features to collect and treat stormwater runoff in compliance with County regulations. Stormwater from the proposed project would be directed to the existing stream channel that runs through the center of the project site. Because the proposed project would create more than 5,000 square feet of new or replaced impervious area, it is categorized as a Large Project by the County. Large Projects must incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) and BMPs to reduce and treat pollution from the 85th percentile storm (BKF Engineers 2025). Bioretention areas, gravel storage layers, and orifice devices would be utilized to effectively store and release stormwater in compliance with County standards. The proposed project stormwater plan identifies six (6) areas with a mix of planters, bioretention basins, and underground gravel storage areas that serve to collect and treat stormwater runoff prior to release into the onsite stream channel.

The project geotechnical investigation indicated that near-surface soils at the project site are clayey with low infiltration rates, which would significantly limit the infiltration of stormwater (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024b). The report also indicated that infiltration locations within 10 feet of the proposed buildings could create a potential geotechnical hazard, and therefore provides recommendations for location and design of bioretention facilities. The project geotechnical engineer reviewed the project's proposed conceptual stormwater plan and determined that the plan is in general conformance with the recommendations in the geotechnical report (Cornerstone Earth Group 2024a).

Construction activity on projects that disturb one (1) or more acres of soil must obtain coverage under the State's General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity (Construction General Permit, 99-08-DWQ). Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground such as stockpiling or excavation. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP must list BMPs that the discharger will use to protect stormwater runoff and the placement of those BMPs. A Notice of Intent (NOI) and SWPPP must be prepared prior to commencement of construction.

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Construction of the proposed project would include grading, trenching, and removing trees and other vegetation that exceeds one (1) acre and could result in short-term soil erosion. As indicated in Section V.E.7(c) above, the proposed project plans include an erosion control plan that would be implemented during construction, in accordance with County regulations. The proposed project would also be required to prepare a SWPPP.

The project proposes a stormwater management plan designed in compliance with County regulations and requirements, which would avoid or minimize potential water quality degradation impacts. In accordance with County requirements, a stormwater plan is required pursuant to SCCC Chapter 7.79, which would be considered application of a uniformly applied development standard. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding water quality than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project with the application of uniformly applied development standards for required stormwater management and water quality controls. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Groundwater. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that Santa Cruz County overlies three (3) different groundwater basins including the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin, the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin (Mid-County Basin), and the Pajaro Valley Groundwater Subbasin, which are all used as a primary source of water for urban and agricultural land uses within the county. According to the basin prioritization in accordance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), Santa Cruz Mid-County Basin and Pajaro Valley Subbasin are considered high priority basins, and Santa Margarita is a medium priority basin. Both high and medium priority basins are required to adhere to the requirements of SGMA by preparing and implementing a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP). None of these three (3) groundwater basins, however, are adjudicated but all three (3) are in some level of overdraft where more water has been extracted from the aquifers than is naturally recharged. The Santa Cruz Mid-County Basin and Pajaro Valley Subbasin are both designated as “critically overdrafted,” resulting in an accelerated timeline for SGMA implementation. The Groundwater Sustainability Agency set up for each basin pursuant to state law are implementing plans to reach sustainable groundwater levels in the next 20 years and have made progress in meeting sustainable groundwater management goals as summarized below for each basin.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development and redevelopment would result in additional demands for potable water supplies that are provided by groundwater resources in three (3) groundwater basins in the county, two (2) of which are experiencing seawater intrusion (Mid-County Basin and Pajaro Valley Subbasin), and the Pajaro Valley Subbasin also is in an overdraft condition. All three (3) groundwater basins/subbasins are subject to implementation of sustainable groundwater management requirements of SGMA and either have completed or are in the midst of completing GSPs (or alternative). The Sustainability Update EIR reported that current trends

have shown that improvements have been made in management of the basins even during extended drought periods. The estimated increased demands on groundwater indirectly resulting from the Sustainability Update due to future development were determined to be relatively modest. The Sustainability Update included revised goals and policies in the ARC Element of the General Plan/LCP that support long-term sustainable management and conservation of water and groundwater resources. In addition, implementation of General Plan/LCP policies summarized in Table 4.10-6 in the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) also would serve to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts related to groundwater supplies or recharge. Considering the long-term planning measures that are required by SGMA and implementation of the GSPs, combined with the sustainable policies of the proposed project, the EIR concluded that increased demands from future development would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the proposed project would impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

The County designates the areas where major groundwater recharge or infiltration is known to occur as Primary Groundwater Recharge areas on General Plan/LCP Resource Constraints Maps and County GIS data base. These areas are locations where local soil conditions and underlying geologic formations allow for infiltration and percolation of rainfall and runoff into groundwater basins. Land divisions and density are regulated by County policy in primary groundwater recharge areas.

The proposed project site is located within the Mid-County Basin, and is not located within a groundwater recharge area as shown in the County's GIS database. The proposed project would result in construction and operation of a residential-commercial mixed-use development with an associated water demand that relies in part on groundwater from an impacted groundwater basin. As discussed in Section V.E.19(b), the proposed project would be provided water service by the City of Santa Cruz, which utilizes groundwater resources from the Mid-County Basin. The proposed 173 residential units and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial uses would be within the overall amount of remaining development potential analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR as described in Section IV.B. Because the project size is within the total amount of potential development related to groundwater impacts analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR, which identified less-than-significant groundwater impacts, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(c[i-iii]) Drainage. Stormwater runoff in the County is conveyed in a number of man-made and natural runoff conveyance systems discharging to various drainages. Stormwater runoff flows overland via sheet flow and channels and in developed areas via streets, gutters and storm drain pipes. In some locations, runoff travels relatively long distances before reaching an inlet or

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receiving water and can form small ponds that either infiltrate, transpire or evaporate over time. The storm drain inlet types range from older inlets to more modern gutter grates.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development that could be accommodated by the Sustainability Update could result in increased stormwater runoff associated with new impervious surfaces, but would not result in a substantial alteration of existing drainage patterns, either through alteration of a stream or through introduction of impervious surfaces that would lead to erosion, flooding or drainage issues. County regulations require preparation and implementation of a stormwater management plan for any new developments larger than 5,000 square feet in size. Per the County's requirements, the plan must show how stormwater overflow will be conveyed and controlled and that runoff shall not negatively impact neighboring properties or stormwater (drainage) pathways. Thus, all future development projects would be subject to the County's stormwater regulations that require preparation of stormwater management plans to meet County standards.

Furthermore, the EIR found that General Plan/LCP policies summarized in Table 4.10-7 in the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) would serve to avoid or minimize impacts related to stormwater drainage resulting from future development. In particular, Parks, Recreation + Public Facilities (PPF) Policy PPF-4.4.1 requires that runoff levels with new development or redevelopment be maintained at predevelopment rates for a minimum design storm as determined by County Design Criteria by requiring projects to provide both on- and offsite improvements, including onsite percolation methods. Policy ARC-4.2.12 requires retention of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces for all new development and redevelopment. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that compliance with existing regulatory requirements would ensure that stormwater generated by construction and operation of future development projects accommodated by the Sustainability Update would not substantially change existing drainage patterns or result in adverse erosion/siltation, flooding, or storm drain capacity issues, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

The Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) specifically analyzed potential stormwater drainage impacts resulting from future development of the project site (Impact HYD-3B). The evaluation considered two scenarios: one with the existing stream channel and related buffer area remaining intact, and the other with the stream channel piped into a drainage system that would connect to the existing downstream piped drainage system. The EIR concluded that compliance with existing regulatory requirements would ensure that stormwater generated by future development on the project site would not substantially change existing drainage patterns or result in adverse erosion/siltation, flooding, or storm drain capacity issues under either option. While the channel could be filled under the second option, this would not result in a substantial change to the overall drainage pattern as neither upstream nor downstream drainage patterns would be altered. Therefore, the EIR concluded that under either option, future development would result in a less-than-significant impact.

The project site is currently undeveloped. An approximately 1,000-foot long, unnamed ephemeral stream channel runs through the eastern portion of the project site, which is connected to a piped drainage system immediately north and south of the project site. This channel is not identified as a stream or mapped as riparian habitat in the County's GIS data base nor is it identified as a perennial or intermittent stream on U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographical maps. However, the County considers this channel to be an ephemeral stream based on past reviews conducted for the County Planning Department as reported in the Sustainability Update EIR. The existing earthen channel varies in width. An existing 27-inch diameter culvert is located at the northern boundary of the project site and carries drainage from developed residential areas to the north through the project site. At the southern end of the project site, drainage flows into a 12-inch culvert that connects with a 54-inch pipe that connects to a downstream drainage system consisting of piped and open channel sections that drain to Leona Creek, Schwann Lagoon and, ultimately, Monterey Bay (County of Santa Cruz 2022b-Draft EIR volume).

Elevations on the project site range from approximately 125 feet at the northwestern corner to about 111 feet along the southern portions of the drainage channel. The natural topography directs much of the runoff from both onsite and adjacent properties toward the onsite stream channel, which ultimately conveys all runoff to a concrete box culvert on the southern portion of the project site that flows underneath Soquel Avenue and connects to the existing public storm drain infrastructure. Runoff from the western portion of the project site flows onto Thurber Lane, where it is conveyed via sheet flow down the street and collected by a catch basin at the southwestern corner of Soquel Drive. Some site runoff from the southern portion of the project site also flows to this catch basin (BKF Engineers 2025).

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) classifies soil on the project site as predominantly Watsonville loam, with a small portion of Elkhorn sandy loam. Watsonville loam is deep and poorly drained with moderately low permeability, while Elkhorn sandy loam is deep and well-drained with moderately high permeability (BKF Engineers 2025).

The proposed project would result in approximately 144,120 square feet of impervious surface with approximately 124,700 square feet of pervious area. The proposed stormwater plan would direct onsite stormwater runoff to the existing stream channel. Bioretention areas, gravel storage layers, and orifice devices would be utilized to effectively store and release stormwater in compliance with County standards. The existing drainage patterns, including runoff from adjacent sites, would be maintained with the proposed project (BKF Engineers 2025).

Because the proposed project is creating more than 5,000 square feet of new or replaced impervious area, it is categorized as a Large Project by the County. Large Projects must LID and BMPs to reduce and treat stormwater runoff as explained in subsection (a) above. Large Projects are also required to retain runoff from the 2-year, 2-hour storm and maintain pre-development discharge rates up to the 10-year, 15-minute design storm through the use of detention and metered release. Based on the standards set by the County, the proposed project would be required to detain the

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runoff from the 25-year design storm and release it at a rate equivalent to the 10-year pre-development design storm. The County's Storm Drain Master Plan determined that detention of the 25-year design storm and discharge of the 10-year pre-development storm would not impact the downstream storm drainage infrastructure and would not cause erosion, channel instability or flooding in the specific area of the proposed project (BKF Engineers 2025). To achieve this, the proposed project would utilize 12-inch to 20-inch gravel layers beneath six (6) proposed bioretention treatment systems to detain stormwater. Stormwater would be routed from gravel storage layers to an outlet control structure for release of stormwater at the pre-development rate for a 10-year storm (BKF Engineers 2025).

The project proposes a stormwater management plan that is consistent with County regulations and requirements, which would avoid or minimize potential water quality degradation impacts. The proposed project would not alter existing drainage patterns. The project's proposed stormwater system would be designed so that the project stormwater flows would not exceed the capacity of stormwater facilities or result in substantial erosion. In accordance with County requirements, a stormwater control plan is required pursuant to SCCC Chapter 7.79, which would be considered application of a uniformly applied development standard. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding drainage than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project or project site with the application of uniformly applied development standards for required stormwater control plan. The Community Development and Infrastructure Department's Stormwater Management Section reviewed and accepted the stormwater management report. The project would be conditioned to meet all requirements of the Section and pay applicable fees for increased impervious surface. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(c)[iv], d) Flood Hazard Areas and Risk of Release of Pollutants. Flooding can occur when stormwater runoff exceeds the conveyance capacity of existing drainages or control systems, dam or levee failures, high tides/storm surges, tsunamis, sea level rise, or other causes. Floods usually occur in relation to precipitation. Within Santa Cruz County, there are numerous areas subject to flooding due to rivers, creeks, or coastal storms. The two (2) main rivers in the county that are subject to flooding are the Pajaro River and the San Lorenzo River.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that some future development that could be accommodated by the Sustainability Update could be located within flood prone, tsunami, or seiche hazard areas. However, the EIR concluded that future development and redevelopment projects would be required to adhere to SCCC chapters 16.10 and 16.13, which include requirements to avoid inappropriate land uses in flood zones. In addition, construction in a flood-prone area would also require flood protection measures incorporated into the project design to avoid inundation. Future development also could include industrial uses that could require the use and storage of hazardous materials or otherwise involve sources of pollutants that adversely affect waters in the event of

inundation due to flooding. Any commercial or industrial land uses would be required to adhere to existing regulatory requirements for storage of hazardous materials, as discussed in Section 4.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of the Draft EIR. State and local regulations require all businesses that store or handle specified quantities of hazardous materials to prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials Business Plan and obtain a Hazardous Materials Permit. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that required compliance with existing regulatory requirements related to development in a flood zone and related to the storage and handling of hazardous materials and wastes would reduce the potential impact of potential release of pollutants from inundation due to future development to a less-than-significant level.

According to the County's GIS data base, the project site is not located within a flood hazard area. The project site also is not within a mapped tsunami inundation zone. The proposed project would not risk release of pollutants due to inundation as a result of being located within a flood hazard, tsunami or seiche zone. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts related to flood hazards than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(e) Conflict with Plans. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that future development projects would be required to adhere to any applicable waste discharge and other regulatory requirements. The EIR concluded that the Sustainability Update includes policies that would be applied to future development to protect water quality, and thus, these policies would be consistent with goals of the Central Coast Basin Plan for water quality and would not conflict or obstruct implementation of the water quality control plan for the region.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that potential future development and redevelopment projects indirectly resulting from the Sustainability Update would represent an increase in water demands, but projected water demand increases alone would not necessarily result in a conflict with the three (3) different groundwater sustainability plans that are or will be implemented within the three (3) underlying groundwater basins/subbasins. SGMA requires that the GSPs identify mechanisms to achieve a sustainable yield by 2040. Future development would occur in accordance with the proposed policies of the General Plan/LCP ARC Element, which have long-term sustainable management and water conservation policies that would be consistent with the groundwater sustainability plans in the county, as well as existing SCCC regulations. Therefore, the EIR concluded that the Sustainability Update's policies regarding protection of groundwater resources, which would be consistent with directives in the GSPs, and would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a GSP, resulting in no impact.

The project site contains an ephemeral stream which is not included in the Central Coast Basin Water Plan, and thus, would result in no impacts related to conflicts with or obstruction of implementation of this plan. As indicated above in subsection 10.b, the proposed project is within

the range of development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR in which potential impacts related to implementation of groundwater management plans were found to be less than significant. Thus, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of water quality control or sustainable groundwater management plans, would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR, and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(f) Inadequate Soils for Septic or Alternative Wastewater Systems. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that areas not served by wastewater disposal service providers outside of the County's USL typically have septic systems, also referred to as onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS). The EIR found that future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update is expected to primarily occur within the USL, and potential future development in planning areas outside of the USL is not expected to increase beyond what could occur under the existing General Plan/LCP. New residential and non-residential uses in rural areas would utilize OWTS for wastewater treatment and disposal. Some areas of the County may have geologic features or soils that are incapable of adequately supporting, or are incompatible with, the installation of OWTS, thereby potentially leading to adverse groundwater quality impacts if OWTS are not properly sited, designed, or maintained. Constraints include areas with noted high groundwater conditions, areas with clay soil conditions, areas with sandy soils or areas in proximity to streams or water supply sources.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development and redevelopment projects accommodated by the Sustainability Update would be required to adhere to County regulations set forth in Chapter 7.38 of the SCCC, which regulate OWTS. The regulations require a permit for the construction, reconstruction, repair, addition, or upgrade of any individual sewage disposal system or any portion thereof on any property within the unincorporated area of the county. The regulations set forth certain prohibitions and lot size requirements for OWTS, as well as specific requirements for system design. Future development also would be subject to requirements of the Local Area Management Plan, which was prepared by the County to meet requirements set forth in the State OWTS Policy. In addition, the General Plan/LCP PPF Element includes policies that require adequate provision of OWTS as summarized in Table 4.10-8 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). In particular, Policy PPF-4.2.4 requires minimum parcel sizes and maximum densities with individual sewage disposal systems, and Policy PPF-4.2.9 allows alternative treatment disposal systems, where environmentally acceptable, as approved by the County and the RWQCB. With required compliance with these regulations and policies, the Sustainability Update EIR found that potential impacts related to adequate disposal capabilities of OWTS that are installed to support future development would be less than significant.

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The proposed project would be served by a public sanitary sewer system and would not use an OWTS, resulting in no impact regarding adequacy of soils to support OWTS. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding use of an OWTS than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

11. LAND USE	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	DEIR pp. 4.11 15 to 4.11 16	No	No	None
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?	DEIR pp. 4.11 16 to 4.11 33 FEIR pp. 3-11 to 3-12	No	No	None

(a) Physically Divide an Established Community. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that existing communities, neighborhoods, and village centers that are developed at urban densities are located along the coast in the Live Oak, Soquel, and Aptos planning areas, as well as in the vicinity of the City of Watsonville and in towns and villages in the San Lorenzo Valley. The County's General Plan/LCP as amended with the Sustainability Update will continue to guide the location, form, and intensity of all development within unincorporated Santa Cruz County for the next 20 years. The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development resulting from the Sustainability Update would have the potential to divide an established community if infrastructure (e.g., roadways, utilities) or other incompatible land uses were developed within an established community. However, the EIR determined that the Sustainability Update would primarily promote future development within established communities where public infrastructure and services already exist, and numerous policies in the General Plan/LCP, summarized in Table 4.11-4 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), would provide for land use compatibility to ensure that established communities remain intact while accommodating future development. Therefore, the EIR found that future development resulting from the Sustainability Update would result in no impact related to physical division of an established community.

The project site is located in the Live Oak planning area within a developed area within the County's USL. The proposed project is located on an infill development site that is surrounded by development. The proposed project does not include linear elements that could serve as barriers

that could physically divide an established community. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Conflict with Policies and Regulations. The Sustainability Update EIR reviewed the Sustainability Update to identify potential conflicts with policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, including the General Plan/LCP, Coastal Act, AMBAG’s 2040 MTP/SCS, and Watsonville Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, and found no apparent conflicts between the Sustainability Update and such land use plans, policies, or regulations. The EIR determined that because the Sustainability Update includes objectives and policies consistent with these adopted plans, and requires coordination with regional plans and programs, adoption and implementation of the Sustainability Update would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with a regional plan, policy, or program, and the impact would be less than significant.

As indicated in Section IV.B. of the Sustainability Update EIR, the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan/LCP land use designation as discussed in Section IV.B and C. Based on the analyses contained in this Environmental Checklist and County staff’s review of the proposed project, the proposed project would not result in a conflict with any policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. Thus, the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan/LCP and would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

12. MINERAL RESOURCES				Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	
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?	DEIR p. 4.2-30	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policies ARC-7.2.2, Public Safety 6.7.7
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local	DEIR p. 4.2-30	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policies ARC-7.2.2,

12. MINERAL RESOURCES				Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	
general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?				Public Safety 6.7.7

(a-b) Loss of Mineral Resources. The State Geologist classifies mineral resource zones (MRZs) solely on the basis of geologic factors. Classification of an area as a MRZ-2 indicates the existence of a deposit that meets certain criteria for value and marketability. The General Plan/LCP recognizes the State classification and designation process by showing these lands as Mineral Resource areas on the General Plan/LCP Resources and Constraints Maps. The Mineral Extraction (M-3) Zone District is used to implement the Mineral Resource protection policies. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the county has approximately 3,300 acres of land in quarry/mineral processing uses, including four (4) active quarries and four (4) closed quarries. A large area extends from the coast up through San Lorenzo Valley and south to Aptos with lands mostly classified as MRZ-3 (areas containing known or inferred mineral resources of undetermined significance) and MRZ-4 (areas where geologic information is inadequate to assign to any other MRZ category) with some locations designated MRZ-1 (areas where little likelihood exists for the presence of significant mineral resources). MRZ-1 and MRZ-3 lands are found in the southern portion of the county from Watsonville to the coast.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development could result in impacts on mineral resources. However, the EIR indicates that the General Plan/LCP contains policies that would serve to avoid or minimize impacts on mineral resources as summarized in Table 4.2-7 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). In particular, Policy ARC-7.2.2 requires that uses on Mineral Resource lands be limited to mining and mining-related uses, and Public Safety Policy 6.7.7 allows facilities to be sited only where they will not preclude extraction of minerals necessary to sustain the economy of the state. The Sustainability Update did not include any proposed changes to properties designated Mineral Resources or zoned for mineral extraction and did not propose development near existing quarry operations in the county. Therefore, the EIR concluded that the Sustainability Update, and resulting future development, would have no impact on mineral resources.

The project site is not located near existing quarry operations, and the project site is not designated Mineral Resources or zoned for mineral extraction. The project site is designated MRZ-4 in the County’s GIS data base. The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource and would be within the scope of impact analyzed within the Sustainability Update EIR, for which a less-than-significant impact was identified related to mineral resources. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe

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impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

13. NOISE				Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project result in:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance or applicable standards of other agencies?	DEIR pp. 4.12 22 to 4.12 25	No	No	General Plan/LCP Noise Policies 9.1.2, 9.2.1, 9.2.2, 9.2.3, 9.2.4, 9.2.5, 9.2.6, 9.6.2 SCCC Chapter 8.30 and Chapter 13.15
b) Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?	DEIR pp. 4.12 25 to 4.12 26	No	No	SCCC Chapter 8.30 and Chapter 13.15
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?	DEIR pp. 4.12 26 to 4.12 27	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy 9.5.1, 9.5.2 SCCC Chapter 13.12

(a) Noise Increases. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that new development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would have the potential to increase ambient noise levels. However, the General Plan/LCP Noise Element includes policies to protect sensitive receptors from permanent noise effects of new development with requirements for preparation of acoustical studies and implementation of mitigation or sound-reducing measures if needed as summarized in Table 4.12-9 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). The General Plan/LCP includes policies that set forth measures to avoid and minimize adverse impacts of increased noise resulting from construction or operation of development projects (Noise Element Policies 9.1.2, 9.1.3, 9.2.1, 9.2.2, 9.2.3, 9.2.4, 9.2.5, 9.2.6, 9.6.2). These requirements are largely incorporated into the SCCC (Chapter 13.15), which would ensure that noise-generating land uses would not result in noise levels that would exceed County standards. In addition, Chapter 8.30 of the SCCC enumerates general standards, limitations and exemptions pertaining to noise within the county.

Development projects are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and typical conditions of approval include limiting the day and times of day during which construction and/or heavy construction

can be conducted, provision of notification to neighbors regarding construction schedules, and implementation of a process to receive and respond to noise complaints. Where the expected noise increase from a proposed development would be substantial, appropriate noise mitigation measures would need to be developed, as feasible. Also, if a proposed use or development includes fixed noise sources that are subject to noise limits in the SCCC, then noise impacts and appropriate mitigation would be identified and incorporated into the project design to reduce noise to meet those limits and reduce noise as perceived by nearby sensitive receptors.

SCCC Chapter 13.15 implements the Noise Element by applying noise policies and standards in the land use permitting process. These regulations are intended to prevent increases in ambient noise levels and would be considered uniformly applied regulations to which the proposed project would be subject to compliance.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development or redevelopment could also result in increased ambient noise levels from vehicular traffic, special events, and construction of individual projects. However, the EIR found that traffic-related noise would not exceed thresholds of significance, and special events that could generate noise would be controlled through a permit process with restrictions on amplified noise if needed.

The Sustainability Update EIR indicated that construction of individual projects would result in temporary noise increases, which would fluctuate throughout the day, depending on the nature of construction activities and equipment in use. However, regulations in the SCCC set decibel limits for sound levels during the day, evening, and night, which would be applicable to future development projects, and provide an exemption for construction activities during daytime hours. Additionally, Policy 9.2.6 of the Noise Element requires the use of mitigation or BMPs to reduce construction noise as a condition of approval. Therefore, with compliance with County policies and regulations, future temporary increases in noise levels due to construction of individual development projects would not be considered substantial. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that future development resulting from the Sustainability Update would result in a less-than-significant impact related to permanent or temporary increases in ambient noise levels.

The primary existing noise source within the vicinity of the project site is vehicular traffic on Soquel Drive and Thurber Lane. The proposed project would result in construction of a primarily residential development with some neighborhood commercial uses. These types of uses are not typically associated with activities that would generate substantial permanent increases in ambient noise levels. Project construction would generate temporary increases in noise levels, but daytime construction activities are exempt from SCCC noise regulations as described in the Sustainability Update EIR. The proposed project would be required to comply with applicable General Plan/LCP policies and SCCC regulations related to the reduction of construction noise. Though the Sustainability Update EIR evaluated potential noise impacts associated with large events with amplified music, the project does not propose to incorporate such events into the residential or commercial component of the project. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new

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significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding permanent or temporary increases in noise than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR with application of uniformly applied development standards and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Vibration. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that future development could result in the generation of ground-borne noise or vibration from some construction activities, certain commercial and industrial operations, and roadway traffic. The Sustainability Update did not directly include elements that would generate long-term/permanent operational ground-borne noise and vibration.

Ground-borne vibration attenuates rapidly, even over short distances. Using standard Federal Transit Administration vibration attenuation formulas, non-pile driving construction activities would exceed the Caltrans recommended threshold of significance of 0.3 in/sec PPV at a distance of approximately 11 feet. The Sustainability Update EIR determined that it would be unlikely that the center of operations for heavy construction equipment would operate within 11 feet of sensitive receptors based on the mandatory buffers required by the SCCC (e.g., setbacks, buffers, easements, rights-of-way, etc.), which would result in structures typically separated by at least 12 feet. Therefore, the EIR concluded that construction activities would not be anticipated to generate ground-borne noise and vibrations levels in excess of the Caltrans guideline threshold criteria of 0.3 in/sec PPV. The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that with implementation of General Plan/LCP policies and adherence to County regulations, noise impacts from construction of future development projects would be less than significant.

The proposed project would result in construction of a mixed-use residential-commercial development but would not involve construction methods or operations that would generate excessive vibration. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding generation of vibration than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(e-f) Airport Noise. Watsonville Municipal Airport is located adjacent to unincorporated areas in the county. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that there is potential for future development to be located within two miles of the airport. The General Plan/LCP Noise Element policies limit the adverse effects of airport-related noise through land use planning and the establishment of noise level thresholds for residential and non-residential land uses within the 60-decibel (dBA) CNEL/L_{dn} noise contour. Additionally, SCCC Chapter 13.12, Airport (AIA) Combining District, identifies allowed and prohibited uses, densities, and other development standards within six (6) airport safety zones in the 2 miles surrounding the airport. The purpose of the district is to prevent any exposure to safety issues with the airport and prevent any incompatible land uses from being developed

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adjacent to the airport. The Sustainability Update did not include any proposed land use changes in the AIA Combining District. Furthermore, the General Plan/LCP Noise Element includes Policies 9.5.1 and 9.5.2 to ensure that future development is sited and designed to avoid exposure to excessive aircraft noise, as summarized in Table 4.12-10 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with compliance with existing policies and other local, state and federal airport regulations, the Sustainability Update would result in a less-than-significant impact related to excessive airport noise.

The project site is not located near an airport or private airstrip; as indicated in Section V.E.9(e), the project site is located approximately 14.4 miles from Watsonville Municipal Airport. The proposed project would not expose people to excessive noise levels associated with aircraft and airport operations. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

14. POPULATION AND HOUSING				
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	DEIR pp. 4.13-13 to 4.13-15	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	SCCC Chapter 17.04 (Annual Population Growth Goal for Santa Cruz County)
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	DEIR pp. 4.13-15 to 4.13-16	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	None

(a) Inducement of Substantial Unplanned Population Growth. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the population growth rate in Santa Cruz County, which has been declining since the 1960s, slowed considerably in the 1990s and 2000s, and has remained low since then. In 2020, the County's unincorporated population of 133,153 comprised approximately half of the County's total population. From 2010 to 2020, the unincorporated population grew by 3,414, comprising an average annual growth rate of 0.3%.

Every four (4) years, AMBAG updates its Regional Growth Forecast for population, housing, and employment to support the development of the MTP/SCS, Regional Travel Demand Model and other planning efforts. The 2018 Regional Growth Forecast was adopted at the time that the Sustainability Update EIR was published, and the 2022 Regional Growth Forecast was subsequently adopted in June 2022. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that based on AMBAG's 2018 Regional Growth Forecast, the 2040 population forecast estimated an increase of 4,754 persons in the County's unincorporated area (an average annual growth rate of 0.2%); however, based on the actual 2020 population reported in the U.S. Census, which was lower than AMBAG forecast, the population increase by 2040 would be 8,492 persons (an average annual growth rate of 0.3%).

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future residential development and associated population increase would exceed current forecasts by approximately 2,895 to 6,630 residents in the year 2040 based on potential future development of 4,500 residential dwelling units with an associated population increase of 11,385 residents. The resulting population increase represents an annual average growth rate of approximately 0.4%, which the EIR indicated is slightly higher than the AMBAG forecast annual average rate of 0.2%, as well as slightly higher than an average annual rate of 0.3% based on existing 2020 population. The annual average growth potentially induced by the Sustainability Update also was found to be slightly higher than the 2021 and 2022 annual Measure J growth rate established by the County (0.25%), but less than the 2020 established annual growth rate of 0.5%.

It is noted that the 2023 and 2024 annual Measure J growth rate established by the County Board of Supervisors subsequent to the certification of the Sustainability Update EIR was 0.5% for each year. An annual growth rate of 0.75% was recommended in 2025 to allow Santa Cruz County to continue to provide its fair share of statewide population growth and considering projects that had been proposed (County of Santa Cruz 2024).

The Sustainability Update EIR found that the population increases potentially resulting from the Update were a conservative estimate for the purposes of analyses included in this EIR, and that residential development within the unincorporated area is subject to annual growth rates and residential building permit limits established by the County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors. However, the EIR concluded that even as a conservative estimate, the average annual growth rate of 0.4% resulting from potential development accommodated by the Sustainability Update, was not substantially higher than forecasted rates (0.2%) and the historical average annual growth rates of 0.3% experienced between 2010 and 2020 and 0.4% experienced between 1990 and 2000.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that General Plan/LCP policies, as summarized in Table 4.13-8 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), would serve to avoid and minimize impacts related to population growth, and that compliance with General Plan/LCP policies, Measure J, and the SCCC would result in establishment of annual growth rates that are relatively consistent with regional and state projections. Thus, the EIR concluded that the Sustainability Update and resulting

residential development would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County. The EIR also indicated that the regional population projections prepared by AMBAG are routinely updated to reflect population trends, and forecasts are adjusted if needed to reflect actual population growth trends. Therefore, the EIR concluded that future residential development would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County, and the impact would be less than significant because the average annual growth rate would not be substantially higher than projected, and compliance with Measure J, proposed policies, and the SCCC would result in establishment of annual growth rates that are relatively consistent with regional and state projections.

The proposed project would result in construction of 173 residential units with an associated estimated population of 441 people based on the County's average household size of 2.55 as shown in recent State estimates (California Department of Finance 2025). This level of development would be within the overall amount of residential development potential analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR as described in Section IV.B. Because the proposed project size is within the total amount of potential residential development and population increase analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding population growth than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183. In addition, it is noted that when the proposed project's population is added to the existing unincorporated population of 132,429 (estimated by the California Department of Finance as of January 1, 2025), the total population of 132,870 would not exceed the current AMBAG 2022 Regional Growth Forecast for the unincorporated county area for the year 2025 (134,675) or 2030 (135,027).

(b) Displacement of Existing Housing or People. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that future development may be constructed on properties with existing development, particularly on underutilized properties that may be developed at higher densities and/or land use intensities.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which comprehensively addressed impacts associated with displacement of existing housing or people, concluded that the Sustainability Update would result in a net increase in housing units, resulting in a less-than-significant impact related to displacement of existing housing or people. In the event that existing residential units are found on a site proposed for development, these units likely would be vacated prior to demolition in accordance with state and local law to avoid displacement of people, and they are required to be replaced if the existing units are affordable units. Furthermore, state streamlining laws include protections for preservation or reconstruction of rental housing.

The proposed project would not result in removal of existing housing units or displace existing people as the project site is vacant and undeveloped. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding displacement of housing

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or people than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES		Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR			

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

Fire protection?	DEIR pp. 4.14-15 to 4.14-17	No	No	None
Police protection?	DEIR pp. 4.14-17 to 4.14-18	No	No	None
Schools?	DEIR pp. 4.14-19 to 4.14-20	No	No	Payment of School Impact Fees
Parks?	DEIR pp. 4.14-20 to 4.14-22	No	No	None
Other public facilities?	DEIR p. 4.14-22	No	No	None

a) Fire Protection, Police Protection, Schools, Parks, and Other Public Facilities

Summary of Sustainability Update Conclusions

Fire Protection. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, fire protection in Santa Cruz County is provided by 13 entities, including nine (9) fire protection districts (FPDs), two (2) community service areas (CSAs), and two (2) city fire departments. The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts associated with fire protection services, concluded that the population growth and new development resulting from the Sustainability Update would result in increased demand for fire protection services throughout the county, primarily within the Central Fire District, which serves most of the properties within the County's USL where new development would be concentrated. The EIR found that future growth would not result in the need for additional fire protection facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios and response times in the future. Furthermore, with compliance with federal, state, and local regulations in addition to implementation of the proposed Sustainability Update policies and implementation strategies summarized in Table 4.14-5 of the EIR, which would avoid and minimize impacts related to fire protection services, the EIR determined that the Sustainability Update's potential indirect impact on fire protection facilities would be considered less than significant.

Police Protection. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office provides police protection services in the unincorporated areas of the county. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) maintains a mutual aid agreement with the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office and assists local governments during emergencies when requested. The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts associated with police protection services, concluded that the County Sheriff's Office has adequate facilities to serve the projected growth increases associated with implementation of the Sustainability Update, and no additional facilities would be needed to maintain response times; however, staffing is currently at minimal levels. New development and growth accommodated by the Sustainability Update would not substantially reduce response times or require new or physically altered police protection facilities that could result in significant physical impacts. Table 4.14-7 of the EIR lists proposed and retained General Plan/LCP policies that would serve to avoid and minimize impacts related to police protection services. The EIR determined that, with compliance with federal, state, and local regulations in addition to implementation of the policies and implementation strategies summarized in Table 4.14-7, the Sustainability Update's potential indirect impact on police protection services would be considered less than significant.

Schools. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, there are 10 public school districts located within the county with a total enrollment of nearly 40,000 students at the kindergarten to high school levels, as well as one (1) community college district (Cabrillo) and one (1) state university (University of California, Santa Cruz). Two (2) additional school districts are located outside of the county but serve some residents within the county. The County and individual jurisdictions provide the procedures for project applicants to pay school impact fees as part of local development approvals to ensure that adequate school facilities continue to be provided in the County. Development impact fees are collected for the following districts: Aromas-San Juan Unified School District, Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District, Happy Valley Elementary School District, Live Oak School District, Loma Prieta Joint Union School District, Mountain Elementary School District, Pacific Elementary School District, Pajaro Valley Unified School District, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District, Santa Cruz City Schools, Scotts Valley Unified School District, and Soquel Union Elementary School District. All fees are collected at the time of issuance of a building permit.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts associated with school services, concluded that some schools particularly in urban areas could experience exceedances in enrollment capacity in some years, but with payment of required school impact fees to fund necessary facility expansion and/or additions if needed, the impact of the Sustainability Update on schools would be less than significant. Table 4.18-8 of the EIR summarizes proposed and retained General Plan/LCP policies that would serve to avoid and minimize impacts related to school enrollments. The EIR determined that because the County and its individual jurisdictions will be required to conduct environmental review prior to any significant expansion of school facilities or the development of new school facilities, as well as current state law requirements that the environmental impact of other new

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development on school facilities is considered fully mitigated through the payment of required development impact fees, this impact would be considered less than significant.

Parks. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, Santa Cruz County Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Services Department (County Parks) manages 43 parks and open space properties totaling nearly 1,600 acres and 29 miles of coastline. The County parks system serves the County in two ways: regional facilities that serve the entire County's population and local parks (e.g., neighborhood, rural, and community parks) that serve unincorporated neighborhoods that are outside an independent recreation and park district boundary. Along with parkland belonging to the County, there are a number of state lands, including 1,500 acres managed by CDFW, and 42,120 acres managed by California State Parks. In addition, the County contains federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, consisting of the approximately 5,800-acre Cotoni-Coast Dairies property, a California Coastal National Monument.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which comprehensively addressed impacts associated with park services, concluded that the Sustainability Update would have a less-than-significant impact related to parks. The Parks Strategic Plan determined that the County provides sufficient parklands for its residents. Table 4.15-9 of the EIR describes existing and proposed policies that avoid and minimize impacts related to parks and recreational facilities. These policies include guidance standards for 2-3 net acres of usable classifications of parkland and 5-6 acres of recreational facilities per 1,000 residents in order to maintain acceptable levels of service. Proposed policies also set forth guidelines for development of new parks and placement near compatible uses. Because existing countywide parklands are sufficient to serve its population and the County continues to plan for additional parks, the increase in population accommodated by the Sustainability Update would not substantially increase usage of park facilities such that provision of new facilities would be required.

Other Public Facilities. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, library services are provided by the Santa Cruz Public Libraries District and are governed by a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that includes all jurisdictions in Santa Cruz County, except for Watsonville, which manages its own public library system. The City of Watsonville operates two (2) facilities—the Main Library and the Freedom Branch Library. The Sustainability Update includes policies to ensure adequate provision of public services (Objective PPF-3.1 and its supporting policies and implementation strategies), provide libraries within community centers, adjacent to major commercial centers, or in other areas convenient for public use (PPF 3.3.1), to support adequate library service in all parts of the county, and continue to improve and expand services (PPF-3.3.2). The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that with implementation of the General Plan/LCP policies and implementation strategies, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that impacts related to libraries and other public facilities would be less than significant.

Project Review

Police and fire protection services to the project site are provided by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office and the Central Fire District, respectively. The project site is within the boundaries of the Soquel Union Elementary School District and the Santa Cruz High School District. The project site would be served by Santa Cruz Gardens Elementary School, New Brighton Middle School, and Harbor High School.

The project site is near several public parks and recreational facilities, including Winkle Farm County Park (approximately 0.05 miles to the east), Chanticleer Avenue County Park (approximately 0.65 miles to the south), Coffee Lane County Park (approximately 0.67 miles to the southeast), Anna Jean Cummings County Park (approximately 0.88 miles to the northeast), Santa Cruz Gardens County Park (approximately 1.00 miles to the north) Jose Avenue County Park (approximately 1.08 miles to the southwest), Hestwood County Park (approximately 1.11 miles to the south), Brommer Street County Park (approximately 1.20 miles to the south) and Simpkins Family Swim Center (approximately 1.42 miles to the south).

The proposed project would result in an incremental increased demand for public services within the County's urban area. However, the proposed project, which consists of 173 residential units and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space, would be within the overall amount of remaining potential residential and non-residential development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR as described in Section IV.B. Because the proposed project size is within the total amount of potential residential development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR regarding public services impacts, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding public services than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

16. RECREATION		Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR			
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of	DEIR pp. 4.14-20 to 4.14-22	No	No	Parks and Recreation Facilities Tax

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16. RECREATION				
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
the facility would occur or be accelerated?				
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	DEIR pp. 4.14-20 to 4.14-22	No	No	None

(a) Use of Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, and in Section 15, Public Services, above, County Parks manages 43 parks and open space properties totaling nearly 1,600 acres and 29 miles of coastline. The County parks system serves the county in two ways: regional facilities that serve the entire county's population and local parks (e.g., neighborhood, rural, and community parks) that serve unincorporated neighborhoods that are outside an independent recreation and park district boundary. Along with parkland belonging to the County, there are a number of state lands managed by California State Parks as indicated above.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts associated with use of parks and recreational facilities as a result of potential future development, concluded that the Sustainability Update would have a less-than-significant impact related to increased use of recreational facilities. The EIR found that potential increased population accommodated by the Sustainability Update could result in an increased use of existing parks and recreational facilities, especially in areas within the County's USL and RSL. The potential increased use of parks and recreational facilities would be distributed throughout existing neighborhood and community parks throughout the USL and specific parks and recreational facilities, including school playgrounds and joint use facilities. Furthermore, the EIR found that with implementation of policies summarized in Table 4.14-9 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume), potential impacts related to parks and recreational facilities would be less than significant. Therefore, the EIR concluded that the Sustainability Update and subsequent development would not 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, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

The proposed project is a mixed-use residential-commercial project, and the project site is located within 0.05 to 1.42 miles of nine (9) existing parks and recreational facilities. The proposed project would result in an incremental increased use of public parks in the vicinity of the proposed project and within the greater region. However, the proposed project, which consists of 173 dwelling units

and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space, would be within the overall amount of remaining development potential analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR as described in Section IV.B.

Because the proposed project size is within the total amount of potential development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR regarding public services impacts, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding recreation than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) New Recreational Facilities. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, implementation of the Sustainability Update would support future development of recreational facilities but does not directly propose the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts associated with construction or expansion of recreational facilities, concluded that the Sustainability Update would have a less-than-significant impact related to construction or expansion of recreational facilities, with implementation of the General Plan/LCP policies and implementation strategies, in combination with existing regulations and park impact fees for new development.

The proposed project would include onsite recreational facilities (play area, turf area, and sitting areas with benches), as well as a walking path adjacent to the riparian corridor that would connect to Winkle Park. None of these facilities, which are part of the overall site plan analyzed herein, would result in adverse or significant impacts on the physical environment. The proposed project would not require expansion of recreational facilities because as explained above, the proposed project is within the level of development evaluated in the Sustainability EIR for which a less-than-significant impact was identified. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

17. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC				
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
a) Conflict with a program, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation	DEIR pp. 4.15-26 to 4.15-31	No	No	None

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17. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?				
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	DEIR pp. 4.15-19 to 4.15-26	No	No	MM TRA-1, MM TRA-2
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (for example, sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (for example, farm equipment)?	DEIR pp. 4.15-31 to 4.15-32	No	No	None
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	DEIR pp. 4.15-32	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy AM-6.1a

(a) Conflict with Circulation Plan, Policy or Ordinance. The Sustainability Update EIR reports that the circulation system within the county consists of nearly 1,135 miles of freeways, arterials, collectors, and local roads with connectivity within and between communities and regions. The County maintains a roadway network of over 600 miles including all of the associated bridges, ramps, bicycle facilities, stop signs, signals and other traffic controls. In the urban areas of the county arterial roads and major state highways make up 14% of the roadway miles but carry over 70% of the VMT.

The County has approximately 100 miles of bicycle facilities, which account for 8% of the county's roadway system, although there are few Class I bikeways (bike paths) in the unincorporated county. Pedestrian facilities include sidewalks, walkways, curb ramps, crosswalks, furnishings, traffic control devices, and other amenities. Public transit in Santa Cruz County is primarily provided by the Santa Cruz Metro Transit District (METRO). There is currently no year-round passenger rail service in Santa Cruz County. The Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, which was acquired by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) in 2012, formerly provided freight rail service. The SCCRTC purchased the rail corridor to preserve the corridor for existing and future transportation uses, including freight rail, passenger rail service/transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The Sustainability Update provided an updated Circulation Element to the General Plan/LCP in the new Access + Mobility (AM) Element. The AM Element generally provides a greater focus on an enhanced multi-modal transportation system, and includes policies that support transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel modes, as well as policies for operations. The element continues support for

use of the Santa Cruz Branch Line and the Santa Cruz Big Trees rail corridors for recreational travel, freight and high-quality transit service, as determined by the SCCRTC and other rail corridor owners. The new AM Element includes objectives, supporting policies, and implementing strategies to increase shuttle, transit, and active transportation travel within the tourism sector to the county's beaches, parks, and other recreational areas. The AM Element includes policies that support development of facilities addressing the overall circulation system, including roads, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities as summarized in Table 4.15-7 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). In addition, several new connector road segments are proposed in the County's USL, primarily in Live Oak and Soquel, including pedestrian and bicycle connections, which would improve circulation.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that the amendments to the General Plan/LCP and SCCC would not result in conflicts with existing local or regional programs, plans, ordinances or policies addressing the county's circulation system. The EIR also concluded that the Sustainability Update is consistent with regional plans: AMBAG's MTP/SC) and SCCRTC's Regional Transportation Plan. Specifically, the AM policies summarized in Table 4.15-7 are consistent with the 2040 MTP/SCS goal and policy objectives to "Provide convenient, accessible, and reliable travel options while maximizing productivity for all people and goods in the region." Therefore, the EIR concluded that adoption and implementation of the proposed Sustainability Update would not result in conflicts with existing plans, programs, policies, or ordinances that address the circulation system in the unincorporated County, including road, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

The proposed project consists of 173 residential units and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space. The proposed project is a mixed-use project along a major transportation corridor that would improve sidewalks along Soquel Drive and Thurber Lane and would be accessible to the new pedestrian/bicycle path bridge over Highway 1 at Chanticleer Avenue, consistent with General Plan/LCP Policy AM-1.1.4. The proposed project would also support transit facilities with the provision of a fair share contribution to Santa Cruz Metro's planned project to transform Soquel Drive into a "Rapid Corridor," which includes relocating the existing bus stop along the proposed project's frontage on Soquel Drive from the east side of Thurber Lane to the west side to take advantage of signal priority and upgrade the bus stop with enhanced amenities. The proposed project would be required to implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program in accordance with SCCC section 13.16.200, which would encourage the use of alternative transportation modes. Key strategies would include onsite amenities to reduce vehicle trips, traffic calming measures, improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and secure bike parking (Hexagon 2025). The proposed project would not conflict with a program, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding conflicts with transportation policies than evaluated in the Sustainability Update

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EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

It is also noted that the proposed project would also be subject to payment of traffic impact fees, which are applied uniformly to new development. The proposed project would be required to pay \$819,000 in Live Oak transportation improvement fees to support essential transportation infrastructure improvements mandated by Santa Cruz County (Hexagon 2025). While the proposed project would result in an increase of vehicle trips, automobile delay, as described by level of service [LOS] or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion may no longer be considered a significant impact on the environment pursuant to CEQA.

(b) Conflicts with State CEQA Guidelines. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) focuses on VMT for determining the significance of transportation impacts. The County adopted a VMT threshold in 2020 pursuant to state law and consistent with the criteria in section 15064.3(b). The County's adopted VMT thresholds follow the guidance provided by the state (Governor's Office of Planning and Research [OPR] 2018), which generally recommend a threshold that is 15% below the existing County-wide average VMT per capita for residential uses and 15% below the County-wide average VMT per employee, except for retail uses, which would be measured by a net increase in total VMT. The County of Santa Cruz has also published guidelines for the implementation of VMT reviews and thresholds along with screening criteria that uses the guidance published within the OPR technical advisory as a reference point.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that adoption and implementation of the proposed Sustainability Update and future development that could result from the Update would result in residential and employee VMT that does not meet the County's VMT threshold, although VMT resulting from development evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR would be below the County's existing VMT. However, the VMT associated with the Sustainability Update would not meet the County's VMT threshold (15% below existing countywide average) for residential per capita and employee VMT (except for retail employee VMT), resulting in a significant impact. The EIR indicated that there are a number of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements that are planned or proposed that could help reduce VMT by providing enhanced alternative modes of transportation other than automobile travel. However, because many of these projects are not funded, and the traffic model cannot forecast reductions due to new and improved active transportation facilities or employer-required transportation demand management (TDM) programs. As a result, reductions related to increases in bicycle and pedestrian mode share, carpooling, and new TDM programs are not accounted for in the Sustainability Update VMT results, and therefore the results were considered conservative.

The EIR indicates that the Sustainability Update includes policies that support transportation improvements and other measures that would serve to reduce VMT as summarized in Table 4.15-6 of the Sustainability Update EIR. These include policies that support multiple transportation

modes (AM-2.1.1, AM-2.1.2, AM-2.1.3), coordinated land use and transportation planning (BE-1.2.1), and multi-modal improvements as part of future development projects (AM-6.2.2). Policies support the implementation of high-quality transit facilities in the county, as well as bicycle and pedestrian improvements, the implementation of which would serve to help reduce total VMT by providing additional and/or enhanced opportunities for alternative transportation modes. In addition, the Sustainability Update encourages infill, mixed-use, and intensified development within the County's USL, which would serve to locate higher density development in proximity to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities that would encourage and promote use of transportation modes other than automobiles. The County's VMT Guidelines also include TDM strategies that can be implemented as project design features and/or mitigation measures to offset a project's VMT.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that development and growth evaluated as part of the Update would result in VMT that is higher than the County's threshold for residential and non-residential uses (except retail uses), and thus, even with full implementation of TDM measures, there likely would not be a sufficient reduction to meet the County's VMT threshold.

The Sustainability Update EIR noted that future development projects would be subject to review under the County's VMT Guidelines, which identify projects that require VMT analysis and others that would be automatically considered within significance thresholds due to size, proximity to high quality transit, and other screening criteria. The County's significance thresholds are based on land use type, broadly categorized as efficiency and net change metrics. Efficiency metrics include VMT per capita and VMT per employee and are used for residential and non-residential uses, respectively. Therefore, some types of future projects, such as small projects, projects near high quality transit, local-serving retail projects, and affordable housing projects could be found to meet the County's VMT threshold, while others will require mitigation to meet the threshold.

The EIR also found that implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would require development and implementation of a funding mechanism to support regional VMT-reducing projects, and Mitigation Measure TRA-2 recommends a General Plan/LCP implementing strategy to further review parking requirements as another means to reduce vehicle travel and VMT. However, because of the uncertainty as to whether such a VMT program under Mitigation Measure TRA-1 could fully fund VMT-reduction measures to the level needed to meet the County's VMT threshold, the EIR concluded that impacts may not be fully mitigated to a less-than-significant level, resulting in a significant and unavoidable impact.

The County's VMT Guidelines, which are based on the OPR's technical advisory, include screening criteria to identify projects or components of mixed-use projects that would not exceed the VMT thresholds of significance. If a project meets these screening criteria, it is presumed to have a less-than-significant impact on VMT, and a detailed analysis is not required. Land use projects that meet at least one of the following screening criteria are presumed to have a less-than-significant impact on VMT and do not require detailed VMT evaluation:

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- *Small Projects:* Projects that generate 110 or fewer average daily vehicle trips and are determined by Santa Cruz County to be inconsistent with the Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- *Projects Near High-Quality Transit:* Projects located within ½-mile of an existing major transit stop as defined in California Public Resources Code § 21064.3: two or more bus lines that maintain a service interval frequency of 15 minutes or less during both the morning and afternoon peak commute periods.
- *Locally Serving Retail/Neighborhood Commercial:*
 - Project is local serving;
 - No single store onsite exceeds 50,000 square feet; and
 - The nature of the project is not regionally focused.
- *Affordable Housing:* The project provides a high percentage of affordable housing.
- *Local Essential Service:* Locally serving public facilities, including daycare centers, public K-12 schools, police or fire facilities, locally serving medical/dental offices, and government offices.
- *Redevelopment Projects:* The project replaces an existing VMT-generating land use and does not result in a net overall increase in VMT.
- *Map Based on Screening:* The area of development is under the threshold as shown on the screening map.

The proposed project consists of a mixed-use development with 173 affordable residential units (including two manager's units) and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space. According to the County's VMT Implementation Guidelines, projects with multiple distinct land uses must be analyzed separately unless their impact on total VMT is considered insignificant. The proposed residential component, which includes affordable housing units, meets the County's VMT screening criteria and, therefore, does not require a detailed VMT analysis. Similarly, the proposed approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space meets the County's VMT screening criteria as a locally serving retail/neighborhood commercial use smaller than 50,000 square feet. Since both components of the proposed project meet the County's VMT screening criteria as outlined above, the proposed project can be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact on the transportation system with respect to VMT. This means that no further detailed analysis is required, as the proposed project aligns with established criteria that indicate it would not substantially increase travel demand or contribute to excessive VMT (Hexagon 2025).

Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe regarding VMT impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(c-d) Road Design Hazards and Emergency Access. The Sustainability Update includes several proposed new roadways in the County's USL, but roadway geometrics have yet to be designed. Future roadways would be designed to meet all applicable road design and sight distance standards that would avoid creation of hazardous conditions including fire department requirements. In addition, new roadways, as well as new access driveways would be required to meet the County of Santa Cruz Design Criteria, which provides standards for safe roadway design. Furthermore, the Sustainability Update included several policies and goals in the AM Element to avoid or minimize impacts related to hazardous conditions within road and transportation system designs that are summarized in Table 4.15-8 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). These proposed policies provide for safe access and improvements to the roadway system within the county, as well as prevent incompatible land uses to avoid transportation conflict and potential roadway safety hazards. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that future development would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that the Update would not directly result in new development that would result in inadequate emergency access. Additionally, the AM Element includes policies that would minimize the impacts related to provision of inadequate emergency access. Specifically, Policy AM-6.1.1 calls for adequate roads for fire and emergency response access, which would be reviewed as part of future development project applications. In addition, County staff would work in conjunction with fire districts and other emergency access providers to coordinate development review and review of new roads (AM-6-1a). Therefore, the Sustainability Update concluded that the Update would not directly result in inadequate emergency access and would result in a less-than-significant impact.

The proposed project has been designed in accordance with standard County requirements and there are no access designs that would substantially increase hazards. Access to the project site would be provided via two right-turn-only driveways on Soquel Drive and a full-access driveway on Thurber Lane near the northern project site boundary. Emergency vehicles would access the project site in the same way as passenger vehicles, via the right-turn only driveways on Soquel Drive or the full-access driveway on Thurber Lane. Additionally, the 26-foot-wide drive aisles between the proposed buildings would provide adequate space for emergency vehicles, such as fire trucks, to reach each proposed residential building. All proposed project access points would ensure smooth entry and exit for emergency vehicles (Hexagon 2025). It is noted that as part of the density bonus request, the proposed project requests a waiver from the County's General Plan and Design Criteria street standards to allow the driveway alignment with the proposed project's eastern Soquel Drive driveway and Chanticleer/Soquel to be offset from the Chanticleer Avenue intersection and a modified street section on Soquel Drive.

The proposed project would be designed in accordance with recommendations of the Central Fire district requirements and would provide for adequate emergency access. Thus, the proposed project would not result in increased hazards related to project design, would not provide

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inadequate emergency access, would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES				
	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
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	DEIR pp. 4.5 25 to 4.5 26	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-8.1.5 SCCC Chapter 16.40
c) 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?	DEIR pp. 4.5 25 to 4.5 26	No	No	General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-8.1.5 SCCC Chapter 16.40

AB 52, effective July 1, 2015 recognizes that California Native American prehistoric, historic, archaeological, cultural, and sacred places are essential elements in tribal cultural traditions, heritages, and identities. The law establishes a new category of resources in CEQA called “tribal cultural resources” that considers the tribal cultural values in addition to the scientific and archaeological values when determining impacts and mitigation. Public Resources Code section 21074 defines a “tribal cultural resource” as either:

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- (1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - (a) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.
 - (b) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of section 5020.1.
- (2) 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 section 5024.1.

(a-b) Tribal Cultural Resources and Consultation. The archaeological records search and the County's outreach to Native American tribes that was conducted for the Sustainability Update EIR did not result in the identification of any specific tribal cultural resources. The Sustainability Update EIR found that the ARC Element of the County's General Plan/LCP includes policies and implementation strategies that would serve to protect tribal cultural resources and reduce impacts related to tribal cultural resources as summarized in Table 4.5-4 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume). The General Plan/LCP policies prohibit disturbance of Native American sites cultural sites or tribal cultural resources without an appropriate permit. Additionally, the County's accidental discovery policy (ARC-8.1.5) and procedures (SCCC Chapter 16.40) would also apply to properties in the event future construction encounters unidentified tribal cultural resources. This regulation requires that construction be stopped if archaeological resources are encountered during construction, that the Planning Director be notified, and the discovery analyzed. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that with compliance with General Plan/LCP policies and County regulations, future development would result in less-than-significant impacts related to tribal cultural resources.

As described above in Section IV.E.5, Cultural Resources, the project site is not identified as being in an archaeologically sensitive area according to the County's GIS data base and an archaeological investigation is not required. However, General Plan/LCP Policy ARC-8.1.5 and SCCC Chapter 16.40 set forth the procedure to follow in the event that unknown archaeological materials, which could include tribal cultural resources, are unearthed during construction as described in Section IV.E.5 above, and implementation of these standards would be a standard condition of approval. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts to tribal cultural resources than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project or project site with application of uniformly applied development standards. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

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19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS				
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment facilities, or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or which could cause significant environmental effects?	DEIR pp. 4.16-33	No	No	None
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	DEIR pp. 4.16-34 to 4.16-37	No	No	None
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?	DEIR pp. 4.16-37 to 4.16-38	No	No	None
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?	DEIR pp. 4.16-38 to 4.16-40	No	No	None
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	DEIR pp. 4.16-38 to 4.16-40	No	No	None

(a) Relocation or Construction of Utilities. The unincorporated area of the County is served a variety of public and private agencies and entities. The Sustainability Update EIR found that the future development and growth accommodated by the Sustainability Update would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County. The EIR concluded that there were no known new or relocated public utility facilities that would be required as a result of future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update based on discussions with service providers. The EIR found that compliance with County General Plan/LCP policies would ensure future development projects could be adequately served by water and sewer

infrastructure as part of the development approval process as summarized in Tables 4-16-5 and 4-16-6 of the Sustainability EIR (Draft EIR volume). In particular, compliance with County General Plan/LCP policies would ensure development projects can be adequately served by water and sewer infrastructure as part of the approval process (BE-2.1.8, PPF-4.2.1). Therefore, the EIR concluded that no new or relocated public utility facilities related to water or wastewater treatment facilities would be required as a result of future development.

The EIR also concluded that no new or expanded storm drainage or energy utility infrastructure were identified, except for some low to moderate priority storm drain improvements and one (1) high priority improvement in urban areas that have been identified in the County's Storm Drain Master Plan and are being addressed by Master Plan updates as described in the EIR. Therefore, the future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would result in a less-than-significant impact related to the need for new or expanded utilities. (See Section 4.3.10(c) regarding stormwater drainage.)

The proposed project is located within the County's USL and would be served by the City of Santa Cruz (water service and wastewater treatment) and Santa Cruz County Sanitation District (wastewater collection). The proposed project is located in the County's Zone 5 for storm drainage. Based on review of existing and required utility service for the proposed project, the proposed project can be served by existing utilities and though the project would relocate existing overhead utilities along Thurber Lane to accommodate required roadway and road side improvements, the project would not result in the need for new public utility facilities. Both the City of Santa Cruz Water Department and the Santa Cruz County Sanitation District have indicated ability to serve the proposed project, and no sewer capacity issues were identified (Santa Cruz County Sanitation District 2025, City of Santa Cruz Water Department 2024). Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding the need for new or relocated utilities than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Water Supply. The Sustainability Update EIR reported that nearly all of Santa Cruz County's water supply is derived from local surface water (streams and reservoirs - 20% of supply) and groundwater (80% of supply), which are fed entirely by precipitation and do not receive any imported water. A small amount of recycled water is produced for irrigation (4%). Domestic supply within the region is provided by five (5) large public agencies, four (4) medium water systems, 115 small water systems, and some 8,000 individual wells. Potable water supplies within the County's USL and RSL are provided by six (6) agencies. Unincorporated areas of the county not serviced by the larger water purveyors rely on private wells and stream diversions for their water supply.

The Sustainability Update EIR found that future development as a result of the Update would occur primarily within the County's USL and would result in additional demand for domestic potable

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water. The EIR found that future potential development and growth appeared to be within growth projections developed for each of the six major public water districts serving the unincorporated county area, although potential development may approach or exceed estimates in the City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District (SqCWD) forecasts in their respective 2020 Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs). However, the EIR further found that implementation of the Sustainability Update policies summarized in Table 4.16-5 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) and compliance with SCCC water conservation requirements would serve to reduce water demand. Furthermore, General Plan/LCP policies require that development be allowed only where adequate water supplies are available, and all public water purveyors would have to approve new connections as part of future development project reviews.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded that implementation of County policies and compliance with water conservation regulations and requirements of the water purveyors would serve to reduce demand and ensure availability of adequate water supplies prior to approval of future developments. Therefore, the Sustainability update EIR concluded that the Update's potential indirect impact on water supplies would be considered less than significant, except conservatively concluded that the impact could be potentially significant for the Santa Cruz Water Department and SqCWD. The EIR indicated that General Plan/LCP policies and regulations would require incorporation of water-conserving fixtures, measures and landscaping as part of new development in the county, which would serve to minimize water demands. The Sustainability Update includes policies that serve to avoid or minimize impacts related to provision of adequate water supplies as summarized in Table 4.16-5 of the EIR (Draft EIR volume). In addition, the policies require that new development or intensification of land use only be allowed where public service levels are adequate to serve a project, including water supply (PPF-3.1.1 and PPF-4.1). Implementation of these policies also would be required for developments served by small mutual water companies or water systems. Requirements for water conserving-fixtures and water-efficient landscaping are also included in the SCCC and building codes and would be required for new development. However, no other mitigation measures were identified in the Sustainability Update EIR that would reduce potential impacts on water supply from the City of Santa Cruz and SqCWD to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the EIR concluded that the impact for these two (2) water suppliers would remain potentially significant and unavoidable.

The proposed project would result in an increased water demand. Water service to the proposed project would be provided by the City of Santa Cruz Water Department. The County's Sustainability Update and General Plan/LCP requires that all development proposals be reviewed to assess whether adequate service is available (PPF-4.1.3) and that a commitment letter be provided from a water agency that verifies the capability of the system to serve proposed development (PPF-4.1.2). The City of Santa Cruz Water Department has provided a letter indicating that the proposed project can be served (2024). Therefore, sufficient water supplies are available to serve the proposed project. Furthermore, the proposed project, which would consist of 173 dwelling units and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space,

would be within the overall amount of remaining residential and non-residential development potential development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR as described in Section IV.B. Because the proposed project's size is within the total amount of potential development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR regarding water supply impacts, and the City of Santa Cruz Water Department has indicated that water service can be provided to the proposed project, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding water supplies than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b) Wastewater Treatment Capacity. The collection, conveyance, and treatment of wastewater within the unincorporated areas of the county are managed by a number of agencies. Wastewater services within Santa Cruz County are provided by three (3) cities, four (4) special districts, and six (6) County Service Areas (CSAs). Facilities range from individual or small community onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS, also known as septic systems) to local wastewater collection systems and regional treatment plants. Wastewater infrastructure includes septic systems, collection and sewer main lines, lift stations, treatment plants and recycled water treatment systems. Wastewater systems are closely regulated both for health and environmental concerns. The RWQCB regulates operations and discharges from sewage systems, while the County regulates individual and small OWTS with flows up to 10,000 gallons per day.

The Sanitation Section of the County Community Development and Infrastructure Department staffs three (3) County sanitation districts, which include the Davenport County Sanitation District, the Santa Cruz County Sanitation District (SCCSD), and the Freedom County Sanitation District, as well as five (5) County Service Areas (CSAs): 2 (Place de Mer), 5 (Sand Dollar), 7 (Boulder Creek), 10 (Rolling Woods), and 20 (Trestle Beach). These agencies provide sanitary sewer collection services. Collected wastewater is treated at the City of Santa Cruz wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) for the Santa Cruz County Sanitation District and CSA 10, and at the City of Watsonville wastewater treatment facility for the Freedom County Sanitation District.

The Sustainability Update EIR concluded wastewater flows resulting from future development accommodated by the Sustainability Update EIR could be accommodated within the remaining capacity of the existing regional wastewater treatment providers. Furthermore, implementation of the Sustainability Update policies and implementation strategies summarized in Table 4.16-6 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) would ensure that adequate sewer services are available as part of future development project reviews. In particular Sustainability Update and General Plan/LCP policies require the adequacy of sewer service be considered in determining the number of units to be permitted for projects (BE-2.1.8) and that a written commitment be provided from the sewer service provider that it can support a new development (PPF-4.2.1). Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that impacts of future development on wastewater treatment capacity would be considered less than significant.

The proposed project would result in increased wastewater generation and the need for wastewater treatment. Wastewater treatment for the proposed project would be provided by the City of Santa Cruz WWTF. The County's Sustainability Update and General Plan/LCP requires that all development proposals be reviewed to assess whether adequate sewer service is available (BE-2.1.8) and that a commitment letter from a sewer agency that verifies the capability of the system to serve proposed development be provided (PPF-4.2.1). The Santa Cruz County Sanitation District has provided a letter indicating that the proposed project can be served. Therefore, there is sufficient wastewater treatment capacity available to serve the proposed project. Furthermore, the proposed project, which consists of 173 dwelling units and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space, would be within the overall amount of remaining residential and non-residential development potential analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR as described in Section IV.B. Because the proposed project's size is within the total amount of potential development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR regarding wastewater treatment impacts, and the Santa Cruz County Sanitation District has indicated that the proposed project can be served, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts regarding wastewater treatment capacity than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(d-e) Solid Waste Disposal. As described in the Sustainability Update EIR, Santa Cruz County Recycling and Solid Waste Services (Recycling & Trash) is responsible for the operation and administration of solid waste diversion and disposal in the unincorporated areas of the county. Recycling & Trash operates the County's two solid waste facilities, the Buena Vista Landfill located west of the City of Watsonville at 1231 Buena Vista Drive and the Ben Lomond Transfer Station located east of Ben Lomond in the San Lorenzo Valley at 9835 Newell Creek Road. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the Buena Vista Landfill has 26% remaining capacity (1,947,631 cubic yards) and is expected to close in 2030, after which refuse from the unincorporated county will be transferred to the Monterey Regional Waste Management District (MRWMD) Monterey Peninsula Landfill, and the County is currently in the process of studying a transfer station to be located at the current Buena Vista Landfill site to facilitate the transition. The Monterey Peninsula Landfill has 98% remaining capacity (over 48.5 million cubic yards) and is expected to have capacity for approximately 90 more years.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts regarding solid waste disposal, concluded that adequate landfill capacity is available to serve development accommodated by the Sustainability Update and beyond. Table 4.16-7 of the Sustainability Update EIR (Draft EIR volume) lists proposed and retained General Plan/LCP policies that would serve to avoid and minimize impacts related to solid waste disposal. Furthermore, the Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the County is working to implement its Zero Waste Plan, which would ultimately result in no net increase in solid waste generation. Additionally, future development

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accommodated by the Sustainability Update would be required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations related to solid waste. Solid waste generated during construction and operation of development projects would be expected to be recycled to the maximum extent possible, and unsalvageable materials generated from development projects would be disposed of at authorized sites in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations. The EIR concluded that impacts related to generation of solid waste and conflicts with regulations as a result of future development would be less than significant.

The proposed project would result in solid waste generation, which would be disposed at Buena Vista Landfill and at the Monterey Peninsula Landfill when the Buena Vista Landfill closes. The proposed project would consist of 173 dwelling units and approximately 1,800 square feet of neighborhood commercial space, which would be within the overall amount of remaining residential and non-residential development potential analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR as described in Section IV.B, and future solid waste generation and disposal was identified as a less-than-significant impact in the Sustainability Update EIR. Because the proposed project's size is within the total amount of potential development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR regarding generation and disposal of solid waste, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

20. WILDFIRE				
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
a) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	DEIR pp. 4.17-14 to 4.17-18	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.92 (Fire Code) and SCCC Title 12 (Building Regulations), Standard Fire Department Conditions of Approval
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	DEIR pp. 4.17-14 to 4.17-18	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.92 (Fire Code)
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel	DEIR pp. 4.17-14 to 4.17-18	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.92 (Fire Code)

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20. WILDFIRE				
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
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?				
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?	DEIR pp. 4.17-14 to 4.17-18	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.92 (Fire Code)
e) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation?	DEIR pp. 4.17-18 to 4.17-19	No	No	SCCC Chapter 7.92 (Fire Code)

(a) Wildfire Fire Hazards. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the risk of significant wildfire exists in the county due to topography, fuels, and weather conditions. The county experiences annual cycles of elevated fire danger, with the wildfire season typically extending from roughly May into late October or early November. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has mapped fire hazard severity zones (FHSZs) throughout the county. According to CAL FIRE's currently adopted (2023) FHSZ maps, most of the unincorporated county is designated as moderate to high FHSZs, while a small area of Bonny Doon and areas along the eastern boundary of the county are designated as being very high FHSZs. Large areas of the county have also been mapped and designated in the County's General Plan/LCP as Critical Wildfire Hazard Areas due to accumulations of wildfire prone vegetation, steep and dry slopes, and the presence of structures vulnerable to wildland fires. These areas are generally situated in the steeper higher elevations of the county. Most of these areas are along the border of Santa Clara County or in the Coastal ridges between Highway 9 and Highway 1. At the local level, the County is responsible for managing emergency preparedness, response, and evacuation through its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), which includes mitigation strategies for reducing wildland fire risks, creating defensible space around structures, improving access, and inter-agency coordination of efforts.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts associated with wildfire hazards, found that the Sustainability Update could lead to some development in areas that are located within designated FHSZs; however, all development would be required to comply with local regulations regarding building and fire codes, including requirements for provision of adequate access and water supply, fire sprinkler systems in new buildings, and exterior defensible space. As noted in Table 4.17-1 of the EIR, policies in the Parks, Recreation + Public Facilities Element and the Public

Safety Element would serve to avoid or minimize impacts related to exposure to wildfires. While some future development could be located in fire hazard zones, with compliance with state and local regulations, as well as implementation of the existing and proposed General Plan/LCP policies, future development would be designed to minimize risks resulting from exposure to wildland fire hazards. Therefore, the Sustainability Update EIR concluded that, with compliance with state and local regulations and implementation of the County's General Plan/LCP policies and LHMP mitigation strategies, the impact related to wildfire would be less than significant.

The proposed project is located within a developed area within the County's USL. The project site is located within a local responsibility area (LRA) and is not located within a fire hazard area or high fire hazard area according to the County GIS database. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project or project site. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(b-d) Exacerbation of Wildfire Risks. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the risk of significant wildfire exists in Santa Cruz County, due to the local climate and topography as well as existing development patterns where over 50% of the county's population lives in the wildland-urban interface (WUI). As described in the EIR, CAL FIRE has mapped fire hazard severity zones throughout the county's state responsibility area (SRA), including moderate, high, and very high FHSZs. In addition, large areas of the county have been mapped and designated in the County's General Plan/LCP as Critical Wildfire Hazard Areas due to accumulations of wildfire prone vegetation, steep and dry slopes, and the presence of structures vulnerable to wildland fires. According to CAL FIRE's currently adopted (2023)⁴ FHSZ mapping, most of the county is designated as moderate to high fire hazard severity, while a small area of Bonny Doon and areas along the eastern boundary of the county are designated as being very high FHSZs. Critical wildfire hazard areas identified by the County are primarily located along the border of Santa Clara County in the South County region and in the coastal ridges of the Mountain and North Coast regions.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts associated with wildfire hazards, concluded that development accommodated by the Sustainability Update would primarily be located in urban areas within the County's USL, where wildfire hazards are relatively lower than in WUI areas. Future development in WUI areas would be required to comply with state and local regulations and local policies regarding siting and design of structures to avoid/minimize risks of exposure to fires. Requirements for adequate access, water supply, building design, and defensible space would also minimize conditions that would lead to exacerbation of a wildfire hazard or result in an adverse secondary effect as a result of development, such as grading of steep slopes or

⁴ June 15, 2023; available online at: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://34c031f8-c9fd-4018-8c5a-4159cdf6b0d-cdn-endpoint.azureedge.net/-/media/osfm-website/what-we-do/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/fire-hazard-severity-zones/fire-hazard-severity-zones-map-2022/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps-2022-files/fhsz_county_sra_11x17_2022_santacruz_2.pdf.

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inadequate drainage. Additionally, the Sustainability Update did not forecast an increase in new residential units in rural planning areas over what could have occurred under the existing General Plan/LCP, although there could be some increased non-residential development in these areas. However, as described in the EIR, all development would be required to be designed in accordance with fire and building code requirements. Therefore, the EIR determined that the Sustainability Update would not directly or indirectly result in activities that would exacerbate the existing risk of wildland fires or result in secondary impacts related to flooding, slope instability, or discharge of pollutants, and the impact would be less than significant.

The proposed project is within a LRA and is not located within a fire hazard area. However, the proposed project would be required to be designed in accordance with fire and building code requirements. The project site is relatively flat and not in an area of known landslides. The proposed project would develop a vacant site comprised primarily of grasslands into a mixed use development with three (3) points of paved access and infrastructure including onsite water system and fire hydrants. Therefore, the proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks or expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildlife. The proposed project does not include infrastructure that could exacerbate wildfire risks. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project or project site. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

(e) Emergency Response and Evacuation. The Sustainability Update EIR indicates that the Santa Cruz County Office of Response, Recovery & Resilience (OR3) serves as the emergency management office for responding to ongoing disasters. Evacuations are frequently a response to natural disasters to protect people from potential harm. The County uses a variety of methods to notify residents when an evacuation is necessary, including reverse 911 calls, text or phone messages through Code Red (for those who have signed up), and/or door-to-door notifications. Evacuation areas are determined by the incident command team who are in charge of responding to the disaster.

The Sustainability Update EIR, which evaluated impacts associated with emergency response and evacuation, concluded that the Sustainability Update would not impair implementation of or interfere with an emergency response or evacuation plan. As described in the EIR, development under the Sustainability Update would be concentrated in urban areas within the County's USL where fire hazards are lower than in WUI areas. Nonetheless, all development would be required to comply with adopted local, regional, and state plans and regulations addressing emergency access and exposure to wildfire hazards. The Sustainability Update Access + Mobility Element includes policies that would minimize the impacts related to provision of inadequate emergency access. Specifically, Policy AM-6.1 calls for adequate roads for fire and emergency response access, which would be reviewed as part of future development project applications. In addition, County

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staff would work in conjunction with the fire departments, and other emergency access providers to continue to coordinate development review and review of new roads with Fire District and Sheriff's Department staff (AM-6-1a). Therefore, the EIR determined that the Sustainability Update would not directly or indirectly result in provision of inadequate emergency access or substantially impair implementation of an emergency response or evacuation plan, and the impact would be less than significant.

The proposed project is located in a developed area in the County's USL. The proposed project would not include any changes to existing public roadways, except for private access and infrastructure improvements into the project site as described above in Section V.E.17(c-d). However, these modifications would not affect emergency access or evacuation plans. Therefore, the proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an emergency response or evaluation plan and would not result in an impact. Thus, the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than evaluated in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in impacts peculiar to the project site or the project. Therefore, no further environmental analysis or review is required pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and the State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE		Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update 2030 EIR			
a) 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, 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?	Draft EIR pp. 4.4-29 to 4.4-40, 4.5-10 to 4.5-26	No	No	MM Bio-2B, CUL-1, and CUL-2, See Sections IV.B.4 and IV.B.5 for list of other uniformly applicable development standards
b) 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 the past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	Draft EIR pp. 4.1-24, 4.2-30 to 4.2-31, 4.3-31, 4.4-40, 4.5-26 to 4.5-27, 4.6-16, 4.7-27, 4.8-37, 4.9-23, 4.10-50 to 4.10-51, 4.11-	No	No	MM CUL-1, and CUL-2, TRA-1, and TRA-2 See Sections IV.B.5, IV.B.8, IV.B.10, and IV.B.17 for list of other uniformly applicable

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21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Where Impact is Addressed in Sustainability Update 2030 EIR	Does Project Involve New Significant Impacts or Substantially More Severe Impacts?	Any New Impacts Peculiar to Project or Site?	Relevant Sustainability Update Mitigation Measures or Other Uniformly Applicable Development Standards
Would the project:				
	33, 4.12-27 to 4.12-28, 4.13-16 to 4.13-17, 4.14-23, 4.15-33, 4.16-41 to 4.16-42, 4.17-19			development standards
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	Draft EIR Sections 4.3, 4.9, 4.12	No	No	No

(a) Substantially Degrade Environmental Quality. The proposed project would not degrade the quality of the environment or otherwise affect fish and wildlife habitat as discussed in Section IV.E.4 (Biological Resources) of this Environmental Checklist review. As explained in Section IV.E.4, biological resource impacts are not peculiar to the project site or the project because they were either adequately addressed in the Sustainability Update EIR or can be substantially mitigated by the application of uniformly applied development policies or standards. As discussed in Section IV.E.5 (Cultural Resources) and Section IV.E.18 (Tribal Cultural Resources), cultural resources are not peculiar to the project site or the project because they were either adequately addressed in the Sustainability Update EIR or can be substantially mitigated by the application of uniformly applied development policies or standards. The proposed project would not result in elimination of important examples of a major period of California history or prehistory. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in new or substantially more severe impacts related to environmental quality, fish or wildlife habitat or populations, plant or animal communities including special-status species, or examples of California history or prehistory than previously identified and analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR.

(b) Cumulative Impacts. The Sustainability Update EIR evaluated cumulative impacts for each environmental resource topic based on future and cumulative projects identified on Table 4.0-1 in the Sustainability Update EIR. Potentially significant cumulative impacts were identified for cultural resources (historical resources), GHG emissions, hydrology (groundwater supplies in the Pajaro Valley), transportation (VMT), and utilities (water supply for two water agencies). However, the Sustainability Update's incremental contribution was not found to be cumulatively considerable, except for cultural resources (historical resources), transportation (VMT), and utilities (water supply). As discussed in this Checklist, the proposed project would be within the amount of development analyzed in the Sustainability Update EIR and would not result in new or

substantially more severe impacts that would lead to new significant or more severe impacts related to cumulative impacts than previously identified in the Sustainability Update EIR.

(c) **Substantial Adverse Effects on Human Beings.** The Sustainability Update EIR did not identify significant impacts that could have a substantial adverse effect on human beings, such as air emissions, noise, or hazards due to location near an airport, construction noise or vibration. Thus, no environmental effects have been identified that would have direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings, and the proposed project would not result in new significant impacts peculiar to the proposed project or project site that would result in substantial adverse effects on humans.

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Report Preparation: County of Santa Cruz Community Development and Infrastructure Department with assistance from Dudek.

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