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- Appendix B Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan
- Appendix C Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment
- Appendix D Focused Congdon’s Tarplant Survey
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose for Preparing the EIR

The City of Salinas (“City”), acting as the lead agency, has determined that the Salinas Travel Center (hereinafter “proposed project”) could result in significant adverse environmental impacts and has required that an environmental impact report (EIR) be prepared to evaluate these potentially significant adverse environmental impacts. The purpose of an EIR is to identify a project’s significant environmental effects, to indicate the manner in which those significant effects can be mitigated or avoided, and to identify potentially feasible alternatives to the proposed project. This EIR is intended to inform the City’s decision makers and constituents, as well as responsible and trustee agencies, about the identified project impacts, mitigations, and alternatives. The City is required to consider the information contained in this EIR prior to taking any discretionary action to approve the proposed project.

This EIR has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended.

1.2 Methodology

This EIR has been prepared by EMC Planning Group under contract to the City. Information from private and public sources, as well as information generated by EMC Planning Group and its technical consultants through field investigation and analysis, is used as the basis for identifying project impacts and mitigation measures.

An EIR is an objective public disclosure document that takes no position on the merits of the proposed project. Therefore, the findings of this EIR do not advocate a position "for" or "against" the proposed project. Instead, the EIR provides objective technical and scientific information on which decisions about the proposed project can be based. This EIR has been prepared according to professional standards and in conformance with legal requirements.

Emphasis

This EIR focuses on the significant effects on the environment in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15143. The significant effects are discussed with emphasis in proportion to their severity and probability of occurrence.
Forecasting and Speculation

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15144, preparing this draft EIR necessarily involved some degree of forecasting. While foreseeing the unforeseeable is not possible, the authors have made their best efforts to find out and disclose all that they reasonably can about the proposed project. In doing so, they have used defensible, fact-based information for forecasting where forecasting was needed to identify potentially significant impacts and to formulate potentially feasible mitigation measures.

Degree of Specificity

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15146, the degree of specificity in this EIR corresponds to the degree of specificity involved in the proposed project. An EIR on a well-defined proposed development project will be more detailed than will be an EIR on policy or regulatory document (e.g. land use plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) where the resulting physical environmental changes cannot yet be precisely identified. An EIR on policy or regulatory project would focus on secondary effects from implementing the plan or regulations, but the EIR need not be as detailed as an EIR on the specific construction projects that might follow.

As is described in Section 4.0, Project Description, the proposed project includes a specific plan, but concrete development projects have only been proposed within a portion of the specific plan boundary (parcels 1 and 2), with no precise development having yet been proposed for the remainder (parcels 3 and 4). Consequently, impacts and mitigation measures for the specific development projects can be described at a higher level of detail than for a projected development scenario identified for the remainder of the project site.

Project-level versus Programmatic Analysis

As discussed in detail in Section 4.4, Approvals and Intended Uses of the EIR, this EIR addresses development proposed for parcels 1 and 2 within the proposed specific plan boundary at a project-level, meaning that this EIR is intended to suffice for all discretionary approvals required to develop those two parcels. However, because no specific development has yet been proposed for parcels 3 and 4, this EIR provides only programmatic review for those parcels. This means that future individual development projects proposed within parcels 3 and 4 will be subject to additional project-specific environmental review by the City. This EIR, then, is a combined project/program EIR.

Because this EIR functions as a program EIR for purposes of parcels 3 and 4, the City may also be able to rely on streamlining provisions found in section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, which sets forth the legal principles regarding the preparation and use of program EIRs.
The proposed project discussed in Section 4.2 includes “zoning actions”. The City, upon receiving future applications for specific development proposals on parcels 3 and 4, may also be able to rely on CEQA Guidelines section 15183 in order to streamline the processing of such projects. This provision generally limits the scope of necessary environmental review for site-specific approvals following the preparation of an EIR for a “zoning action.” For such site-specific approvals, CEQA generally applies only to impacts that are “peculiar to the parcel or to the project” and have not been previously disclosed, except where “substantial new information” shows that previously identified impacts would be more significant than previously assumed. Notably, impacts are considered not to be “peculiar to the parcel or to the project” if they can be substantially mitigated pursuant to previously adopted, uniformly applied development policies or standards.

**Technical Detail**

This EIR includes technical data, maps, plans, diagrams, and similar relevant information used to identify and disclose project impacts and mitigation measures to reviewing agencies and members of the public, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15147. Technical and specialized data is summarized in the body of the EIR. Detailed technical analyses and reports prepared for the proposed project are included as appendices on a CD on the inside, back cover of the EIR.

**Citation**

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15148, the analysis in this EIR is informed by many sources, including engineering reports and scientific documents. Documents referenced, but not included in the EIR as appendices are cited accordingly.

### 1.3 EIR PROCESS

There are several steps required in an EIR process. The major steps are briefly discussed below.

**Notice of Preparation**

CEQA Guidelines section 15082 describes the purpose, content and process for preparing, circulating and facilitating early public and public agency input on the scope of an EIR. CEQA Guidelines section 15375 defines a notice of preparation as:

…a brief notice sent by the Lead Agency to notify the Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, the Office of Planning and Research, and involved federal agencies that the Lead Agency plans to prepare an EIR for the project. The purpose of the notice is to solicit guidance from those agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR.
A notice of preparation was prepared for the proposed project and circulated for 30 days from October 22, 2016 to November 21, 2016, as required by CEQA. Six organizations and/or agencies provided written responses to the notice of preparation. Written responses to the NOP were received from the following:

1. California Department of Transportation, October 31, 2016;
2. Ohlone/Coastanoan-Esselen Nation, November 9, 2016;
3. Ag Land Trust, November 4, 2016;
4. Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County, November 18, 2016;
5. Transportation Agency for Monterey County, November 18, 2016; and

The notice of preparation and the written responses to it are included in Appendix A on CD on the inside back cover of this EIR.

As part of the early consultation process and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15082(c)(1) regarding projects of statewide importance and section 15083 regarding early public consultation, a scoping meeting was held at the City of Salinas Community Development Department, 65 West Alisal Street in Salinas, on November 17, 2016 at 2:00 PM. No organizations or agencies or members of the public attended the scoping meeting.

**Draft EIR**

**Contents**

This EIR is an informational document which will inform public agency decision makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effect of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable, potentially feasible alternatives to the project. The public agency is required to consider the information in the EIR along with other information which may be presented to the agency. CEQA Guidelines Article 9 requires a draft EIR contain the following information:

- Table of Contents;
- Summary;
- Project Description;
- Environmental Setting;
- Consideration and Discussion of Environmental Impacts;
Consideration and Discussion of Mitigation Measures Proposed to Minimize Significant Effects;

Consideration and Discussion of Alternatives to the Proposed Project;

Effects not found to be Significant;

Organization and Persons Consulted; and

Discussion of Cumulative Impacts.

The detailed contents of this draft EIR are outlined in the table of contents.

Public Review

This draft EIR will be circulated for a 45-day public review period. All comments received on the draft EIR will be addressed in the final EIR. CEQA Guidelines section 15204(a) states that in reviewing a draft EIR, persons and public agencies should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated. Comments are most helpful when they suggest additional specific alternatives or mitigation measures that would provide better ways to avoid or mitigate the significant environmental effects. At the same time, reviewers should be aware that the adequacy of an EIR is determined in terms of what is reasonably feasible, in light of factors such as the magnitude of the project at issue, the severity of its likely environmental impacts, and the geographic scope of the project. CEQA does not require a lead agency to conduct every test or perform all research, study, and experimentation recommended or demanded by commenters.

CEQA Guidelines section 15204(d) states that reviewers should explain the basis for their comments, and should submit data or references offering facts, reasonable assumptions based on facts, or expert opinion supported by facts in support of the comments. Pursuant to section 15064, an effect shall not be considered significant in the absence of substantial evidence.

Final EIR

Contents

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15132, the final EIR will provide the following:

- List of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the draft EIR;
- Comments received on the draft EIR;
- Responses to significant environmental points raised in comments; and
- Revisions that may be necessary to the draft EIR based upon the comments and responses.
According to CEQA Guidelines section 15204(a), when responding to comments, lead agencies need only respond to significant environmental issues and do not need to provide all information requested by reviewers, as long as a good faith effort at full disclosure is made in the EIR. The final EIR and the draft EIR will constitute the entire EIR.

Certification

CEQA Guidelines section 15088(b) requires the lead agency to provide a written proposed response to a public agency on comments made by that public agency at least 10 days prior to certifying an EIR.

CEQA Guidelines section 15090 requires lead agencies to certify the final EIR prior to approving a project. The lead agency shall certify that the final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, the final EIR was presented to the decision-making body of the lead agency, which reviewed and considered the information contained in the final EIR prior to approving the project, and that the final EIR reflects the lead agency’s independent judgment and analysis.

1.4 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESSES

This EIR identifies mitigation measures and other mechanisms such as conditions of approval and/or required consistency with policies, standards, and/or regulations that serve to reduce the significant environmental effects associated with the proposed project. As described in CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4(a)(2), mitigation measures must be fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally binding instruments. In the case of the adoption of a plan, policy, regulation, or other public project, mitigation measures can be incorporated into the plan, policy, regulation, or project design.

The City of Salinas will ensure the enforceability and implementation of mitigation measures and the consistency of proposed development with policies, standards, regulations and/or conditions of approval associated with the proposed Salinas Travel Center project through the City’s development review processes. As discussed in Section 4.2, Project Characteristics, the proposed project includes a specific plan, which sets forth design and development standards that supplement standards contained in the zoning code and apply only to future projects within the specific plan (project site) boundary. In addition to approval of the specific plan, future individual development projects will also be subject to the City’s site plan review or conditional use permit processes.

The site plan review process is described in Article VI, Division 5, Site Plan Review, of Chapter 37, Zoning, of the City of Salinas Municipal Code. The site plan review process is designed primarily to ensure that project development is consistent with standards contained in the zoning code. The site plan review process would also be used to ensure
compliance with: standards contained in the zoning code and specific plan; policies contained in the City of Salinas General Plan; mitigation measures included in this EIR; applicable regulations of other local, regional, state, and federal agencies; and any conditions of approval that the City may require.

The conditional use permit process is described in Article VI, Division 8, Conditional Use Permits, of Chapter 37, Zoning, of the City of Salinas Municipal Code. A conditional use permit may be required for an individual future project where flexibility in the application of land use and development regulations is needed and/or where a project may have unusual site development features or operating characteristics that require special consideration so that the project is designed, located, and/or operated to ensure compatibility with uses on adjoining properties and in the surrounding area. Like the site plan review process, the conditional use permit process would be used to ensure compliance with the following: standards contained in the zoning code and specific plan; policies contained in the City of Salinas General Plan; mitigation measures included in this EIR; applicable regulations of other local, regional, state, and federal agencies; and any conditions of approval that the City may require. The proposed specific plan identifies the types of future land use projects that would be subject to the site plan review process or the conditional use permit process.

As mentioned earlier and as discussed in Section 4.4, Approvals and Intended Uses of the EIR, this EIR addresses development proposed for parcels 1 and 2 within the proposed specific plan boundary at a project-level, meaning that this EIR is intended to suffice for all discretionary approvals required to develop those two parcels. However, because no specific development has yet been proposed for parcels 3 and 4, this EIR provides only programmatic review for those parcels. This means that future individual development projects proposed within parcels 3 and 4 will be subject to additional project-specific environmental review by the City. It is anticipated that, at a minimum, future individual projects within parcels 3 and 4 will undergo review pursuant to either the site plan review or conditional use permit processes.

1.5 TERMINOLOGY

Characterization of Impacts

This EIR uses the following terminology to denote the significance of environmental impacts.

No Impact

“No impact” means that no change from existing conditions is expected to occur.
Adverse Impact

A “less-than-significant impact” is an adverse impact, but would not cause a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in the physical environment, and no mitigation is required.

A “significant impact” or “potentially significant impact” would, or would potentially, cause a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in the physical environment, and mitigation is required.

A “less-than-significant impact with implementation of mitigation measures” means that the impact would cause no substantial adverse change in the physical environment if identified mitigation measures are adopted at the time of project approval and ultimately implemented.

A “significant and unavoidable impact” would cause a substantial change in the physical environment and cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; mitigation may be recommended, but will not reduce the impact to less-than-significant levels even if adopted and ultimately implemented.

Beneficial Impact

A “beneficial impact” is an impact that would result in a decrease in existing adverse conditions in the physical environment if the project is implemented.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AB  Assembly Bill
ADT  Average Daily Traffic
AFY  Acre Feet per Year
ALP  Agricultural Land Preservation Program
AMBAG  Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
APN  Assessor’s Parcel Number
AQMP  Air Quality Management Plan
BMP  Best Management Practices
C2F6  Hexafluoroethane
CalEEMod  California Emissions Estimator Model
CalGreen  Green Building Standards Code
Caltrans  California Department of Transportation
CARB  California Air Resources Board
1.0 Introduction

kWh  Kilowatt Hour
LAFCO  Local Agency Formation Commission
L_{dn}  Day-night averaged noise level (also referred to as DNL)
LED  Light-emitting Diode
L_{eq}  Energy-equivalent sound/noise descriptor
LID  Low Impact Design
LOS  Level of Service
MGD  Million Gallons Per Day
MLD  Most Likely Descendent
MM  Mitigation Measure
MMRP  Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
MMT  Million Metric Tons
MRWPCA  Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency
NPDES  National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NO  Nitrogen Dioxide
N_{2}O  Nitrous Oxide
NOC  Notice of Completion
NOP  Notice of Preparation
O_{3}  Ozone
PFC  Perfluorocarbon
PG&E  Pacific Gas & Electric Company
PM_{2.5}  Fine Particulate Matter 2.5 micrometers or less
PM_{10}  Particulate Matter 10 microns or less
PPM  Parts per Million
PPV  Peak Particle Velocity
ROG  Reactive Organic Gases
RTP  Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB  Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB  Senate Bill
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI</td>
<td>Sphere of Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWDS</td>
<td>Storm Water Development Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWMP</td>
<td>Storm Water Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWPPP</td>
<td>Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWRCB</td>
<td>State Water Resources Control Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAC</td>
<td>Toxic Air Contaminant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAMC</td>
<td>Transportation Agency for Monterey County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIA</td>
<td>Traffic Impact Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMDL</td>
<td>Total Maximum Daily Load</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPH</td>
<td>Total petroleum hydrocarbons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USACE</td>
<td>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDA</td>
<td>United States Department of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USFWS</td>
<td>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USGS</td>
<td>United States Geologic Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOC</td>
<td>Volatile Organic Compound</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This side intentionally left blank.
2.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15123 requires an EIR to contain a brief summary of the proposed project and its consequences. This summary identifies each significant effect and the proposed mitigation measures and alternatives to reduce or avoid that effect; areas of controversy known to the lead agency; and issues to be resolved, including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigate the significant effects.

This summary also includes a brief summary of the project description. Detailed project description information, including figures illustrating the project location and components, is included in Section 2.0, Project Description.

2.2 PROPOSED PROJECT SUMMARY

The proposed project includes a general plan amendment, a specific plan, pre-zoning, annexation, a parcel map, and site plan reviews for two individual proposed development projects, as summarized below.

General Plan Amendment

The project site is currently designated General Industrial in the City of Salinas General Plan. The proposed project includes a general plan amendment to redesignate a 2.19-acre portion of the project site Retail. This land use change is being requested to enable development of the hotel component of the proposed project as described in more detail in the Site Plan Review section below.

Specific Plan

The project site is located within a Future Growth Area as described in the City of Salinas General Plan. Consistent with City requirements, the applicant has prepared the draft Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan (Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar 2017), included as Appendix B of this EIR. The specific plan includes the following chapters: Introduction, Land Use and Development Regulations, Design Guidelines and Standards, Circulation and Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Utilities, Stormwater Management, Community Services and Facilities, and Implementation and Financing.
Annexation and Pre-zoning

The entire 64-acre project site is currently within unincorporated Monterey County. The proposed project includes annexation of the project site to the City of Salinas. The Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) will require the City to pre-zone the project site with zoning classifications that are consistent with the zoning code and which implement the existing/proposed general plan land use designations, prior to LAFCO taking action on the annexation. The zoning classifications would become effective upon LAFCO’s approval of the annexation.

Parcel Map

The applicant is proposing to divide the 34-acre developable portion of the project site into four parcels – parcels 1 through 4 and remainder. As described in the Site Plan Review section below, specific development projects are proposed for two of the parcels. The remaining two parcels are not proposed for development at this time.

Site Plan Review for Proposed Projects on Parcels 1 and 2

A 79-room hotel with an indoor pool area and parking is proposed on the 2.19-acre parcel 1. A travel center composed of a convenience store, branded fast-food restaurant, automobile and truck fueling stations, and a mechanic’s building is proposed on the 13.86-acre parcel 2. These projects are subject to review and approval through the City’s Site Plan Review process. This process will be completed by City staff subsequent to the City’s Council’s consideration of the remaining approvals (general plan amendment, specific plan, pre-zoning, annexation, and parcel map). Detailed information prepared by the applicant for these two projects is included in this EIR to enable evaluation of environmental impacts at the level of information available for proposed future development within the project site.

Future Development within Parcels 3 and 4

The applicant is not proposing specific development projects for parcels 3 or 4. Future projects proposed for these parcels would be considered when development applications are submitted to the City in the future. It is likely that future projects would be subject to approval by the City through either its Site Plan Review or Conditional Use Permit processes.

Proposed and Potential Development Capacity

Table 2-1, Proposed and Potential Building Capacity, includes a summary of the building development capacity within the specific plan area.
Table 2-1  Proposed and Potential Building Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
<th>Planned/Future End Use</th>
<th>Parcel Size (acres)¹</th>
<th>Building Capacity (square feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parcel 1</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>50,371 (Proposed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel 2</td>
<td>Fueling Stations, Convenience Store, Fast Food, Mechanic's Building</td>
<td>13.86</td>
<td>20,349 (Proposed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel 3</td>
<td>Industrial – To be determined</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>65,993 (Potential)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel 4</td>
<td>Industrial – To be determined</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>324,522 (Potential)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.98</td>
<td>461,235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Lane Engineers, Inc. 2016, EMC Planning Group 2016
NOTES:
¹The approximate 30-acre balance of the 64-acre site is comprised of Caltrans and City roadway rights-of-way.
²Building capacity based on 0.5 FAR for the General Industrial land use designation identified in the General Plan

2.3  SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project will have a range of significant impacts. Each of the significant impacts is identified in Table 2-2, Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures, located at the end of this Summary section. The table lists each significant impact by topic area, the level of significance of each impact, mitigation measures to avoid or substantially minimize each impact, and the level of significance of each impact after implementation of the mitigation measures. Note that impacts which are less than significant are not included in the table, including impacts that are less than significance with required conformance to regulations identified in the Regulatory Setting section of each environmental topic evaluated in the EIR.

2.4  SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR must address “a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” The project objectives are included in Section 2.0, Project Description.

The following project alternatives were considered and analyzed in detail in Section 24.0, Alternatives:

- Alternative 1: No Project Alternative

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6 (e) requires the “no project” alternative be evaluated along with its impacts. The “no project” alternative analysis must discuss
the existing conditions, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services. For purposes of identifying the no project alternative, “current plans” are Monterey County’s General Plan and zoning designations for the property, which is currently within the unincorporated County. The Monterey County 2010 General Plan designates the project site as Farmlands 40 acre minimum combined with an Urban Reserve designation. The zoning designations of the project site are Farmlands (F), 40 acre minimum (40) combined with Urban Reserve (UR).

The “no project” alternative assumes no development would occur and the project site would remain in its existing conditions. The portion of the project site in agricultural production would remain in agricultural production, and the portion of the project that is vacant land, would remain vacant land, although there is nothing to preclude the property owners from returning the vacant land to its historic agricultural use.

- **Alternative 2: Other Project Consistent with City General Plan**

  This alternative investigates what could be reasonably expected to occur on the project site in the reasonably foreseeable future if the proposed project were not approved, but the property is annexed into the City and brought under City jurisdiction, as contemplated in both the City of Salinas General Plan and the Monterey County General Plan. This alternative assumes the project site would be developed with uses consistent with the Salinas General Plan land use designation of General Industrial. Uses appropriate within this designation include food packing, trucking, container manufacturing and similar agricultural support uses. With a FAR of 0.5, a maximum of 740,520 square feet of building development could be permitted on the site. However, for purposes of this analysis, 461,230 square feet of building is assumed to be consistent with the proposed project so the impacts of this alternative are not overstated.

- **Alternative 3: Reduced Project Size (Parcel 1–Hotel and Parcel 2–Travel Center Only)**

  This alternative reduces the size of the project site and the building capacity associated with the proposed project by eliminating the development capacity of 390,510 square feet of building capacity for General Industrial end uses within parcels 3 and 4. The project site would be reduced to 16.05 acres, with 17.93 acres eliminated. All other aspects of the proposed project would remain the same. This alternative would include action by the City to ensure parcels 3 and 4 are not developed in the future, such as a general plan amendment to remove the parcels from the city’s sphere of influence, redesignating the parcels Agriculture, placing the two parcels into a conservation easement, or two or more of these or other options.
• Alternative 4: Reduced Project Size (Parcel 1–Hotel, Parcel 2–Travel Center, and Parcel 3–General Industrial Only)

This alternative reduces building capacity by eliminating the development capacity of 324,522 square feet for General Industrial end uses assumed within parcel 4. Other uses included in the proposed project would remain the same, with remaining building capacity at 136,713 square feet. The project site would be reduced to 19.08 acres, with 14.90 acres within parcel 4 being eliminated. This alternative would include action by the City to ensure parcel 4 is not developed, such as a general plan amendment to remove the parcel from the city’s sphere of influence, redesignating the parcel Agriculture, or placing it into a conservation easement, or other options.

• Alternative 5: Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2–Travel Center Only)

This alternative includes only future development of the travel center on parcel 2. It reduces building capacity from 461,235 square feet to 20,349 square feet, a total 440,881 square feet, or 95 percent. This alternative would include parcel 1 to avoid creating an island of unincorporated land. Parcels 1 and 2 consist of a total of 16.05 acres. However, development would occur only on the 13.86 acres within parcel 2, a reduction of 60 percent of the developable acreage relative to the proposed project. This alternative would include action by the City to ensure that parcels 1, 3, and 4 are not developed, such as a general plan amendment to remove parcels 3 and 4 from the city’s sphere of influence, redesignating the parcels Agriculture, or placing them into a conservation easement, or two or more of these or other options.

Environmentally Superior Alternative

The no project alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. It is superior because it would avoid all impacts of the proposed project. Of the remaining alternatives, Alternative 4, Reduced Project Size (Parcel 1–Hotel, Parcel 2–Travel Center, and Parcel 3–General Industrial Only) is the environmentally superior alternative. This alternative substantially lessens the significant unavoidable impact of the proposed project from conversion of important farmland to non-agricultural use. However, Alternative 4 also creates a significant unavoidable impact on groundwater by increasing demand for groundwater pumping. Nevertheless, this effect of Alternative 4 is reduced relative to all other alternatives except Alternative 2, but Alternative 2 does not substantially lessen the significant unavoidable impact of the proposed project from conversion of important farmland.

Alternative 4 would meet the objectives of the project. However, for the following objectives, Alternative 4 would meet the objectives to a lesser degree than the proposed project:

• Provide jobs to support the current and future population of the City of Salinas;
2.0 Summary

- Annex a portion of the Salinas Airport West Future Growth Area described in the General Plan to provide a catalyst for new economic development; and
- Generate tax revenues to the City from new retail and industrial development within the project site.

2.5 AREAS OF KNOWN CONTROVERSY

CEQA Guidelines section 15123, subdivision (b)(2) provides that the EIR shall identify “areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency including issues raised by agencies and the public.”

Although the lead agency is not aware of controversial issues associated with the proposed project, through the NOP process, a range of topics and issues were recommended for analysis in the EIR analysis. Issues included, but may not be limited to:

- Conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural use and mitigation in the form of agricultural conservation easements;
- Buffering proposed urban development from on-going, adjacent agricultural activities within the County;
- Impacts on transportation facilities within the jurisdiction of Caltrans;
- Air quality impacts and noise impacts on future employees;
- Pedestrian and bicycle access;
- Measures to reduce mobile source air and greenhouse gas emissions;
- Consistency with LAFCO policies; and
- Potential impacts on cultural resources.
### Table 2-2  Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Impact</th>
<th>Significance Level without Mitigation</th>
<th>Mitigation Measure(s)</th>
<th>Significance Level after Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agricultural Resources</strong></td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>AG-1 Developers of the proposed hotel project, the travel center project, and future projects within parcels 3 and 4 shall provide mitigation for conversion of Farmland (Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland) to non-agricultural use. At a minimum, mitigation shall include dedication of a permanent agricultural conservation easement to a qualified third-party farmland conservation entity on off-site agricultural land of equal or better quality at a ratio of 1:1. Individual developers shall demonstrate compliance with this mitigation measure to the Community Development Director prior to issuance of grading permits for individual projects.</td>
<td>Significant and Unavoidable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert 24.89 Acres of Prime Farmland, 5.73 Acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 2.50 Acres of Unique Farmland to Non-Agricultural Use</td>
<td><strong>Significant</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Air Quality</strong></td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>AQ-1 To reduce fugitive dust emissions from grading and construction activities associated with the proposed hotel and travel center projects, and from future projects within parcels 3 and 4, the following measures shall be included on all grading and construction plans for these projects, prior to issuance of a grading permit:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation of Fugitive Dust Emissions from Grading on more than 2.2 Acres and Construction on more than 8.1 Acres</td>
<td><strong>Significant</strong></td>
<td>▪ Water areas of active disturbed soils at least twice daily or as necessary to prevent visible dust leaving the site, using raw or recycled water when feasible.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Apply chemical soil stabilizers or dust suppressants on disturbed soils that will not be actively graded for a period of four or more consecutive days.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Apply non-toxic binders and/or hydro seed to disturbed soils on which grading is completed, but on which more than four days will pass prior to paving, foundation construction, or placement of other permanent cover.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Cover or otherwise stabilize stockpiles which will not be actively used for a period of four or more consecutive days, or water at least twice daily as necessary to prevent visible dust leaving the site, using raw or recycled water when feasible.</td>
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<td>▪ Maintain at least 20&quot; of freeboard and cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand, or loose materials.</td>
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<td>▪ Install wheel washers at all construction site exit points, and sweep streets if visible soil material is carried onto paved surfaces.</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2.0 Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Impact</th>
<th>Significance Level without Mitigation</th>
<th>Mitigation Measure(s)</th>
<th>Significance Level after Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ▪ Stop grading and earth moving if winds exceed 15 miles per hour.  
▪ Pave roads, driveways, and parking areas at the earliest point feasible within the construction schedule.  
▪ Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The phone number of the air district shall also be visible to ensure compliance with Rule 402 (Nuisance). |  |  | |
| **Biological Resources** |  |  | |
| **Loss of a Congdon's Tarplant Population** | Significant | BIO-1 To compensate for loss of a Congdon's tarplant population, the developer of parcel 1 on which the population is located shall retain a qualified biologist or native plant specialist to collect seed from all annual Congdon's tarplant individuals within the impact area at the optimal time (after its blooming period) and prior to issuance of a grading permit. The project developer and the Community Development Director shall oversee selection of an appropriate mitigation area, preferably on the project site, or in the immediate vicinity, that would not be disturbed in the future.  
After City approval of the proposed mitigation area, a qualified biologist shall develop a Habitat Management Plan detailing optimal methods for Congdon's tarplant seed collection from the impact area, preparation of the mitigation area, and seed installation at the mitigation area. The Habitat Management Plan shall also include maintenance measures to manage the rare plant occurrence for long-term protection and persistence at the mitigation area, which for this species would likely include periodic site disturbance. Collected seed shall be installed at the mitigation area at the optimal time. Topsoil from the on-site occurrence location shall also be salvaged (if practical) for use in the mitigation area.  
The Habitat Management Plan shall require at a minimum three years of annual monitoring by a qualified biologist during the plant's peak blooming period to ensure that mitigation was successful and that long-term maintenance procedures specified in the plan are creating conditions that support survival of the transplanted Congdon's tarplant population. Though the population size of this annual plant is expected to vary in the mitigation area from year to year depending on environmental conditions, because 103 individual plants were observed in the impact area in 2016, at least that many individuals must exist in the mitigation area during at least one of the three years following installation. If this success criteria is not achieved, the project developer shall coordinate with the City to | Less than Significant |
The project applicant shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure with oversight by the Community Development Director. Compliance with this measure shall be documented and submitted to the City Community Development Director.

To avoid/minimize potential impacts to burrowing owls, individual project developers will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a two-visit (i.e. morning and evening) presence/absence survey at areas of suitable habitat on and adjacent to their individual project sites no less than 14 days prior to the start of construction. Surveys will be conducted according to methods described in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFW 2012). If these pre-construction “take avoidance” surveys performed during the breeding season (February through August) or the non-breeding season (September through January) locate occupied burrows in or near construction areas, the qualified biologist will interpret survey results and develop a plan for project-specific avoidance, minimization, and compensation for habitat loss. The CDFW will be notified of the observation and provided a copy of the plan.

Where there is insufficient habitat on, adjacent to, or near project sites where burrowing owls will be impacted, acquisition of off-site mitigation lands with occupied burrowing owl habitat may be required in consultation with the CDFW. Compensation may take the form of: a) acquiring and dedicating lands into conservation easements; b) purchasing mitigation credits at compensation ratios that have been approved by the CDFW; or c) preserving area contiguous or near the acreage lost.

To avoid possible impacts to nesting birds on and adjacent to the project site, if noise generation, ground disturbance, vegetation removal, or other construction activities begin during the nesting bird season (February 1 to September 15), or if construction activities are suspended for at least two weeks and recommence during the nesting bird season, individual project developers shall retain a qualified biologist acceptable to the City to conduct a pre-construction survey for nesting birds. The survey shall be performed within...
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Significant Impact</th>
<th>Significance Level without Mitigation</th>
<th>Mitigation Measure(s)</th>
<th>Significance Level after Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Waters of the State and U.S. Potentially under Jurisdiction of the RWQCB [0.23-acre] and the USACE [0.08-acre]</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>BIO-4 Prior to initiation of ground disturbance or construction activities, the developer of parcel 2 shall retain a qualified biologist to determine the extent of the drainage ditch regulated by the USACE and RWQCB. If the USACE claims jurisdiction, the developer shall retain a qualified biologist to obtain a Clean Water Act Section 404 Nationwide Permit. If the proposed ditch impact does not qualify for a Nationwide Permit, the developer shall proceed with the qualified biologist in obtaining an Individual Permit from the USACE. The developer shall then retain a qualified biologist to coordinate with the Central Coast RWQCB to obtain a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification. To compensate for temporary and/or permanent impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. that will be impacted as a result of the proposed project, mitigation will be provided as required by the regulatory permits. Mitigation would be provided through one of the following mechanisms:</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Salinas Travel Center Draft EIR

**Significant Impact** | **Significance Level without Mitigation** | **Mitigation Measure(s)** | **Significance Level after Mitigation**
--- | --- | --- | ---

a. A Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will be developed that will outline mitigation and monitoring obligations for temporary impacts to wetlands and other waters as a result of construction activities. The Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan would include thresholds of success, monitoring and reporting requirements, and site-specific plans to compensate for wetland losses resulting from the project. The Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will be submitted to the appropriate regulatory agencies for review and approval during the permit application process.

b. To compensate for permanent impacts, the purchase and/or dedication of land to provide suitable wetland restoration or creation will ensure a no net loss of wetland values or functions. If restoration is available and feasible, a minimum 1:1 impact to mitigation ratio would apply to projects for which mitigation is provided in advance.

The developer of parcel 2 shall comply with terms and conditions of the permits, including measures to protect and maintain water quality, restoration of work sites, and mitigation to offset temporary and/or permanent wetland impacts. The developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure prior to issuance of a grading permit, with oversight by the Community Development Director.

### Cultural Resources

| Potential for Construction Activities Such as Excavations, Grading, or Trenching Associated with Development within the Project Site to Adversely Affect Historical Resources and/or Unique Archaeological Resources | Significant | CR-1 | Less than Significant |
--- | --- | --- | ---

The following language shall be included in any permit associated with earth moving activities for development projects proposed within the project site:

In the event that evidence of archaeological or historical features or deposits (e.g., ceramic shard, trash scatters, lithic scatters) are uncovered during excavation and/or grading, all work shall stop in the area of the subject property until an appropriate data recovery program can be developed and implemented by a qualified archaeologist. This archaeologist shall determine whether the uncovered deposits or features qualify as either "historical resources" within the meaning of CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, subdivision (a), "unique archaeological resources" as defined in Public Resources Code section 21083.2, subdivision (g), or "tribal cultural resources," as defined in Public Resources Code section 21074. If historical resources, unique archaeological resources, or tribal cultural resources are present, the project proponent shall preserve any such resources or implement any feasible mitigation measures identified by the archaeologist and imposed by the City. Recommended mitigation measures shall be reviewed by the...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Impact</th>
<th>Significance Level without Mitigation</th>
<th>Mitigation Measure(s)</th>
<th>Significance Level after Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potential for Disturbance of Unknown Native American Human Remains from Construction Activities Including Grading and Excavations within the Project Site</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Community Development Director and shall be approved if feasible in light of project design, logistics, and cost considerations and, if approved, shall be implemented and completed prior to approval of a grading permit, unless otherwise directed by the Community Development Director. Data recovery shall be an option if preservation in place is infeasible. Where resources have been determined to be “unique archaeological resources” but not “historical resources” or “tribal cultural resources,” the project proponent’s obligations shall be limited as set forth in Public Resources Code section 21083.2, subdivisions (d), (e), and (f).</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If human remains are found during construction within the project site, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the construction site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until an archeological monitor and the coroner of Monterey County are contacted. If it is determined that the remains are Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descendent (MLD) from the deceased Native American. The MLD may then make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code section 5097.98. The landowner or his authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance if: a) the Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a MLD or the MLD failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission; b) the descendent identified fails to make a recommendation; or c) the landowner or his authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendent, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.</td>
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<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for Destruction or Loss of Unique Paleontological Resources from Ground Disturbing Development Activities within Project Site</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>CR-3 The following language shall be included in any permit associated with earth moving activities for development projects proposed within the annexation area: In the event that evidence of paleontological resources are uncovered during excavation and/or grading, all work shall stop in the immediate area until a qualified paleontologist can assess the scientific significance of the paleontological resources and, if they are significant, until an appropriate data recovery program can be developed and implemented. The Community Development Director shall</td>
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<td>Less than Significant</td>
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### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Significant Impact</th>
<th>Significance Level</th>
<th>Mitigation Measure(s)</th>
<th>Significance Level after Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Project-Generated GHG Emissions that Would Impede Attainment of State GHG Emissions Reduction Goals | Significant        | GHG-1 Prior to issuance of a building permit for each individual project proposed within the project site, individual project developers shall prepare a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Plan for their respective projects. Each GHG Reduction Plan shall be designed to reduce GHG emissions from each individual project to 3.51 MT CO2e per service population per year. This threshold is based on an assumed buildout year of 2025 for individual projects. A higher threshold of significance may be warranted for projects that build out prior to 2025 based on Senate Bill 32 and/or other legislation that may be adopted prior to the buildout year for individual projects. For such projects, individual project developers may provide substantial evidence that a higher threshold of significance is warranted. The evidence shall be based on the threshold of significance determination methodology utilized in this EIR. Any proposed change in the threshold of significance shall be subject to review and approval of the City of Salinas Planning Commission. The GHG Reduction Plan shall include the GHG reduction measures listed below and shall quantify the project-specific GHG reductions achieved with the measures. Additional measures may be added by the developer. Reductions from measures required by regulations of the City of Salinas (e.g. facilities trip reduction plan) and/or of the state (e.g. SB 350 renewable energy standard for 2030 and Advanced Clean Car Standards) may be included. The Reduction Plan shall list all of the required and additional measures (if any), identify reductions associated with each, and provide evidence supporting the level of reduction calculated for each. All measures within the control of individual project applicants shall be implemented and operational prior to occupancy of the associated project. The following on-site GHG reduction measures shall be included in the plan. Other feasible reduction measures may be substituted for the measures listed below provided they achieve a similar volume of reductions:  
  - Design buildings to exceed the Title 24 energy efficiency standards currently in effect by at least 10 percent. The 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards are the standards currently in effect.  
  - Provide on-site renewable energy to replace demand for grid electricity. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Impact</th>
<th>Mitigation Measure(s)</th>
<th>Significance Level after Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Rooftop solar installations and/or ground-mounted installations may be feasible options for on-site energy production. | **Rooftop solar installations and/or ground-mounted installations may be feasible options for on-site energy production.**  
- Exceed higher than mandated parking lot and area energy efficient lighting standards.  
- Incorporate indoor water conservation measures, such as use of ultra-low-flow toilets and faucets (bathrooms).  
- Incorporate low flow irrigation that exceeds requirements of the City of Salinas Zoning Code Section 37-50.330 and the state Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.  
- Install Energy Star appliances in all buildings.  
- Include the necessary infrastructure in the project design (e.g. physical design, energy, and fueling) to support the deployment of zero emission technologies now and into the future, including electric vehicle charging stations for passenger cars and heavy-duty trucks (the latter especially for the proposed travel center project), zero emission battery electric and hybrid electric passenger vehicles and electric forklifts.  
- Electrify loading docks.  
- Provide and prioritize locations of parking for electric cars and trucks.  
- Include sufficient plug-in capabilities for transport refrigeration units to eliminate the time that a refrigeration system is powered by a fossil-fueled internal combustion engine while at the site (proposed travel center project only). | |

If the on-site GHG emissions reduction measures identified in each GHG reduction plan combined with reductions from City of Salinas and/or state regulatory reductions are insufficient to reduce project emissions to below the threshold of significance, individual project developers may then secure additional emissions reductions through off-site GHG reduction programs and/or through purchase of carbon off-sets.  
Each GHG Reduction Plan is subject to review and approval by the Community Development Director prior to approval of building permits for the subject project.
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<td>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td><strong>HAZ-1</strong> Prior to the issuance of grading permits for development within parcels 1, 3 and 4, developers of individual projects shall prepare Phase I Environmental Site Assessments to determine the potential for or actual presence of agricultural chemical residues that could pose a risk to the public health or workers. If potential or actual hazardous materials conditions are identified that require preparation of Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, future individual project developers shall be responsible for conducting the assessments and for implementing all recommendations and requirements for remediation of hazardous materials conditions identified therein. Performance standards in the form of Environmental Screening Levels utilized by the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board and identified in the <em>User's Guide: Derivation and Application of Environmental Screening Levels</em> will be used to determine whether hazardous material conditions that pose a threat to public health and safety are present and as a guide for clean-up levels that must be attained to remediate such conditions. Hazardous materials removed from the site shall be managed consistent with regulations contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Division 4.5. Certification that remediation actions have been completed shall be provided to the City of Salinas Community Development Director prior to issuance of a grading permit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pose Hazards to Public Health or the Environment from Exposure to Agricultural Chemical Residues in Site Soils during Construction</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td><strong>HAZ-2</strong> Prior to the issuance of grading permits for development within parcel 2, the project developer shall prepare a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. If hazardous materials conditions related to agricultural chemical residues in site soils are found that pose a threat to public health and safety, the project developer shall implement all remediation actions identified in the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. Performance standards in the form of Environmental Screening Levels utilized by the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board and identified in the <em>User's Guide: Derivation and Application of Environmental Screening Levels</em> will be used to determine whether hazardous material conditions that pose a threat to public health and safety are present and as an initial guide for clean-up levels that must be attained to remediate such conditions. Hazardous materials removed from the site shall be managed consistent with regulations contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Division 4.5. Certification that remediation actions have been completed shall be provided to the City of Salinas Community Development Director.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hazards to Public Health or the Environment from Exposure to Aerially Deposited Lead in Soils Located along U.S. Highway 101 that may be Disturbed by Construction Activities</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Prior to the issuance of grading permits for development, developers of individual projects within the project site that are located adjacent to U.S. Highway 101 shall retain a certified industrial hygienist or similar licensed professional to provide evidence about the potential presence of aerially deposited lead in soils within the individual project boundaries. If evidence suggests the presence of aerially deposited lead, developers shall retain a qualified expert to conduct soil testing for aerially deposited lead in locations where project grading and excavations may have potential to result in release of this material. The testing scope should include preparation of a site-specific work plan specifying surface sample or soil boring locations, sample collection, laboratory analysis, and preparation of findings, and recommendations. The testing report must identify lead concentrations in such locations and whether the lead concentration exceeds the Environmental Screening Level for lead identified in the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board’s User’s Guide: Derivation and Application of Environmental Screening Levels. The Environmental Screening Level will be used as a guide for clean-up levels that must be attained to remediate contamination if such exists and exceeds the Environmental Screening Level. Hazardous materials removed from the site shall be managed consistent with regulations contained in California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Division 4.5. Certification that remediation actions have been completed shall be provided to the City of Salinas Community Development Director.</td>
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The project developer shall prepare a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. If hazardous materials conditions related to agricultural chemical residues in site soils are found that pose a threat to public health and safety, the project developer shall implement all remediation actions identified in the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. Performance standards in the form of Environmental Screening Levels utilized by the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board and identified in the User’s Guide: Derivation and Application of Environmental Screening Levels will be used to determine whether hazardous material conditions that pose a threat to public health and safety are present and as an initial guide for clean-up levels that must be attained to remediate such conditions. Hazardous materials removed from the site, if any, shall be managed consistent with regulations contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Division 4.5.
To initiation of project related ground disturbance activities in those locations.

HAZ-4 If the aerially deposited lead testing program identified in mitigation measure HAZ-3 identifies the presence of hazardous concentrations of lead in soils to be excavated or graded, project developers shall prepare and implement a worker health and safety plan training program. To avoid health effects on construction personnel, all personnel who may come in contact with contaminated soil will be trained in accordance with applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards contained in 8 California Code of Regulations 5192 (e), Training. A site-specific worker health and safety plan defining potential contaminants and, where appropriate, proper personnel protective equipment will be employed. Worker training will be completed prior to initiation of ground disturbance in the hazard areas.

### Noise

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<tr>
<td>Expose Proposed Project Hotel Room Interiors to Noise Levels in Excess of State Standards</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>N-1 A suitable form of forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) to be identified in coordination with the City of Salinas Building Department shall be installed at the hotel to ensure that interior noise levels in all rooms are less than 45 dBA. The applicant for the hotel project shall provide evidence to the City of Salinas Building Department that interior noise levels will meet this standard prior to the issuance of a building permit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expose Travel Center Buildings to Interior Noise Levels in Excess of State Standards</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>N-2 A suitable form of forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) to be identified in coordination with the City of Salinas Building Department shall be installed to service travel center buildings that are designed to remain fully closed (e.g. convenience store, fast food restaurant, etc.) to ensure that interior noise levels are less than 45 dBA. The applicant for the travel center project shall provide evidence to the City of Salinas Building Department that interior noise levels will meet this standard prior to the issuance of a building permit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expose Interiors within Future Buildings within Parcel 4 to Noise Levels in Excess of State Standards</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>N-3 A suitable form of forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) to be identified in coordination with the City of Salinas Building Department shall be installed in future buildings within parcel 4 to ensure that interior noise levels are less than 45 dBA. The applicant(s) for future development within parcel 4 shall provide evidence to the City of Salinas Building Department that interior noise levels will meet this standard prior to the issuance of a building permit.</td>
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### Summary

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<td>Noise Generation from Future Operations within Parcels 3 and 4 that Affects the Adjacent Proposed Travel Center Uses and Existing Industrial Uses to the East</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>N-4 Potential impacts on adjacent commercial uses within parcel 2 and on existing industrial uses located to the east of parcels 3 and 4 from mechanical equipment employed in future development within parcels 3 and 4 shall be assessed in acoustical studies for each project proposed within parcels 3 and 4. The studies shall identify whether mechanical equipment noise will exceed City standards at the respective property lines of the commercial and industrial uses as identified in municipal code Table 37-50.50, Maximum Noise Standards. If standards are exceeded, methods to reduce noise exposure to levels below the applicable standard shall be identified and included as conditions of approval for the future use(s). Measures could include, but are not limited to: placing noise generating equipment as far from the affected uses as possible, and/or employing noise controls such as fan silencers, equipment enclosures, and screen walls. Prior to approval of individual projects within parcels 3 and 4, the City of Salinas Building Department will be responsible for reviewing the noise study(s) and ensuring that noise attenuation measures are included incorporated into individual projects required.</td>
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| Construction Noise from Development of the Proposed Hotel with Potential to Adversely Affect the Adjacent Off-Site Motel 6 Use | Significant                          | N-5 The applicant for the proposed hotel project on parcel 1 shall prepare a construction noise attenuation plan which shall be implemented during hotel construction activities. The plan shall be subject to review and approval by the Community Development Director, prior to the issuance of a grading permit. The construction noise attenuation plan shall include the following best management practices to reduce construction noise at the common property line with the adjacent Motel 6 to the north of parcel 1:  
  - Restrict noise-generating activities at construction sites or in areas adjacent to construction sites to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Construction shall be prohibited on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays unless prior written approval is granted by the building official.  
  - Construct temporary noise barriers, where feasible, to screen stationary noise-generating equipment. Temporary noise barrier fences would provide a 5 dBA noise reduction if the noise barrier interrupts the line-of-sight between the noise source and receiver and if the barrier is constructed in a manner that eliminates any cracks or gaps.  
  - Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.  
  - Prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.  
  - Locate stationary noise-generating equipment, such as air compressors or | Less than Significant |
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| Portable power generators, as far as possible from the Motel 6 as feasible. If they must be located near the motel, adequate muffling (with enclosures where feasible and appropriate) shall be used to reduce noise levels. Any enclosure openings or venting shall face away from the motel. | - Utilize "quiet" air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.  
- Construction staging areas shall be established at locations that will create the greatest distance between the construction-related noise sources and the Motel 6 during all project construction.  
- Locate material stockpiles, as well as maintenance/equipment staging and parking areas, as far as feasible from the Motel 6.  
- Route all construction traffic via designated truck routes where possible. Prohibit construction related heavy truck traffic in residential areas where feasible.  
- Control noise from construction workers’ radios to a point where they are not audible at the adjacent Motel 6.  
- The contractor shall prepare a detailed construction schedule for major noise-generating construction activities. The construction plan shall identify a procedure for coordination with the adjacent Motel 6 use so that construction activities can be scheduled to minimize noise disturbance.  
- Designate a "disturbance coordinator" who would be responsible for responding to any complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator will determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., bad muffler, etc.) and will require that reasonable measures be implemented to correct the problem. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the disturbance coordinator at the construction site and include in it the notice sent to the Motel 6 regarding the construction schedule. |                                                                                                                                           |                                      |

### Transportation

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| Degraded Performance of Seven City-Controlled Intersections Due to Traffic Generated by the Proposed Project | Significant        | TRANS-1 Prior to issuance of building permits, all developers of individual projects within the specific plan area shall pay a fair share of the cost of a traffic signal at Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre (South), which would restore the intersection from unacceptable LOS F to an acceptable LOS A during the PM peak hour.  
TRANS-2 Prior to issuance of the first building permit, either the hotel developer | Less than Significant |
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| or the travel center developer (whichever is first to request a building permit) shall construct a traffic signal at Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre (South). Traffic generated by only 20 percent of total development capacity proposed for these projects combined triggers the need for this improvement. The subject developer shall enter into a reimbursement agreement with the City of Salinas for reimbursement of costs when fair-share costs are paid by developers of all other projects within the specific plan area as required pursuant to mitigation measure TRANS-1. Traffic signal design and construction shall be subject to review and approval by the City of Salinas Public Works Department. The City of Salinas Public Works Department shall ensure that the improvements have been completed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for the subject project. TRANS-3 Prior to issuance of building permits, all developers of individual projects within the specific plan area shall pay a fair share of the cost of a traffic signal at Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramps. This improvement would restore the intersection from unacceptable LOS F to an acceptable LOS C during the PM peak hour. TRANS-4 Prior to issuance of a building permit, the developer of the future individual project within Phase 2 of the project (within parcels 3 or 4) whose traffic generation represents more than 82 percent of the projected PM peak traffic volume for Phase 2 as shown in TIA Table 15, Fair Share Analysis, shall construct a traffic signal at Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramps. The developer shall enter into a reimbursement agreement with the City of Salinas for reimbursement of costs when fair-share costs are paid by developers of all other projects within the specific plan area as required pursuant to mitigation measure TRANS-3. Traffic signal design and construction shall be subject to review and approval by the City of Salinas Public Works Department. The City of Salinas Public Works Department shall ensure that the improvements have been completed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for the subject project. TRANS-5 Prior to issuance of building permits, all developers of individual projects within the specific plan area shall pay a fair share of the cost of a traffic signal at Skyway Boulevard/Airport Boulevard. This improvement would restore the intersection from unacceptable LOS F to an acceptable LOS C during the PM peak hour. TRANS-6 Prior to issuance of the first building permit, either the hotel developer or the travel center developer (whichever is first to request a building permit) shall restripe the eastbound right-turn lane on Airport Boulevard to a shared left- and right-turn lane and reconfigure the intersection so that the eastbound Airport
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient Provision of Transit Facilities</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>TRANS-7 Each applicant for individual future projects proposed within parcels 3 and 4 shall consult with Monterey-Salinas Transit to determine whether the individual project triggers the need to provide transit. Such facilities could include bus stops, shelters, pull-outs, or other improvements deemed warranted by Monterey-Salinas Transit. Each applicant shall provide written evidence from Monterey-Salinas Transit as part of the project level entitlement application which verifies whether the project triggers the need for transit facilities. The information may be verified at the discretion of the Community Development Director. If facilities are needed, the applicant shall provide facility improvement plans designed to Monterey-Salinas Transit specifications to the City as part of the project application. The improvement plans shall be subject to review and approval of the Public Works Department and shall be installed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit.</td>
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SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017
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3.0 Environmental Setting

3.1 Project Location, and Site and Vicinity Setting

The City of Salinas has received applications requesting a series of approvals pertaining to a 64-acre site. If approved, the proposed project would result in annexation of the 64-acre site, and development of a portion of it with a regional travel center and a hotel. The balance of the annexation area would be reserved for future development with uses that are currently undefined, but allowed per the Industrial land use designation that applies to them, and as defined in the draft Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan.

In the remainder of this EIR, the terms “project site”, “annexation area”, “specific plan area”, and “specific plan boundary” are used interchangeably to refer to the overall 64-acre area that is addressed in this EIR.

Project Site Location

The project site is located adjacent to U.S. Highway 101, just south of the existing city limits within the unincorporated area of Monterey County. Figure 3-1, Project Location, shows the regional and broader project site vicinity. A significant portion of the site is comprised of rights-of-way for adjacent roadways that include De La Torre, Roy Diaz Street, U.S. Highway 101, and U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A that traverses through the central portion of the site. The project site is part of a larger 261-acre parcel identified as assessor’s parcel number 177-131-011.

Surrounding land uses include commercial uses to the north; business park (light industrial and offices) and the Salinas Municipal Airport to the east; actively farmed agricultural fields to the south; and motels and fast-food restaurants and U.S. Highway 101 to the west. Industrial uses are located on the opposite side of U.S. Highway 101 to the west.

Project Site Setting

The project site is gently sloping. Elevations range from a low of about 50 feet to a high of about 65 feet. Along much of its southeastern and southern boundary, the project site is elevated above adjacent off-site lands. A topographic break that ranges to a maximum of about 10 feet between the site boundary and adjacent off-site lands creates a landform separation between the site and the adjacent properties.
The project site has historically been used for agricultural production. The Monterey County 2010 General Plan designates the site as Farmlands 40 acre minimum combined with an Urban Reserve designation. The zoning designations are Farmlands (F), 40 acre minimum (40) combined with Urban Reserve (UR).
The approximately 16.05-acre vacant portion north of Ramp 326A that is outside existing road rights-of-way has been fallow since 2012 when construction on the new Ramp 326A, De La Torre, and Roy Diaz Street roadways was completed. The approximately 17.93-acre area south of Ramp 326A remains actively farmed. More information about agricultural resources within the project site can be found in Section 6.0, Agricultural Resources.
The project site includes the following: disturbed areas that are generally devoid of vegetation due to mechanical clearing, regular compaction by vehicles, etc.; actively farmed area (currently in strawberry production); and ornamental (landscaped) areas within the Caltrans right-of-way. There are no trees, though several mature non-native gum trees (Eucalyptus sp.) are located adjacent to the northwestern edge of the site. Many areas within the site contain an understory of non-native grasses and ruderal (weedy) species. A man-made drainage ditch traverses north to south through the northern portion of the site. It collects storm water from developed areas west of U.S. Highway 101, the highway and highway ramps, and from portions of the adjacent surface streets, and conveys it through the project site for discharge into the Reclamation Ditch located off-site to the east. The Reclamation Ditch is a regional storm water/flood control facility operated by the Monterey County Water Resources Agency. More information about biological resources conditions within the site, including the potential for the drainage ditch to be regulated by federal and state agencies, can be found in Section 8.0, Biological Resources.
There are no buildings on the project site.
The primary environmentally sensitive features of the site include its high visibility from U.S. Highway 101, its prior and current agricultural resource value, and potentially the on-site drainage channel and its associated biological resource value.

Figure 3-2, Aerial Photograph, shows local roadways, the existing city limit line, existing site conditions, adjacent land uses, other notable site and nearby features. Figure 3-3, Site Photographs, shows representative existing conditions and features within the project site.

**Vicinity Setting**
The project site lies at the transition between developed areas within the city limits that border the site on three sides and the broad expanse of agricultural land south of the site within unincorporated Monterey County that extends south down the Salinas Valley. The fact that a portion of the project site contains actively farmed agricultural land and is located adjacent to actively farmed agricultural land gives rise to common land use and environmental resources issues related to direct and indirect conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural use. These issues are described in Section 6.0, Agricultural Resources.
Figure 3-1
Location Map
Salinas Travel Center EIR
Figure 3-2
Aerial Photograph
Salinas Travel Center EIR
3.0 Environmental Setting

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Figure 3-3

Project Site

1. View to southwest of existing off-site motel
2. View west across vacant portion of project site
3. View to northeast across active agricultural use within project site
4. View to west showing topographic break/slope along south boundary of project site

Source: ESRI 2016, City of Salinas 2016
Photographs: EMC Planning Group 9/2016
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The site is bordered by developed uses within the city that include hotels and commercial uses to the north and northwest, industrial uses to the west on the opposite side of U.S. Highway 101, and industrial and office uses located within the boundary of the Salinas Municipal Airport on the east. The active airport facilities themselves lay further east beyond the industrial and office uses. The proximity of the airport and the potential for its operations to affect future uses within the project site and vice-versa (e.g. noise, aircraft approach and departure safety, etc.) are discussed in detail in Section 12.0, Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

### 3.2 REGIONAL SETTING

Salinas is located at the northern end of the Salinas Valley and about eight miles southeast of the Monterey Bay. The city encompasses approximately 23.2 square miles and is surrounded by unincorporated Monterey County on all sides.

U.S. Highway 101 is the primary transportation route through the Salinas Valley to points north and south of the city. State Route 68 provides access between the Monterey Peninsula and Salinas. State routes 183 and 156 also are important transportation corridors in the immediate area.

The area around Salinas is primarily agricultural land in active agricultural production. Other than the level alluvial Salinas Valley floor, major landforms in the area include the Gabilan Range (approximately one mile to the east of the city limits) and the Santa Lucia Range (approximately two miles to the west/southwest of the city limits).

Natural resources of concern within the Salinas area include important farmland and limited habitat for rare and endangered species. The Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin, from which the City of Salinas and all other cities within the Salinas Valley obtain extract municipal water supply, is in an overdraft condition. The critical influence of new urban development on groundwater conditions is a key land use and water resources management issue for the City and region.

### 3.3 INCONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE PLANS

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15125(d), an EIR shall identify and discuss inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans, specific plans, and regional plans.

The proposed project has been reviewed in light of the guidance provided in the City of Salinas General Plan, and in a range of local and regional plans related to the assessment, avoidance, and/or mitigation of environmental effects. The local and regional plans considered include, but are not limited to: air quality plans, habitat conservation plans, water
quality control plans, regional transportation plans, etc. The relationship of the proposed project to these plans is identified in the analysis of each individual environmental topic evaluated in this EIR. For example, the applicable air quality plans are discussed and included as a component of the environmental impact analyses in Section 7.0, Air Quality, while the regional transportation plan and the project relationship to it is addressed in Section 16.0, Transportation. All environmental topic sections include a summary of relevant General Plan policies and where applicable, discussion of how the proposed project is consistent with policies.
Project Description

The applicant is requesting approvals from the City that would enable development of a portion of the 64-acre project site with a regional travel center/hotel. The balance of the project site would be reserved for future development with uses that are currently undefined, but allowed per the City of Salinas General Plan Industrial land use designation that applies to it. This section of the EIR describes the overall project objectives, required approvals, proposed physical improvements, and intended uses of the EIR.

4.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project is being proposed to meet a range of City and applicant objectives. The underlying purpose of the project is to develop the project site consistent with goals, policies, and objectives as outlined in the general plan and municipal code, including the City’s Airport Overlay District Regulations, as a means to facilitate economic development.

The objectives have guided the land use plan, circulation plan, design principles, development regulations and development standards included in the specific plan. The objectives are as follows:

- Provide jobs to support the current and future population of the City of Salinas;
- Annex a portion of the Salinas Airport West Future Growth Area described in the general plan to provide a catalyst for new economic development;
- Generate tax revenues to the City from new retail and industrial development within the project site;
- Create a regional travel center by providing a truck and auto fuel dispensing area, mechanic’s building, convenience store, fast-food restaurant, and hotel;
- Provide trucks traveling on U.S. Highway 101 and within the local Salinas industrial area greater options for convenient refueling, light vehicle maintenance, resting, overnight accommodations, food services, and other related services;
- Provide for overflow overnight truck parking demand for adjacent existing motels;
4.0 Project Description

- Reduce existing passenger, light truck and heavy truck trips on local streets by providing travel related services easily accessible to motorists on U.S. Highway 101 that divert trips from and improve circulation conditions on local roadways; and

- Consider the visual sensitivity of the site as viewed from U.S. Highway 101 as an interim southern gateway to the City by providing appropriate development design.

4.2 Project Characteristics

This section of the EIR describes the approvals being sought by the applicant, characteristics of currently proposed development, and capacity for future additional development.

Monterey County Land Use Designations and Zoning

The Monterey County 2010 General Plan designates the project site as Farmlands 40 acre minimum combined with an Urban Reserve designation. The zoning districts of the project site are Farmlands (F), 40 acre minimum (40) combined with Urban Reserve (UR). The purpose of the Farmlands (F) zoning district is to “preserve and enhance the use of the prime, productive and unique farmlands in the County of Monterey while also providing opportunity to establish necessary support facilities for those agricultural uses” (as identified in Title 21: Chapter 21.20 of the County Municipal Code). The purpose of the Urban Reserve (UR) zoning district is to “identify those areas shown in the Monterey County General Plan and adopted area plans which should be annexed and developed in a phased manner as part of an incorporated city to ensure the effective provision of urban services” (as identified in Title 21: Chapter 21.50 of the County Municipal Code).

Project Applications

The applicant has submitted applications requesting approval of a general plan amendment, a specific plan, pre-zoning, annexation, a parcel map, and site plan reviews for two individual proposed development projects. The characteristics of the proposed project associated with each of these approvals are described below.

General Plan Amendment

The project site is currently designated General Industrial in the City of Salinas General Plan. Figure 4-1, Existing City of Salinas General Plan Land Use Designations, shows the existing land use designation. The applicant is requesting that the existing land use designation for a 2.19-acre portion of the project site be amended to Retail as shown in Figure 4-2, Proposed City of Salinas General Plan Land Use Designation. This land use change is being requested to enable development of the hotel component of the proposed project as described in more detail in the Site Plan Review section below.
Figure 4-1
Existing City of Salinas General Plan
Land Use Designation

Source: City of Salinas General Plan 2002

Salinas Travel Center EIR
4-4 EMC Planning Group Inc.

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Figure 4-2
Proposed City of Salinas General Plan
Land Use Designation

Source: City of Salinas
General Plan 2002

Salinas Travel Center EIR
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Specific Plan

The project site is located within a Future Growth Area as described in the City of Salinas General Plan. General plan implementation program LU-4 requires that a specific plan be prepared for new development proposed within a Future Growth Area. Expectations for the content of specific plans are described on page LU-40 of the general plan. As such, the project site is also within a Specific Plan Overlay District as described in City of Salinas Municipal Code section 37-40.100. California Government Code sections 65450 et seq., define the required content of a specific plan. These include: introduction, background and purpose, land use, development standards and urban design, circulation, infrastructure and public facilities, and plan implementation.

Consistent with the City’s requirements, the applicant has prepared the draft Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan (Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar 2017). It is included as Appendix B on the CD on the inside back cover of this EIR. The specific plan includes the following chapters: Introduction, Land Use and Development Regulations, Design Guidelines and Standards, Circulation and Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Utilities, Stormwater Management, Community Services and Facilities, and Implementation and Financing. Policies that guide how future development is to be implemented are provided in each chapter where applicable. The specific plan represents the “roadmap” for the physical development within the specific plan boundary, which as previously noted, is co-terminous with the annexation area boundary. The content of the specific plan is referenced throughout this EIR.

The specific plan includes land use classifications and development standards that differ from those contained in Chapter 37, Zoning, of the City of Salinas Municipal Code. As a result, the City would adopt the specific plan by ordinance.

Information regarding land use, zoning, site planning, infrastructure planning and other specific plan components are described below and summarized in the Regulatory Setting section of each environmental topic evaluated in this EIR.

Prezoning

The applicant is requesting the City to prezone the project site with zoning classifications that are consistent with the municipal code and which implement the existing/proposed general plan land use designations. The zoning classifications would become effective upon the Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) approval of the annexation. The specific zoning districts that would apply are described below.

With the exception of a 2.19-acre parcel, the remainder of the project site would be zoned Industrial General (IG) consistent with the corresponding land use designation. The 2.19-acre parcel would be zoned Commercial Thoroughfare (CT). The proposed specific plan includes development regulations that modify both the IG and CT zoning district development standards for development planned solely within the specific plan boundary. The specific plan boundary is co-terminous with the annexation boundary.
The project site would also carry a Specific Plan Overlay District that references the fact that development within it will be guided by the specific plan prepared for the project. Further, the project site would carry an Airport Overlay District to identify that it is within the City of Salinas Municipal Airport Area of Influence. The Airport Overlay District regulations contained within the City of Salinas Municipal Code will apply to development planned within the project site. This issue is discussed further in Section 12.0, Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

**Annexation**

The entire 64-acre project site is currently within unincorporated Monterey County. To enable its development as proposed, it must first be annexed to the City. For annexation to occur, the project site must be within the City’s sphere of influence. The annexation area is also within one of the City’s Future Growth Areas as illustrated in general plan Figure LU-1. Future Growth Areas represent areas into which the City plans to direct new urban growth. This Future Growth Area is also within the City’s sphere of influence as shown in general plan Land Use Figure LU-6, Sphere of Influence. The sphere of influence boundary includes lands outside of, but adjacent to, the current city limit into which the City has anticipated it would grow over time. Figure 4-3, Annexation Area/Sphere of Influence, shows the relationship between the annexation area, Future Growth Area, and sphere of influence boundaries. Because the annexation area is within the sphere of influence, the City may consider the annexation request. The annexation area is a part of a larger 261-acre parcel identified as assessor’s parcel number 177-131-011.

The annexation area includes approximately 30 acres that are within a State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) right-of-way for U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A and within rights-of-way for the adjacent local public streets. The approximately 34-acre balance of the annexation area would be available for future development. The applicant is requesting the City to approve the annexation and to forward a resolution of application to LAFCO for its consideration of the annexation, as well as its consideration to detach the annexation area from the boundaries of several special districts that provide services in unincorporated Monterey County. LAFCO has discretionary approval over reorganizations of city and county boundaries, including annexations of unincorporated land into cities and changes in the boundaries of special districts. The request for these approvals will be part of the City’s “Reorganization” application to LAFCO. The City must consider and approve the reorganization, which must also be approved by LAFCO before the annexation and district detachments become effective.

**Parcel Map**

The applicant is proposing to divide the 34-acre developable portion of the project site into four parcels – parcels 1 through 4 and remainder. The proposed parcel map is shown in Figure 4-4, Proposed Parcel Map. As described in the Site Plan Review section below, specific development projects are proposed for two of the parcels. The remaining two parcels are not proposed for development at this time.
Figure 4-3

Annexation Boundary/Sphere of Influence

Source: City of Salinas General Plan 2002

Salinas Travel Center EIR
4.0 Project Description

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THE BASIS OF BEARINGS FOR THIS SURVEY IS THE CALIFORNIA COORDINATE SYSTEM, ZONE 4, NAD83, AS DETERMINED BY GPS OBSERVATIONS RELATIVE TO THE CALIFORNIA SURVEYING AND DRAFTING, INC. VIRTUAL SURVEY NETWORK, EPOCH DATE 2007. THE MONUMENTED CENTERLINE OF DE LA TORRE ST. BEARS S 24°27'23" E.

LEGEND:
- BOLD LINE INDICATES PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
- MONUMENT FOUND AND ACCEPTED AS DESCRIBED
- SET UP "REBAR TAGGED 5985, 6" DEEP
- RECORD DATA PER DOCUMENT NO. 2009078341, OF OFFICIAL RECORDS. RECORD DATA PER PARCEL MAP. REC. IN VOL. 12 OF PARCEL MAPS. PG. 121, O.R.
- RADIAL BEARING
- INDICATES WAIVER OF DIRECT ACCESS RIGHTS PER DOCUMENT NO. 2009078341, OF OFFICIAL RECORDS
- PARCEL 10875-2 PER DOC. NO. 2009078341, O.R.
- TO BE ABANDONED PER THIS MAP
- RIGHT OF WAY 50 FEET TO THE CITY OF SALINAS PER THIS MAP
- ALL DISTANCES ARE IN FEET AND DECIMALS THEREOF.

BASIS OF BEARINGS

Source: Patrick R. Teter 2016

Figure 4-4
Proposed Parcel Map
Salinas Travel Center EIR
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Site Plan Review for Proposed Projects on Parcels 1 and 2

The applicant is proposing specific development projects for parcels 1 and 2 as illustrated in the site plan shown in Figure 4-5, Hotel and Travel Center Site Plan. A 79-room hotel with associated indoor pool area and parking is proposed on the 2.19-acre parcel 1. A travel center composed of a convenience store, branded fast-food restaurant, automobile and truck fueling stations, and a mechanic’s building is proposed on the 13.86-acre parcel 2.

The hotel and travel center projects would be considered individually for approval by City staff through its site plan review process. The site plan review process enables City staff to review and approve specific projects without Planning Commission and City Council review provided the projects are consistent within applicable land use designations, zoning, and development regulations. A determination about the consistency of the two projects with land use and with zoning standards will be made as part of the development review process for the individual projects conducted by City staff. The applicant has submitted detailed project information necessary for consideration of the two site plan review approvals. Site plan review approvals would be considered by City staff subsequent to Planning Commission review and City Council actions on all but the site plan review approvals being sought by the applicant; the site plan review approvals would not be part of the package of approvals to be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council.

In the remainder of this EIR, the terms “hotel site” and “parcel 1” are used interchangeably to describe the proposed hotel location. Similarly, the terms “travel center” and “parcel 2” are used interchangeably to refer to the proposed travel center location.

Project Approvals for Future Projects Proposed within Parcels 3 and 4

The applicant is not proposing specific development projects for parcels 3 or 4. Future projects proposed for these parcels would be considered when development applications are submitted to the City. It is assumed that such projects would also be considered through the site plan review approval process provided they are consistent with the specific plan permitted use classifications and consistent with the IG zoning regulations and development regulations contained in the specific plan. If not, other approvals such as a conditional use permit may be required along with CEQA review.

Proposed and Potential Development Capacity

Table 4-1, Proposed and Potential Building Capacity, includes a summary of the building development capacity within the specific plan area. The building capacities associated with the hotel and the travel center projects on parcels 1 and 2, respectively, are identified in the site plan for the projects; additional details for these projects are provided below. Since parcels 3 and 4 are not currently proposed for development, a future maximum development building development capacity for them is defined to provide context for the intensity of development that could be proposed in the future. Additional information about the assumptions for parcels 3 and 4 is provided below.
4.0 Project Description

Hotel Project – Parcel 1

A 79-room, nationally branded hotel is planned on the 2.19-acre parcel 1. Figure 4-6, Hotel Elevations, presents the conceptual design of the hotel building. It is proposed as four stories with a maximum height of 50 feet at the top of the highest parapet wall. The hotel includes a total of 50,371 square feet of gross building space.

A covered vehicle entrance for guests to load/unload luggage and an outdoor pool area are planned. Access would be provided via an entry along De La Torre. A total of 95 parking spaces are shown in two parking fields that are located along De La Torre. A significant portion of the hotel site is dedicated to low impact development storm water improvements in the form of bioswales. These features and their integration into an overall storm water control plan for the project site are described in more detail in the Infrastructure section below and in Section 13.0, Hydrology and Water Quality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
<th>Planned/Future End Use</th>
<th>Parcel Size (acres)¹</th>
<th>Building Capacity (square feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parcel 1</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>50,371 (Proposed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel 2</td>
<td>Fueling Stations, Convenience Store, Fast Food, Mechanic’s Building</td>
<td>13.86</td>
<td>20,349 (Proposed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel 3</td>
<td>Industrial – To be determined</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>65,993 (Potential)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel 4</td>
<td>Industrial – To be determined</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>324,522 (Potential)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.98</td>
<td>461,235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Lane Engineers, Inc. 2016, EMC Planning Group 2016

NOTES:
¹ The approximate 30-acre balance of the 64-acre site is comprised of Caltrans and City roadway rights-of-way.
² Building capacity based on 0.5 FAR for the General Industrial land use designation identified in the general plan

Travel Center – Parcel 2

The travel center proposed for parcel 2 consists of several components as summarized below.

Convenience Store and Fast Food Restaurant

A 7,662 square-foot convenience store and attached 2,911 square-foot fast-food restaurant are contained in one buildings located in the central portion of parcel 2. The proposed design of the convenience store and restaurant are presented in Figure 4-7, Convenience Store and Restaurant Building Elevations. The convenience store would feature a retail component and interior access to the fast-food restaurant. Pedestrian entrances would be located on both sides of the structure. The fast-food restaurant would have dine-in/sit-down and drive-through components. The drive-through component would be located on the north side of the building that faces Roy Diaz Street. The tallest building height is planned at 23 feet.
Figure 4-5

Hotel and Travel Center Site Plan

Salinas Travel Center EIR

Source: Lane Engineers, Inc. 2015
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Figure 4-7
Convenience Store and Restaurant Building Elevations
Salinas Travel Center EIR

Source: GSB, Inc. 2017
Automobile and Truck Fuel Stations

Separate automobile and truck fuel stations are planned. The automobile fuel station features seven fuel islands totaling 14 auto fueling positions, a propane tank, and a dump station for recreation vehicles, all located within a self-contained parking lot with drive-through aisle. The automobile fuel station would be located at the corner of De La Torre and Roy Diaz Street, taking access from De La Torre. The truck fuel station would feature nine diesel bays or truck fueling positions, an air station and ample truck stacking room for efficient fueling. Each diesel bay would have a master dispenser and satellite dispenser so that a truck operator can put fuel the truck’s tanks on both sides simultaneously. The truck fuel station would be located at the corner of U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A and Roy Diaz Street. It would have a shared access drive with the mechanic’s building, taking access from De La Torre.

The fuel tanks for the truck and automobile fuel stations would be located southwest of the convenience store, along the truck fuel station and mechanic building access drive. A separated tanker truck access lane would be provided for vehicles refilling and servicing the fuel tanks in order to not disrupt the flow of traffic to and from the truck service station and tire shop. The gasoline storage tanks would be below ground and the diesel storage tanks would be above ground.

Mechanic’s Building

A 9,776 square-foot, two-bay mechanic’s building is also proposed. Related services are intended only for local and long-haul trucks that utilize the travel center. The proposed design of the mechanic’s building is presented in Figure 4-8, Mechanic’s Building Elevations. Services would include selling and repairing truck tires, and performing light maintenance such as oil and other fluid changes. No major engine repairs or major services would be performed. A truck scale would be located adjacent to the building. The mechanic’s building would not function in the typical fashion of an auto repair or tire shop, as the applicant would be prohibited from engaging in the traditional marketing and/or advertising of other tire and service shops that are located outside the boundaries of the site.

Access to the mechanic’s building would be provided via a shared truck access drive with the truck fuel station, with access from De La Torre. The mechanic’s building would be located in a truck parking lot that may be used by convenience store, fuel station, restaurant, and hotel patrons.

Travel Center Operations

The travel center would operate 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. The convenience store and fast-food restaurant are expected to have two deliveries per week. The remaining project components including the fuel stations and mechanic’s building are expected to have one to three small deliveries per week. Approximately 1,200 autos per day and 600 trucks per day are expected to utilize travel center services.

As with the hotel site, a significant portion of the travel center site is dedicated to low impact development storm water management features such as bioswales.
Signage for Travel Center Project

The specific plan includes a conceptual monument signage design for the travel center component of the proposed project. Figure 4-9, Conceptual Travel Center Signage, illustrates the concept. The signage concepts are preliminary and may be subject to refinement as part of the site plan review approval process and the City’s requirement that the applicant prepare a master signage plan.

Future Development Capacity – Parcels 3 and 4

The intent of including parcels 3 and 4 in the annexation area is to facilitate their future development with urban uses, and by so doing, create expanded opportunity for job generation and revenue generation for the City. The annexation area is highly visible and accessible from U.S. Highway 101. Therefore, the applicant and the City anticipate that parcels 3 and 4 will represent attractive development destinations for development in the short- mid-term. When this draft EIR was released for public review, end users for these parcels had not yet been identified. Therefore, for land planning purposes, and for purposes of programmatic impact assessment in this EIR, it is assumed that these parcels will develop consistent with their General Industrial land use designation at a 0.5 floor area ratio (FAR) building intensity. The FAR describes the number of square feet of building development permitted as a ratio of the area of a given development site. As shown above in Table 4-1 presented earlier, a maximum of 65,993 square feet of building are projected on parcel 3 and a maximum of 324,522 square feet of building is projected parcel 4. These are considered to be maximum development capacity projections. Future development within parcels 3 and 4 would be subject to all applicable land use and development standards of the City for uses on land designated General Industrial and zoned IG. Table 2.1, Zoning District Use Classifications, in the draft specific plan identifies the types of uses that could be considered on these parcels. Each future project proposed for either parcel will be subject to a project-specific development review process such as a site plan review. If the future projects are consistent the specific plan, the CEQA review process can be streamlined under either CEQA Guidelines section 15168 or CEQA Guidelines section 15183. See Section 4.4, Approvals and Intended Uses of the EIR, for more details.

Access and Circulation

The proposed project includes a vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle circulation system consisting of existing public streets, new public streets, and pedestrian/bicycle facilities located along these streets and within each parcel. Planned circulation improvements are described in Chapter 4, Circulation and Transportation, in the draft specific plan. The level of detail available for circulation planning for parcels 1 and 2 is higher than for parcels 3 and 4 given that site plans for parcels 1 and 2 have been prepared.
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City Signage at Top of Sign

Sample Tenant Sign, 480-SF Maximum

Architectural Treatment to Match Onsite Buildings

Source: Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar, 2017

Figure 4-9

Conceptual Travel Center Signage
Salinas Travel Center EIR
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Roy Diaz Street, De La Torre, and U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A provide public access to the project site. Roy Diaz Street and De La Torre would be improved along their frontages in the annexation area. Those improvements would consist of sidewalks, crosswalks, and landscaping. The project site will be tied into existing pedestrian access on Roy Diaz Street and beyond. Separated pedestrian walks would connect to De La Torre and provide pedestrian access within the annexation area. The draft specific plan includes proposed street sections for these adjacent streets.

Two vehicle entries would be provided for parcel 2 that are intended to separate truck users from automobile, motorcycle, and recreation vehicle users. The first vehicular entry would be located along De La Torre and would be approximately 230 feet from the intersection of Roy Diaz Street and De La Torre. The entry would provide access to the automobile fuel station, convenience store, restaurant, drive through, and non-truck parking lot. The second vehicle entry would be located along De La Torre and would be approximately 210 feet from the first vehicle entry. The second vehicle entry would provide access to the truck fuel station, mechanic’s building, truck parking lot, convenience store, restaurant and fuel storage tanks. There would be no internal vehicular access between the two areas and no direct access to Roy Diaz Street. One vehicular entry for parcel 1 would be provided opposite of the second vehicle entry of parcel 2.

Parcels 3 and 4 have existing access from Roy Diaz Street that currently dead ends in a cul-de-sac partially located on parcel 3. Future development proposed within parcels 3 and 4 would be required to include improvements to Roy Diaz Street that include sidewalks, crosswalks, and landscaping. Roy Diaz Street must also be extended through to parcel 4 with associated frontage improvements.

**Utility Infrastructure**

The project site would be connected to existing and improved City infrastructure, including roads, water supply, sanitary sewer, and storm drain facilities, and connected to dry utilities (electricity, gas, and telecommunications) operated by the respective utility providers. New development must comply with the City’s Stormwater Development Standards to ensure consistency with state post-construction water quality regulations. Each individual project proposed within the project site must prepare its own conceptual storm water control plan prior to receiving planning approvals and to prepare final control plans as project site design variables are finalized. Section 5 of the specific plan, Infrastructure and Public Utilities, includes information on existing and planned utility infrastructure improvements.

**Landscape Plan and Standards**

Landscape plans and standards are described in the specific plan in Section 3, Design Guidelines and Standards. The design guidelines and standards address streetscape
improvements, project site entries, parking lots, special landscape areas, plant material, landscape design, irrigation, water conservation, and landscape maintenance. A number of the standards in the specific plan supersede landscape standards contained in the City of Salinas Municipal Code for commercial and industrial development. This is especially true for parking lots given the unique nature of needs for truck circulation and parking associated with the proposed travel center. The design guidelines and standards also consider visibility of the project site from U.S. Highway 101, as special design considerations are needed pursuant to general plan policy as described in Section 5.0, Aesthetics.

**Architectural and Site Design Standards**

Architectural and site design standards are also included in Section 3, Design Guidelines and Standards, of the specific plan. Architectural guidelines for facades, roofs, materials, color, utilities and mechanical equipment are provided as are design guidelines for parking areas, and bicycle parking.

Draft specific plan Section 3.7 addresses special design standards for signage, lighting, site furnishings, fuel tank areas (associated with the proposed travel center), waste enclosures, and walls and fences.

**Employment Generation**

Job generation potential for future development within the project site is derived based on an employment density of 1,000 square feet of building area per industrial use job and 550 square feet of building area per commercial use job. Parcels 3 and 4 would be zoned IG (Industrial General). As shown in Table 2.1, Zoning Districts Use Classifications, in the specific plan, a wide range of commercial uses would be allowed within this zoning district with a Site Plan Review or Conditional Use Permit approval. General and limited industry uses would likely be the predominant types of industrial uses allowed with a Site Plan Review approval.

As presented earlier in Table 4-1, parcels 3 and 4 have potential building capacities of 65,990 square feet and 324,520 square feet, respectively, for a total of 391,510 square feet. For purposes of employment projections, it is assumed that commercial uses would constitute half (195,755 square feet) and industrial uses would constitute half (195,755 square feet) of this development.

Total employment potential for the entire project is projected to be 681 jobs as summarized in Table 4-2, Employment Generation Projection.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
<th>Building Square Footage Potential</th>
<th>Employment Density (Building Square Feet per Job)</th>
<th>Projected Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50,371</td>
<td>550 (commercial uses)</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20,349</td>
<td>550 (commercial uses)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>195,775</td>
<td>1,000 (industrial uses)</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>195,775</td>
<td>550 (commercial uses)</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>681</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017
NOTES: 1Total building potential of 391,510 square feet for parcels 1 and 2 is divided by 2 based on end use assumptions of one-half commercial and one-half industrial uses.

4.3 Applicant Proposed Mitigation Measures

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4(a)(1)(A), a distinction is to be made between mitigation measures proposed by a project applicant to reduce adverse impacts and those proposed by the lead agency, responsible agencies, and/or trustee agencies. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15097(b), when the project at issue is the adoption of a general plan, specific plan, community plan or other plan-level document, policies or any other portion of the plan that serve as mitigation measures are to be included in the mitigation monitoring program prepared for the project.

As the proposed project includes a specific plan, policies included in the specific may serve as applicant proposed mitigation measures where they function to reduce the adverse impacts of the proposed project. Where this is the case, the policies are described and referenced as mitigation in each section of this EIR that includes evaluation of environmental effects of the proposed project. Similarly, if any other elements of the specific plan serve to reduce adverse environmental impacts, these are also identified.

4.4 Approvals and Intended Uses of the EIR

Actions and approvals required to implement the proposed project, including actions and approvals directly related to the EIR, are listed below.

City Actions

- Certify EIR;
- Adopt Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program;
- Adopt CEQA findings and statement of overriding considerations for adoption of the specific plan;
4.0 Project Description

- Approve general plan amendment to change the land use designation of parcel 1 to Retail;
- Adopt specific plan;
- Approve pre-zoning to CT (Commercial Thoroughfare) for parcel 1 and IG (General Industrial) for parcels 2, 3, and 4, with a SP (Specific Plan) overlay district and Airport Overly district applied to the entire project site;
- Approve annexation;
- Approve minor subdivision (4-lot parcel map); and
- Site plan review approval for the hotel project and site plan review approval for the travel center project (assumed to be City staff level review and approval).

Future City Project-Specific Approvals

- Project-level approvals for future individual projects proposed within parcels 3 and 4. Staff level review for site plan review approval. If for a conditional use permit approval, CEQA documentation tiered from this EIR and Planning Commission approval would be required.

Other Actions

- Project advisory review by the Monterey County Airport Land Use Commission prior to consideration of project approvals by the City.

LAFCO Actions

- Consider City-certified EIR
- Adopt CEQA findings and statement of overriding considerations;
- Approve Reorganization Proposal including:
  - Annexation of the project site to the City of Salinas;
  - Annexation of the project site to the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency;
  - Detachment of the project site from the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County; and
  - Detachment of the project site from the Monterey County Regional Fire District.
- Approve transfer of tax collection from Monterey County to the City of Salinas.

Please refer to Section 19.1, Land Use and Planning, for discussion of the relationship of the proposed project to LAFCOs reorganization standards and policies.
Project-level Versus Programmatic Analysis

This EIR addresses development proposed for parcels 1 and 2 within the proposed specific plan at a project-level, meaning that this EIR is intended to suffice for all discretionary approvals required to develop those two parcels. Because no specific development has yet been proposed, however, for parcels 3 and 4, this EIR provides only programmatic review. This means that future individual development projects proposed within parcels 3 and 4 will be subject to additional project-specific environmental review by the City. This EIR, then, is a combined project/program EIR.

Because this EIR functions as a program EIR for purposes of parcels 3 and 4, the City may rely on streamlining provisions found in section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, which sets forth the legal principles regarding the preparation and use of program EIRs. As described in subdivision (d)(2) of that section, later environmental documents (EIRs, mitigated negative declarations, or negative declarations) can incorporate by reference materials from the program EIR regarding regional influences, secondary impacts, cumulative impacts, broad alternatives, and other factors. These later documents need only focus on new impacts that have not been considered before. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168[d][3].)

Section 15168(c), entitled “Use with Later Activities,” provides as follows:

Subsequent activities in the program must be examined in the light of the program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared:

1. If a later activity would have effects that were not examined in the program EIR, a new Initial Study would need to be prepared leading to either an EIR or a Negative Declaration.

2. If the agency finds that pursuant to Section 15162, no new effects could occur or no new mitigation measures would be required, the agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by the program EIR, and no new environmental document would be required.

3. An agency shall incorporate feasible mitigation measures and alternatives developed in the program EIR into subsequent actions in the program.

4. Where the subsequent activities involve site specific operations, the agency should use a written checklist or similar device to document the evaluation of the site and the activity to determine whether the environmental effects of the operation were covered in the program EIR.

Here, the City will have the option of preparing a written checklist similar to the typical initial study when applications are submitted for development on parcels 3 and 4. With respect to certain types of environmental resources, the effects to which would not differ regardless of the exact kind of land use that is proposed (e.g., agricultural resources, cultural
resources, geology, soils, and paleontological resources), the City’s expectation, at least at present, is that the written checklists will conclude that no further analysis of such effects beyond that found in this program EIR will be necessary. Thus, the new analyses for these site-specific actions will focus on issues and impacts regarding which this program EIR lacks detailed site-specific information, and for which specific project proposals could have site-specific effects not wholly anticipated in this EIR. (See also CEQA Guidelines section 15063, subd. (b)(1)(C) ).

Because the proposed project, as discussed in Section 4.2, includes zoning actions, the City, upon receiving future applications for specific development proposals, may be able to rely on Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines section 15183 in order to streamline the processing of such projects. These two provisions generally limit the scope of necessary environmental review for site-specific approvals following the preparation of an EIR for a “zoning action.” For such site-specific approvals, CEQA generally applies only to impacts that are “peculiar to the parcel or to the project” and have not been previously disclosed, except where “substantial new information” shows that previously identified impacts would be more significant than previously assumed. Notably, impacts are considered not to be “peculiar to the parcel or to the project” if they can be substantially mitigated pursuant to previously adopted, uniformly applied development policies or standards.

Under section 15183, the City could “limit its examination of environmental effects to those which the [City] 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 off-site 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.”
5.0 Aesthetics

The aesthetic value of a site whose character would change as a result of new development can be considered a function of its visual character and quality as perceived by an observer. The proposed project will alter the existing visual character of the site by converting existing fallow land and actively farmed agricultural land to urban uses. This section of the EIR evaluates this issue, as well as visual effects related to scenic vistas, scenic highway corridors, and light and glare.

Determinations of significance for visual effects are inherently subjective. Interpretations of existing conditions or changes in existing conditions brought about by a proposed action are subject to the perceptions and sensitivities of the analyst or the viewer experiencing the change. The analysis in this section is a good-faith effort to objectively identify the existing aesthetic setting and changes in that setting resulting from future development of the project site.

Unless otherwise noted the information in this section is derived from field analysis and observation and information obtained from a variety of sources including:

- City of Salinas General Plan (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002a);
- Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002b);
- City of Salinas Municipal Code;
- Scenic Highway Guidelines (California Department of Transportation 2008); and
- Draft Travel Center Specific Plan (Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar 2017).

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

The issue of project effects on visual resources was not raised in responses to the NOP.
5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regional Visual Setting

Salinas lies at the northern end of the approximately 70-mile long Salinas Valley. The visual setting within the Salinas Valley is dominated by open space views comprised of agricultural land and the Gabilan and Santa Lucia mountains that border the valley. These features represent the primary scenic resources within Monterey County. The cities of Salinas, Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City, along with areas of concentrated urban development within unincorporated areas of Monterey County (e.g. Chualar), represent urban islands intermittently dispersed along the Salinas Valley floor. The most dramatic changes in visual resource conditions occur at the urban/agricultural edges of these urban areas where agricultural fields abruptly give way to urban development. Because Salinas is the largest city in Monterey County and is surrounded by land in agricultural use, the visual interface between urban and surrounding agricultural land is extensive.

Public views of the dominant rural agricultural landscape and mountains bordering the Salinas Valley lands are most common from highways that traverse through the valley. U.S. Highway 101 is the primary access route and extends the full length of the valley, including through Salinas. This heavily traveled route affords travelers sweeping views of agricultural and mountain landscapes and views of the urban/agricultural fringe at the margins of the southern and northern approaches to Salinas. State Route 68 and State Route 183 also provide travelers with similar views, though each is less heavily traveled than U.S. Highway 101.

Visual Character of the Project Site

The project site, located at the southern urban edge of Salinas, has been historically used for agricultural crop production. Parcels 3 and 4, comprising the approximately 17-acre portion of the site south of the U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A, remain in active agricultural production. Parcels 1 and 2, which comprise the balance of the site located north of the ramp, are vacant and are covered with ruderal, non-native grassland. The topography of the project site is essentially level. The ruderal grassland and agricultural land represent the visual attributes of the site. U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A and Roy Diaz Street bisect the site. Several trees line the Ramp 326A right-of-way.

When viewed from U.S. Highway 101, the project site is framed by the existing commercial development (motels and fast-food restaurants) adjacent to the site on the north, existing business park (industrial and office uses) and the Salinas Municipal Airport on the east, U.S. Highway 101 and industrial uses to the west, and actively farmed agricultural land to the south. Please refer back to Figure 3-2, Aerial Photograph, for the location of these uses. Representative photographs of the project site which illustrate its existing visual character are shown in Figure 5-1, Visual Character.
Figure 5-1
Visual Character
Salinas Travel Center EIR
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Factors in Identifying Changes in Visual Character

The degree to which the project site is visible to potential viewers from public viewpoints is fundamental for assessing the extent to which the proposed project would substantially alter the visual character of the site. Viewer sensitivity to the change is largely dependent on the frequency and duration of views of a site, and sensitivity to change; if viewer sensitivity is low, the effect of visual change would be limited. Conversely, high viewer sensitivity may correspond with negative impressions of a visual change.

Project Site Visibility

The visibility of the project site is dependent on the location of the viewer, and the frequency and duration of views. Generally unobstructed views of the site are available from U.S. Highway 101 and from Roy Diaz and De La Torre. Of these, views from the highway are considered substantially more sensitive due to the frequency of views from the highway relative to the existing site streets. Viewer location, frequency and duration of available views are discussed for each segment in the following paragraphs.

Direct views of the site are available along U.S. Highway 101, which is a highly travelled commuter, freight, and visitor route with a posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour adjacent to the site. View frequency is high for travelers on U.S. Highway 101, especially from the northbound lanes. Views of the site from the northbound and southbound travel lanes of U.S. Highway 101 are presented in Figure 5-2, Views from U.S. Highway 101. View frequency from the southbound lanes of U.S. Highway 101 is limited due to visual obstructions caused by existing development as the traveler approaches the project site.

The duration of available views of the site from U.S. Highway 101 is greatest for motorists traveling north because views to the north are unobstructed as the viewer approaches the site. Views of the site from northbound lanes are framed by existing commercial and business park development to the north and east, respectively, which serve as a backdrop. As the viewer approaches the site at a relatively high rate of speed, the site is not visually discernable from the foreground views of other agricultural parcels outside the boundary of the site until U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A is visible within the viewer line of sight. Consequently, the duration of northbound views is relatively brief.

View duration along De La Torre and Roy Diaz streets and along U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A would be longer given the lower speeds on these roadways although far fewer views would occur due to the substantially lower volume of traffic on these facilities relative to U.S. Highway 101.

Viewer Sensitivity

Viewer sensitivity is a function of a viewer’s degree of exposure to visual change and the viewer’s sensitivity to visual change. Exposure is comprised of both the duration and frequency of views to a modified landscape as described above. Viewer sensitivity to visual
change also is a function of viewer expectations about and concern for changes in visual character. If new development is of a size or scale or design that significantly contrasts with existing visual setting conditions, it could be considered to substantially alter those conditions. Some viewers may be highly sensitive to such change. Conversely, changes in the landscape from new development that is of a scale, location, and character that is not highly inconsistent with its surroundings may not be perceived as a substantial change in visual character by some viewers.

**Light and Glare/Sky Glow Conditions**

A range of sources of daytime and nighttime glare are common in urbanized areas. Daytime sources of glare typically include reflection of the sun off of buildings, car windshields, and other highly reflective glass or metal surfaces. Nighttime lighting affects nighttime views and creates sky glow. Typical sources of nighttime lighting that contribute to sky glow include high-intensity lighting at playfields, lighting of commercial and industrial facilities, parking lot lighting, street lighting, and vehicle headlights. Nighttime lighting in Salinas is common and extensive. It contributes to significant sky glow above the city.

As described below in Section 5.2, Regulatory Setting, the project site is within the City of Salinas Municipal Airport Overlay Zone. Regulations for development within the Airport Overlay Zone are included in the municipal code. The regulations are intended to guide new development such that it does not endanger or interfere with the landing, take off, or maneuvering of an aircraft. The regulations are intended to implement direction contained in the Caltrans Airport Land Use Planning Handbook (Caltrans 2011). The “Handbook” provides direction for airport planning and land use planning in locations near airports to the ensure safety of airport operations. As described therein, lighting from new development is one potential source of safety conflict if it is difficult for pilots to distinguish from airport lighting. Similarly, glare from a range of sources such as roofs, windows, or other installations associated with new development is described in the Handbook as a possible visual hazard if it distracts or interferes with a pilot’s operation of an aircraft.

**5.2 Regulatory Setting**

**State**

**Caltrans State Scenic Highway Program**

Caltrans administers the Corridor Protection Program as outlined in the Scenic Highway Guidelines (Caltrans 2008). According to these guidelines, development along designated state scenic corridors is subject to specific land use regulations and design standards. Scenic corridors consist of land that is visible from a scenic highway right-of-way and are comprised primarily of scenic and natural features. The local jurisdiction typically
Figure 5-2
Views from U.S. Highway 101

Source: ESRI 2017, Salinas Travel Center EIR
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determines the characteristics and corridor boundaries, which can be based on topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines. Management of the scenic corridor occurs through the local Corridor Protection Program.

There are no state-designated scenic highways in the immediate vicinity of Salinas. The designated scenic highway nearest to the project site is the segment of State Route 68 from State Route 1 to the Salinas River, which is nearly three miles from the project site. The project site is not visible from this roadway. Development on the project site would not have potential to adversely affect scenic resources within a state scenic highway corridor.

**Regional/Local**

**City of Salinas General Plan**

The City of Salinas General Plan does not include environmental setting or policy information that defines the location of specific or broad scenic vistas that should be considered for protection as part of the City’s individual project development review processes or CEQA processes. However, the City of Salinas General Plan contains a range of policies that are relevant to the proposed project that guide the City’s direction regarding maintaining visual resources and quality. These are as follows:

- **Policy CD-1.2.** Maintain Salinas as a city with sharply defined edges between urban use and surrounding agricultural activities.
- **Policy CD-1.3.** Maintain the distinction of the City’s urban/rural interface by using roadway segments and/or natural features and tree plantings to form the boundary between urban development and open space or agriculture.
- **Policy CD-1.4.** Use landscaping, design schemes and signing to improve the image and distinct identity of the City, its neighborhoods and its major gateways.
- **Policy CD-1.8.** Apply high-quality design standards to projects visible from Highway 101.
- **Policy CD-2.2.** Minimize potential light and sound impacts of new development on surrounding areas.
- **Policy CD-2.8.** Avoid large un-landscaped parking areas and blank building walls facing streets or adjoining properties.
- **Implementation Program CD-5.** Review discretionary development proposals for potential aesthetics impacts per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The standards established in the Zoning Code, the City’s Design Guidelines, Landscaping Standards,
Lighting Ordinance, Gateway Guidelines, the project’s incorporation of the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) characteristics, and the project’s potential to damage or block scenic resources and views will be used to determine the significance of impacts. If potential impacts are identified, mitigation in the form of project redesign (e.g. bulk, shadow/access to light, height, architectural details, lighting) will be required to reduce the impact to a level less than significant.

Regarding the indirect effects of lighting and glare from new development, the City of Salinas General Plan also includes the following policy regarding compatibility of new development within the Area of Influence:

**Policy LU-12.2.** Review development proposals within areas affected by the operation of the airport to ensure airport and land use compatibility, protect the public safety, and allow for continued aviation operations. This includes minimizing residential population increases within the 55 decibel CNEL contour.

This policy reflects guidance provided in Caltrans’ Handbook regarding local agency use of land use and other tools to ensure that new development near airports does not adversely affect airport operations and that such development is not exposed to elevated safety risks from airport operations.

**Urban/Agricultural Edges**

According to the general plan, a primary goal of the Community Design Element is to maintain sharply defined urban edges. The City works to preserve these edges by using roadway segments to form distinct boundaries between urban and agricultural uses. The City also promotes use of natural features, tree plantings, and agricultural buffers to form the boundary between urban development and open space or agriculture to prevent incompatibilities between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.

**Visibility from U.S. Highway 101**

City of Salinas General Plan policy CD-1.8 states the following, “apply high-quality design standards to projects visible from Highway 101”. The general plan outlines the following four primary views of the city available from U.S. Highway 101: agricultural views in the northern portion of the general plan planning area; views of the Northridge Mall area, the Salinas Auto Mall, and Westridge Shopping Center; long vistas into Carr Lake; and views of potential office and commercial development in the central portion of Salinas (general plan, page CD-13). Although the project site is directly visible from U.S. Highway 101, the site is not located in a primary view area identified in the general plan.
Gateway Overlay Districts

The City of Salinas General Plan designates five “gateway” areas in the City (general plan, page CD-11). The project site is not located within a designated Gateway Overlay District; however, the site lies south of the Sanborn/101 Gateway. The designated gateway areas are zoned Gateway Overlay Districts and are subject to strict land use regulations and development standards. As the City grows to the south along U.S. Highway 101, the visual character of the project site will contribute to the overall visual character and quality of the southeastern approach to Salinas on U.S. Highway 101. Future development within the project site would represent a new expanded edge of the city’s urban/agricultural boundary and until such additional development occurs to the south of the project site consistent with the general plan, the project site will represent an interim visual gateway to the city.

General Plan Land Use

As described in Section 4.2, Project Characteristics, the project site is within a Future Growth Area and within the City’s sphere of influence as described in the City of Salinas General Plan. Land that is contiguous to the project site on the south is also within the Future Growth Area of which the project site is a part and also within the sphere of influence. This balance of the Future Growth Area is also designated General Industrial in the general plan. As such, it is quite possible that in the future, additional urban development could occur south of the project site.

Airport Overlay Zone District

The general plan identifies planning needs for the Salinas Municipal Airport. It also calls for creating an Airport Overlay Zoning District for parcels located within the Salinas Municipal Airport Area of Influence. The area of influence is illustrated in City of Salinas General Plan Figure LU-11. The project site is within the area of influence. The City subsequently created an Airport Overlay Zoning District. The goal is to facilitate compatibility between new development within the area of influence and the airport to ensure that new development does not compromise the safety of airport operations. Related lighting regulations are noted below as part of the discussion of municipal code regulations regarding lighting.

City of Salinas Municipal Code

Regulations pertaining to development design that are applicable to the proposed project are found in several locations in Chapter 37, Zoning, of the Municipal Code. Article III, Base District Regulations, Division 3, Section 37-30.220, Design Standards, provides design standards specifically for commercial development. Article 7 addresses airport land use compatibility and regulations for new development within the airport overlay zoning district. Article III, Base District Regulations, Division 5, Section 37-30.330, Design Standards, provides design standards specifically for industrial development. Additional regulations that are supplemental to the base district design standards are included in Article V,
Supplemental Regulations Applying to All Districts. New development must be consistent with these guidelines and regulations. The guidelines and regulations promote development design that is sensitive to visual effects and aesthetics. The standards are intended to reduce adverse effects on visual quality. An overview of key design standards and regulations is provided below.

**Design Standards**

Article III, Base District Regulations, Division 3, Section 37-30.220, Design Standards, provides design standards specifically for commercial development. Article III, Base District Regulations, Division 5, Section 37-30.330, Design Standards, provides design standards specifically for industrial development. The design standards for each zone district address a range of design topics. The purpose of the guidelines for each district is as follows:

- **Commercial Districts:** These design standards are intended to assist the designer in understanding the city’s requirements for high quality commercial development. These standards complement the development regulations contained in this division by providing good examples of potential design solutions and by providing design interpretations of the various regulations. These standards ensure the highest level of design quality while at the same time providing the flexibility necessary to encourage creativity on the part of project designers. The standards are also intended to promote commercial developments, which are pedestrian-oriented, safe, and reflect traditional neighborhood design principles.

- **Industrial Districts:** These design standards are intended to assist the designer in understanding the city’s requirements for high quality industrial development. These standards complement the development regulations contained in this division by providing good examples of potential design solutions and by providing design interpretations of the various regulations. These standards ensure the highest level of design quality while at the same time providing the flexibility necessary to encourage creativity on the part of project designers.

As a note, the industrial district standards are most applicable to the IGC and IBP zoning districts (neither of which would be applicable within the project site boundary under the proposed project), but also apply to the IG zoning district primarily for those uses visible from public rights-of-way and U.S. Highway 101. The industrial portions of the project site would be developed per the IG zoning and are visible from public rights-of-way and U.S. Highway 101, therefore the standards are applicable.

The standards address the following topics: design principles, site planning, architecture, landscaping, fences and walls, screening, roof treatments, parking and circulation, lighting (discussed in more detail below), and signage (discussed in more detail below).
Airport Overlay District Standards

Article IV, Division 7 - Airport (AR) Overlay District, addresses regulations for new development proposed within the Salinas airport area of influence. The project site is within the area of influence. The purpose of the airport overlay district regulations is to:

(a) Fulfill the city’s obligations, in accordance with requirements of state law (Government Code Section 65302.3), to implement the airport land use compatibility policies adopted by the Monterey County airport land use commission;

(b) Regulate land use development within the vicinity of Salinas municipal airport to protect it from potential encroachment by land uses which are incompatible with airport activities and which may impair the future development and use of the airport; and

(c) Minimize the public’s exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards that would result from incompatible land use development within areas around airport.

Use classifications, development regulations, and design standards that apply within this zoning are those of the underlying base zoning district (as identified in Article III: Base District Regulations of the Zoning Code) except as modified by the airport overlay. Avigation easements are required as a condition of approval for all new development within the area of influence.

Supplemental Standards

Chapter 37, Article V, Supplemental Regulations Applying to All Districts, includes development standards that are in addition to those found in the standards for each individual zoning district. These supplemental standards address the topics listed below that are relevant to the proposed project. The purpose of each set of standards is included to summarize how the standards address the aesthetic character of new development.

- **Division 2. Parking, Loading, and Outdoor Lighting.**

  The purpose of this section is to: (a) Ensure that adequate parking and loading facilities, and outdoor lighting are provided for new land uses, and for major alterations and enlargements of existing uses in proportion to the need for such facilities created by each use; and (b) Ensure that off-street parking and loading facilities, and outdoor lighting are designed in a manner that will ensure efficiency, protect the public safety, and, where appropriate, insulate surrounding land uses from adverse impacts.

- **Division 4. - Landscaping and Irrigation.**

  The purpose of this section is to establish landscaping and irrigation regulations that are intended to: (a) enhance the aesthetic appearance of development in all
areas of the city; (b) reduce heat and glare generated by urban development; (c) minimize water use; (d) minimize impervious surfaces and meet federal, state and local water quality regulations such as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements, and storm water development standards (SWDS); and (e) protect public health, safety, and welfare by minimizing the impact of all forms of physical and visual pollution, promoting natural surveillance, controlling soil erosion and runoff, screening incompatible land uses, preserving the integrity of neighborhoods, and enhancing pedestrian and vehicular traffic and safety.

Landscaping and required planting areas shall be installed in accordance with the standards and requirements of this section for all zoning districts.

Signage

Signage design can play a significant role in the aesthetic appearance of new development. The fundamental standards for signage are included in Chapter 37, Article V, Division 3. – Signs. Relevant standards related to the aesthetic appearance of new signage is included in Section 37-50.530 and summarized below.

- Purpose. The purpose of this division is to establish uniform sign regulations that are intended to: (a) Implement the city’s community design and safety standards as set forth in the general plan; (b) Maintain and enhance the city’s appearance by regulating the design, character, location, number, type, quality of materials, size, illumination, and maintenance of signs; (c) Generally limit commercial signage to on-site locations in order to protect the aesthetic environment from the visual clutter associated with the unrestricted proliferation of signs, while providing channels of communication to the public; (d) Respect and protect the right of free speech by sign display, while reasonably regulating the structural, locational, and other non-communicative aspects of signs, generally for the public health, safety, welfare, and, specifically, to serve the public interests in traffic and pedestrian safety and community aesthetics; (e) Minimize the possible adverse effects of signs on nearby public and private property; and (f) Serve the city’s interests in maintaining and enhancing its visual appeal for tourists and other visitors, by preventing the degradation of visual quality which can result from excess signage;

Regulations in Section 37-50.570 identify that a sign permit is required. The sign permit process is described as are criteria used to determine whether a sign permit will be issued. This assures that the City has the discretion to review signage to ensure it is consistent with City of Salinas Zoning Code standards that address its potential visual and aesthetic effects.

Signage regulations for commercial uses and industrial uses are contained in sections 37.30.220(p), Signs, and 37-30.330(m), Signs, respectively. These are general regulations that are implemented through the sign permit process described in Section 37-50.570.
**Lighting**

Lighting design is addressed in Chapter 37, Zoning, Article III, Base District Regulations, Division 3, Section 37-30.220(o), Design Standards, Lighting, provides lighting design standards specifically for commercial development. Article III, Base District Regulations, Division 5, Section 37-30.330(l), Design Standards, Lighting, provides lighting design standards specifically for industrial development. Additional lighting regulations are found Article V, Supplemental Regulations Applying to All Districts. All new development will be required to comply with these standards unless any are preempted by standards included in the specific plan. Their implementation is designed to reduce light and glare effects of new development. The key lighting related sections of the zoning code are summarized below.

- **Article III, Base District Regulations, Division 3, Section 37-30.220(o), Design Standards, Commercial Use Lighting:**
  3. as a security device, lighting should be adequate, but not overly bright. All building entrances shall be appropriately lighted, and (4) all lighting fixtures shall be shielded to confine light spread within the site boundaries and reduce "sky-glow" impacts.

- **Article III, Base District Regulations, Division 5, Section 37-30.330(l), Design Standards. Lighting:**
  3. as a security device, lighting should be adequate but not overly bright. All accesses to buildings should be well lighted, and (6) All lighting should be shielded to confine light spread within the site boundaries and "sky-glow" impacts.

- **Article V, Supplemental Regulations Applying to All Districts, Division 1. – Special Regulations Applying to All Districts, Section 37-50.180(b)(1), Performance Standards, Glare From Glass.** Mirror or highly reflective glass shall not significantly increase glare visible from adjacent streets and property or pose a hazard for motor vehicles; (2) From Roofs. Highly reflective roof surfaces shall be prohibited in the airport overlay district unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the deputy city manager or their designee, that such surfaces will not pose a hazard to aircraft; and (3) From Outdoor Lighting. Parking lot and security lighting in any district shall be shielded or directed away from any R or NU (NE, NG-1, or NG-2) district properties located within one hundred feet. Lighting for outdoor court or field games within three hundred feet of an R or NU (NE, NG-1, or NG-2) district shall require approval of a conditional use permit.

Section 37-50.480: Outdoor lighting shall employ cutoff optics that allows no light emitted above a horizontal plane running through the bottom of the fixture. Parking lots shall be illuminated to no more than an average maintained two and four-tenths footcandles at ground level with uniform lighting levels. All building-mounted and freestanding parking lot lights (including the fixture, base, and pole) shall not exceed a maximum of twenty-five feet (a maximum of forty feet in the IG district) in height in all districts. Illumination at an R or NU (NE, NG-1, and NG-2)
district property line shall not exceed one-half footcandle maximum. Lighting adjacent to other property or public rights-of-way shall be shielded to reduce light trespass. No portion of the lamp (including the lens and reflectors) shall extend below the bottom edge of the lighting fixture nor be visible from an adjacent property or public right-of-way. A point to point lighting plan showing horizontal illuminance in footcandles and demonstrating compliance with this section shall be submitted for review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit.

**Proposed Specific Plan**

New development within the specific plan boundary must be consistent with the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan. The information below summarizes information from the specific plan that is relevant to the issue of aesthetics. In this context, the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan support general plan policies, municipal code regulations, and/or other federal, State, or other local regulations presented above that serve to mitigate environmental effects of the proposed project.

Specific Plan Chapter 3, Design Guidelines and Standards, includes a description of the development vision and planning and design principles for future development within the specific plan boundary. Chapter 3 includes the following goals, policies and standards that would guide development.

- **Goal 2-3.** Maintain a sharply defined edge between urban uses and agricultural activities.
  - **Policy 2-3.1.** Require temporary agricultural buffers when urban development is proposed to be directly adjacent to productive agriculture.

- **Goal 3-1.** Create entrances to the City that announce arrival and establish a positive impression.
  - **Policy 3-1.1.** Provide landscaping along U.S. Highway 101 frontages to enhance and emphasize entry to the City.
  - **Policy 3-1.2.** Apply high-quality design standards.
  - **Policy 3-1.3.** Provide City signage visible from U.S. Highway 101.

- **Goal 3-2.** Balance the functional needs of general industrial and highway oriented uses with providing a well-designed street scene.
  - **Policy 3-2.1.** Apply landscape standards that require parking lots, walls, and buildings to be softened with plant material.
  - **Policy 3-2.2.** Apply architectural standards that require form, color, materials, and shadow to provide visual interest.

- **Goal 3-3.** Develop enhanced public streetscapes.
Policy 3-3.1. Require development projects to improve their public street frontages with sidewalks and street trees.

Policy 3-2.2. Utilize front setbacks and landscape to enhance the streetscape.

Chapter 3 includes the following guidelines and standards relative to the visual effect of the project on aesthetic resources.

**Streetscapes**

Section 3.4.1 of the specific plan requires future development to reflect the established landscape design and plant palette along De La Torre and Roy Diaz Street to the greatest extent possible. This section also identifies required landscape buffers and tree spacing requirements for future projects that abut and/or are substantially visible from the U.S. Highway 101 right-of-way. Proposed landscape plans are subject to review and approval by the Community Development Department.

**Project Entries**

Section 3.4.2 of the specific plan requires installation of landscape architectural features and landscaping that emphasizes entries along public frontages. Designs may be formal or informal but must include materials that convey a consistent theme and are complementary to the materials used throughout the site. Entry signs shall be designed consistent with the standards specified under Section 3.7.1 Signage and individual master sign plans for future projects.

**Parking Lots**

Section 3.4.3 of the specific plan sets forth standards for landscaping within automobile and truck parking lots. Included in this section are design criteria for landscape setbacks and buffers and tree spacing for public streets, areas abutting property lines or other public areas that are visible to public streets or other public areas.

**Special Landscape Areas**

Section 3.4.4 of the specific plan defines and encourages “special landscape areas”, which are areas within a project site that provide for the rest, relaxation, and enjoyment of people in an outdoor setting such as plazas, courtyards, shaded turf areas, pool areas, etc. Special landscape areas shall have good visibility from buildings and are encouraged to have an ornate landscape design.

**Planting Design and Material**

Section 3.4.5 of the specific plan includes plant lists as guidance for general and low impact development landscape designs. The landscape should enhance the building design, user experience, street scene, provide screening, and manage storm water.
Industrial and Commercial Facades

Section 3.5.1 of the specific plan includes Commercial Thoroughfare Base Zoning District standards include specifications for wall planes that face public streets and front and corner ground floor walls to avoid monotonous surfaces, articulation of building heights and facades, use of trim, varying wall planes, use combinations of complementary colors, and landscape materials emphasizing horizontal features rather than vertical, front entries visible from the street(s), and rhythmic fenestration establish character, avoidance of reflective, translucent, or dark tinted glass along façades that face pedestrian oriented areas, and use of richly textured materials, darker colored materials and/or panels, and/or periodic landscape pots or continuous landscape planter with shrubs.

For the Industrial General Base Zoning District, buildings are encouraged to have a recognizable base consisting largely of richly textured materials, darker colored materials and/or panels, and/or periodic landscape pots or continuous landscape planter with shrubs, to employ a variety of structure forms and/or rhythmic fenestration to establish character, emphasize entries consistent with architectural styles, avoid blank walls and corners on streets, provide architectural detail on tall facades visible from public viewpoints, and utilize landscaping at building edges to reduce visual mass and height.

Roof

Specific plan section 3.5.2 provides guidelines and standards applicable to buildings in all zoning districts. The standards discourage monotonous rooflines and roof planes, near vertical and mansard roof designs, corrugated metal unless the material is appropriate for the architectural style or theme of the building, highly reflective surfaces that create glare, or illuminated roofing.

Materials

Section 3.5.3 of the specific plan includes standards and guidelines that apply to all zoning districts within the specific plan area and include consistent and complimentary application of materials on all facades, use of low maintenance and vandal-resistant materials, and avoidance of frequent changes in materials and untreated/untextured block walls.

Color

Section 3.5.4 of the specific plan sets forth criteria to achieve building and material colors that enhance the architectural styles in all proposed zoning districts, discourages large areas of intense primary colors, minimizes the number of colors used, requires finished color treatments for all roof flashings, rain gutters, and downspouts, vents, and architectural details that complement or match adjacent materials and/or colors.
**Signs**

Section 3.7.1 of the specific plan requires integrated signage with the architectural themes of buildings and encourages the use of monument type signs for tenant identification from public streets, in conformance to the municipal code, unless otherwise noted. Freeway signs are encouraged (in moderation), provided they are designed with adequate height, visibility, and information to provide drivers adequate time to safely change lanes and exit the highway. Future projects with two or more tenants are required to prepare a master sign plan. The section also provides design criteria for a gateway monument sign in parcel 2 (Development Area 2 as described in the specific plan), consistent with the materials and architecture of on-site buildings, which would emphasize City information at the highest portion of the sign. The proposed conceptual monument sign design height is 50 feet or less, but may be subject to modification as part of the review of the applicant’s preliminary master sign plan.

**Lighting**

Specific plan section 3.7.2 states that future project lighting shall provide illumination for the security and safety of the site while avoiding adverse lighting impacts to the surrounding properties and roadways. Lighting shall meet the guidelines and standards specified in the Salinas Municipal Code Section 37-50.480 and other applicable codes such as CalGreen and Cal Energy code.

**Other Standards**

Design guidelines and standards for street furnishings, trash and fuel tank screening, and walls and fences are provided in Sections 3.7.3 – 3.7.6.5.3

### 5.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of aesthetics, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on the subject of aesthetics, or on any subject addressed in the checklist. *(Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.)* Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” *(Ibid.)* Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here.

Therefore, for the purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:
5.0 Aesthetics

- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; and/or
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

In applying these criteria, the City is concerned only with visual impacts from public views, and not from private views. The City has discretion to make this distinction, and does so because requiring mitigation for impacts to purely private views would give private landowners a kind of power over land uses on adjacent or nearby properties that they are not afforded under California law. (See Mira Mar Mobile Community v. City of Oceanside (2004) 119 Cal.App.4th 492-493, quoting Wolford v. Thomas (1987) 190 Cal.App.3d 347, 358, for the proposition that “California landowners do not have a right of access to air, light and view over adjoining property”.)

The Appendix G checklist includes the following questions, which the City determined not to be relevant to the proposed project:

- Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

As described in the Environmental Setting section above, the project site is not located within a state scenic highway corridor or, as described for the general plan in the Regulatory Setting section, within a scenic vista defined by the City. Neither the views of the project site nor views through or over the project site are unique. Therefore, proposed and anticipated development on the project site would have no impact on a scenic vista and there is no potential for the proposed project to substantially damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway corridor. Therefore, no further discussion of these issues is necessary.

5.4 Environmental Impact Analysis

This section includes information and data regarding aesthetics issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data are used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

Change in Visual Character

The proposed project would change the existing visual character of the site by converting vacant and cultivated agricultural land bisected by roadways to urban, built uses. Factors that influence the extent to which this change is considered substantial are described below.
Visual Resource Character and Context of the Project Site

Parcels 1 and 2 that comprise the approximately 16-acres portion of the developable portion of the project site are vacant and do not have notable visual resource value. Agricultural land used for agricultural crop production generally is considered to have a desirable aesthetic character. Loss of the agricultural character of the 17-acre portion of the project site that remains in agricultural use (parcels 3 and 4) would result in the loss of an aesthetic resource.

The perceived change in the visual resource character of the site will be substantially lessened by the fact the project site is bordered on three sites by existing urban development – on the west by U.S. Highway 101 and industrial development, on the north by commercial development, and on the east by business development that exhibit strong urban visual character. Future development within the project site represents an incremental extension of an existing urban edge rather than introduction of urban development into an area of unique aesthetic character that is not substantially influenced by the visual character of existing urban development. Further, views of existing agricultural lands in the vicinity and broader Salinas Valley are common such that the conversion of 17 acres of agricultural land at the urban fringe is not likely to be perceived as a significant change in visual conditions.

Visual Character of Proposed Development within Parcels 1 and 2

The project site would be built out with commercial and industrial uses. The visual characteristics of the proposed hotel on parcel 1 and the proposed travel center on parcel 2 can be generally described based on the site plan for these projects and on the conceptual elevations for the individual projects. Please refer back to Section 4.2, Project Characteristics, for the site plan shown in Figure 4-5, the elevations for the hotel project shown in Figure 4-6, and the elevations for the convenience store/fast food and mechanic’s buildings shown in Figures 4-7 and 4-8, respectively. The conceptual monument sign planned for the travel center portion of the proposed project also plays a role in visual character. Please refer back to Figure 4-9 for the concept design for this sign.

Visual Features of Proposed Hotel

As described in Section 4.2, the proposed hotel would be four stories with a maximum height of 50 feet. At this height, the hotel building would be 1-2 stories taller than most of the existing buildings located adjacent to the project site on the west, north, or east. The Motel 6 building adjacent to the hotel site on the north is 2-3 stories high and industrial buildings on the west side of U.S. Highway are of similar height. So while the hotel building would be a new, relatively prominent visual feature on the approach to the city from northbound U.S. Highway 101, it would not be out of scale with nearby existing buildings as seen from the highway.

The building elevations shown in Figure 4-6 illustrate that the hotel design would be typical of branded, highway-oriented hotels. Basic architectural details are shown in the hotel
elevations as are a number of the façade, roof, and building material details. The site plan shown in Figure 4-5 shows that parking fields would be placed to the side of the hotel. Landscaping would be established throughout the site, with storm water bioretention features located along the site frontage with De La Torre. Approximately 29 percent of the site would be landscaped (which includes the storm water bioretention areas). These primary visual features of the hotel project suggest that it would not be out of character with existing urban development.

**Visual Features of Proposed Travel Center**

The main structural features of the travel center project are the convenience store/fast-food restaurant building and the mechanic’s building. The convenience store/fast-food building would be approximately 23 feet tall, while the mechanic’s building would be 24 feet tall. The elevations in Figures 4-7 and 4-8 show the basic design features of both buildings. Landscaping would be placed throughout the site with a large percent of the landscape area consisting of storm water bioretention areas. Approximately 31 percent of the travel center site would be landscaped.

Because of its function as a travel center for large trucks and passenger vehicles, the site design is dominated by parking fields needed to accommodate these types of vehicles. Parking areas would be the dominant visual features of the travel center project. The planned travel center monument sign, planned for a location along U.S. Highway 101, would also be a significant visual feature of the travel center project. It would be of similar height as the proposed hotel and may not be visually dominant in scale relative to the hotel as seen from northbound U.S. Highway 101. It will be more visually dominant from the southbound direction on the highway.

**Future Development within Parcels 3 and 4**

Because specific development projects are not yet planned for parcels 3 and 4, there is no available detail about the design characteristics of future projects that may locate there. Future development on these parcels must be consistent with City of Salinas General Plan policies, the City of Salinas Zoning Code design standards for the IG zoning district that would govern such development, and with the supplemental zoning code standards for all zoning districts as described in the Regulatory Setting section above, as well as with specific plan standards described below. The design characteristics of future development would be reviewed for consistency with policies and standards as part of the development review process for these projects as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process.

**Specific Plan Design Guidelines and Standards**

The specific plan includes policies and a wide range of design guidelines and standards (summarized previously in the Regulatory Setting section above); many of these address the visual characteristics of the proposed hotel, proposed travel center, and future development within parcels 3 and 4 to the extent practical given functional needs of end users.
The design standards and policies contained in the specific plan meet the intent of the City’s design policies as articulated in the City of Salinas General Plan. Site-specific design guidelines and design standards that call for attractive and high quality architecture and site design in areas of the project site that are visible from U.S. Highway 101 are provided. For example, the proposed specific plan requires agricultural buffers to reduce conflicts with agriculture and maintains a sharply defined edge between urban development and agriculture consistent with general plan policy CD-1.2. The required use of landscaping as buffers along the periphery of areas designated for development will soften the appearance of new development and reduce the visual impact of new development as viewed from all adjacent roadways consistent with general plan policies CD-1.3 and CD-1.4. Architectural design standards, equipment screening standards, and landscaping standards are among the most important factors in reducing visual impacts of development – all of which are included in the specific plan.

The specific plan requires use and placement of landscaping along roadways adjoining areas proposed for development, and provides representative plant listings to be used, consistent with general plan policy CD-1.7. Architectural design standards in the specific plan address issues such as building siding textures and colors, articulation of building facades, wall elevations, windows, entryways, building elevations, and the screening of mechanical equipment, consistent with general plan policy CD-1.8. The specific plan standards for landscaping, architectural design, placement and screening of buildings, etc., would, among other benefits, enhance streetscapes, provide buffering and screening, break up views of unarticulated industrial buildings and large continuous pavement areas, and enhance entries to the annexation area, consistent with general plan policy CD-2.8.

The proposed hotel project, the proposed travel center project, and future projects proposed within parcels 3 and 4 must be designed consistent with the policies, design guidelines, and design standards contained in the general plan, specific plan, and with related regulations contained in the zoning code as described in the Regulatory Setting section above. For the hotel and travel center projects, this consistency will be assured through the site plan review process that is being conducted concurrently with the City’s consideration of all development entitlements being requested by the applicant. The City’s site plan review process is described Section 1.4, Development Review Process. Similarly, at the time future development is proposed within parcels 3 and 4, it will be reviewed for consistency as part of the development review process deemed applicable to individual future projects at that time.

**Summary of Visual Change**

As discussed in the Environmental Setting, the frequency and duration of views of the project site would be most prominent from the northbound lanes of U.S. Highway 101. The project site currently is not visually discernable from adjacent agricultural lands and adjacent existing urban development until northbound travelers are adjacent to the northbound exit.
ramp 326 A and the project site is within their direct line of sight. Under existing conditions, Development of the project site represents an incremental expansion of the existing urban edge where this urban edge is already adjacent to existing urban development. Despite the high frequency (but relatively short duration) of existing northbound views of the site from the highway, the change in visual conditions is not expected to represent a significant departure from the existing pattern and form of development that is visible from the highway. This likelihood is supported by the fact that the project site does not contain unique visual resources that would otherwise differentiate it from typical visual resource conditions at the existing urban/agricultural edge.

The site is most highly visible from Ramp 326A, Roy Diaz Street, and De La Torre. However the frequency of views from these roadways would be substantially lower than from U.S. Highway 101 because they carry low traffic volumes relative to the highway. In combination with the fact that the site does not contain unique visual resources and that existing views from Roy Diaz and De La Torre are already predominantly of existing urban development, the change in visual form and pattern of development as perceived from these roads is not considered substantial.

The proposed (Retail) and planned (General Industrial) land uses for the site are consistent with the general plan land use designations for existing adjacent land uses within the city. The proposed hotel and travel center developments would not have visual characteristics that are incompatible with the existing commercial, business park, and industrial development adjacent to the project site on three sides. The design of the hotel and travel center projects and of future development within parcels 3 and 4 must be consistent with design guidance and standards included in general plan policies; specific policies, guidelines, and standards; and the City of Salinas Municipal Code design regulations. For these reasons, neither the hotel and travel center project designs, nor the design of future uses within parcels 3 and 4 are expected to contribute to create viewer perception of a substantial change in visual character resulting from development design.

**Project Site as an Interim Visual Gateway**

Though not directly related to the thresholds of significance, the issue of city gateways is discussed here for informational purposes. The project site is located in a visually prominent location as viewed from U.S. Highway 101. However, the project site is not within a Gateway Overlay District as defined in the City of Salinas General Plan. Therefore, future development within the project site is not subject to general plan policy or municipal code requirements that apply to land within a designated Gateway Overlay District. Nevertheless, for an interim period of time, the project site would represent a notable portion of the first urban development on the east side of U.S. Highway 101 within the city that is immediately visible to the large number of travelers on northbound U.S. Highway 101. As such, it could be considered a portion of an undesignated visual gateway to the city.
This would be an interim condition because land immediately south of the site is also within the Future Growth Area of which the project site is a part and also within the City’s sphere of influence. Therefore, once development occurs to the south, the project site would become less visually prominent as it would no longer represent the leading urban/agricultural edge that is highly visible from the highway. If future development is not designed with the high visibility of the project site, future development could degrade the visual quality of a portion of an informal, interim gateway to the city. This would be inconsistent with general plan policies CD-1.4 regarding using landscaping, design schemes and signing to improve the image and distinct identity of the City, its neighborhoods and its major gateways; and with Policy CD-1.8, which requires application of high-quality design standards to projects visible from U.S. Highway 101.

As summarized in the Specific Plan Design Guidelines and Standards section above, required consistency of future development with specific plan design guidelines and standards would assure that its visual character is not inconsistent with its interim function as a portion of a visual gateway to Salinas. The consistency of the proposed hotel and travel center projects is being evaluated by the City concurrently with its consideration of other entitlements being sought by the project applicant. Consistency of future development within parcels 3 and 4 will be assured through the City’s development review process deemed applicable to those projects as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process.

**Light and Glare**

The proposed hotel and travel center projects, as well as future development within parcels 3 and 4 will create new sources of light and glare through their use of lighting of various types such as street and parking lot lighting, building lighting, signage illumination, and security illumination. Creation of substantial sources of light and glare and the casting of light and glare skyward and outside the individual project sites and could result in adverse effects from sky glow and/could adversely affect airport operations unless it is properly designed.

All lighting must comply with the performance standards contained in the City of Salinas Municipal Code. Key standards are summarized in the Regulatory Setting section above. These standards include requirements for cutoff optics, shielding of light fixtures, maximum height limits for mounted and freestanding parking lot lights, confining all light splay within the site boundaries, and restrictions on the use of mirrored or highly reflective glass, roof materials, etc. Additionally, the specific plan defines design elements that should be avoided due to their potential aesthetic and glare effects. These include highly reflective surfaces at the ground story or highly reflective surfaces that create glare on roof top equipment, which are consistent with municipal code regulations.

Through the site plan review process, the City will evaluate the proposed hotel and travel center development plans, including lighting and building plans (the latter for minimization...
of reflective roof or wall surfaces). Revisions to the plans will be required if proposed lighting or external building materials for roofs, walls, or other surfaces, has potential to conflict with the performance standards contained in in the zoning code as described in the Regulatory Setting section above. Similarly, lighting plans and building plans for future projects within parcels 3 and 4 will be reviewed through the development review process deemed appropriate for those individual projects at the time they are proposed as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process, of this EIR. Design changes will be required as needed to ensure conformance with the performance standards in the municipal code.

Please refer to Section 12.0, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, for more information about land use compatibility with airport operations, including considerations regarding light and glare as a hazard to airport operations.

As discussed in Section 11.0, Greenhouse Gases, mitigation measure GHG-1 includes project design options for reducing GHG emissions from proposed development within the specific plan boundary. Use of roof or ground-mounted solar photovoltaic systems is included as one of the options that could be employed. The issue of glare from solar photovoltaic panels as a potential hazard to airport operations was reviewed with the City of Salinas Airport Manager. Solar photovoltaic systems are already employed within the boundary of the airport. Installation of such systems within the specific plan area is not deemed to be a hazard to airport operations (phone conversation with Brett Godown, City of Salinas Airport Manager, October 26, 2017).

5.5 **IMPACT SUMMARY**

**IMPACT**    Change in the Visual Character from Vacant Grassland/Agricultural Use to Urban Use (Less than Significant)

Development within the project site would change the visual character of the site as seen from adjacent public roadways and U.S. Highway 101. This change would occur with the conversion of the site from vacant ruderal grassland and agricultural crop production to urban development. The existing visual resource value of the site is not unique and the site is bound on three sides by existing urban development of similar character as that proposed for the site. Viewer sensitivity to the change in visual character is not assumed to be high. The greatest frequency of views of the site would be from U.S. Highway 101 in the northbound direction. Once developed, the change in visual conditions as seen from the highway would not be highly discernable, as the project will only incrementally expand the boundary of the existing urban/agricultural land interface in the project area. Further, the existing visual backdrop to the project site as seen from northbound U.S. Highway 101 is already dominated by existing urban development.

The visual characteristics of the proposed hotel and travel center projects are not inconsistent with existing adjacent industrial, commercial, and business park development. While the
hotel building will be more visually prominent than existing adjacent and nearby commercial and industrial buildings, it will not be out of scale with existing development. The parking fields and signage associated with the travel center project will be its most dominant visual features. However, these features are representative of other commercial and industrial development in the city. From a site design standpoint, projects are not expected to contribute to a substantial change in visual character relative to existing urban development located adjacent to these project sites.

The hotel and travel center projects must be designed consistent with the design guidelines in the specific plan as described above, which in turn must be consistent with design policies contained in the City of Salinas General Plan as described in the Regulatory Setting section above. They must also be designed consistent with the design standards contained in the specific plan and the regulations contained in the City of Salinas Municipal Code, the latter of which are also discussed in the Regulatory Setting. Design consistency of these two projects will be assured through the City’s site plan review process being conducted concurrently with the City’s consideration of the other entitlements being sought by the applicant. The design of future development within parcels 3 and 4 must also be consistent with these documents as would be assured through the development review process conducted for these projects at the time individual project applications are submitted as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process.

Considering the factors summarized above, the proposed project would not result in substantial degradation of visual character and the impact of the project would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**IMPACT** Introduce New Sources of Light and Glare that Substantially Increase Glare and Sky Glow (Less than Significant)

The proposed hotel and travel center projects, as well as future development within parcels 3 and 4, would create new sources of light and glare. All development is subject to the lighting standards contained in the City of Salinas Municipal Code as identified the Regulatory Setting. These standards are in part designed to: minimize use of overly intense lighting, shield light fixtures so that lighting splay is directed downward not transmitted to off-site properties, and through so doing avoid lighting and glare that could conflict with operations of the Salinas Municipal Airport.

The hotel and travel center projects are being reviewed for their consistency with zoning code performance standards for lighting as part of the City’s site plan review process. Future development within parcels 3 and 4 will also be required to comply with the performance standards through the City’s development review process as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. Lighting and glare effects, including hazards to airport operations, will be less than significant with required conformance with the performance standards. No mitigation measures are required.
6.0 Agricultural Resources

This section of the EIR includes evaluation of agricultural resources within the project site. The existing agricultural values of the project site and adjacent lands are identified, along with state and City regulations and policies that guide actions related to the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.

Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- *Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002b);
- *Monterey County Important Farmlands Map* (California Department of Conservation 2014);
- *Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding* (City of Salinas/County of Monterey 2006); and

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

The Ag Land Trust, Monterey County Resource Management Agency, and LAFCO submitted NOP responses that address agricultural resources. The responses focused on identifying impacts from conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use, establishing buffers between proposed urban uses and existing adjacent farmland, and mitigation for loss of farmland. Monterey County also commented on the relationship of the proposed project to the Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the City, the agricultural resources related content of which is described in the Regulatory Setting section below.

6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Agricultural Resources Setting

The highly-productive agricultural lands surrounding Salinas create a distinct urban/agricultural edge and agricultural crops and related industries are a primary economic
engine for the city and region. Salinas lies at the north end of the Salinas Valley, known as "The Salad Bowl of the World," and is the processing and shipping point for lettuce, broccoli, mushrooms, and strawberries, along with numerous other crops. The climate is also ideal for vineyards. Salinas is the processing and shipping point for one of the world’s largest agricultural centers.

Salinas has historically been an agricultural community. While most of the land within the city limits has been developed into urban use, there are remaining parcels that continue in agricultural production, and agricultural land surrounds the city. These agricultural areas help to preserve the traditional rural character of the community, maintain visual open space, and provide substantial economic benefit to the community. However, as growth continues to occur, the expansion of urban uses into portions of the interior and surrounding agricultural areas will be necessary in part to provide adequate housing to meet the existing demand for housing for agriculture and agriculture-related workers and their families (City of Salinas 2002).

Several categories of agricultural products make up the vast majority of Monterey County farm production value. Vegetable crops are the single largest production category by dollar value. For 2016, lettuce dominated this category, followed by broccoli, celery, cauliflower, and spinach, for a total value of $2,817,031,000. Fruit and nut crops represented the second largest category and consisted mostly of strawberries and wine grapes for a total value of $1,056,777,000. Nursery products provided an additional value, as did livestock and seeds. Total agricultural value in 2016 totaled $4.25 billion (Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner 2016).

The vast majority of the most valuable agricultural lands in Monterey County, including those adjacent to Salinas and classified as Prime, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland, are located on the topographically level floor of the Salinas Valley. The valley floor is also subject to the highest rates of agricultural land conversion to non-agricultural uses due to its level topography and good drainage qualities that are favorable for expanding urban development.

**Farmland Classifications**

Land in Monterey County was inventoried as part of the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) and mapped on the *Monterey County Important Farmlands Map* (California Department of Conservation 2014). The land mapped is classified into several different categories including: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, Grazing Land, Urban and Built-Up Land, and Other Land. Conversion of important farmland, which includes farmland in the first three classifications noted above, to a non-agricultural use, is a significant impact. The FMMP is described in more detail in the Regulatory Setting section below.
New development would occur on the approximately 33.98 acres contained in parcels 1 through 4. As shown on Figure 6-1, Farmland Mapping Classifications, land within these parcels is classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland. The remainder of the approximately 64-acre site is within road rights-of-way controlled by the City and Caltrans that are classified as Urban and Built-up land. A summary of the FMMP classifications is provided Table 6-1, Farmland Classifications.

Table 6-1  Farmland Classifications

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<th>Parcel Acreage</th>
<th>Farmland Classifications</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Prime Farmland</td>
<td>Farmland of Statewide Importance</td>
<td>Unique Farmland</td>
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<td>2.19</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>24.89</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Monterey County GIS 2016

Land within parcels 1 and 2 have been fallow since Caltrans completed its U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A improvements in 2012. Land within parcels 3 and 4 remains actively farmed. It was planted in strawberries at the time of the 2016 site investigation.

**Adjacent Agricultural Lands**

The project site is bordered on the west, north, and northeast by developed land within the city limits. To the south and southeast lie agricultural lands within the unincorporated county that are in active agricultural production. Along much of its southeastern and southern boundary, the project site is elevated above adjacent off-site agricultural land within unincorporated Monterey County. A topographic break that ranges to a maximum of about 10 feet between the site boundary and adjacent off-site lands creates a natural separation between the site and the adjacent properties. Please refer back to Figure 3-2, Aerial Photograph, for the location of this break. A farm road traverses the southern boundary of the project site. The road is separated from a farm road located along the northern margin of the adjacent farmland by the intervening slope.
6.2 **REGULATORY SETTING**

State

**California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program**

The California Department of Conservation uses the Natural Resources Conservation Service soil classifications to classify agricultural lands under its FMMP. The FMMP was established in 1982 to assess the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural lands and the conversion of these lands. These designated agricultural lands are included in the Important Farmland Maps used in planning for the present and future of California’s agricultural land resources. The California Department of Conservation has a minimum mapping unit of 10 acres, with parcels that are smaller than 10 acres being absorbed into the surrounding classifications. The categories mapped by the California Department of Conservation are described below. In addition to mapping existing farmland, the FMMP provides analysis of agricultural land use changes throughout California.

**Prime Farmland**

Prime Farmland has the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply necessary to produce sustained high yields. To be classified as Prime Farmland, the land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

**Farmland of Statewide Importance**

This is farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. The land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

**Unique Farmland**

This is farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state’s leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. The land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

Regional/Local

**Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission Policies and Procedures Relating to Spheres of Influence and Changes of Organization and Reorganization (Part E)***

It is the policy of LAFCO that, consistent with section 56300 (a) of the [Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg] Act, applications or proposals for a change in organization or reorganization, or for the establishment or any change to a Sphere of Influence or urban service area
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(hereinafter, “Proposal” or “Proposals”), shall provide for planned, well-ordered, efficient urban development patterns with appropriate consideration of preserving open-space and agricultural lands within those patterns. To implement this policy, it is the further policy of LAFCO that:

1. A Proposal must discuss how it balances the state interest in the preservation of open space and prime agricultural lands against the need for orderly development. (Government Code section 56001.) Proposals that fail to discuss this balance, in the opinion of the executive officer, will be deemed incomplete. Proposals may be denied if they fail to demonstrate to the satisfaction of LAFCO that the need for orderly development is balanced against the preservation of open space and prime agricultural lands.

2. A Proposal must discuss its effect on maintaining the physical and economic integrity of agricultural lands. (Government Code section 56668 (a).) Proposals that fail to discuss their effect, in the opinion of the executive officer, will be deemed incomplete. Proposals may be denied if they fail to demonstrate to the satisfaction of LAFCO that the physical and economic integrity of agricultural lands is maintained.

3. A Proposal must discuss whether it could reasonably be expected to induce, facilitate, or lead to the conversion of existing open-space land to uses other than open-space uses. (Government Code section 56377.) Proposals that fail to discuss potential conversion, in the opinion of the executive officer, will be deemed incomplete. Proposals may be denied if they fail to demonstrate to the satisfaction of LAFCO that: a) they guide development or use of land for other than open-space uses away from existing prime agricultural lands in open-space use and toward areas containing non-prime agricultural lands (Government Code section 56377 (a)); and b) development of existing vacant or non-prime agricultural lands for urban uses within the existing jurisdiction of a local agency or within the Sphere of Influence of a local agency will occur prior to the development of existing open-space lands for non-open-space uses which are outside of the existing jurisdiction of the local agency or outside of the existing Sphere of Influence of the local agency (Government Code section 56377 (b)).

4. A Proposal must, if applicable, provide for pre-zoning (Government Code section 56375 (a)), and must demonstrate that it is consistent with the General Plans and Specific Plans of the existing local agency and any immediately adjacent local agency (Government Code sections 56375 (a) and 56668 (g)). Proposals may be denied if they are not consistent with such plans, or, if not pre-zoned, if the Proposal does not demonstrate to the satisfaction of LAFCO that the existing development entitlements are consistent with the local agency’s plans.
To further these policies, it is the position of LAFCO that agricultural buffers provide an important means to preserve open-space and agricultural lands and preserve the integrity of planned, well-ordered, efficient urban development patterns. Such buffers may be permanent, temporary, or rolling, and may take many forms; easements, dedications, appropriate zoning, streets, or parks, for example. How agricultural buffers are used to further the state policy of preserving open-space and agricultural lands within patterns of planned, well-ordered, efficient urban development is left to the discretion of each local agency; however, Proposals will be judged on how state-wide policies under the Act, and LAFCO adopted policies, with respect to the preservation of open-space and agricultural lands are furthered. Agreements between neighboring local agencies with regard to the preservation of open-space and agricultural lands are encouraged, and such agreements may be incorporated by LAFCO into a Proposal as a condition of approval, or may be required as a condition precedent to approval.

**City of Salinas General Plan**

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the City of Salinas General Plan contains a range of goals and policies that are focused on conservation of agricultural resources. Policies include the following:

**Policy LU-2.1.** Minimize disruption of agriculture by maintaining a compact city form and directing urban expansion to the North and East, away from the most productive agricultural land.

**Policy COS-3.3.** Discourage the conversion of lands designated on the Land Use Map as Agriculture to non-agricultural uses.

**Policy COS-3.4.** Minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban uses through the use of buffer zones, roads, and other physical boundaries.

**Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding – Agricultural Land Mitigation**

In 2006, the City and the County adopted the Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding. The agreements made in the memorandum facilitate annexation and development of the City’s Future Growth Area located to the north and east as illustrated in the general plan. The agreements also facilitate annexation of additional land, including the “Unikool” and Fresh Express sites located to the west and south of the City. The Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding describes the intent of each agency to consider annexation of the Future Growth Areas defined at that time and identifies framework conditions under which annexation could be considered. One of the conditions pertains to preservation of agricultural land that would be converted to non-agricultural use with development of the growth areas.
In its responses to the NOP, the Monterey County Resource Management Agency suggested that the Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding should be amended to address the proposed project. The City has determined that the Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding is applicable only to the lands addressed in that document and consequently, annexation of land that is not specifically identified in the memorandum, including the project site, is not subject to the agreements included therein. Therefore, this issue is not discussed further.

City of Salinas Agricultural Land Preservation Program

To implement the Salinas General Plan and the Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding, the City adopted an Agricultural Land Preservation Program (ALP) in April 2008. The City consulted the County as part of the ALP development process. The ALP supports implementation of key principles and mitigation measures expressed in the general plan including:

- Cooperation with the County;
- Priority to Redevelopment and Infill projects;
- Right to Farm Notices;
- Buffers between Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Uses; and
- Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Program.

The ALP is designed to implement specific general plan policies that would reduce pressure to convert agricultural land. The City also committed to implement a general plan policy to work collaboratively with the County and other local jurisdictions to develop an agricultural conservation easement program. A collaborative effort to develop such a program has not been undertaken to date. A Greater Salinas Area Memorandum of Understanding agreement to require agricultural conservation easements for future development to the west and south of the City is also included in the ALP.

For development to the north and east of U.S. Highway 101 within the City’s Future Growth Area located north of Boronda Road described in the general plan, the ALP does not require agricultural conservation easements. However, a mitigation fee of $750 per acre is required for conversion of agricultural land currently designated Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. For development of lands to the west and south of the City, payment of the fee is not a mitigation option. The ALP also describes uses to which agricultural mitigation fees may be applied (City of Salinas 2008).

City of Salinas Municipal Code

In 2006, the City adopted City of Salinas Municipal Code Section 37-50.220, which identifies City obligations to preserve agricultural lands. The purposes of the “Right to Farm” regulation are as follows:
(1) Demonstrate the city's support for the preservation of agricultural land and operations;

(2) Limit the effects of land use conflicts created by the proximity of urban development to agricultural operations located in and adjacent to the city; and

(3) Provide notice to purchasers, property owners, and tenants of nonagricultural property and uses of their proximity to agricultural land and operations and that they may experience inconveniences and discomforts related to normal farming activities including, but not limited to, noise, odors, fumes, dust, smoke, burning, vibrations, insects, rodents, the application of pesticide, herbicide and fertilizer application, and/or the operation of farm machinery, equipment, and vehicles (including aircraft).

As a condition of all discretionary review application approvals, the City requires that a deed restriction be recorded on any land located within one thousand feet of agricultural land, agricultural processing, or agricultural farming operations to notify any purchaser, property owners, or tenants of the right to farm.

**Proposed Specific Plan**

New development within the specific plan boundary must be consistent with the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan. In this context, the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan support general plan policies, municipal code regulations, and/or other federal, State, or other local regulations presented above that serve to mitigate environmental effects of the proposed project. The information below summarizes information from the specific plan that is relevant to the issue of agricultural resources.

The proposed specific plan includes the following policy, consistent with City of Salinas General Plan policy COS-3.4, which calls for minimizing conflicts between agricultural and urban uses through the use of buffer zones, roads, and other physical boundaries. Policy 2-3.1 of the specific plan requires temporary agriculture buffers/conservation easements when urban development is proposed to be directly adjacent to productive agriculture. Section 2.3.5 of the proposed specific plan provides additional detail regarding the process of defining the buffers:

The specific details and conditions of the temporary agriculture buffers/conservation easements shall be determined in a separate process between subject property owners, the City of Salinas, the County of Monterey, and the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) of Monterey County. Establishment of agriculture buffers shall utilize a set of criteria including but not limited to the type of non-agricultural use proposed, site conditions, anticipated agricultural patterns, weather patterns, crop types, machinery use, pesticide use, existing topographical...
features and existing landscape features. Temporary buffers shall be
designed to comply with applicable state and local laws. Buffers shall be
delineated on the property of the proposed non-agricultural use unless a
mutual agreement is met between the two landowners to locate the buffer
on the agricultural land.
The specific plan notes that any buffer(s) that would be established would be temporary and
terminated once the underlying agricultural purpose for the buffer no longer exists.

6.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of
factual inquiries related to the subject of agricultural resources, as it does on a whole series of
additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these
inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on the subject of agricultural resource
impacts, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (Save Cuyama Valley v. County of
Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants
agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a
common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in
Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here.
Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the
proposed project would:

- 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; or

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

The Appendix G checklist also inquires whether a proposed project would:

- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;

- 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)); or

- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

These questions are irrelevant to the proposed project, as none of the land within the project
site is under Williamson Act contract and there is no forest land or timberland within the
project area. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with land in a Williamson Act contract, nor would the proposed project conflict with existing zoning for forest land or timberland and would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land.

6.4 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS**

This section includes information and data regarding agricultural resource issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

**Important Farmland**

The proposed project would convert 24.89 acres of Prime Farmland, 5.73 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 2.50 acres of Unique Farmland to non-agricultural use as mapped by the FMMP. The balance of 0.94 acres is classified as Urban and Built-Up land. The proposed project would convert a total of 33.12 acres of “Farmland” (defined to be comprised of these three farmland classifications) to non-agricultural use.

The general plan EIR identified loss of farmland as a significant unavoidable impact of implementing the general plan, including the planned future use of the project site for industrial development. A mitigation measure is included in the general plan EIR for this impact which requires the City to cooperate with the County to direct growth away from the most productive farmlands to the south and west of the city.

Based on the intent of the ALP, which was adopted in part as a tool to implement the general plan, the City has, and will continue to require that permanent agricultural land conservation easements be provided by project applicants whose projects convert Farmland to non-agricultural use. Farmland of equal or better quality than that being converted is to be placed in a permanent conservation easement at a minimum ratio of one acre conserved to one acre converted.

LAFCO’s agricultural land conservation policies apply to Prime Farmland rather than to all three Farmland classifications described above. By requiring permanent agricultural easements as partial mitigation for conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use, the City would also be addressing LAFCO’s interest that mitigation for loss of Prime Farmland be addressed in the EIR.

**Conversion of Other Farmland to Non-agricultural Uses**

Development of urban uses adjacent to active agricultural operations can lead to land use conflicts. Impacts associated with urban interface conflicts were identified in the general plan
EIR. These include inconveniences or discomforts (externalities) associated with dust, smoke, noise, and odor from agricultural operations; restrictions on agricultural operations (such as pesticide application) along interfaces with urban uses; conflicts with farm equipment and vehicles using roadways; trespassing and vandalism on active farmlands; etc. These conflicts can lead to constraints on agricultural operations and along with rising land values, can create pressure/incentives for agricultural land owners to convert land to non-agricultural uses.

These types of conflicts are typically associated with locating sensitive residential uses adjacent to existing agricultural operations. Placing agricultural operations and non-residential uses adjacent to each other is typically a lesser source of potential land use conflict. Non-residential uses do not typically have the same sensitivity to agricultural operation nuisances and are not continuously occupied. The types of industrial end uses that the draft specific plan identifies may be permitted within parcels 3 and 4 adjacent to existing agricultural uses would not be highly sensitive to operations associated with on-going agricultural operations. Further, the topographical separation between these uses would also serve to physically separate these uses.

The general plan EIR found that potential impacts associated with indirect conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures that consist of policies included in the general plan. For residential and non-residential uses, a general plan policy addresses the need to incorporate buffers between non-agricultural and agricultural uses to reduce the potential impact as described in the Regulatory Setting above.

The proposed project does not include residential uses. Therefore, adverse land use incompatibility effects for the land use type that is most sensitive to agricultural operations would not occur. Future development within the project site must conform to general plan agricultural buffer policy. That policy is reflected in specific plan Policy 2-3.1, which requires a temporary agricultural buffer along the boundary of parcels 3 and 4. Neither the general plan nor the specific plan includes criteria for defining the features of an temporary buffer. The Monterey County General Plan Agricultural Element includes policy related to agricultural buffers. Because the project site would be annexed to the City, County agricultural policy would not be directly relevant to if and how the City requires agricultural buffers are to be integrated into the proposed project. However, Monterey County General Plan Policy AG-1.2 does include criteria which are provided below for illustrative purposes to indicate the types of criteria that are commonly considered to establish agricultural buffers:
AG-1.2. The County shall require that well-defined buffer areas be provided as partial mitigation for new non-agricultural development proposals that are located adjacent to agricultural land uses on farm lands designated as Prime, of Statewide Importance, Unique, or Local Importance.

a. Criteria. The following criteria shall be used to establish agricultural buffers to protect current and reasonably foreseeable future agricultural operations:

1. The type of non-agricultural use proposed, site conditions and anticipated agricultural practices.

2. Weather patterns, crop type, machinery and pesticide use, existence of topographical features, trees and shrubs, and possible development of landscape berms to separate the nonagricultural use from the existing agricultural use.

b. Buffers. Buffers and/or easements shall be:

1. Designed to comply with applicable state and local laws regulating school buffers, pesticide barriers, and other controls.

2. Provided on the land designated for the proposed new use and not on the adjacent agricultural land unless by mutual agreement between the two landowners. Buffer maintenance will be the responsibility of the underlying fee title owner and shall be enforceable by the County of Monterey.

3. Designed to be used for the purposes and manner described in this policy and for no other purposes unless agreed to by abutting landowners. Drainage, shading, vegetation, and erosion control shall be made beneficial to the adjacent agricultural use.

In circumstances in which a buffer is not meant to be permanent, it will be terminated once the underlying agricultural purpose for the buffer no longer exists. The Agricultural Advisory Committee shall review and make recommendations on establishment of, and changes to, buffer zones.

Conformance of future projects proposed within parcel 4 with the agricultural buffer requirement will be assured through the City’s development review process for individual future projects as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. This will ensure that potential land use incompatibility conflicts that might otherwise facilitate indirect conversion of off-site agricultural land to non-agricultural use will be minimized.
6.5 **IMPACT SUMMARY AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

**IMPACT** Convert a Total of 33.12 Acres of Farmland Comprised of 24.89 Acres of Prime Farmland, 5.73 Acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 2.50 Acres of Unique Farmland to Non-Agricultural Use (Significant and Unavoidable)

The proposed project would convert 24.89 acres of Prime Farmland, 5.73 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 2.50 acres of Unique Farmland to non-agricultural use. This is considered a significant adverse environmental impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would partially mitigate the impact.

*Mitigation Measure*

**AG-1** Developers of the proposed hotel project, the travel center project, and future projects within parcels 3 and 4 shall provide mitigation for conversion of Farmland (Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland) to non-agricultural use. At a minimum, mitigation shall include dedication of a permanent agricultural conservation easement to a qualified third-party farmland conservation entity on off-site agricultural land of equal or better quality at a ratio of 1:1. Equal or better quality is land with a California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program farmland classification that is equal to or better than the classification of farmland being converted. The conservation easement shall be placed on land in proximity of the City. Individual developers shall demonstrate compliance with this mitigation measure to the Community Development Director prior to issuance of grading permits for individual projects.

Implementation of this mitigation measure would partially mitigate the impact by requiring developers to permanently preserve other Farmland. However, the mitigation measure would not reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level, as Farmland within the project would be irretrievably committed to non-agricultural use. Therefore, even with implementation of this mitigation measure, the impact would be significant and unavoidable. A statement of overriding considerations would be required.

**IMPACT** Development of Urban Uses with Potential to Facilitate Conversion of Farmland to Non-Agricultural Use (Less than Significant)

The proposed project would place non-residential urban development adjacent to active farmland. Adjacent, on-going agricultural operations have potential to generate dust and noise, and to create public health concerns from the use of pesticides which could be considered incompatible with the proposed urban uses if adequate buffering between the two uses is not provided. The continued viability of the adjacent farmland could be affected
if these externalities create pressure on agricultural land owners to halt or modify their agricultural activities. This in turn could lead to conversion of the adjacent farmland to non-agricultural uses.

Policy 2-3.1 in the specific plan requires that an on-site agricultural buffer be established along the boundary of parcels 3 and 4. The purpose is to separate proposed urban uses from adjacent, on-going agricultural uses and by doing so, reduce the potential for incompatibilities with farming operations. Required conformance of future development within the project site with the policy would substantially reduce the potential for such development to indirectly facilitate conversion of the adjacent farmland to non-agricultural use. Such conformance will be assured through the City’s development review process as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. No mitigation measures are required.

**Relationship of the Proposed Project to LAFCO Reorganization Proposal Standards**

The proposed project will be subject to review and approval of LAFCO because it includes two or more changes of organization contained within a single proposal. Changes of organization include annexations and attachments/detachments from a district. The LAFCO actions associated with the proposed project as listed in Section 4.4, Approvals and Intended Uses of the EIR, shows that two annexations and two detachments are proposed.

As part of its deliberations on a proposal for reorganization, LAFCO will evaluate the consistency of the proposal with its *Standards for the Evaluation of Proposal for a Change of Organization or Reorganization* (Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission 2013). Among the standards that are applicable to the proposed project are those set forth in Part E of this document, which is quoted in the Regulatory Setting portion of this section.

To assist LAFCO in its consistency determination, the applicable standards in Part E of the policies and procedures are listed in Appendix H, LAFCO Reorganization Standards Evaluation, and the project consistency with the standards is described.

No inconsistencies were identified as a result of the analysis. As of the date of this draft EIR, the reorganization application had not yet been completed. The application must be completed prior to the City’s consideration of the reorganization approval.
7.0 Air Quality

This section of the EIR includes an evaluation of the proposed project’s operational and construction emissions impacts on air quality.

Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- City of Salinas General Plan (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002a);
- Draft Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan (Rugger-Jensen-Azar 2017);
- Salinas Travel Center Draft Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment Illingworth & Rodkin 2017) (Appendix C – on CD on the inside back cover of this EIR);
- CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District 2008)

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

In comments on the NOP, the Monterey County Health Department recommended that air quality impacts on vulnerable groups (e.g. adjacent hotels, housing, existing businesses, and workers/patrons at the site) be addressed in the EIR.

7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regional Climate and Topography

Salinas is located in the North Central Coast Air Basin (hereinafter “air basin”), a 5,159 square mile area along the central coast of California comprising several interconnected valleys: a portion of the Santa Clara Valley, San Benito Valley, Salinas Valley, and Carmel Valley. A semi-permanent high-pressure cell in the eastern Pacific Ocean is the basic controlling factor in the air basin’s climate. In the summer, a dominant, high pressure cell causes persistent west and northwest winds over the coast. Air descends in the high-pressure cell forming a stable temperature inversion of hot air over a cool coastal layer of air. Onshore air currents pass over cool ocean waters to bring fog and relatively cool air into the coastal valleys. Warmer air aloft acts to inhibit vertical air movement.
The generally northwest-southeast orientation of mountain ranges restricts and channels summer on-shore air currents. Surface heating in the interior portion of the Salinas and San Benito valleys creates a weak low pressure cell, which intensifies on-shore airflows during the afternoon and evening. In the fall, the surface winds become weak, and the marine layer grows shallow, dissipating altogether on some days. Airflow is occasionally reversed in a weak offshore movement, and the relatively stationary air mass is held in place by the high-pressure cell, which allows pollutants to build up over a period of a few days. It is most often during this season that the north or east winds develop, which can transport pollutants from either the San Francisco Bay Area or the Central Valley into the air basin.

During the winter, the high-pressure cell migrates southward and has less influence on the air basin. Air frequently flows in a southeasterly direction out of the Salinas and San Benito valleys, especially during night and morning hours. Northwest winds are nevertheless still dominant in winter, but easterly flow is more frequent. The general absence of deep, persistent inversions and the occasional storm systems usually result in good air quality for the basin as a whole in winter and early spring.

**Air Emissions from Existing On-Site Activities**

A portion of the project site is fallow and a portion is in agricultural row crop production. There are no existing activities within the vacant portion, so no existing air emissions are associated with that portion of the site. Existing agricultural operations are sources of air pollutant emissions that include engine exhaust (tractors, delivery vehicles, worker vehicles) and fugitive dust (soil disturbance during farming operations and vehicle operations on unpaved surfaces). Because these activities are only intermittent and of small scale (the area of the site in row crop production is approximately 17 acres), these emissions have not been quantified. Chemical sprays are likely to be occasionally applied to the crops. There are no sensitive receptors immediately adjacent to the farmed area for which agricultural chemical drift would be a public health concern.

**Criteria Air Pollutants and their Effects on Human Health**

The six most common and widespread air pollutants of concern, or “criteria pollutants,” are ground level ozone, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and lead. In addition, volatile organic compounds are a key contributor to the criteria pollutants because they react with other substances to form ground level ozone. The primary pollutants of concern in Monterey County are ozone and precursors (volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides), particulate matter 10 and 2.5 microns or less in size, and carbon monoxide. The common properties, sources, and related health and environmental effects of these pollutants are summarized in Table 7-1, Common Air Pollutants. Air-borne lead and sulfur oxides are not significant pollutants of concern in the region (Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District 2008, 2013).
Table 7-1   Common Air Pollutants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pollutant</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Major Sources</th>
<th>Related Health &amp; Environmental Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ozone (O₃)                       | Created by the chemical reaction between nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds in the presence of heat and sunlight. Ground level ozone is the principal component of smog. | • Motor vehicle exhaust;  
• Industrial emissions;  
• Gasoline vapors  
• Chemical solvents. | • Reduced lung capacity; Irritation of lung airways and inflammation;  
• Aggravated asthma;  
• Increased susceptibility to respiratory illnesses (i.e. bronchitis). |
| Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) | Precursor of ground-level ozone                                             | • Petroleum transfer and storage;  
• Mobile sources;  
• Organic solvents. | • Potential carcinogen (e.g. benzene);  
• Toxic to plants and animals. |
| Nitrogen Oxides (NOₓ)            | Group of highly organic gases containing nitrogen in varying amounts. Many nitrogen oxides are odorless and colorless. | • Motor vehicles;  
• Electric utilities;  
• Industrial, commercial, and residential sources that burn fuel. | • Toxic to plants;  
• Reduced visibility;  
• Respiratory irritant. |
| Suspended and Fine Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) (PM₂.₅) | Describes particles in the air, including dust, soot, smoke, and liquid droplets. Others are so small that they can only be detected with an electron microscope. | • Motor vehicles;  
• Factories;  
• Construction sites;  
• Tilled farm fields  
• Unpaved roads;  
• Wood burning. | • Aggravated asthma;  
• Increases in respiratory symptoms;  
• Decreased lung function;  
• Premature death;  
• Reduced visibility. |
| Carbon Monoxide (CO)             | Describes particles in the air, including dust, soot, smoke, and liquid droplets. Others are so small that they can only be detected with an electron microscope. | • Fuel combustion;  
• Industrial processes;  
• Highly congested traffic | • Chest pain for those with heart disease;  
• Vision problems;  
• Reduced mental alertness;  
• Death (at high levels) |


Ozone

Ground level ozone is produced by chemical reactions, which are triggered by sunlight, involving nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds. Since ozone is not directly emitted to the atmosphere, but is formed because of photochemical reactions, it is considered a secondary pollutant. Ozone is a seasonal problem, occurring roughly from April through October.

Ozone is a strong irritant that attacks the respiratory system, leading to the damage of lung tissue. Asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory ailments, as well as cardiovascular diseases, are aggravated by exposure to ozone. A healthy person exposed to high concentrations may
become nauseated or dizzy, may develop a headache or cough, or may experience a burning sensation in the chest. Research has shown that exposure to ozone damages the alveoli (the individual air sacs in the lung where the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between the air and blood takes place). Research has shown that ozone also damages vegetation.

**Volatile Organic Compounds (Ozone Precursor)**

Volatile organic compounds are emitted from a variety of sources, including liquid and solid fuel combustion, evaporation of organic solvents, and waste disposal.

**Nitrogen Oxides (Ozone Precursor)**

Most nitrogen oxides are created during combustion of fuels. Nitrogen oxides are a major contributor to ozone formation. Nitrogen dioxide is a reddish-brown gas that can irritate the lungs and can cause breathing difficulties at high concentrations. Like ozone, nitrogen dioxide is not directly emitted, but is formed through a reaction between nitric oxides and atmospheric oxygen. Nitrogen dioxide also contributes to the formation of particulate matter (see discussion below). Nitrogen dioxide concentrations in the air basin have been well below ambient air quality standards; therefore, nitrogen dioxide concentrations from land use projects are not a concern.

**Particulate Matter**

Particulate matter is comprised of small, suspended particles, primarily composed of dust particles, nitrates, and sulfates. Particulate matter is classified as under 10 microns (suspended particulate matter or PM10) and under 2.5 microns (fine particulate matter or PM2.5). Suspended particulate matter is directly emitted to the atmosphere as a byproduct of fuel combustion, wind erosion of soil and unpaved roads, and from construction or agricultural operations. Small particles are also created in the atmosphere through chemical reactions. Approximately 64 percent of fugitive dust is suspended particulate matter. Minimal grading typically generates about 10 pounds per day per acre on average while excavation and earthmoving activities typically generate about 38 pounds per day per acre.

Although particles greater than 10 microns in diameter can cause irritation in the nose, throat, and bronchial tubes, natural mechanisms remove much of these particles. Particles less than 10 microns in diameter are able to pass through the body’s natural defenses and the mucous membranes of the upper respiratory tract and enter into the lungs. The particles can damage the alveoli. The particles may also carry carcinogens and other toxic compounds, which can adhere to the particle surfaces and enter the lungs.

**Carbon Monoxide**

Carbon monoxide is a component of motor vehicle exhaust, which contributes about 56 percent of all carbon monoxide emissions nationwide. Other non-road engines and vehicles (such as construction equipment and boats) contribute about 22 percent of all carbon
monoxide emissions nationwide. Carbon monoxide can cause harmful acute health effects by reducing oxygen delivery to the body’s organs (like the heart and brain) and tissues. Photochemical oxidation of carbon monoxide in the presence of nitrogen oxides and water vapor contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone. California Air Resources Board data show a steady decrease in CO emissions levels from 2000 through 2015:

- 2000: 349.7 tons per day;
- 2005: 244.9 tons per day;
- 2010: 179.9 tons per day; and
- 2015: 149.3 tons per day.

The California Air Resources Board’s emissions projection for 2025 is 118.0 tons per day.

Higher concentrations of carbon monoxide generally occur in areas with heavy traffic congestion. In cities, 85 to 95 percent of all carbon monoxide emissions may come from motor vehicle exhaust. Concentration of carbon monoxide is a direct function of vehicle idling time and, thus, traffic flow conditions. Transport of carbon monoxide is extremely limited; it disperses rapidly from the source under normal meteorological conditions. Under certain meteorological conditions, however, carbon monoxide concentrations close to a congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthy levels, affecting local sensitive receptors (residents, school children, hospital patients, the elderly, etc.). Typically, high carbon monoxide concentrations are associated with roadways or intersections operating at unacceptable levels of service. Congested intersections with high volumes of traffic could cause carbon monoxide “hot spots,” where localized high concentrations of carbon monoxide occur. Emissions thresholds established for carbon monoxide apply to direct or stationary sources.

**Diesel Emissions**

Diesel exhaust is the predominant toxic air contaminant in urban air and is estimated to represent about two-thirds of the cancer risk from toxic air contaminants. Diesel engines emit a complex mix of pollutants including nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and toxic air contaminants. The most visible constituents of diesel exhaust are very small carbon particles or soot, known as diesel particulate matter. Diesel exhaust also contains over 40 cancer-causing substances, most of which are readily adsorbed on the soot particles. Among the toxic air contaminants contained in diesel exhaust are dioxin, lead, polycyclic organic matter, and acrolein. Short-term exposure to diesel particulate matter is associated with variable irritation and inflammatory symptoms. Diesel engine emissions are responsible for a majority of California’s estimated cancer risk attributable to air pollution. Diesel particulate matter is a significant fraction of California’s particulate pollution (California Air Resources Board 2005; California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment 2001).
Diesel exhaust is especially common during the grading stage of construction (when most of the heavy equipment is used), and adjacent to heavily trafficked roadways where diesel trucks are common. The EPA regulates diesel engine design and fuel composition at the federal level, and has implemented a series of measures since 1994 to reduce nitrogen oxides and particulate emissions from off-road and highway diesel equipment. Ultralow sulfur off-road and highway diesel fuels, 15 parts per million (ppm) became the standard in California by 2007, replacing the previous 500 ppm fuel (Clean Diesel Fuel Alliance 2016).

EPA Tier 1 non-road diesel engine standards were introduced in 1996, Tier 2 in 2001, Tier 3 in 2006, and Tier 4 in 2011, with final Tier 4 in 2014 (DieselNet 2016). Table 7-2, Non-road Engine Emissions Standards (130-560 kw Engines), compares emissions standards for NOx and particulate matter from non-road engine Tier 1 through Tier 4 for a typical engine size of 130 to 560 kilowatts. As illustrated in the table, emissions for these pollutants have decreased significantly for construction equipment manufactured over the past 20 years, and especially for construction equipment manufactured in the past several years.

Table 7-2 Non-road Engine Emissions Standards (130-560 kw Engines)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment Tier</th>
<th>Particulates</th>
<th>Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1 (introduced in 1996)</td>
<td>0.55 grams per kilowatt-hour</td>
<td>9.2 grams per kilowatt-hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2 (introduced in 2001)</td>
<td>0.15 grams per kilowatt-hour</td>
<td>6.5 grams per kilowatt-hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3 (introduced in 2006)</td>
<td>0.15 grams per kilowatt-hour</td>
<td>4.0 grams per kilowatt-hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 4 (introduced in 2014)</td>
<td>0.02 grams per kilowatt-hour</td>
<td>0.4 grams per kilowatt-hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In California, non-road equipment fleets can retain older equipment, but fleets must meet averaged emissions limits, new equipment must be Tier 3 or better after January 2018 (for large and medium fleets) or January 2023 (for small fleets), and over time the older equipment must be fitted with particulate filters. Large and medium fleets have increasingly strict fleet compliance targets through 2023 and small fleets through 2029. A small fleet has total horse power of 2,500 or less, and a medium fleet has total horsepower of between 2,500 and 5,000. All non-road equipment operating in California is registered with the California Air Resources Board, which issues an equipment identification number (California Air Resources Board 2014).

**Asbestos**

Asbestos can be found in construction materials in older buildings and in serpentine rocks and soils formed from those rocks. Serpentine rock is typically found along ridges in the central California area, and serpentine soils are found near drainages from those ridges (California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology 2000). Asbestos is
generally not harmful when asbestos-containing materials are left undisturbed, but when disturbed microscopic fibers can be dislodged and remain in the air for long periods. Asbestos handling and disposal is regulated by federal and state law. The project site does not contain any buildings, and the deep alluvial soils found on the project site do not contain serpentine rocks or soils formed from serpentine.

**Construction Emissions**

Emissions generated during construction are “short-term” in the sense that they would be limited to the actual periods of site development and construction. Short-term construction emissions are typically generated by the use of heavy equipment, the transport of materials, and construction employee commute trips. Construction-related emissions consist primarily of reactive organic gasses, nitrogen oxides, diesel particulate matter, suspended particulate matter, and carbon monoxide. Emissions of reactive organic gasses, nitrogen oxides, diesel particulate matter, and carbon monoxide are generated primarily by the operation of gas and diesel-powered motor vehicles, asphalt paving activities, and the application of architectural coatings. Suspended particulate matter emissions are generated primarily by wind erosion of exposed graded surfaces.

**Stationary Source Emissions**

Stationary sources are fixed in place and include two major subcategories: point and area sources. Point sources consist of a single emission source with an identified location point at a facility. Facilities could have multiple point sources located onsite. Point sources are often associated with manufacturing and industrial processes. Point sources include boilers, spray booths, generators, and gasoline dispensing stations. Area sources are small emission sources that are widely distributed, but may have substantial cumulative emissions; examples include residential water heaters, small engines, and consumer products, such as barbecue lighter fluid and hair spray.

**Sensitive Receptors**

Although air pollution can affect all segments of the population, certain groups are more susceptible to its adverse effects than others. Children, the elderly, and the chronically or acutely ill are the most sensitive population groups. These sensitive receptors are commonly associated with specific land uses such as residential areas, schools, parks, retirement homes, and hospitals. In addition, certain air pollutants, such as carbon monoxide, only have significant effects if they directly affect a sensitive population. There are no sensitive receptors within 1,000 feet of the project site (Illingworth and Rodkin 2017). Three hotels are located within 1,000 feet of the project site: a Motel 6, Days Inn, and Inns of California. These hotels are governed by the definition of a hotel in Salinas Municipal Code Sec. 37-10.320, that limits guest stays to no longer than 28 days. The hotels are not extended stay hotels that allow longer guest stays.
7.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Federal

Federal Clean Air Act


The federal Clean Air Act required the EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for several air pollutants on the basis of human health and welfare criteria. The Clean Air Act also set deadlines for the attainment of these standards. The Clean Air Act established two types of national air standards: primary and secondary standards. Primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of sensitive persons such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. Historically, air quality laws and regulations have divided air pollutants into two broad categories of airborne pollutants: “criteria pollutants” and “toxic air contaminants.”

In general, the Clean Air Act creates a partnership between state and federal governments for implementation of the Clean Air Act provisions. The federal Clean Air Act requires states to prepare an air quality control plan known as a State Implementation Plan. California’s State Implementation Plan contains the strategies and control measures that California will use to attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. If, when reviewing the State Implementation Plan for conformity with Clean Air Act Amendments mandates, the EPA determines a State Implementation Plan to be inadequate, EPA may prepare a Federal Implementation Plan for the non-attainment area and may impose additional control measures.

The Lewis-Presley Air Quality Management Act, adopted in 1976 and amended in 1987, and the California Clean Air Act, adopted in 1988 and amended in 1992, provide the basis for air quality regulation by the state. The California Clean Air Act requires that all air districts in the state endeavor to achieve and maintain California Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter. The California Clean Air Act specifies that air districts focus particular attention on reducing the emissions from transportation and area-wide emission sources, and the California Clean Air Act provides districts with authority to regulate indirect sources.

United States Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA was established in 1970, the same year the federal Clean Air Act was passed, and has primary responsibility for establishing the standards the states must enforce, for
conducting research, and for providing financial and technical assistance to the states. When necessary, the EPA steps in to aid the states in implementation and enforcement of clean air regulations.

**Federal Standards for Air Pollutants**

Ambient air quality is described in terms of compliance with the state and national standards. State standards are discussed below. In general, criteria pollutants are pervasive constituents, such as those emitted in vast quantities by the combustion of fossil fuels. Both the state and federal governments have developed ambient air quality standards for the most prevalent pollutants, which include ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, suspended particulate matter, and fine particulate matter. Table 7-3, Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards, lists state and federal ambient air quality standards for common air pollutants.

National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants are emissions standards set by the EPA for an air pollutant not covered by National Ambient Air Quality Standards that may cause an increase in fatalities or in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating illness. The standards for a particular source category require the maximum degree of emission reduction that the EPA determines to be achievable, which is known as the Maximum Achievable Control Technology.

**State**

**Air Quality Management Plans**

The federal Clean Air Act requires areas with unhealthful levels of ozone, inhalable particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide to develop plans, known as State Implementation Plans. State Implementation Plans are comprehensive plans that describe how an area will attain national ambient air quality standards. State Implementation Plans are a compilation of new and previously submitted plans, programs (such as monitoring, modeling, permitting, etc.), district rules, state regulations, and federal controls. California grants air districts explicit statutory authority to adopt indirect source regulations and transportation control measures, including measures to encourage the use of ridesharing, flexible work hours, or other measures that reduce the number or length of vehicle trips. Local air districts and other agencies, such as the Bureau of Automotive Repair and the Department of Pesticide Regulation, prepare State Implementation Plan elements and submit them to the California Air Resources Board for review and approval. The California Air Resources Board forwards State Implementation Plan revisions to the EPA for approval and publication in the Federal Register. The 1990 amendments to the federal Clean Air Act set deadlines for attainment based on the severity of an area’s air pollution problem.
Table 7-3  Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pollutant</th>
<th>Averaging Time</th>
<th>California Standards(^1)</th>
<th>Federal Standards(^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>Primary(^3,4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ppm</td>
<td>µg/m(^3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ozone(^6)</td>
<td>1 Hour</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 Hour</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM(_{10})(^7)</td>
<td>24 Hour</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM(_{2.5})(^7)</td>
<td>24 Hour</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon Monoxide (CO)</td>
<td>8 Hour</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Hour</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrogen Dioxide (NO(_2))(^8)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Hour</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulfur Dioxide (SO(_2))(^9)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24 Hour</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Hour</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Hour</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead(^10,11)</td>
<td>30 Day Average</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 month revolving</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Calendar Quarter</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility Reducing Particles(^12)</td>
<td>8 Hour</td>
<td>See note(^12)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulfates</td>
<td>24 Hour</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrogen Sulfide</td>
<td>1 Hour</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinyl Chloride(^10)</td>
<td>24 Hour</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:
1. California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide (1 and 24 hour), nitrogen dioxide, suspended particulate matter—PM\(_{10}\), PM\(_{2.5}\), and visibility reducing particles, are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.
2. National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual averages or annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest eight hour concentration in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM\(_{10}\), the 24 hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 µg/m\(^3\) is equal to or less than one. For PM\(_{2.5}\), the 24 hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard. Contact EPA for further clarification and current federal policies.
3. Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.

4. National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect the public health.

5. National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.

6. On October 1, 2015, the national 8-hour ozone primary and secondary standards were lowered from 0.075 to 0.070 ppm.

7. On December 14, 2012, the national annual PM2.5 primary standard was lowered from 15 µg/m³ to 12.0 µg/m³. The existing national 24-hour PM2.5 standards (primary and secondary) were retained at 35 µg/m³, as was the annual secondary standard of 15 µg/m³. The existing 24-hour PM10 standards (primary and secondary) of 150 µg/m³ also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over three years.

8. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the three-year average of the annual 98th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 100 ppb. Note that the national 1-hour standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the national 1-hour standard to the California standards the units can be converted from ppb to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 100 ppb is identical to 0.100 ppm.

9. On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO2 standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the three-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb. The 1971 SO2 national standards (24-hour and annual) remain in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2010 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1971 standards, the 1971 standards remain in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2010 standards are approved. Note that the 1-hour national standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.

10. CARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as 'toxic air contaminants' with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.

11. The national standard for lead was revised on October 15, 2008 to a rolling 3-month average. The 1978 lead standard (1.5 µg/m³ as a quarterly average) remains in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2008 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1978 standard, the 1978 standard remains in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2008 standard are approved.

12. In 1989, CARB converted the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which is "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" for the statewide standard.

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**State Toxic Air Contaminants Regulation**

Enacted in 1983, the Toxic Air Contaminant Identification and Control Act created California's program to reduce exposure to air toxics. The Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Information and Assessment Act of 1987 requires a statewide air toxics inventory, notification of people exposed to a significant health risk, and facility plans to reduce these risks.

The California Air Resources Board is required to use certain criteria in the prioritization for the identification and control of air toxics. The California Air Resources Board uses available information to prioritize compounds. California Air Resources Board regulations restrict to 0.25 percent the asbestos content of material used in surfacing applications such as unpaved roads, parking lots, driveways, and walkways.

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment assists the California Air Resources Board by developing the health assessment portion of the TAC identification documents; reviews facility risk assessments for the "Hot Spots" Program; is developing new risk
assessment guidelines for the "Hot Spots" Program; and is the lead agency for Proposition 65. The Department of Pesticide Regulation regulates toxic air contaminants that are also pesticides.

**California Air Resources Board**

The federal Clean Air Act gives states primary responsibility for directly monitoring, controlling, and preventing air pollution. The California Air Resources Board is responsible for coordination and oversight of federal, state, and local air pollution control programs in California and for implementing the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act and California Clean Air Act. The duties of California Air Resources Board include coordinating air quality attainment efforts, setting standards, conducting research, and creating solutions to air pollution. The California Air Resources Board, which is a state agency located within the California Environmental Protection Agency, oversees regional or local air quality management or air pollution control districts that are charged with developing attainment plans for the areas over which they have jurisdiction. The California Air Resources Board grants these regional or local air districts explicit statutory authority to adopt indirect source regulations and transportation control measures, including measures to encourage the use of ridesharing, flexible work hours, or other measures that reduce the number or length of vehicle trips.

**State Standards for Air Pollutants**

As discussed above, ambient air quality is described in terms of compliance with the state and national standards. Table 7-3, Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards, presented earlier, lists state and federal ambient air quality standards for common air pollutants. The state standards generally have lower thresholds than the federal standards, yet both are applicable to the proposed project. When state thresholds are exceeded at regional monitoring stations, an “attainment plan” must be prepared that outlines how an air quality district will achieve compliance with the state standards. Generally, these plans must provide for district-wide emission reductions of five percent per year averaged over consecutive three-year periods.

**State Controls on Gasoline Dispensing**

The California Air Resources Board has established controls to reduce air emissions from gasoline distribution. Vapor recovery systems are used to control emissions from California gasoline dispensing facilities. Phase I vapor recovery systems collect vapors displaced from an underground storage tank when a cargo tank truck delivers gasoline to a dispensing facility. Phase II vapor recovery systems collect vapors displaced during storage or dispensing of gasoline. All vapor recovery systems must undergo certification tests to demonstrate compliance with California Air Resources Board performance standards before they can be sold, offered for sale, or installed in California. The Phase I and Phase II systems
at a dispensing facility work in combination with vapor recovery systems in vehicles. The California Air Resources Board estimates that approximately 370 tons per day of potential hydrocarbon emissions are captured (California Air Resources Board 2013).

**Regional/Local**

**Monterey Bay Air Resources District**

The air district is the agency with primary responsibility for assuring that federal and state ambient air quality standards are attained and maintained in the air basin. The air basin encompasses three counties: Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz. The air district is charged with regulatory authority over stationary sources of air emissions, monitoring air quality within the air basin, providing guidelines for analysis of air quality impacts pursuant to CEQA, and preparing an air quality management plan to maintain or improve air quality in the air basin.

**Air Basin Attainment Status**

In accordance with the Clean Air Act, the California Air Resources Board is required to designate regions of the state as attainment, non-attainment, or unclassified with regard to that region’s compliance with criteria air pollutants standards. An “attainment” designation for a region signifies that pollutant concentrations do not violate the standard for that pollutant in that region. A “non-attainment” designation indicates that a pollutant concentration violated the standard at least once. An “unclassified” designation signifies that available data does not support either an attainment or non-attainment status. The air basin is in non-attainment with state mandated thresholds for ozone and suspended particulate matter as shown in Table 7-4, North Central Coast Air Basin Attainment Status Designations. With respect to federal standards, the air basin has either achieved attainment or is unclassified.

**Table 7-4 North Central Coast Air Basin Attainment Status Designations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pollutant</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Federal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ozone (O₃)</td>
<td>Non-attainment/Transitional</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspended Particulates (PM₁₀)</td>
<td>Non-attainment</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Particulates (PM₂.₅)</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon Monoxide (CO)</td>
<td>Attainment (Monterey Co)</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂)</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SOURCE: Monterey Bay Air Resources District 2017*
The air district is delegated with the responsibility at the local level to implement both federal and state mandates for improving air quality in the air basin through an air quality plan. When thresholds are exceeded at regional monitoring stations on consecutive accounts, an attainment plan must be prepared that outlines how an air quality district will achieve compliance. Generally, these plans must provide for district-wide emission reductions of five percent per year averaged over consecutive three-year periods. The air district periodically prepares and updates plans in order to attain State and national air quality standards, to comply with quality planning requirements, and to achieve the goal of clean and healthful air. These plans also report on progress in improving air quality and provide a road map to guide the air district’s future activities.

**Air District 2012-2015 Air Quality Management Plan**

The 2012-2015 air quality management plan was adopted by the air district in March 2017. The air quality management plan focuses on achieving the 8-hour component of the California ozone standard (the air basin has already attained the 1-hour standard), by continuing successful programs carried forward from the prior air quality management plan. Ozone exceedances at monitoring stations have declined from 63 (2006-2008), to 16 (2009-2011) to 9 (2013-2015). Mobile source NOx emissions in the air basin have dropped significantly during the period 2000 to 2015, from about 56 tons per day to about 23 tons per day, largely attributable to state fuel and fuel efficiency standards. The level of NOx transported into the air basin from the San Francisco Bay region has likewise declined.

As identified above, the primary pollutants of concern in the formation of ozone are VOC and NOx. Ozone formation in the air basin is more limited by the availability of NOx than by the availability of VOCs, so reducing NOx emissions is most crucial for reducing ozone formation. The majority of NOx emissions originate from mobile sources. The air district only has direct permitting authority over emissions that originate from point sources, which constitute 21 percent of NOx emissions. The air district can only indirectly affect mobile source and area source emissions, for example by influencing land use patterns which can reduce vehicle miles travelled. Since mobile sources are the primary source of NOx emissions, the air quality plan provides for continued focus on mobile source grant programs which reduce NOx from both on road and off road mobile sources.

**Air District Permitting**

Most stationary point sources require an operating permit from the air district. Examples of permitted sources include generators and gasoline dispensing stations.

**Salinas General Plan**

The general plan includes a number of policies that directly or indirectly relate to air quality. For example, policies relating to compact growth have the effect of reducing vehicle miles traveled, and therefore reducing mobile source air emissions. The policies most pertinent to
the proposed project are presented here, although most would be applicable only to providing commute alternatives for employees. Some of the policies are relevant to land use planning decisions, but these decisions were already approved in the broad sense with adoption of the general plan. Most policies would have little relevance to the primary clients of the proposed project, which would be primarily truck drivers involved in goods movement and highway travelers.

**Policy LU-1.1.** Achieve a balance of land uses to provide for a range of housing, jobs, libraries, and educational and recreational facilities that allow residents to live, work, shop, learn, and play in the community.

**Policy LU-2.4.** Utilize well-designed in-fill development, and selectively increase density within Focused Growth Areas to maintain compact city form.

**Policy COS-6.3.** Encourage development design that maintains air quality and reduces direct and indirect emissions of air contaminants.

**Policy COS-6.4.** Support alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, biking and public transit, and develop bike- and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods to reduce emissions associated with automobile use.

**Policy C-1.10.** Encourage car-pooling at government offices, businesses, schools, and other facilities, to reduce the number of vehicles using the roadway system.

**Policy C-2.5.** Work with Caltrain and Amtrak to provide commuter rail service to the Silicon Valley and other major destinations to provide alternatives to automobile use.

**Policy C-2.6.** Promote a regional jobs-housing balance to reduce vehicle miles traveled and congestion on the regional circulation system.

**Policy C-4.1.** Continue to develop a network of on- and off-street bicycle routes to encourage and facilitate the use of bicycles for commute, recreational, and other trips. Eliminate gaps and provide connections between existing bicycle routes.

**Policy C-5.1.** Increase availability of safe and well-maintained sidewalks in all areas of the City.

**Policy C-5.5.** Improve the walking environment by providing safe and attractive sidewalks, cut-throughs, and walkways, for both recreational and commuting purposes.

**City of Salinas Municipal Code**

Municipal code section 37-50.330 requires future projects to integrate vehicle trip reduction measures into their plans. The intent of this measure is to enable the City to meet State air
quality and congestion mandates by reducing vehicle miles traveled and associated mobile source air emissions. The measure also implements general plan policies related to achieving and maintaining acceptable level of service standards, supporting Monterey-Salinas transit goals, and encouraging the use of bicycles and walking activities. Projects that are anticipated to generate 2,500 average daily trips or more are required to prepare a facilities trip reduction plan for City review. An annual facilities trip reduction plan monitoring report must be submitted to the Public Works Department, Traffic and Transportation Engineering Division by January 31 for three years after project occupancy.

**Proposed Specific Plan**

New development within the specific plan boundary must be consistent with the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan. In this context, the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan support general plan policies, municipal code regulations, and/or other federal, State, or other local regulations presented above that serve to mitigate environmental effects of the proposed project. The information below summarizes information from the specific plan that is relevant to the issue of air quality.

The proposed draft specific plan does not include policies specifically targeted to reduce air emissions. However, specific plan Section 4, Circulation and Transportation, includes discussion of transit improvements (none deemed necessary by Monterey-Salinas Transit based on applicant communications with the transit agency) and planned pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

Pursuant to municipal code Section 37-50.330, the specific plan also includes information regarding the need to prepare trip reduction plans for qualifying projects. Parcels 1 and 2 are currently planned for specific projects. Traffic generation projections for these uses and for future industrial uses on parcels 3 and 4 are discussed in Section 16.0, Transportation. A vehicle trip reduction plan is required for the travel center component of the proposed project as it would generate more than 2,500 trips per day. The hotel would not require a plan. Trip reduction plans for future individual projects within parcels 3 and 4 may be required depending on their individual trip generation characteristics. Specific plan Table 4.1, Potential Trip Reduction Measures, includes a range of potential trip reduction measures that may be considered for inclusion in the travel center trip reduction plan.

The City will review and approve all facilities trip reduction plans for compliance with Section 37-50.330 and has the discretion to modify vehicle trip reduction measures for individual future projects. This review process will be part of the City’s development review process for individual projects as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process.
7.3 **Thresholds or Standards of Significance**

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of air quality, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on the subject of air quality impacts, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (*Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara* (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (*Ibid.*) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Cause a violation of any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation;

The Monterey Bay Air Resources District has established the following quantitative thresholds of significance for air emissions in its CEQA Air Quality Guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pollutant</th>
<th>Operational</th>
<th>Construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOC</td>
<td>137 pounds per day (direct plus indirect)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO\textsubscript{x}, as NO\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>137 pounds per day (direct plus indirect)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM\textsubscript{10}</td>
<td>82 pounds per day (on-site)</td>
<td>equivalent to 2.2 acres excavation or grading, or 8.1 acres of general construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM\textsubscript{2.5}</td>
<td>55 pounds per day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors); or

- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

These are the issues evaluated in the impact analysis below.

The Appendix G questions on the subject of air quality also give rise to additional thresholds that are not relevant to the proposed project. Under these thresholds, significant effects would occur if a proposed project would:

- Cause a violation of any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation for toxic air contaminants. The Monterey Bay Air Resources District has established a threshold of significance for toxic air contaminants of one cancer case per 100,000 population.
7.0 Air Quality

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan; or
- Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

There are no sensitive receptors within 1,000 feet of the project site that could be exposed to toxic air contaminants associated with development of the project site. Therefore, there is no potential for development cause exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants at a level that exceeds the air district threshold.

In accordance with the air district’s CEQA guidelines figure 5-1, a project should have VOC and NOx emissions of less than 137 pounds per day and be consistent with the air quality management plan. The air district has also established a consistency determination procedure tied to population growth – a project that does not result in an increase in population beyond that projected by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments is considered not to conflict with the air quality management plan.

California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) air emission modeling was conducted for the proposed project. Results are included in Appendix C, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment. At full build out, the proposed project would emit approximately 37.1 pounds per day of VOC and 44.4 pounds per day of NOx, both below the respective thresholds of significance. The proposed project would not result in population growth, so it would not exceed the population projections upon which the air quality management emissions forecasts are based. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the air quality management plan.

The proposed project could result in minor odors from diesel exhaust. There are no sensitive receptors within 1,000 feet of the project site, so there would be no significant impact from odors.

No further discussion of toxic air contaminants, consistency with the air quality management plan, or impact from odors is required.

7.4 Environmental Impact Analysis

Construction Emissions

Construction of the hotel and travel center on Parcels 1 and 2 would take place over about 17 months (374 construction days) on a 16.05-acre site. CalEEMod air emissions modeling was conducted for construction as shown in Table 2, Construction Period Emissions, of Appendix C. The modeling results show that construction period equipment exhaust emissions would be below the air district thresholds for VOC, NOx, PM10 and PM2.5. The air basin is in non-attainment for the state ambient air quality standard for PM10. Projects that include earthmoving activities on over 2.2 acres per day or general construction activities on over 8.1 acres per day are assumed to result in the emission of greater than the air district’s threshold.
of 82 pounds of particulate matter per day. The area of grading and construction would exceed the thresholds of 2.2 acres and 8.1 acres, respectively. Therefore, fugitive dust from grading and construction could result in significant PM10 emissions.

Specific development projects have not been proposed on Parcels 3 or 4. Therefore, it would be speculative to project whether future development on either parcel or on portions of either parcel may result in significant or less-than-significant PM10 emissions. This evaluation would be made at the time individual projects are proposed for these parcels.

**Operational Criteria Air Emissions**

Buildout of the project site would result in automobile and heavy truck trips that would emit criteria air pollutants, including VOC, NOx, and particulate matter. CalEEMod air emissions modeling included in Appendix C was conducted for operational criteria air emissions. The modeling results in Table 3, Operational Emissions, of the appendix show that emissions would be below the air district thresholds. Emissions of VOC would be 37.1 pounds per day and emissions of NOx would be 44.4 pounds per day, both below the threshold of 137 pounds per day. Emissions of PM10 would be 17.1 pounds per day, below the threshold of 82 pounds per day. Emissions of PM2.5 would be 5.0 pounds per day, below the threshold of 55 pounds per day. Because emissions of the criteria air pollutants for which the air basin is in non-attainment would be below the air district thresholds at buildout of the project site, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact from criteria air pollution emissions.

**Carbon Monoxide Concentration**

Carbon monoxide emissions from traffic generated at buildout of the project site would be the pollutant of greatest concern at the local level. Congested intersections with a large volume of traffic have the greatest potential to cause high-localized concentrations of carbon monoxide. After adjusting for internal trip reductions and diverted trips, the proposed project would add approximately 4,911 trips to the road network at buildout of all four parcels (Hexagon Transportation Consultants 2017). All of the intersections affected by the proposed project would operate at acceptable levels of service either with or without implementation of mitigation measures, indicating less than congested conditions. Therefore, the project would have a less-than-significant effect with respect to carbon monoxide concentrations.

**Toxic Air Emissions**

The proposed project includes two sources of toxic air emissions, the gasoline dispensing pumps, and diesel trucks. Gasoline vapors from fueling pumps include chemicals such as benzene, toluene, and xylene. Diesel exhaust consists of a mixture of particulate matter and gasses, including benzene and formaldehyde.
Risk from exposure to toxic air contaminants is based on a 24 hour per day exposure over a duration measured in years. There are no sensitive receptors (residences, schools, etc.) within 1,000 feet of the project site, or included in the proposed project. Therefore, there would be no impact from toxic air emissions on sensitive receptors.

### 7.5 Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures

**Impact**

Generation of Fugitive Dust Emissions from Grading on more than 2.2 Acres and Construction on more than 8.1 Acres (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

To be conservative, it is assumed that construction of the proposed hotel and travel center could occur concurrently. In this case, these projects could involve grading on more than 2.2 acres, and general construction on more than 8.1 acres, as parcels 1 and 2 contain a combined acreage of 17.05 acres. Construction activity of this extent would result in fugitive dust emissions in excess of the threshold of 82 pounds per day of PM\(_{10}\). Therefore, the PM\(_{10}\) emissions generated by this development would have a significant impact on air quality.

Because there are no projects currently proposed for parcels 3 or 4, it is unknown whether grading associated with future development could exceed the thresholds noted above. This would be determined at the time individual project applications are submitted. In a worst-case condition, one or more future development projects would exceed the threshold.

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the impact of grading activities associated with the proposed hotel and travel center to less than significant. If future development within parcels 3 and 4 result in the same impact, the mitigation measure would also reduce those impacts to less than significant.

#### Mitigation Measure

**AQ-1** To reduce fugitive dust emissions from grading and construction activities associated with the proposed hotel and travel center projects, and from future projects within parcels 3 and 4, the following measures shall be included on all grading and construction plans for these projects, prior to issuance of a grading permit:

- Water areas of active disturbed soils at least twice daily or as necessary to prevent visible dust leaving the site, using raw or recycled water when feasible.

- Apply chemical soil stabilizers or dust suppressants on disturbed soils that will not be actively graded for a period of four or more consecutive days.
Apply non-toxic binders and/or hydro seed to disturbed soils on which grading is completed, but on which more than four days will pass prior to paving, foundation construction, or placement of other permanent cover.

Cover or otherwise stabilize stockpiles which will not be actively used for a period of four or more consecutive days, or water at least twice daily as necessary to prevent visible dust leaving the site, using raw or recycled water when feasible.

Maintain at least 2’0” of freeboard and cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand, or loose materials.

Install wheel washers at all construction site exit points, and sweep streets if visible soil material is carried onto paved surfaces.

Stop grading and earth moving if winds exceed 15 miles per hour.

Pave roads, driveways, and parking areas at the earliest point feasible within the construction schedule.

Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The phone number of the air district shall also be visible to ensure compliance with Rule 402 (Nuisance).

Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce fugitive dust emissions from earthmoving activities by approximately 50 percent, depending on the activities conducted, which would ensure that the proposed project does not exceed the air district thresholds for short-term construction emissions. For example, watering active, unpaved construction areas with full coverage can reduce fugitive PM₁₀ from construction equipment and other mobile sources by 50 percent, reducing daily emissions from 70 pounds/day/acre to 35 pounds/day/acre (Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District 2008, p. 8-2).

**IMPACT Generation of Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions during Construction (Less than Significant)**

According to the CalEEMod modeling results which project air emissions at buildout of the specific plan area (parcels 1 – 4), construction emissions would be below the air district thresholds. Emissions of VOC would be 21.9 pounds per day and emissions of NO₂ would be 39.9 pounds per day, both below the threshold of 137 pounds per day. Emissions of PM₁₀ would be 1.8 pounds per day, below the threshold of 82 pounds per day. Emissions of PM₂.₅ would be 1.7 pounds per day, below the threshold of 55 pounds per day. Because project
emissions of the criteria air pollutants for which the air basin is in non-attainment would be below the air district thresholds, at buildout, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact from criteria air pollution emissions during construction. No mitigation measures are required.

**IMPACT Generation of Operational Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions (Less than Significant)**

CalEEMod modeling results for buildout of the specific plan area show that operational emissions would be below the air district thresholds. Emissions of VOC would be 37.1 pounds per day and emissions of NO₂ would be 44.4 pounds per day, both below the threshold of 137 pounds per day. Emissions of PM₁₀ would be 17.1 pounds per day, below the threshold of 82 pounds per day. Emissions of PM₂.₅ would be 5.0 pounds per day, below the threshold of 55 pounds per day. Because project emissions of the criteria air pollutants for which the air basin is in non-attainment would be below the air district thresholds at buildout, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact from criteria air pollution emissions. No mitigation measures are required.

**IMPACT Generation of Carbon Monoxide Concentrations (Less than Significant)**

After adjusting for internal trip reductions and diverted trips, at buildout of the specific plan area, the proposed project would add approximately 4,911 trips to the road network. All of the intersections affected would operate at acceptable levels of service either with or without implementation of mitigation measures, indicating less than congested conditions that might otherwise give rise to potential public health impacts. Therefore, the project would have a less-than-significant effect with respect to carbon monoxide concentrations. No mitigation measures are required.
8.0 Biological Resources

This section addresses existing biological resources on the project site; the federal, state, and regional/local regulatory framework pertaining to biological resources; and anticipated impacts to biological resources as a result of the proposed project. This evaluation is based on biological field surveys conducted by EMC Planning Group biologists; a review of existing scientific literature, aerial photographs, and technical background information; and policies and programs applicable to projects located in Salinas.

Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- *Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002);
- *Results of Expanded Focused Congdon’s Tarplant Survey for the Salinas Travel Stop Project* (EMC Planning Group 2016);
- *California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database* (CDFW 2016);
- *California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants* (CNPS 2016);
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Endangered Species Program (USFWS 2016) and National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2017); and

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

None of the comments received on the NOP addressed biological resources.

8.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

EMC Planning Group biologists Andrea Edwards and Stefanie Krantz performed biological surveys at the site on September 25, 2015, September 28, 2015, and November 22, 2016 to document existing plant communities/wildlife habitats and to evaluate the potential for
special-status species to occur on the site. Qualitative estimations of plant cover, structure, and spatial changes in species composition were used to determine plant communities and wildlife habitats, and habitat quality and disturbance level were noted.

The project site is situated on the Natividad U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle map, and ranges in elevation from about 50 to 65 feet. It is within the Central Western California region, Central Coast sub-region, where coastal vegetation predominates, but chaparral and other non-coastal vegetation also occur (Baldwin 2012). The climate in the area is Mediterranean, with warm and dry summers, and winters tending to be cool and wet. Most of the annual rainfall occurs between the months of December and March.

Figure 8-1, Habitat Map, shows the plant communities and land use areas present on the project site. Developed areas are paved roadways, including U.S. Highway 101 with its on-ramp and off-ramp, De La Torre, and Roy Diaz Street. Disturbed areas adjacent to the Reclamation Ditch and adjacent motel property are generally devoid of vegetation due to mechanical clearing, regular compaction by vehicles, etc. During the November 22, 2016 field survey, the eastern portion of the site (parcels 3 and 4) was in active row crop production (strawberry fields). Ornamental (landscaped) areas are present in the Caltrans right-of-way and include various native and non-native shrub plantings. No trees are present within the project site, though several mature non-native gum trees (*Eucalyptus* sp.) exist adjacent to the northwestern edge of the site on the motel property. A drainage ditch traverses the site in a southwest to northeast direction. It is discussed in detail below in the Wetlands/Waterways sub-section. Many areas mentioned above other than the agricultural land within parcels 3 and 4 contain an understory of non-native grasses.

Low quality wildlife habitat is present in the western portion of the site in a vacant field, which contains non-native grassland mixed with ruderal (weedy) areas. Non-native grassland on the site is dominated by non-native grasses including wild oats (*Avena* spp.), ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*), foxtail chess (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), rye grass (*Festuca perennis*), and barley (*Hordeum murinum*). Other non-native plants prevalent on the site with these grasses include black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), shortpod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), and tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*). Native coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) shrubs are also present in the non-native grassland at some locations, mainly near/southeast of De La Torre.

Ruderal (weedy) areas are concentrated along the drainage ditch and are dominated by bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), which is considered an invasive plant species by the California Invasive Plant Council. Other common non-native species in these ruderal areas include radish (*Raphanus sativus*), poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), sweet fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus* var. *pycnocephalus*), milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*), and common sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), among others.
Figure 8-1
Habitat Map
Salinas Travel Center EIR

Source: City of Salinas 2016, ESRI 2016
8.0 Biological Resources

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Bird species observed on the site or expected to utilize on-site habitat include red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), Anna’s hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), Brewer’s blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), golden-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), American goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*), lesser goldfinch (*Carduelis psalitria*), and house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*).

Mammal species expected in this habitat include California vole (*Microtus californicus*), Botta’s pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), and raccoon (*Procyon lotor*); black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*) is notably abundant on the site. Reptile species expected in this habitat include western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), terrestrial garter snake (*Thamnophis elegans*), and gopher snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus*).

**Special-Status Species**

Special-status species in this report are defined as those listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Rare, or as Candidates for listing by the USFWS or CDFW under the state and/or federal Endangered Species Acts. The special-status designation also includes CDFW Species of Special Concern and Fully Protected species, CNPS Rare Plant Rank 1B and 2B species, and other locally rare species that meet the criteria for listing as described in Section 15380 of CEQA Guidelines. Special-status species are generally rare, restricted in distribution, declining throughout their range, or have a critical, vulnerable stage in their life cycle that warrants monitoring.

A search of the CDFW *California Natural Diversity Database* was conducted for the Prunedale, San Juan Bautista, Hollister, Salinas, Natividad, Mount Harlan, Spreckels, Chualar, and Gonzales USGS quadrangles in order to evaluate potentially occurring special-status plant and wildlife species in the project vicinity (CDFW 2016). Records of occurrence for special-status plants were reviewed for those same USGS quadrangles in the CNPS *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants* (CNPS 2016). A USFWS *Endangered Species Program* threatened and endangered species list was also generated for Monterey County (USFWS 2016).

Table 8-1, Special-Status Plant Species with Potential to Occur in Vicinity, and Table 8-2, Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur in Vicinity, show special-status species documented within the project vicinity, their listing status and suitable habitat description, and their potential to occur on the site. Discussion of special-status species with potential to occur on the site follows the tables.
### Table 8-1  Special-Status Plant Species with Potential to Occur in Vicinity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Status (Federal/State/CNPS)</th>
<th>Suitable Habitat Description</th>
<th>Potential to Occur on Project Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alkali milk-vetch (Astragalus tener var. tener)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Alkaline sites in playas, valley and foothill grassland (on adobe clay), and vernal pools; elevation 1-60m. Blooming period: March – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmel Valley bush-mallow (Malacothamnus palmeri var. involucratus)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub; elevation 30-1100m. Blooming period: May – October.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choris' popcorn-flower (Plagiobothrys chorisianus var. chorisianus)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Mesic sites in chaparral, coastal scrub, and coastal prairie; elevation 15-100m. Blooming period: March – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congdon's tarplant (Centromadia parryi spp. congdonii)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.1</td>
<td>Valley and foothill grassland (alkaline); elevation 1-230m. Known to occur on various substrates, and in disturbed and ruderal (weedy) areas. Blooming period: June – November.</td>
<td>Present. Observed during September 2016 focused plant survey on the site in disturbed weedy roadside area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contra Costa goldfields (Lasthenia conjugens)</td>
<td>FE/--/1B.1</td>
<td>Wet areas in cismontane woodland, playas (alkaline), valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools; elevation 0-470m. Blooming period: March – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastwood's goldenbush (Ericameria fasciculata)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.1</td>
<td>Closed cone coniferous forest, chaparral (maritime), coastal dunes, and coastal scrub/sand. Blooming period: July – October.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragrant fritillary (Fritillaria liliacea)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and coastal prairie. Often on serpentine substrate; various soils reported though usually clay in grassland; elevation 3-410m. Blooming period: February – April.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabilan Mountains manzanita (Arctostaphylos gabilanensis)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Granitic substrates in chaparral and cismontane woodland; elevation 300-700m. Blooming period: March.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernandez spineflower (Chorizanthe biloba var. immemora)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Chaparral and cismontane woodland; prefers sandy and gravelly soils on east slope of Diablo Range; elevation 695-750m. Blooming period: May – September.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hickman's onion (Allium hickmanii)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and coastal prairie; prefers sandy loam, damp ground, and vernal swales; elevation 20-200m. Blooming period: April – May.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Status (Federal/State/CNPS)</td>
<td>Suitable Habitat Description</td>
<td>Potential to Occur on Project Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hooker’s manzanita (Arctostaphylos hookeri ssp. hookeri)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Sandy soils in coastal scrub, chaparral, and closed-cone forest habitats; evergreen; elevation 45-215m. Blooming period: February – April.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutchinson’s larkspur (Delphinium hutchinsoniae)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Broadleaved upland forest, chaparral, coastal prairie, and coastal scrub; elevation 0-400m. Blooming period: March – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Valley bush-mallow (Malacothamnus aboriginum)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Chaparral and cismontane woodland; rocky, often burned areas. Prefers granitic outcrops and sandy bare soil; elevation 150-1700m. Blooming period: April – October.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellogg’s horkelia (Horkelia cuneata ssp. sericea)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.1</td>
<td>Closed-cone coniferous forest, maritime chaparral, and coastal scrub, in sandy or gravelly openings; elevation 10-200m. Blooming period: April – September.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legenere (Legenere limosa)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.1</td>
<td>In beds of vernal pools; elevation 1-880m. Blooming period: April – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsh microseris (Microseris paludosa)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Closed-cone coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland; elevation 5-300m. Blooming period: April – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monterey gilia (Gilia tenuiflora ssp. arenaria)</td>
<td>FE/ST/1B.2</td>
<td>Sandy openings in maritime chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, and coastal scrub; elevation 0-45m. Blooming period: April – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monterey spineflower (Chorizanthe pungens var. pungens)</td>
<td>FT/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Sandy openings in maritime chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland; elevation 3-450m. Blooming period: April – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern curly-leaved monardella (Monardella sinuata ssp. nigrescens)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Sandy soils in coastal dunes, coastal scrub, chaparral, and lower montane coniferous forest; elevation 0-300m. Blooming period: April – September.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon meconella (Meconella oregana)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.1</td>
<td>Open, moist places in coastal prairie and coastal scrub; elevation 250-500m. Blooming period: March – April.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pajaro manzanita (Arctostaphylos pajaroiensis)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.1</td>
<td>Sandy soils in chaparral; evergreen; elevation 30-760m. Blooming period: December – March.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine rose (Rosa pinetorum)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Closed-cone coniferous forest; elevation 2-300m. Blooming period: May – July.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Status (Federal/State/CNPS)</td>
<td>Suitable Habitat Description</td>
<td>Potential to Occur on Project Site</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink Johnny-nip (Castilleja ambigua var. insalutata)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.1</td>
<td>Coastal bluff scrub and coastal prairie; elevation 0-100m. Blooming period: May – August.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinnacles buckwheat (Eriogonum nortonii)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.3</td>
<td>Sandy sites in chaparral, and valley and foothill grassland, often on recent burns; elevation 300-975m. Blooming period: May – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round-leaved filaree (California macrophylla)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.2</td>
<td>Clay sites in cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grassland; elevation 15-1200m. Blooming period: March – May.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saline clover (Trifolium hydrophilum)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.2</td>
<td>Marshes and swamps, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools. Prefers wet, alkaline sites; elevation 0-300m. Blooming period: April – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco popcorn-flower (Plagiobothrys diffusus)</td>
<td>--/SE/1B.1</td>
<td>Valley and foothill grassland, and coastal prairie. Historically known from grassy slopes with marine influence; elevation 60-485m. Blooming period: March – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Joaquin spearscale (Extriplex joaquiniana)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.2</td>
<td>Alkaline sites in chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, playas, and valley and foothill grassland; elevation 1-320m. Blooming period: April – October.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand-loving wallflower (Erysimum ammophilum)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.2</td>
<td>Sandy openings in maritime chaparral, coastal dunes, and coastal scrub; elevation 0 – 60m. Blooming period: February – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandmat manzanita (Arctostaphylos pumila)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.2</td>
<td>Sandy openings in closed cone coniferous forest, maritime chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, and coastal scrub; elevation 30-730m. Blooming period: February – May.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz clover (Trifolium buckwestiorum)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.1</td>
<td>Broadleaved upland forest, cismontane woodland, and coastal prairie; prefers moist grassland and gravelly margins; elevation 105-610m. Blooming period: April – October.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz microseris (Stebbinsoseris decipiens)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.2</td>
<td>Open areas in broadleaved upland forest, closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal prairie, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland; sometimes on serpentine substrates; elevation 10-500m. Blooming period: April – May.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz tarplant (Holocarpha macradenia)</td>
<td>FT/SE/1B.1</td>
<td>Coastal prairie, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland; often on clay or sandy soils; elevation 10-220m. Blooming period: June – October.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Lucia bush-mallow (Malacothamnus palmeri var. palmeri)</td>
<td>--/-/1B.2</td>
<td>Chaparral. Prefers dry rocky slopes, mostly near summits, but occasionally extends down canyons to the sea; elevation 60-365m. Blooming period: May – July.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Status (Federal/State/ CNPS)</td>
<td>Suitable Habitat Description</td>
<td>Potential to Occur on Project Site</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaside bird’s-beak (Cordylanthus rigidus ssp. littoralis)</td>
<td>--/SE/1B.1</td>
<td>Sandy often disturbed sites in closed-cone coniferous forest, maritime chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, and coastal scrub; elevation 0-215m. Blooming period: May – October.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toro manzanita (Arctostaphylos montereyensis)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.2</td>
<td>Sandy areas in maritime chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub; elevation 30-730m. Blooming period: February – March.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbrella larkspur (Delphinium umbraculorum)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.3</td>
<td>Mesic sites in cismontane woodland; elevation 400-1600m. Blooming period: April – June.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernal pool bent grass (Agrostis lacuna-vernalis)</td>
<td>--/--/1B.1</td>
<td>Vernal pools (mima mounds); elevation 115-145m.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadon’s rein orchid (Piperia yadonii)</td>
<td>FE/--/1B.1</td>
<td>Sandy sites in coastal bluff scrub, closed cone coniferous forest, and maritime chaparral; elevation 10-510m. Blooming period: May – August.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Listing Status Codes:**

**Federal [USFWS]**
- **FE** - Listed as Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act.
- **FT** - Listed as Threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act.
- **FC** - Candidate for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

**State [CDFW]**
- **SE** - Listed as Endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.
- **ST** - Listed as Threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.
- **SR** - Listed as Rare under the California Endangered Species Act.
- **SC** - Candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act.

**CNPS Rare Plant Ranks and Threat Code Extensions**
- **1B**: Plants that are considered Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere.
- **2B**: Plants that are considered Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere.
- **.1**: Seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat).
- **.2**: Fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened).
- **.3**: Not very threatened in California (less than 20% of occurrences threatened low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known).
### Table 8-2 Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur in Vicinity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Status (Federal/State)</th>
<th>Suitable Habitat Description</th>
<th>Potential to Occur on Project Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American badger ((Taxidea taxus))</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Most abundant in drier, open stages of shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats. Needs sufficient food and open, uncultivated ground with friable soils to dig burrows. Preys on burrowing rodents.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site due to on-site and surrounding land uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank swallow ((Riparia riparia))</td>
<td>--/ST</td>
<td>Highly colonial species that nests in alluvial soils along rivers, streams, lakes, and ocean coasts. Nesting colonies only occur in vertical banks or bluffs of friable soils at least one meter tall, suitable for burrowing with some predator deterrence values.</td>
<td>Low potential. Marginally suitable habitat present on the site between the agricultural area and off-site Reclamation Ditch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black legless lizard ((Anniella pulchra nigra))</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Moist, warm habitats with loose soil for burrowing and prostrate plant cover in beaches, chaparral, pine-oak woodland, or riparian areas.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burrowing owl ((Athene cunicularia))</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Open, dry, annual or perennial grasslands, desert, or scrubland, with available small mammal burrows.</td>
<td>High potential. Species occurs at nearby airport, and evidence of probable burrow use found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California clapper rail ((Rallus longirostris obsoletus))</td>
<td>FE/SE and SFP</td>
<td>Found in saltwater and brackish marshes, traversed by tidal sloughs in the vicinity of San Francisco Bay. Associated with abundant growths of pickleweed, but feeds away from cover on invertebrates from mud-bottomed sloughs.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California red-legged frog ((Rana draytonii))</td>
<td>FT/SSC</td>
<td>Rivers, creeks, and stock ponds with pools and overhanging vegetation. Requires dense, shubby or emergent riparian vegetation, and prefers short ripples and pools with slow-moving, well-oxygenated water. Needs upland habitat to aestivate (remain dormant during dry months) in small mammal burrows, cracks in the soil, or moist leaf litter.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California tiger salamander ((Ambystoma californiense))</td>
<td>FT/ST</td>
<td>Grasslands and oak woodlands near seasonal pools and stock ponds in central and coastal California. Needs upland habitat to aestivate (remain dormant during dry months) in small mammal burrows, cracks in the soil, or moist leaf litter. Requires seasonal water sources that persist into late March for breeding.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coast Range newt ((Taricha torosa))</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Coastal drainages; lives in terrestrial habitats and can migrate over one km to breed in ponds, reservoirs, and slow-moving streams.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site. Outside of current geographic range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden eagle ((Aquila chrysaetos))</td>
<td>--/SFP</td>
<td>Rolling foothill mountain areas, sage-juniper flats, and desert. Cliff-walled canyons provide nesting habitat in most parts of range. Also uses large trees in open areas.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Status (Federal/State)</td>
<td>Suitable Habitat Description</td>
<td>Potential to Occur on Project Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least Bell's vireo (Vireo bellii pusillus)</td>
<td>FE/SE</td>
<td>Summer resident of southern and central California in riparian habitats below 2,000 feet in elevation. Often nests in large shrubs, along margins of bushes, or on twigs projecting into pathways.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site. Outside of current geographic range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pallid bat (Antrozous pallidus)</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Deserts, grasslands, scrublands, woodlands, and forests. Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting. Roosts must protect bats from high temperatures.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Joaquin coachwhip (Masticophis flagellum ruddocki)</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Open, dry habitats with little or no tree cover. Found in valley grassland and saltbush scrub in the San Joaquin Valley. Requires mammal burrows for refuge and oviposition (egg-laying).</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz long-toed salamander (Ambystoma macrodactylum croceum)</td>
<td>FE/SE and SFP</td>
<td>Wet meadows near sea level in a few restricted locales in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. Aquatic larvae prefer shallow water (&lt;12 inches); use clumps of vegetation or debris for cover. Adults aestivate (remain dormant during dry months) in small mammal burrows.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swainson's hawk (Buteo swainsoni)</td>
<td>--/ST</td>
<td>Breeds in grasslands with scattered trees, juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, savannahs, and agricultural or ranch lands with groves or lines of trees. Requires adjacent suitable foraging areas, such as grasslands or agricultural fields supporting rodent populations.</td>
<td>Not expected; Salinas Valley is outside current breeding range. May occasionally fly over or forage at site during migration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsend's big-eared bat (Corynorhinus townsendii)</td>
<td>--/SC&amp;SSC</td>
<td>Inhabits a wide variety of habitats. Most common in mesic sites. Roosts in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Roosting sites limiting. Extremely sensitive to human disturbance.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricolored blackbird (Agelaius tricolor)</td>
<td>--/SC&amp;SSC</td>
<td>Areas adjacent to open water with protected nesting substrate, which typically consists of dense, emergent freshwater marsh vegetation.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-striped garter snake (Thamnophis hammondii)</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Coastal California up to 7,000 feet in elevation. Highly aquatic, found in or near permanent fresh water, often along streams with rocky beds and riparian vegetation.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western mastiff bat (Eumops perotis Californicus)</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Many open, semi-arid habitats, including conifer and deciduous woodlands, coastal scrub, grasslands, chaparral, etc. Roosts in crevices in cliff faces, high buildings, trees, and tunnels.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western pond turtle (Emys marmorata)</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, and irrigation ditches with aquatic vegetation. Needs basking sites (such as rocks or partially submerged logs), and suitable upland habitat (sandy banks or grassy open fields) for egg-laying.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Status (Federal/State)</td>
<td>Suitable Habitat Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western red bat (Lasiurus blossevillii)</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Roosts primarily in trees, 2-40 feet above the ground, from sea level up through mixed conifer forests. Prefers habitat edges and mosaics with trees and open areas for foraging.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western spadefoot (Spea hammondii)</td>
<td>--/SSC</td>
<td>Occurs primarily in grassland habitats, but can be found in valley foothill hardwood woodlands. Breeds in winter and spring (January - May) in quiet streams and temporary pools.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-tailed kite (Elanus leucurus)</td>
<td>--/SFP</td>
<td>Rolling foothills and valley margins with scattered oaks, and river bottomlands or marshes next to deciduous woodlands. Open grasslands, meadows, or marshes for foraging close to isolated, dense-topped trees for nesting and perching.</td>
<td>Not expected. No suitable habitat found on the site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Listing Status Codes:**

Federal (USFWS)
- FT - Listed as Threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act.
- FC - Candidate for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

State (CDFW)
- SE - Listed as Endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.
- ST - Listed as Threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.
- SC - Candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act.
- SFP - CDFW Fully Protected species under California Fish and Game Code.
- SSC - CDFW Species of Special Concern.
Congdon’s Tarplant

Given the disturbed site conditions, only one special-status plant species was considered potentially present. The CNPS Rare Plant Rank 1B Congdon’s tarplant (*Centromadia parryi* ssp. *congdonii*) is found on a range of substrates, and is tolerant of disturbed and ruderal (weedy) areas; it often occurs in patches of non-native grassland. This low-growing annual herb is most observable during its peak blooming period, from late summer to early fall. A focused presence/absence survey for Congdon’s tarplant was conducted September 28, 2016 on approximately 34 acres of the 64-acre project site (all areas proposed for development). The remainder of the site is within Caltrans and City road rights-of-way and was not surveyed, as this area is not proposed for development.

Congdon’s tarplant was observed on the site in a shallow, disturbed swale along the edge of De La Torre. Figure 8-2, Special-Status Biological Resources, shows the focused plant survey area and the location of Congdon’s tarplant observed on the site. Most of the 103 observed plants were flowering, though some had already gone to seed. These annual disturbance-tolerant plants occurred within 5 to 10 feet of the road pavement, in exposed soil and near sparse non-native grassland/ruderal (weedy) vegetation. The special-status plant survey report is attached as Appendix D, found on CD on the inside back cover of this EIR. It includes a list of all plant species observed on the site and a California Native Species Field Survey Form.

**Burrowing Owl**

Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. Burrowing owls live and breed in burrows in the ground, especially in abandoned California ground squirrel burrows. Optimal habitat conditions include large open, dry and nearly level grasslands or prairies with short to moderate vegetation height and cover, areas of bare ground, and populations of burrowing mammals.

The on-site agricultural fields and non-native grassland/ruderal areas provide suitable foraging habitat for burrowing owls, and small mammal burrows on the site could be utilized for nesting habitat. Burrowing owl therefore has potential to occur on and adjacent to the site, especially along the adjacent, off-site Reclamation Ditch. An owl pellet and feather observed at on-site burrows are evidence of probable burrow use by burrowing owl. Further, this species is known to occur immediately northeast of the site along the Reclamation Ditch and throughout the Salinas Municipal Airport property.

**Bank Swallow**

Bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*) is a state-listed Threatened species. This highly colonial species nests in alluvial soils along rivers, streams, lakes, and ocean coasts; nesting colonies only
occur in vertical banks or bluffs of friable soils at least one meter tall, suitable for burrowing with some predator deterrence values. This species has been recorded more than 10 miles from the project site in Marina, Moss Landing, and Hollister; it also occurs along the Salinas River in Greenfield and King City, more than 25 miles southeast of the project site. This species has low potential to occur on the project site due to the presence of marginally suitable habitat between the agricultural fields and off-site Reclamation Ditch.

### Wetlands and Waterways

An intermittent man-made drainage ditch is present on the site as shown on the figures presented earlier, and would be replaced with a new underground storm drain pipe by the proposed project. This on-site ditch accepts storm water runoff through a 24-inch concrete culvert under U.S. Highway 101, and crosses the site to empty into a 24-inch corrugated metal pipe encased in a concrete culvert headwall on the south side of the intersection of Roy Diaz and De La Torre; this pipe connects to the man-made off-site Reclamation Ditch. Other drainages on the project site include shallow man-made ditches adjacent to the existing highway ramps. These features are located within Caltrans right-of-way areas and will not be impacted by the proposed project. Therefore, they are not discussed further.

The main on-site drainage ditch transports storm water runoff from the upland area west of U.S. Highway 101 across the site and into the Reclamation Ditch system. The USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2017) includes the off-site Reclamation Ditch as a man-made feature, but does not include the on-site drainage ditch. The Reclamation Ditch system collects water from numerous discharge points after its three main branches converge at historic Carr Lake, which currently consists primarily of heavily cultivated agricultural fields. It then converges with channelized sloughs near Castroville and ultimately enters Monterey Bay at Moss Landing Harbor. During large storm events, water from the excavated and regularly maintained Reclamation Ditch system may flood the historic Carr Lake agricultural fields in central Salinas.

### Wildlife Movement

Wildlife movement includes migration (i.e., usually movement one way per season), inter-population movement (i.e., long-term dispersal and genetic flow), and small travel pathways (i.e., daily movement within an animal’s territory). While small travel pathways usually facilitate movement for daily home range activities, such as foraging or escape from predators, they also provide connection between outlying populations and the main populations, permitting an increase in gene flow among populations. These habitat linkages can extend for miles and occur on a large scale throughout the greater region. Habitat linkages facilitate movement between populations located in discrete locales and populations located within larger habitat areas.
Figure 8-2

Special-Status Biological Resources

Salinas Travel Center EIR

Source: City of Salinas 2016, ESRI 2016
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Agricultural row crop production on the site and to the south would prohibit most wildlife movement due to the lack of suitable vegetative cover, and wildlife movement through the project site is greatly restricted by existing urban development in all other directions. The site includes a segment of U.S. Highway 101 and busy on/off ramps that further prohibit successful wildlife movement. However, common, urban-adapted mammals such as black-tailed jackrabbit and raccoon may utilize on-site and adjacent drainage and irrigation ditches for limited wildlife movement.

8.2 **REGULATORY SETTING**

**Federal**

**Endangered Species Act**

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), administered by the USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), provides protection to plant and wildlife species listed as Endangered or Threatened. In general, the USFWS has jurisdiction over terrestrial and freshwater species, while NMFS has jurisdiction over ocean-going species.

Section 9 of the FESA generally prohibits all persons from causing the "take" of any member of a listed species (16 U.S.C. § 1538.) This prohibition applies mainly to animals; it only extends to plants in areas “under federal jurisdiction” and plants already protected under state law. (Id., subd. (a)(2)(B); see also Northern California River Watch v. Wilcox (9th Cir. 2010) 620 F.3d 1075.)

“Take” is defined in statute as, "... to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." (16 U.S.C. § 1532(19).) Harass is defined in regulation as "...an intentional or negligent act or omission that creates the likelihood of injury to a listed species by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns that include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering." (See 50 CFR § 17.3.) Harm is defined in regulation as "...significant habitat modification or degradation that results in death or injury to listed species by significantly impairing behavioral patterns such as breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (Id.) Despite the general prohibition against take, the FESA in some circumstances permits “incidental take,” which means take that is incidental to, but not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity. (16 U.S.C. § 1539(a)(1)(B).)

Proposed federal actions that would result in take of a federally listed or proposed species require consultation with the USFWS or NMFS under section 7 of the FESA. (Id., § 1536.) The objective of consultation is to determine whether the proposed federal action would jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or destroy or adversely modify critical habitat. Where such an outcome would not occur, the USFWS or NMFS must still impose
reasonable and prudent measures to minimize the effects of the incidental taking. Where such an outcome could occur, the USFWS or NMFS must propose reasonable and prudent alternatives that, if implemented, would avoid such an outcome. (Ibid.)

Compliance can be achieved under Section 7 or 10 of the FESA depending on the involvement of the federal government. Section 7 requires federal agencies to make a finding on all federal actions, including the approval by an agency of a public or private action, such as the issuance of a “404 permit” for filling wetlands by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), on the potential of the action to jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species impacted by the action or to result in the destruction or adverse modification of such species’ critical habitat. Provisions of Section 10 are implemented when there is no federal involvement in a project except compliance with the FESA. A take not specifically allowed by federal permit under Section 7 or Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the FESA is subject to enforcement through civil or criminal proceedings under Section II of the FESA.

**Migratory Bird Treaty Act**

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1989 prohibits killing, possessing, or trading in migratory birds, except in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. This Act encompasses whole birds, parts of birds, bird nests, and eggs of over 800 native birds, including many common species. (See 16 USCA § 703.)

**Clean Water Act**

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1972 regulates the discharge of dredge and fill material into “Waters of the U.S.” including wetlands. Certain natural drainage channels and wetlands are considered jurisdictional “Waters of the U.S.” The USACE is responsible for administering the Section 404 permit program. The agency determines the extent of its jurisdiction as defined by ordinary high water marks on channel banks. Wetlands are habitats with soils that are intermittently or permanently saturated, or inundated. The resulting anaerobic conditions naturally select for plant species known as hydrophytes that show a high degree of fidelity to such soils. Wetlands are identified by the presence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils (soils intermittently or permanently saturated by water), and wetland hydrology according to methodologies outlined in the 1987 *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual* and the 2006 *Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region*.

Activities that involve the discharge of fill into jurisdical waters are subject to the permit requirements of the USACE. Discharge permits are typically issued on the condition that the project proponent agrees to provide compensatory mitigation that results in no net loss of wetland area, function, or value, either through wetland creation, restoration, or the purchase of wetland credits through an approved wetland mitigation bank. In addition to individual project discharge permits, the USACE also issues general nationwide permits applicable for certain activities.
State

California Endangered Species Act

The CDFW administers a number of laws and programs designed to protect fish and wildlife resources. Principal of these is the California Endangered Species Act of 1984 (CESA Fish and Game Code Section 2050 et seq.), which regulates the listing and take of state Endangered and Threatened species, as well as Candidate species. Under Section 2081 of the CESA, the CDFW may authorize take of an Endangered and/or Threatened species, or Candidate species, by a permit or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for scientific, educational, or management purposes. In approving an incidental permit, the CDFW must ensure, among other things, that “[t]he impacts of the authorized take shall be minimized and fully mitigated.” Further, “[t]he measures required to meet this obligation shall be roughly proportional in extent to the impact of the authorized taking on the species. Where various measures are available to meet this obligation, the measures required shall maintain the applicant’s objectives to the greatest extent possible. All required measures shall be capable of successful implementation.”

Native Plant Protection Act

The legal protection afforded listed plants under this Act includes provisions that prohibit the taking of plants from the wild and impose a salvage requirement for landowners. If a landowner has been informed of a listed plant species on his property, the CDFW must be notified at least 10 days in advance of any land use change that might affect the species or its habitat, thereby affording the CDFW an opportunity to conduct a salvage operation. Candidate species are also protected from taking by the Native Plant Protection Act (Fish and Game Code, §§ 1900-1913).

The CDFW has demonstrated a general policy of regarding many of the plants with CNPS Rare Plant Ranks 1 and 2 as meeting the definitions of Chapter 10, Section 1901 of the Native Plant Protection Act. As such, those plants also qualify for protection under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In addition, plants with CNPS Rare Plant Ranks 3 and 4, as well as unique plant communities are usually informally protected under this act.

Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act

The Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act is set forth in Fish and Game Code Sections 2800–2835. The intent of the legislation is to provide for conservation planning as an officially recognized policy that can be used as a tool to eliminate conflicts between the protection of natural resources and the need for growth and development. In addition, the legislation promotes conservation planning as a means of coordination and cooperation among private interests, agencies, and landowners, and as a mechanism for multispecies and multi-habitat management and conservation. The development of Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs) is an alternative to obtaining take authorization under Section 2081 of the Fish and Game Code.
Nesting Birds and Birds of Prey

Sections 3505, 3503.5, and 3800 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibit the take, possession, or destruction of birds, including their nests or eggs. Birds of prey (the orders Falconiformes and Strigiformes) are specifically protected in California under provisions of the California Fish and Game Code, Section 3503.5. This section of the Code establishes that it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds of prey or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this Code. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort, such as construction during the breeding season, is considered take by the CDFW.

Fully Protected Species

California Fish and Game Code Sections 3511, 3513, 4700, and 5050 pertain to Fully Protected wildlife species (birds in Sections 3511 and 3513, mammals in Section 4700, and reptiles and amphibians in Section 5050), and strictly prohibit the take of these species. The CDFW cannot issue a take permit for Fully Protected species, except under narrow conditions for scientific research or the protection of livestock, or if an NCCP has been adopted.

Streambed Alterations

The CDFW has jurisdiction over the bed and bank of natural drainages according to provisions of Sections 1601 through 1603 of the California Fish and Game Code. Diversions, obstructions, or changes to the natural flow or bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake in California that support wildlife resources and/or riparian vegetation are subject to CDFW regulations. Activities that would disturb these drainages are regulated by the CDFW; authorization is required in the form of a Streambed Alteration Agreement. Such an agreement typically stipulates measures that will protect the habitat values of the drainage in question.

California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Wat. Code, § 13000 et seq.) is California’s primary water quality control statute. Its protections extend to wetlands, and in some instances wetlands that are not subject to federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act. Under the Porter-Cologne Act definition, waters of the state are “any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state.” (Wat. Code, § 13050[e].) Although all waters of the U.S. that are within the borders of California are also waters of the state, the reverse is not necessarily true. Therefore, California retains authority to regulate discharges of waste into any waters of the state and discharges to receiving waters more broadly than the Clean Water Act does.

Waters of the state fall under the jurisdiction of the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). Under Porter-Cologne, each RWQCB must prepare and periodically
update water quality control basin plans. Each basin plan sets forth water quality standards for surface water and groundwater, as well as actions to control nonpoint and point sources of pollution. California Water Code Section 13260 requires any person discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, in any region that could affect the waters of the state to file a report of discharge (an application for waste discharge requirements) with the applicable RWQCB. Construction activities that may discharge wastes into the waters of the state must meet the discharge control requirements of the Porter-Cologne Act.

Also, under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, any activity requiring a USACE Section 404 permit must also obtain a state Water Quality Certification (or waiver thereof) to ensure that the proposed activity will meet state water quality standards. The applicable state RWQCB is responsible for administering the water quality certification program and enforcing National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

**Burrowing Owls**

Take of individual burrowing owls and their nests is prohibited by Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 of the Fish and Game Code. Section 86 of the Code defines take as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill.” Per the 2012 CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, various activities have the potential to be defined as take with regard to burrowing owls, their nests or eggs, or their habitat, including: grading, disk, cultivation, earthmoving, burrow blockage, heavy equipment compacting and crushing burrow tunnels, levee maintenance, flooding, burning and mowing, and operating wind turbine collisions. Impacts to burrowing owl habitat should also be avoided in order to avoid harassment of owls at occupied burrows. In order to evaluate whether projects will result in impacts to burrowing owls, a habitat assessment, site surveys, and an impact assessment may be performed. Only those biologists meeting the minimum qualifications defined in the Staff Report should perform these evaluations.

Site-specific avoidance or mitigation measures may be developed in order to seasonally and spatially avoid negative impacts to burrowing owls. These may include: avoiding disturbing occupied burrows during the breeding season from February 1 through August 31, avoiding impacts to occupied burrows during the non-breeding season, restricting the use of poison bait to mammals, or other, similar measures. Various, additional techniques to minimize impacts to burrowing owls may also be implemented. Follow-up monitoring may be required in order to compare between original site conditions and conditions after mitigation measures have been undertaken.

Where mitigation for permanent impacts to nesting, occupied and satellite burrows and burrowing owl habitat is required, a permanent conservation of similarly-vegetated communities (grassland, scrublands, desert, urban, and/or agriculture) to provide for burrowing owl nesting, foraging, wintering, and dispersal habitats comparable to or better than that of the impact area may be necessary. Mitigation lands must contain sufficiently
large acreage, and the presence of fossorial mammals. Permanent protection of the mitigation land is typically created through a conservation easement deeded to a nonprofit conservation organization or public agency with a conservation mission, for the purpose of conserving burrowing owl habitat and prohibiting activities incompatible with burrowing owl use. A mitigation land management plan supported by long-term funding addresses long-term ecological sustainability, monitoring, and maintenance at the site (CDFW 2012).

Regional/Local

City of Salinas General Plan

The 2002 City of Salinas General Plan Conservation/Open Space (COS) Element contains the following goals and policies associated with biological resources that are applicable to the proposed project:

**Goal COS-5.** Protect and enhance the remaining identified and significant ecological and biological resources within and surrounding the community.

**Policy COS-5.1.** Protect and enhance creek corridors, river corridors, the reclamation ditch, sloughs, wetlands, hillsides and other potentially significant biological resources for their value in providing visual amenity, flood protection, habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities.

**Policy COS-16.** Coordination with the Agencies: Work closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game during the discretionary project permitting and CEQA review of any project that may result in the alteration of a stream bed, involve the removal of vegetation in wetland and riparian habitats, or disturb Waters of the United States.

**Policy COS-18.** Riparian/Wetland Habitat Mitigation and Management: Require project developers to retain creeks and wetlands in their natural channels rather than placing them in culverts or underground pipes, where feasible...The project applicant shall receive authorization to fill wetlands and “other” waters from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, pursuant the requirements of the Clean Water Act. The project applicant shall also obtain a water quality certification (or waiver) from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, consistent with requirements of this State agency. The project applicant shall also obtain a 1601/1603 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game, pursuant to Fish and Game Code. These permits shall be received prior to any site grading that may occur in or immediately adjacent to creeks or wetlands...Pursuant to provisions of the Section 404 permit, 1601/1603 Streambed Alteration Agreement and State water quality certification (or waiver), the project applicant shall implement a riparian/wetland...
mitigation plan, and any other measures so identified by regulatory agencies. This plan shall identify measures for the applicant to compensate for unavoidable impacts to riparian or wetland resources...

Policy COS-21. Protection and Enhancement of Special Status Species: Require project developers to protect and enhance special status species habitat through setbacks and open space easements within new development and/or redevelopment areas. Protection and enhancement of special status species habitat shall require management of the habitat to ensure persistence of the species within the setback areas. Surveys shall be conducted at the appropriate season to ascertain whether the habitats within the proposed project area support special status species. If special status species are observed, avoidance measures shall be implemented. A qualified biologist shall conduct a biological assessment of all habitat areas to assess the potential for the following special status species: Congdon’s tarplant...Burrowing owl...If suitable habitat for any of these species is observed, then focused surveys during the appropriate season should be conducted. Such surveys would include...protocol presence/absence surveys for burrowing owl, and spring/summer surveys for special status plant species. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife shall be consulted regarding the appropriate level of effort and protocol prior to conducting focused wildlife species surveys. If any of these species are found to inhabit the survey area, the City may require the preparation and implementation of a Habitat Management Plan to provide protection for the habitat...

8.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of biological resources, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on the subject of biological resources impacts, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here, though it has exercised its discretion to modify the language of the Appendix G threshold addressing impacts to wetlands so that it applies not only to federally protected wetlands, but also to wetlands that are protected under state law (the reach of which is sometimes broader than federal law).
Although CEQA generally gives agencies considerable discretion in fashioning significance thresholds, there are some thresholds that must, as a matter of law, be used by public agencies. Many of these relate to biological resources, and are found in CEQA Guidelines Section 15065 (“Mandatory Findings of Significance”).

Finally, the City is aware that neither Appendix G nor Section 15065 sets forth language directly addressing potential effects on birds of prey or nesting birds due to violation of laws (described earlier) intended to protect them. The City has therefore exercised its discretion to formulate a threshold to address this particular category of impact.

In light of the foregoing, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species;
- Cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels;
- Threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community;
- 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;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally or state-protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- 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; or
- Result in the take or destruction of any nesting birds or birds of prey, or the nest or eggs of such birds.

The Appendix G checklist also inquires whether a proposed project would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan.

These questions are irrelevant to the proposed project because, as described in the Environmental Setting section above, the project site does not contain sensitive natural communities, riparian habitat, or City-regulated trees, and no habitat conservation plans apply to the project. The applicable issues for the proposed project (special-status species, wetlands and waterways, and wildlife movement) are evaluated in the Environmental Impact Analysis section below.

### 8.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section includes information and data regarding biological resource issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section which follows.

#### Special-Status Species

**Congdon’s Tarplant**

The proposed project would remove a population of CNPS Rare Plant Rank 1B Congdon’s tarplant. This direct adverse effect on a special-status species is a significant environmental impact. During the September 2016 focused plant survey, 103 Congdon’s tarplant individuals were observed on the site in a shallow, disturbed swale along the edge of De La Torre. This annual disturbance-tolerant herb population is expected to vary in number from year to year as influenced by environmental factors and human disturbances. CNPS Rare Plant Rank 1B species are considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, as lead agencies have discretion to conclude that such species meet the definition of “rare” or “endangered” found in CEQA Guidelines section 15380. Significant impacts to such species require mitigation under CEQA. Further, the City of Salinas General Plan requires focused presence/absence surveys for this species if suitable habitat is present on a project site; if the species is present and impacts to it are deemed unavoidable, general plan policy COS-21 requires mitigation to compensate for impacts to the species.

**Burrowing Owl**

If CDFW Species of Special Concern burrowing owl is present on or adjacent to the site during site preparation or construction activities, the proposed project may cause direct burrowing owl mortality through destruction of occupied burrows or indirectly disrupt
individuals. A substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any special-status species is a significant environmental impact. The agricultural fields and non-native grassland/ruderal areas within the site provide suitable foraging habitat for burrowing owl, and small mammal burrows on the site could be utilized for nesting habitat. Burrowing owl has high potential to occur on and adjacent to the site, especially along the off-site Reclamation Ditch. The CDFW has developed a protocol for burrowing owl surveys and mitigation (CDFW 2012). A summary of the protocol is included in the Regulatory Setting section above. Further, general plan policy COS-21 requires focused presence/absence surveys for this species if suitable habitat is present on or adjacent to a project site, and protection of any individual burrowing owl(s) if present.

**Nesting Birds**

If nesting birds protected by state and federal regulations are present on or adjacent to the site during site preparation or construction activities, the proposed project may directly result in loss of active nests, or indirectly result in nest abandonment and thereby cause loss of fertile eggs or nestlings. Direct or indirect adverse effects on any special-status species, including the destruction of any nesting birds or birds of prey, or destruction of the nests or eggs of such birds are significant adverse environmental impacts. Protected nesting birds, including state-listed Threatened bank swallow, have potential to nest on and adjacent to the project site. Construction noise has the potential to impact nesting birds (including raptors) protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code if construction activities occur during the nesting bird season (February 1 through September 15).

**Wetlands and Waterways**

The proposed project would remove the approximately 1,115 foot long man-made intermittent drainage ditch and replace it with a new underground storm drain pipe to transport storm water across the site into the nearby Reclamation Ditch. The drainage ditch is potentially under the regulatory jurisdiction of the USACE and RWQCB. A substantial adverse effect on federally or state-protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other effects, could be a significant adverse environmental impact. The ditch includes approximately 0.08 of an acre potentially under jurisdiction of the USACE based on Ordinary High Water Mark, and approximately 0.23 of an acre potentially under jurisdiction of the RWQCB based on top of bank.

The drainage ditch is thickly lined with a non-native and invasive thistle, bristly ox-tongue. It is not a natural stream, and does not support special-status species or riparian habitat, so it would not be regulated by the CDFW. Because the drainage ditch does not support hydrophytic vegetation, it is not a wetland feature according to the three-parameter USACE wetland definition that requires the presence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and
hydrologic indicators. However, the drainage ditch meets the USACE definition of an intermittent “water” feature constructed in uplands that drains only uplands during storm events. USACE representative Keith Hess visited the project site on February 3, 2017; the USACE will likely take jurisdiction over the drainage ditch and will require a permit for the proposed project. The RWQCB will likely also take jurisdiction over the drainage ditch as a waters of the State and/or wetland feature and will require a Water Quality Certification.

**Wildlife Movement**

Common, urban-adapted mammals such as raccoon may currently utilize on-site and adjacent drainage and irrigation ditches for limited wildlife movement. However, the site does not function as a significant regional wildlife movement corridor or important habitat linkage. The proposed project would impede to a limited degree the local movement of common, urban-adapted wildlife due to habitat loss. This is a less-than-significant impact.

### 8.5 IMPACT SUMMARY AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Anticipated project impacts to special-status biological resources are presented below, along with applicable measures designed to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate significant impacts.

**IMPACT**  
Loss of a Congdon’s Tarplant Population (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

During the 2016 survey, 103 Congdon’s tarplant individuals were observed within parcel 1 on the site, but this annual disturbance-tolerant herb population is expected to vary in number from year to year as influenced by environmental factors and human disturbances. The proposed project would remove this population of CNPS Rare Plant Rank 1B Congdon’s tarplant. A substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any special-status species is a significant environmental impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

**Mitigation Measure**

**BIO-1**  
To compensate for loss of a Congdon’s tarplant population, the developer of parcel 1 on which the population is located shall retain a qualified biologist or native plant specialist to collect seed from all annual Congdon’s tarplant individuals within the impact area at the optimal time (after its blooming period) and prior to issuance of a grading permit. The project developer and the Community Development Director shall oversee selection of an appropriate mitigation area, preferably on the project site, or in the immediate vicinity, that would not be disturbed in the future.

After City approval of the proposed mitigation area, a qualified biologist shall develop a Habitat Management Plan detailing optimal methods for Congdon’s...
tarplant seed collection from the impact area, preparation of the mitigation area, and seed installation at the mitigation area. The Habitat Management Plan shall also include maintenance measures to manage the rare plant occurrence for long-term protection and persistence at the mitigation area, which for this species would likely include periodic site disturbance. Collected seed shall be installed at the mitigation area at the optimal time. Topsoil from the on-site occurrence location shall also be salvaged (if practical) for use in the mitigation area.

The Habitat Management Plan shall require at a minimum three years of annual monitoring by a qualified biologist during the plant’s peak blooming period to ensure that mitigation was successful and that long-term maintenance procedures specified in the plan are creating conditions that support survival of the transplanted Congdon’s tarplant population. Though the population size of this annual plant is expected to vary in the mitigation area from year to year depending on environmental conditions, because 103 individual plants were observed in the impact area in 2016, at least that many individuals must exist in the mitigation area during at least one of the three years following installation. If this success criteria is not achieved, the project developer shall coordinate with the City to implement remedial mitigation through revision of the Habitat Management Plan, collection of additional seed from a local population, and repeated installation in the mitigation area, followed by another three years of annual monitoring. This process shall be extended as needed until all success criteria contained in the Habitat Management Plan are achieved, including the successful establishment of at least 103 individual plants.

The project applicant shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure with oversight by the Community Development Director. Compliance with this measure shall be documented and submitted to the City Community Development Director.

With implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1, which ensures replacement of the impacted Congdon’s tarplant population in an alternative area through a transplant and monitoring program, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on this special status species. This mitigation results in the transplanting of a population rather than the loss of a population of this special-status species. Therefore, potential impacts to this special-status plant species are less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

**IMPACT**  
Potential Loss of Burrowing Owls (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Burrowing owl has high potential to occur on and adjacent to the site, especially along the off-site Reclamation Ditch. If this California Species of Special Concern is present on or adjacent to the site during site preparation or construction activities, the proposed project
may cause direct burrowing owl mortality through destruction of occupied burrows or through indirectly disrupting individuals located either onsite or off-site. A substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on this special-status species would be a significant impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

**Mitigation Measure**

BIO-2 To avoid/minimize potential impacts to burrowing owls, individual project developers will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a two-visit (i.e. morning and evening) presence/absence survey at areas of suitable habitat on and adjacent to their individual project sites no less than 14 days prior to the start of construction. Surveys will be conducted according to methods described in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFW 2012). If these pre-construction “take avoidance” surveys performed during the breeding season (February through August) or the non-breeding season (September through January) locate occupied burrows in or near construction areas, the qualified biologist will interpret survey results and develop a plan for project-specific avoidance, minimization, and compensation for habitat loss. The CDFW will be notified of the observation and provided a copy of the plan.

Where there is insufficient habitat on, adjacent to, or near project sites where burrowing owls will be impacted, acquisition of off-site mitigation lands with occupied burrowing owl habitat may be required in consultation with the CDFW. Compensation may take the form of: a) acquiring and dedicating lands into conservation easements; b) purchasing mitigation credits at compensation ratios that have been approved by the CDFW; or c) preserving area contiguous or near the acreage lost.

With implementation of mitigation measure BIO-2, which requires pre-construction surveys for burrowing owl, a qualified biologist to prepare a plan to protect individual burrowing owls if they are present on or adjacent to the project site, and compensation for habitat loss, the proposed project would not 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 CDFW or USFWS. Therefore, potential impacts to burrowing owl are less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

**IMPACT** Potential Loss or Disturbance of Protected Nesting Birds (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Protected nesting birds, including state-listed Threatened bank swallow and various raptors, have potential to nest on and adjacent to the project site during the nesting bird season.
(February 1 through September 15). If nesting birds protected by state and federal regulations are present on or adjacent to the site during site preparation or construction activities, direct loss of active nests, or indirect loss from nest abandonment and subsequent loss of fertile eggs or nestlings could occur. The take or destruction of any nesting birds or birds of prey, or the nest or eggs of such birds would be a significant impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would eliminate the impact.

**Mitigation Measure**

**BIO-3**

To avoid possible impacts to nesting birds on and adjacent to the project site, if noise generation, ground disturbance, vegetation removal, or other construction activities begin during the nesting bird season (February 1 to September 15), or if construction activities are suspended for at least two weeks and recommence during the nesting bird season, individual project developers shall retain a qualified biologist acceptable to the City to conduct a pre-construction survey for nesting birds. The survey shall be performed within suitable nesting habitat areas within individual development sites and within suitable nesting habitat areas adjacent those sites where project activities may have potential to indirectly impact nesting birds to ensure that no active nests would be disturbed during project implementation. The surveys shall be conducted no more than one week prior to the initiation of disturbance or construction activities on individual project sites.

If no active bird nests are detected during a survey, then project activities can proceed as scheduled. However, if an active bird nest of a native species is detected during a survey, a plan will be developed to ensure that noise generation, ground disturbance, vegetation removal, or other construction activities do not result in the take or destruction of any nesting birds, birds of prey, or the next or eggs of such birds. The plan will include measures for bird nest avoidance prepared by the qualified biologist to determine and clearly delineate an appropriately sized, temporary protective buffer area around each active nest, depending on the nesting bird species, existing site conditions, and type of proposed disturbance or construction activities. The protective buffer area around an active bird nest is typically 75-250 feet, determined at the discretion of the qualified biologist.

To ensure that no inadvertent impacts to an active bird nest will occur, no disturbance and/or construction activities shall occur within the protective buffer area(s) until the juvenile birds have fledged (left the nest), and there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting, as determined by the qualified biologist.
Individual project developers shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure prior to issuance of a grading permit, with oversight by the Community Development Director.

Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-3 will ensure that potential impacts to nesting birds are reduced by requiring pre-construction surveys and requiring avoidance measures to ensure development activities will not take or destroy any nesting bird or bird of prey or disrupt the nesting activities of such birds. With implementation of this mitigation measure, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on protected nesting birds. Therefore, this impact is less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

**IMPACT**

Loss of Waters of the State and U.S. Potentially under Jurisdiction of the RWQCB [0.23-acre] and the USACE [0.08-acre] (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Development within parcel 2 would remove an approximately 1,115 foot long, man-made intermittent drainage ditch and replace it with a new underground storm drain pipe. This ditch is likely under the regulatory jurisdiction of the USACE and RWQCB. A Jurisdictional Waters Delineation report was submitted to the USACE on March 31, 2017 for verification (EMC Planning Group 2017). The USACE and RWQCB are expected to require permits for development of the travel center component proposed within parcel 2 that impacts the ditch. This impact to a jurisdictional waterway would be a significant impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

**Mitigation Measure**

**BIO-4**

Prior to initiation of ground disturbance or construction activities, the developer of parcel 2 shall retain a qualified biologist to determine the extent of the drainage ditch regulated by the USACE and RWQCB. If the USACE claims jurisdiction, the developer shall retain a qualified biologist to obtain a Clean Water Act Section 404 Nationwide Permit. If the proposed ditch impact does not qualify for a Nationwide Permit, the developer shall proceed with the qualified biologist in obtaining an Individual Permit from the USACE. The developer shall then retain a qualified biologist to coordinate with the Central Coast RWQCB to obtain a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification. If the USACE does not assert jurisdiction over some or all portions of the ditch, the developer shall seek authorization from the RWQCB to modify the portions of the ditch not subject to USACE jurisdiction as part of the process of receiving 401 Water Quality Certification or through Waste Discharge Requirements.

To compensate for temporary and/or permanent impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. or waters of the State that will be impacted as a result of the proposed project, mitigation will be provided as required by the regulatory
permits, consistent with minimum City mitigation standards set forth below. Mitigation would be provided through one of the following mechanisms:

a. A Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will be developed that will outline mitigation and monitoring obligations for temporary impacts to wetlands and other waters as a result of construction activities. The Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan would include thresholds of success, monitoring and reporting requirements, and site-specific plans to compensate for wetland losses resulting from the project. The Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will be submitted to the appropriate regulatory agencies for review and approval during the permit application process.

b. To compensate for permanent impacts, the purchase and/or dedication of land to provide suitable wetland restoration or creation will ensure a no net loss of wetland values or functions. If restoration is available and feasible, a minimum 1:1 impact to mitigation ratio would apply to projects for which mitigation is provided in advance.

The developer of parcel 2 shall comply with terms and conditions of the permits, including measures to protect and maintain water quality, restoration of work sites, and mitigation to offset temporary and/or permanent wetland impacts. The developer shall be responsible for implementation of this mitigation measure prior to issuance of a grading permit, with oversight by the Community Development Director.

Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-4 will ensure that impacts to affected wetlands and waterways are mitigated by requiring a wetland assessment/jurisdictional determination and associated permitting meeting minimum City-imposed performance standards. With implementation of this mitigation measure, development within parcel 2 would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally or state-protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. Therefore, this impact is less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

**IMPACT**  **Impede Movement of Common, Urban-Adapted Wildlife (Less than Significant)**

The proposed project would impede to a limited degree the local movement of common, urban-adapted wildlife due to habitat loss. Although common, urban-adapted mammals such as raccoons may currently utilize on-site and adjacent drainage and irrigation ditches for limited wildlife movement, the site does not function as a significant regional wildlife movement corridor or important habitat linkage. This is a less-than-significant environmental impact. No mitigation measures are required.
This section of the EIR examines whether cultural resources (historical, prehistoric, paleontological, and tribal) are known to exist or have potential to exist within the project site and whether future development has potential to impact the resources. Information in this section is derived from several sources including, but not limited to:

- *Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002b);
- Cultural Resources Archival Records Search, County File Number 2016101058/APN177-131-011/Salinas Travel Stop (Northwest Information Center 2016);
- *Airport Boulevard Interchange Project Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment* (California Department of Transportation 2005);
- *Monterey County 2007 General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report* (ICF Jones & Stokes 2008); and

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

The Ohlone/Coastanoan-Esselen Nation submitted comments on the NOP regarding tribal resources. Comments pertaining to the CEQA scope of review request that sacred burial items be protected and undisturbed, that all sacred burial items be left with the tribe’s ancestors on site or as culturally determined by the tribe, that cultural items be returned to the tribe, and that archaeological reports/surveys be provided. The tribe also requested that it be included in any mitigation, recovery, and monitoring activities.

The Ohlone/Coastanoan-Esselen Nation was also consulted by the City pursuant to Senate Bill 18 and Assembly Bill 52 requirements (described below). The consultation results are reported in the Regulatory Setting section below.
9.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Ethnographic Setting

The city is within the aboriginal territory of the Costanoans (from the Spanish Costanos for “coastal people”), who are also known today as the Ohlone. The Costanoans spoke a language now considered one of the major subdivisions of the Miwok-Costanoan, which belonged to the Utian family within the Penutian language stock. Costanoan designates a family of eight languages. Costanoan-speaking tribal groups occupied the area from the Pacific Coast to the Diablo Range and from San Francisco to Point Sur. Modern descendants of the Costanoan prefer to be known as Ohlone. The name Ohlone is derived from the Oljon group, which occupied the San Gregorio watershed in San Mateo County. The two terms (Costanoan and Ohlone) are used interchangeably in much of the ethnographic literature.

On the basis of linguistic evidence, it has been suggested that the ancestors of the Ohlone arrived in the San Francisco Bay area about 1,400 B.P., having moved south and west from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The ancestral Ohlone displaced speakers of a Hokan language and were probably the producers of the artifact assemblages that have been found in the area.

Archaeological Resources Setting

A number of archaeological investigations have been conducted in Salinas and in Monterey County. None of these have identified recorded prehistoric archaeological sites in the immediate project area. Chronological data from sites in the broader vicinity, including the city, documents human occupation from 10,000 years ago to 150 years ago. The sites are marked by appearance of projectile points, bifaces, beads, ornaments, and bone tools. Given the vast quantities of alluvium on the Salinas Valley floor it is possible that many prehistoric sites lie deeply buried.

The City requested that the Northwest Information Center, which is part of the California Historical Resources Information System, conduct a cultural resources archival search for the project site. The purpose of the search was to determine whether archaeological or historic resources have been recorded within or near the project site. An archaeological reconnaissance survey conducted over about 30 percent of the project site in 2003 concluded that there are no archaeological sites within the area surveyed. Based on the information available to it, the Northwest Information Center suggests that the project site has a moderate possibility of containing unrecorded archaeological sites.

Caltrans completed the Airport Boulevard Interchange Project Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment in 2005 to evaluate the environmental effects of constructing the Airport Boulevard interchange and adjacent segments of Roy Diaz Street and De La Torre (California Department of Transportation 2005). U.S. Highway 101
Ramp 326A, Roy Diaz Street, and De La Torre were constructed through/adjacent to the project site as part of the interchange improvement project. The environmental document concluded that there are no cultural resources within the footprints of the aforementioned road rights-of-way. The conclusion was based on a property survey report prepared by Caltrans staff in 2004. This information is provided only as reference regarding the potential cultural resources sensitivity context for the project site.

**Historical Buildings/Structures Setting**

The Northwest Information Center archival records search discussed previously identified that a historical resources survey conducted in 2000 concluded that there were no historical buildings and/or structures within the project site. Based on field observations of the site by EMC Planning Group in 2016, there are no above-ground buildings on the project site.

**Paleontological Resources Setting**

As described in the Monterey County General Plan Draft EIR section 4.10.2.3, Paleontological Resources, significant paleontological resources are fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, and diagnostically or stratigraphically important, and those that add to an existing body of knowledge in specific areas, stratigraphically, taxonomically, or regionally. They include fossil remains of large to very small aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates, remains of plants and animals previously not represented in certain portions of the stratigraphy, and assemblages of fossils that might aid stratigraphic correlations—particularly those offering data for the interpretation of tectonic events, geomorphologic evolution, paleoclimatology, and the relationships of aquatic and terrestrial species. Most of the fossils found in Monterey County are of marine life forms and form a record of the region’s geologic history of advancing and retreating sea levels.

Fossils are found throughout the County because of the widespread distribution of marine deposits. Twelve fossil sites have been identified as having outstanding scientific value. None of these sites are located in the immediate vicinity of the City or the project site.

Agricultural soils in the Salinas Valley on which the city is located are generally formed on deep alluvium – soils deposited on the valley floor over millions of years due to erosion of uplands on both sides of the Salinas Valley. According to the California Department of Conservation California Geological Survey’s Geologic Atlas of California – Santa Cruz sheet, the project site is located on an Alluvium geologic formation (http://www.quake.ca.gov/gmaps/GAM/santacruz/santacruz.html). The Alluvium formation is generally found north, south, and east of U.S. Highway 101 within the city. The alluvium that comprises this unit was recently deposited – likely in the last 10,000 years. To be considered a fossil, an object generally must be more than 10,000 years old. As noted above, most fossils recorded in Monterey County to date have been found in geologic formations.
that are millions of years old. Consequently, it is unlikely that fossils would be found during excavations or other related construction activities associated with development within the project site.

### 9.2 REGULATORY SETTING

#### Federal

**Federal National Historic Preservation Act**

Federal regulations for cultural resources are primarily governed by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which applies to actions taken by federal agencies, such as approval of section 404 permits for fill of wetlands. The National Register of Historic Places was established to recognize resources associated with the accomplishments of all peoples who have contributed to the country’s history and heritage. Guidelines were designed for federal and state agencies in nominating cultural resources to the national register. These guidelines are based upon integrity and significance of the resource. Integrity applies to specific items such as location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Integrity is defined in the National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 1982) as: “The authenticity of a property’s historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property’s historic or prehistoric period. If a property retains the physical characteristics it possessed in the past then it has the capacity to convey association with historical patterns or persons, architectural or engineering design and technology, or information about a culture or peoples.

Quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture is present in resources that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and the resources meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a. are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of our history;
- b. are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- c. embody distinctive characteristics of type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and
- d. have yielded, or are likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.”
State

California Historic Resource Criteria

A cultural resource is considered “significant” if it qualifies as eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. Properties that are eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources must meet one or more of the following criteria:

a. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;

b. Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history;

c. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values; and/or

d. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation. (Pub. Resources Code, § 5024.1.)

A property may be automatically listed in the California Register of Historic Places if it is formally determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Properties that are formally determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places are designated as such through one of the federal preservation programs administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation.

The California Register of Historic Places interprets the integrity of a cultural resource based upon its physical authenticity. A historic cultural resource must retain its historic character or appearance and thus be recognizable as a historic resource. Integrity is evaluated by examining the subject’s location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. If the subject has retained these qualities, it may be said to have integrity. It is possible that a cultural resource may not retain sufficient integrity to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places yet still be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Places. If a cultural resource retains the potential to convey significant historical/scientific data, it may be said to retain sufficient integrity for potential listing in the California Register of Historic Resources.

California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15064.5

Under CEQA, public agencies must consider the effects of their actions on both “unique archeological resources” and “historical resources.” Both categories of cultural resources are addressed in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, which reflects two different statutes aimed at the two broad categories of resources. (See Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21083.2, 21084.1)

Although “historical resource” is a broad category that includes buildings, the concept also
includes archaeological resources, creating a potential that a particular archaeological resource might be (i) a unique archaeological resource, (ii) an historical resource, (iii) both, or (iv) neither. CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, subdivision (b), provides guidance on how to deal with archaeological resources that might qualify under either of these two statutory categories.

**Unique Archaeological Resources**

Public Resources Code section 21083.2 requires agencies to determine whether proposed projects would have effects on “unique archaeological resources,” and instructs agencies, in preparing EIRs, to disregard impacts on “nonunique archaeological resources.” A “unique archaeological resource” is defined as an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria: 1) contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information; 2) has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type; or 3) is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person (Public Resources Code, § 21083.2, subd. (g)). A “nonunique archaeological resource” is “an archaeological artifact, object, or site which does not meet the[s] criteria[.]” (Id., subd. (h)).

Treatment options under Section 21083.2 include activities that preserve such resources in place in an undisturbed state. Other acceptable methods of mitigation under Section 21083.2 include excavation and curation or study in place without excavation and curation.

**Historical Resources**

Public Resources Code section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, subdivision (a)(i), defines a historical resource as, among other things, a resource listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources. In addition, a resource is presumed to constitute an historical resource if it is included in a local register of historical resources unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant (CEQA Guidelines, § (a)(2).) Finally, a resource should be considered “historical” if the lead agency determines that the resource “meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code §5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852) including the following:

(A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage;

(B) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

(C) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
(D) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15964.5, subd. (a)(3).)

Public Resources Code section 21084.1 provides that a “project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” In other words, a significant effect to an “historical resource” occurs where a proposed project would cause “a substantial adverse change in the significance” of such a resource.

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, subdivision (b)(1), defines the phrase “substantial adverse change,” as used in this context, as meaning “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.” In turn, subdivision (b)(2) states that an historic resource is “materially impaired” when a project “demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in” either, the California Register of Historic Resources, a local register of historic resources, or a historical resources survey.

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4, subdivision (b), sets forth principles relevant to means of mitigating impacts on historical resources. It provides as follows:

1. Where maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of the historical resource will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, the project’s impact on the historical resource shall generally be considered mitigated below a level of significance and thus is not significant.

2. In some circumstances, documentation of an historical resource, by way of historic narrative, photographs or architectural drawings, as mitigation for the effects of demolition of the resource will not mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effect on the environment would occur.

3. Public agencies should, whenever feasible, seek to avoid damaging effects on any historical resource of an archaeological nature. The following factors shall be considered and discussed in an EIR for a project involving such an archaeological site:

   A. Preservation in place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to archaeological sites. Preservation in place maintains the relationship between artifacts and the archaeological context. Preservation may also avoid conflict with religious or cultural values of groups associated with the site.
(B) Preservation in place may be accomplished by, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Planning construction to avoid archaeological sites;
2. Incorporation of sites within parks, greenspace, or other open space;
3. Covering the archaeological sites with a layer of chemically stable soil before building tennis courts, parking lots, or similar facilities on the site; or
4. Deeding the site into a permanent conservation easement.

(C) When data recovery through excavation is the only feasible mitigation, a data recovery plan, which makes provision for adequately recovering the scientifically consequential information from and about the historical resource, shall be prepared and adopted prior to any excavation being undertaken. Such studies shall be deposited with the California Historical Resources Regional Information Center. Archaeological sites known to contain human remains shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of Section 7050.5 Health and Safety Code. If an artifact must be removed during project excavation or testing, curation may be an appropriate mitigation.

(D) Data recovery shall not be required for an historical resource if the lead agency determines that testing or studies already completed have adequately recovered the scientifically consequential information from and about the archaeological or historical resource, provided that the determination is documented in the EIR and that the studies are deposited with the California Historical Resources Regional Information Center.

Section 15064.5, subdivision (f), deals with potential discoveries of cultural resources during project construction. That provision states that, “[a]s part of the objectives, criteria, and procedures required by Section 21082 of the Public Resources Code, a lead agency should make provisions for historical or unique archaeological resources accidentally discovered during construction. These provisions should include an immediate evaluation of the find by a qualified archaeologist. If the find is determined to be an historical or unique archaeological resource, contingency funding and a time allotment sufficient to allow for implementation of avoidance measures or appropriate mitigation should be available. Work could continue on other parts of the building site while historical or unique archaeological resource mitigation takes place.”

Subdivision (e) of section 15064.5 requires that excavation activities be stopped whenever human remains are uncovered and that the county coroner be called in to assess the remains. If the county coroner determines that the remains are those of Native Americans, the Native American Heritage Commission must be contacted within 24 hours. At that time, the lead agency must consult with the appropriate Native Americans, if any, as identified in a timely
manner by the Native American Heritage Commission. Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines directs the lead agency (or applicant), under certain circumstances, to develop an agreement with the Native Americans for the treatment and disposition of the remains.

**California Assembly Bill 52 – Protection of Tribal Cultural Resources**

On September 25, 2014, Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill (AB) 52, which creates a new category of environmental resources “tribal cultural resources” that must be considered under CEQA. The legislation imposes new requirements for consultation regarding projects that may affect a tribal cultural resource, includes a broad definition of what may be considered to be a tribal cultural resource, and includes a list of recommended mitigation measures.

AB 52 adds tribal cultural resources to the categories of cultural resources in CEQA, which had formerly been limited to historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources. AB 52 requires lead agencies to provide notice to tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project if they have requested notice of projects proposed within that area.

Two tribes requested notice of projects proposed within their aboriginal territory pursuant to AB 52. Consequently, the City provided notice of the proposed project to the Ohlone/Coastanoan-Esselen Nation (OCEN) and the Xolon Salinan Tribe on September 16, 2016. The City then conducted a requested consultation with Louise Miranda-Ramirez (OCEN), on April 11, 2017. Topics discussed included the proposed project description, the findings of the cultural resources records search, Louise Miranda-Ramirez’s knowledge of any known or potential artifacts in the area (none were known to her), and the possibility of creating a memorandum of understanding with property owners that calls for conveyance of any artifacts found on their properties to the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation.

**California Senate Bill 18 – Tribal Consultation**

California Senate Bill (SB) 18 was adopted in 2005. Its purpose is to increase tribal involvement in state planning. In short, SB 18 states:

Prior to the adoption or any amendment of a city or county’s general plan, proposed on or after March 1, 2005, the city or county shall conduct consultations with California Native American tribes that are on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission for the purpose of preserving or mitigating impacts to places, features, and objects described in Sections 5097.9 and 5097.995 of the Public Resources Code that are located within the city or county’s jurisdiction.

SB 18 establishes a process to be followed by lead agencies for consulting with Native American Tribes and for considering the input received as part of the CEQA process for
identifying and mitigating impacts on protected places, features and objects. The consultation is required for the proposed project due to the applicant’s request for a general plan amendment.

The Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation requested consultation pursuant to SB 18. Consultation was conducted on August 16, 2017 with tribal representative Louise Miranda-Ramirez. Topics discussed included the consultation process, requests for archaeological and historical reports, prior studies that included portions of the project site, lack of significant disturbance on the site and potential for presence of archaeological resources.

**State Regulations Regarding Paleontological Resources**

Several state laws protect paleontological resources on state lands as well as projects undertaken by state agencies. A summary of these laws follows.

*California Environmental Quality Act*

CEQA is the primary California state environmental law protecting fossils. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines provides an Environmental Checklist of questions that a lead agency should normally address if relevant to a project’s environmental impacts. One of the questions to be answered in this Environmental Checklist (CCR Section 15063; Appendix G, Section V, c) is the following: “Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site...?”

CEQA Guidelines Section XVIII.a, of the Environmental Checklist asks a second question equally applicable to paleontological resources: “Does the project have the potential to eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history?” Fossils are important examples of the major periods of California prehistory. To be in compliance with CEQA, environmental impact assessments, statements, and reports must answer both these questions in the Environmental Checklist.

Other state requirements for paleontological resource management are in California Public Resources Code section 5097.5, entitled “Archaeological, Paleontological, and Historical Sites”. This statute defines any unauthorized disturbance or removal of a fossil site or fossil remains on public land as a misdemeanor, and specifies that state agencies may undertake surveys, excavations, or other operations as necessary on publicly owned lands to preserve or record.

*Public Resources Code Section 5097.5*

California PRC Section 5097.5 prohibits excavation or removal of any vertebrate paleontological site, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands and specifies that state agencies may undertake surveys, excavations, or other operations as necessary on publicly owned lands to preserve or record...
paleontological resources. Public lands are defined to include lands owned by or under the jurisdiction of the state or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof.

Section 5097.5 states that any unauthorized disturbance or removal of archaeological, historical, or paleontological materials or sites located on public lands is a misdemeanor. Section 30244 requires reasonable mitigation for impacts on paleontological resources where development might adversely impact paleontological resources, as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

**Regional/Local**

**City of Salinas General Plan**

The General Plan contains one policy regarding archaeological resources:

**COS-4.4.** Protect significant archaeological resources in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

**9.3 THRESHOLDS OR STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of cultural resources, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use the vast majority of these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance. (*Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara* (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (*Ibid.*)

Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here, though it has no discretion with respect to one particular threshold: the one applicable to “historical resources.” As noted earlier, Public Resources Code section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, subdivision (b), require an agency to find a significant effect where a proposed project would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

In addition, the City has exercised its discretion to modify one of the checklist inquiries so that it does not address generic “archaeological resources” but instead focuses on “unique archaeological resources.”

Furthermore, despite the considerable discretion agencies normally enjoy in fashioning significance thresholds, there are some thresholds that must, as a matter of law, be used by public agencies. One of these relates (if only impliedly) to paleontological resources, and is found in CEQA Guidelines section 15065 (“Mandatory Findings of Significance”).
9.0 Cultural Resources

In light of the foregoing, the proposed project would cause a significant effect on cultural resources if it would:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in section 15064.5;
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to section 15064.5;
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature;
- Eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory; or
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Based on a prior cultural resources survey of land including the project site, the project site does not contain historical buildings or structures. This absence of structures within the project site was confirmed by EMC Planning Group during a field reconnaissance of the site in 2016. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of any structure that qualifies as an historical resource. The analysis below considers, however, the possibility that subsurface historical resources could be encountered during construction.

9.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section includes information and data regarding cultural resource issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

Archaeological Resources/Human Remains

As described in the Environmental Setting section above, a significant portion of the project site has not been surveyed for the potential presence of unique archaeological resources. Construction of new development projects within the site will require excavations and other ground disturbing activities. These activities could affect unknown buried archaeological resources if such resources do occur within the site. Similarly, these activities could affect unknown, buried human remains if such are present within the project site.

Paleontological Resources

As described in the Environmental Setting section above, fossils are found throughout Monterey County because of the widespread distribution of marine deposits. Although the geologic formations present within the project site is not likely to contain fossils of significant
scientific value, paleontological resources could nevertheless be present. Impacts to paleontological resources could result from grading, excavations, and other ground disturbing activities.

9.5 IMPACT SUMMARY AND MITIGATION MEASURES

IMPACT Potential for Construction Activities Such as Excavations, Grading, or Trenching Associated with Development within the Project Site to Adversely Affect Historical Resources and/or Unique Archaeological Resources (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Ground disturbing construction activities associated with development of the project site could affect unknown, buried archaeological resources if present. Some of these could turn out to be “unique.” The following mitigation measure is designed to reduce the potential that these activities could demolish or destroy a unique archaeological resource such that the potential impact would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

CR-1 The following language shall be included in any permit associated with earth moving activities for development projects proposed within the project site:

In the event that evidence of archaeological or historical features or deposits (e.g., ceramic shard, trash scatters, lithic scatters) are uncovered during excavation and/or grading, all work shall stop in the area of the subject property until an appropriate data recovery program can be developed and implemented by a qualified archaeologist. This archaeologist shall determine whether the uncovered deposits or features qualify as either “historical resources” within the meaning of CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, subdivision (a), “unique archaeological resources” as defined in Public Resources Code section 21083.2, subdivision (g), or “tribal cultural resources,” as defined in Public Resources Code section 21074. If historical resources, unique archaeological resources, or tribal cultural resources are present, the project proponent shall preserve any such resources or implement any feasible mitigation measures identified by the archaeologist and imposed by the City. Recommended mitigation measures shall be reviewed by the Community Development Director and shall be approved if feasible in light of project design, logistics, and cost considerations and, if approved, shall be implemented and completed prior to approval of a grading permit, unless otherwise directed by the Community Development Director. Data recovery shall be an option if preservation in place is infeasible. Where resources have been determined to be “unique archaeological resources” but not “historical resources” or “tribal cultural resources,” the project proponent’s obligations shall be limited as set forth in Public Resources Code section 21083.2, subdivisions (d), (e), and (f).
Mitigation measure CR-1 requires that all construction activities on the project site stop should subsurface historical, unique archeological, or tribal cultural resources be uncovered in order to ensure the integrity of the resource is not inadvertently compromised. Implementation of mitigation measure CR-1 would reduce potentially significant impacts to currently undiscovered historical, unique archaeological, or tribal cultural resources because actions would be taken to avoid such resources where feasible, or to otherwise move, record, or treat the resource appropriately, in accordance with pertinent laws and regulations. Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce impact to a less-than-significant level.

**IMPACT** Potential for Disturbance of Unknown Native American Human Remains from Construction Activities Including Grading and Excavations within the Project Site (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Ground disturbing construction activities associated with development of the project site could damage unknown, buried human remains if present. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to less than significant.

*Mitigation Measure*

**CR-2** If human remains are found during construction within the project site, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the construction site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until an archeological monitor and the coroner of Monterey County are contacted. If it is determined that the remains are Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descendent (MLD) from the deceased Native American. The MLD may then make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code section 5097.98. The landowner or his authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance if: a) the Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a MLD or the MLD failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission; b) the descendent identified fails to make a recommendation; or c) the landowner or his authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendent, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.
Implementation of mitigation measure CR-2 would reduce potentially significant impacts to human remains because actions would be implemented to avoid, move, record, or otherwise treat the remains appropriately, in accordance with pertinent laws and regulations. By providing an opportunity to avoid or minimize the disturbance of human remains, and to appropriately treat any remains that are discovered, this impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

**IMPACT**

**Potential for Destruction or Loss of Unique Paleontological Resources from Ground Disturbing Development Activities within Project Site (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Ground disturbing construction activities associated with future development within the project site could damage unique paleontological resources if present. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to less than significant.

**Mitigation Measure**

CR-3 The following language shall be included in any permit associated with earth moving activities for development projects proposed within the annexation area:

In the event that evidence of paleontological resources are uncovered during excavation and/or grading, all work shall stop in the immediate area until a qualified paleontologist can assess the scientific significance of the paleontological resources and, if they are significant, until an appropriate data recovery program can be developed and implemented. The Community Development Director shall ensure that the permit language has been included and shall ensure that the appropriate data recovery program is implemented if significant paleontological resources are uncovered.

Mitigation measure CR-3 requires that all construction activities on the project site stop should evidence of paleontological resources be uncovered in order to ensure the integrity of the resource is not inadvertently compromised. Implementation of mitigation measure CR-3 would reduce potentially significant impacts to currently undiscovered significant paleontological resources because actions would be taken to avoid, move, record, or otherwise treat the resource appropriately, in accordance with pertinent laws and regulations. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.
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This section of the EIR includes evaluation of geologic and soils conditions within the project site, and evaluation of the potential risks to public safety and development of the site from seismic hazards and existing geologic conditions.

Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- *Geotechnical Engineering Report Loves Travel Stop* (Terracon 2015)(included as Appendix E on CD on the inside back cover of this EIR);
- *City of Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002);
- *Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002b);
- *Soil Survey of Monterey County, California* (USDA 1978); and

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

No comments were received on the NOP regarding geology and soils issues.

### 10.1 Environmental Setting

#### Regional Geology

Monterey County lies within the California Coast Ranges geomorphic and physiographic province, a region dominated by active tectonics astride the margin between the Pacific and North American tectonic plates. Over time, these forces have created the varied mountainous, valley, and fault-bound blocks seen in Monterey County today. During the Miocene Epoch (five to 24 million years ago), the Pacific and North American plates shifted the direction of their major movement relative to one another, and instead of a convergent margin, the plate boundary became a transform boundary with lateral movement similar to that occurring along the present-day San Andreas Fault system. Movement along the ancient fault system caused the Salinian rocks to be carried northward—after undergoing folding.
and intrusion by granitic rocks. Thus, the two major rock types underlying Monterey County, the Salinian and Franciscan, both were created as a result of interaction between the Pacific and North American plates.

Plate motion continues today and is manifested along the County’s various fault systems. Two faults considered active with evidence of historic or recent movement are the San Andreas Fault and the San Gregorio Fault, which form the eastern and western boundaries of the Salinian block. Tectonic movement in the region has resulted in a variety of active fault types. Uplift along faults is largely responsible for the formation of the Coast Ranges, including the Santa Lucia Range and the Gabilan Range.

Rapid erosion and deposition of soil from the uplifted mountains formed broad alluvial fans of well drained, nutrient-rich soil. This process occurred over several tens of millions of years. During the Pleistocene era, the sea level fluctuated repeatedly in response to climate changes that formed glaciers in other parts of the world. As the sea level changed, marine sediments were deposited beneath what later became the floor of the Salinas Valley.

Salinas’ relatively flat topography and geologic setting present few geologic hazards, other than those related to seismic activity. A map prepared by the Monterey County Planning Department, based on 1980 U.S. Geological Survey mapping, depicts all the incorporated, urbanized area of the city and most of the surrounding planning area as being located within the area of “least landslide and erosion susceptibility” (general plan, page S-19).

Some localized soil constraints related to clay and steeper slopes may occur within the city’s planning area (general plan, page S-20).

**Project Site Setting**

Terracon Consultants, Inc. prepared a preliminary geotechnical engineering report in 2015 entitled *Geotechnical Engineering Report* for the travel center project proposed for parcel 2. The geotechnical report was prepared to explore surface and subsurface soil and groundwater conditions and to provide preliminary design level soil-engineering criteria for construction of infrastructure improvements within parcel 2. Subsurface soil and geologic conditions within parcel 2 are generally considered to be representative of those within the entire project site given the uniformity of topographic and geomorphic conditions within the site.

**Faulting and Seismicity**

There are no known active faults in Salinas and consequently, there are no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones in the city.

Although the potentially active King City and Gabilan Creek faults (active within the last three million years, though not the last 11,000 years) are located within the city planning area, they are not expected to generate seismic activity. The greatest seismic threat is seismic shaking due to the fact that Salinas lies within a region with active seismic faults. The San Andreas and Calaveras faults are the most significant faults in the region.
Seismic activity poses primary and secondary types of hazards. Primary hazards include ground rupture, ground shaking, ground displacement, and subsidence and uplift from earth movement. Primary hazards can induce secondary hazards including ground failure (lurch cracking, lateral spreading, and slope failure), liquefaction, water waves (tsunamis and seiches), and movement on nearby faults (sympathetic fault movement), dam failure, and fires (general plan, page S-20).

All of Salinas is in Seismic Risk Zone IV, the highest potential risk category due to the frequency and magnitude of earthquake activity nationwide as determined in the most recently adopted California Building Code.

**Ground Failure/Liquefaction**

Ground failure is a phenomenon associated with seismic shaking. Ground failure can occur as a result of subsidence, liquefaction, lateral ground spreading or dynamic compaction.

Liquefaction occurs primarily in areas of recently deposited sands and silts and in areas of high groundwater levels and involves a sudden loss in strength of a saturated, cohesionless soil caused by shock or strain, such as an earthquake, and resulting in the temporary transformation of the soil into a fluid mass. If the liquefying layer is near the surface, the effects are much like that of quicksand. If the liquefying layer is in the subsurface, it may provide a sliding surface for the material above it. Liquefaction typically occurs in areas where groundwater is less than 30 feet below the surface, and where the soils are composed predominantly of poorly consolidated fine sand. Especially susceptible areas include sloughs and marshes that have been filled in and covered with development. Salinas has several former wetland areas that have been “reclaimed” (drained and filled) and developed. In addition, Salinas rests on almost 1,800 feet of alluvium (general plan, page S-20).

Groundwater was not encountered in any of the soil borings conducted by Terracon within parcel 2. The maximum boring depth was 21 feet. Based on California Department of Water Resources groundwater data from several wells in the vicinity of the project site, Terracon reported the likely depth to groundwater level in the project vicinity as between 45 to 65 feet below ground surface, with fluctuations assumed to occur seasonally and annually. The project site is not mapped within an area of high liquefaction potential (Terracon 2015).

Subsidence is the gradual lowering of the ground surface with little or no horizontal motion. Subsidence results from settlement over small or large areas as the consequence of compaction or loss of subsurface materials. The exception is tectonic subsidence, which occurs suddenly and is the compaction of soils due to ground shaking during earthquakes. Subsidence is usually the result of groundwater, gas or oil extraction, and hydro-compaction or the oxidation of organic soils. As stated on page 4.4-14 of the County General Plan Draft EIR, there is little documentation of widespread subsidence in Monterey County. As described in Section 18.0, Water Supply, the proposed project would not cause an increase in groundwater extraction.
Slope Stability/Landslides

With one exception, the project site does not contain slopes that could be subject to failure or sliding. The exception occurs along the southeastern, southern, and southwestern margins of parcel 4 where a topographic break occurs between the parcel boundary and adjacent land. The feature appears to mark upper (project site) and lower (adjacent farmland) ancient fluvial terraces. Along this margin, the project site is elevated above adjacent off-site land. The topographic break ranges to a maximum of about 10 feet between the site boundary and adjacent off-site lands. Please refer back to Figure 3-2, Aerial Photograph and Figure 3-3, Site Photographs for the location of the slope feature. To date, no information exists as to the stability of this slope or its potential to fail under seismic shaking or other conditions.

Erosion

Erosion is a natural process caused by wind, water, or gravitational forces, which can result in soil removal or erosion of soil from a site. The primary geological effects of erosion are loss of topsoil, rut formation, and potential destabilization of slopes. Subsequent deposition to another site is sedimentation.

Based on Terracon’s soil boring results, soils within parcel 2 generally consist of stiff to very stiff sandy silt, sandy clay, clayey sand, lean and fat clay overlying medium dense to very dense silty sand, clayey sand, and sand. Soil types across the remainder of the project site are likely to be similar. The Soil Survey of Monterey County, California indicates that soils present within the annexation area have a minimal to moderate erosion hazard.

Expansive Soils

Expansive soils are susceptible to expansion or contraction as moisture content changes. Expansive soils swell when wet and shrink when dry, which can damage buildings that are not designed properly. Clay soils are especially prone to shrink or swell due to their high water holding capacity and elastic qualities. The geotechnical report shows that near surface clay soils within parcel 2 are expected to exhibit moderate expansion potential (Terracon 2015). Similar conditions are possible across the remainder of the project site.

10.2 Regulatory Setting

State

California and Uniform Building Code

The California Building Code (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations)(CBC) and the Uniform Building Code provide standards for testing and building construction as well as safety measures for development within earthquake prone areas. The city is located within
Seismic Risk Zone 4, which is expected to experience the greatest effects from earthquakes, and which requires the most stringent standards for seismic design. The code standards are enforced by local building officials at the project design stage.

Where no other building codes apply, Chapter 18 of the CBC regulates soils and foundations. The CBC also applies to building design and construction in the state and is based on the federal International Building Code (IBC) used widely throughout the country (generally adopted on a state-by-state or district-by-district basis). The CBC has been modified for California conditions with numerous more detailed and/or more stringent regulations.

The State earthquake protection law (California Health and Safety Code Section 19100 et seq.) requires that structures be designed to resist stresses produced by lateral forces caused by wind and earthquakes. Specific minimum seismic safety and structural design requirements are set forth in Chapter 16 of the CBC. The CBC identifies seismic factors that must be considered in structural design.

Chapter 18 of the CBC regulates soils and foundations, and regulates the preparation of a preliminary soil report, geohazard report, and geotechnical reports. Chapter 18 also regulates analysis of expansive soils and the determination of the depth to groundwater table. There are varying seismic design categories that require analysis of slope instability, liquefaction, total and differential settlement, surface displacement due to faulting or seismically induced lateral spreading or lateral flow, and lateral earth pressures on retaining walls. It also requires addressing mitigation measures to consider in structural design, which may include ground stabilization, selection of appropriate foundation type and depths, selection of appropriate structural systems to accommodate anticipated displacements, or any combination of these measures. The potential for liquefaction and soil strength loss must be evaluated for site-specific peak ground acceleration, earthquake magnitude, and source characteristics consistent with the maximum considered earthquake ground motions. Peak ground acceleration must be determined as specified in CBC Chapter 18.

Finally, Appendix Chapter J of the 2013 CBC regulates grading activities, including drainage and erosion control and construction on unstable soils, such as expansive soils and areas subject to liquefaction.

**Seismic Hazards Mapping Act**

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act addresses non-surface fault rupture earthquake hazards, including strong ground shaking, liquefaction, and seismically induced landslides. The California Geological Survey is the principal state agency charged with implementing the Act and is required to provide local governments with seismic hazard zone maps that identify areas susceptible to amplified shaking, liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and other ground failures. The goal is to minimize loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating seismic hazards. Site-specific geotechnical hazard investigations are required when construction projects fall within these areas.
The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) are responsible for assuring implementation and compliance with the provisions of the Clean Water Act and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. The Central Coast RWQCB office regulates water quality in streams and aquifers throughout the central coast of California and the Monterey Bay region through designation of beneficial uses, establishment of water quality objectives, and administration of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program for storm water and construction site runoff.

Point source discharges to surface waters are generally controlled through waste discharge requirements issued under federal NPDES permits. NPDES permits are required for several categories of storm water dischargers, including for cities that operate storm water management systems (e.g. roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, human-made channels, and storm drains) that are used to collect, convey, and discharge storm water to surface water bodies. An NPDES permit usually contains components such as discharge prohibitions, effluent limitations, and necessary specifications and provisions to ensure proper treatment, storage, and disposal of storm water discharges.

Construction activity on projects that disturb one or more acres of soil, or less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acre, must develop and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP). The SWPPP must list best management practices that will be used to reduce pollutants, including sediment, contained in storm water runoff under construction and post-construction conditions. The best management practices include a range of actions for avoiding soil erosion that produces sediment which can degrade surface water quality.

More information on NPDES requirements and water quality protection can be found in Section 13.0, Hydrology and Water Quality.

**Regional/Local**

**City of Salinas General Plan**

The Safety Element of the City of Salinas General Plan contains a range of goals and policies that are focused on protecting public safety and health from geologic and soils related hazards. Illustrative policies include the following:

**Policy S-4.1.** During the review of development proposals, investigate and mitigate geologic and seismic hazards, or require that development be located away from such hazards, in order to preserve life and protect property.
Implementation Program S-16. To minimize damage from earthquakes and other geologic activity, implement the most recent state and seismic requirements for structural design of new development and redevelopment.

Implementation Program S-17. During review of discretionary development and redevelopment proposals, require surveys of soil and geologic conditions by state licensed Engineering Geologists and Civil Engineers where appropriate. When potential geologic impacts are identified, require project applicants to mitigate the impacts per the recommendations contained within the geologic survey.

City of Salinas Municipal Code

The City of Salinas Municipal Code contains regulations that address development and public safety risks related to geology and soils. Chapter 31 Article VI pertains to parcel maps. Sections 31-601.4(l) states that an engineering geology report may be required by the City Engineer to evaluate and address geology and soils hazards, including soil expansiveness. Chapter 9 Article I Sections 9-1 and 9-1.1 verifies the City’s adoption of the CBC. As a condition of approval designed to ensure compliance with the municipal code (and to implement related general plan policy), prior to issuance of building permits, new development must demonstrate compliance with the CBC (including its seismic safety standards).

City of Salinas Storm Water Development Standards

Point source storm water discharges to surface waters are generally controlled through National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) waste discharge requirements that are promulgated by the State Water Resources Control Board. The City’s NPDES Permit, Order No. R3-2012-0005, NPDES Permit No. CA 0049981, Waste Discharge Requirements for City of Salinas, Municipal Storm Water Discharges, became effective on June 17, 2012. The permit requires compliance with receiving water limitations with adherence to water quality standards, and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce storm water pollutant discharges and protect water quality and beneficial uses. Best management practices to reduce pollutants in storm water discharges include: erosion control, sediment control, and construction site waste management practices; good housekeeping practices to control pollutants, promote waste management practices, and implement control practices to keep pollutants away from the storm drainage system; requirements to preserve pre-development hydrologic and pollutant conditions; requirements for development planning; and watershed characterization.

The City has developed storm water management ordinances and programs to implement storm water management regulations pursuant to its NPDES permit. These are embedded in the City’s Stormwater Management Plan and its Stormwater Development Standards
(SWDS). SWMP includes all of the required and recommended control programs for municipal facilities, industrial facilities, and commercial facilities. The SWMP describes the minimum procedures and practices the City uses to reduce pollutants in storm water and non-storm water discharges. It outlines procedures and responsibilities for protecting water quality, including the selection and implementation of BMP practices.

The City of Salinas Development Engineering Division follows the guidelines presented in the City’s Standard Specifications, Design Standards, and Standard Plans – 2008 Edition for design and construction of development and improvement projects within the City. To minimize soil erosion and protect surface water quality during project construction phase, development plans within the City must also comply with the guidelines presented in Appendix A of this document - Standards to Control Excavations, Cuts, Fills, Clearing, Grading, Erosion, and Sediment. Section 3, General Provisions. Subsection (a) and (d) are particularly relevant to preventing erosion and water quality impacts:

(a) No person shall cause or allow the persistence of a condition on any site that could cause accelerated erosion. Accelerated erosion shall be controlled and/or prevented by Permitee or the property owner by using measures outlined in subsequent sections as applicable, especially when work is on geologically unstable areas, on slopes above twenty percent (20%), and/or on soils rated a severe erosion hazard. Additional measures may be necessary and may be specifically required by the City Engineer.

(e) The property owner and the person(s) doing or causing or directing the grading shall put into effect and maintain all Best Management Practices necessary to protect adjacent watercourses and public or private property from damage by erosion, flooding, or deposition of mud or debris originating from the site. Precautionary measures shall include provisions for properly designed erosion and sediment control measures, so that downstream properties are not affected by upstream erosion or sediment transport by storm water. If, in the opinion of the City Engineer, grading activities result in a need for post-construction runoff control measures, then such measures, (including Low Impact Development devices/systems), shall be required to be installed, as specified in the City of Salinas Storm Water Development Standards.

The standards reiterate the NPDES permit requirements and requirements for a SWPPP and implementing BMPs as required consistent with the City’s NPDES permit.

**10.3 THRESHOLDS OR STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of geology and soils, as it does on a whole series of...
additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on these subjects, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - strong seismic ground shaking;
  - seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction;
  - landslides; or
  - result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;

- Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse; or

- Be located on an expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the current Uniform Building Code, creating substantial risks to life or property.

The Appendix G checklist also inquires whether a proposed project would:

- Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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; and

- 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.

These questions are irrelevant to the proposed project because, as described in the Environmental Setting section above, there are no known active faults within or adjacent to the City and no related Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones. There is no potential for exposing people or structures to risk from earthquake fault rupture. No further discussion of this issue is necessary. Further, future development within the project site will be connected to the City’s municipal wastewater conveyance system. Septic systems are not required or permitted. No further discussion of this topic is required.
10.4 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS**

This section includes information and data regarding geology and soil issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

It is noteworthy that, in *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369, 377 (“CBIA”), the California Supreme Court held that “agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental conditions on a project’s future users or residents.” (Italics added.) For this reason, the court found the following language from CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2, subdivision (a), to be invalid: “[A]n EIR on a subdivision astride an active fault line should identify as a significant effect the seismic hazard to future occupants of the subdivision. The subdivision would have the effect of attracting people to the location and exposing them to the hazards found there.” (Id. at p. 390.)

The court did not hold that CEQA never requires consideration of the effects of existing environmental conditions on the future occupants or users of a proposed project. But the circumstances in which such conditions may be considered are narrow: “when a proposed project risks exacerbating those environmental hazards or conditions that already exist, an agency must analyze the potential impact of such hazards on future residents or users. In those specific instances, it is the project’s impact on the environment—and not the environment’s impact on the project—that compels an evaluation of how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions.” (Id. at pp. 377-378, italics added.) Because this exception to the general rule would presumably never apply to existing seismic hazards, the court concluded that this particular topic was outside the ambit of CEQA. (Id. at p. 390.) The court also recognized that, within the entirety of CEQA, certain very specific statutes require consideration of existing conditions on project occupants; and the court treated these statutes as exceptions to the general rule it announced. (Id. at pp. 391-392.)

In light of the CBIA decision, the City is not required by CEQA to address the extent to which existing seismic hazards – in the form of possible earthquakes, groundshaking, liquefaction, or subsidence – could affect future occupants or users of lands. Even so, the City believes that such issues are important from a public policy standpoint, and intends to address them under its police power, as opposed to under CEQA. (See Cal. Const., Art. XI, § 7; *Associated Home Builders, Inc. v. City of Livermore* (1976) 18 Cal.3d 582, 600-601; *Candid Enterprises, Inc. v. Grossmont Union High School District* (1985) 39 Cal.3d 878, 875; *DeVita v. County of Napa* (1995) 9 Cal.4th 763, 782.) Therefore, readers should treat the discussions below of impacts on future project residents and users as being beyond the scope of CEQA, and provided to the public on a voluntary basis in the interest of full disclosure.
Seismic Shaking

Future development within the project site may be subject to intense seismic shaking given its location in a seismically active region. Strong seismic shaking could pose a substantial risk to public safety and to improvements if buildings and infrastructure are not designed to meet seismic safety standards included in the California Building Code.

Policy S-4.1 of the general plan requires all new development to investigate potential seismic hazards that may be present within a proposed project area and to mitigate those hazards to ensure public safety. Potential seismic hazards within parcel 2 have already been evaluated by Terracon. As a standard condition of approval and pursuant to standards contained in the municipal code, the City will condition new development proposed within the remainder of the project site to prepare geotechnical analyses that identify site specific seismic and geologic conditions and hazards that must be addressed and mitigated consistent with requirements contained in the CBC. Issues to be addressed include subsurface soil conditions as they affect potential for ground failure (e.g. liquefaction) or compaction during a seismic shaking event, susceptibility to seismic shaking, potential for slope failure/lateral spreading, etc. This analysis will be assured through the City’s development review process as summarized in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. Implementation of project design measures needed to ensure compliance with the municipal code and CBC will be assured through the City’s building permit review process.

Liquefaction

While the geotechnical report found a low liquefaction potential within parcel 2, subsurface conditions, including groundwater depth and soil characteristics that affect potential for liquefaction could incrementally vary across the project site. As noted above, approvals of individual future projects within the project site will be conditioned to require site specific analysis of geologic conditions, including liquefaction hazards. If identified, such hazards would be mitigated through site specific engineering design approaches consistent with municipal code and CBC requirements discussed in the Regulatory Setting section above.

Slope Stability/Landslides

Slope stability conditions along the southern margin of parcel 4 have not been evaluated to date, as no development is currently proposed for this area of the project site. The extent to which the slope could be subject to failure due to the indirect effects of future development within the parcel (e.g. slope loading, erosion/saturation from storm water runoff, etc.) must be assessed in detail. The results may provide important site design/development design for future projects proposed within parcel 4.
Expansive Soils

A portion of parcel 2 was identified by Terracon as containing expansive soils. This factor is discussed in the geotechnical report as a basis for recommending that engineered fill be used to mitigate potential damage to improvements on that parcel. As noted above, the City will require that this potential soils hazard be investigated and addressed in site specific geotechnical investigations that will be required of future development within parcels 1, 3, and 4.

Soil Erosion

Soils within the project site are considered to have low to moderate erosion potential. All new development within the project site must incorporate soil erosion prevention best management practices pursuant to the City’s NPDES permit, SWDS, and Standard Specifications, Design Standards, and Standard Plans.

10.5 Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures

IMPACT Increased Risk to Public Safety and Structures from Seismic Shaking (Less than Significant)

Future development within the project site will likely be subject to significant seismic ground shaking in the event of an earthquake on one or more active and potentially active faults in the region. If site improvements and structures are not constructed to withstand expected shaking intensities, such facilities could be damaged and pose risks to public safety. This is a potentially significant impact.

Site specific seismic shaking hazards for individual projects are identified through project-specific geotechnical reports required by the City as a standard condition of approval to ensure that all new development is compliant with municipal code and CBC standards. All future development within the project site must be consistent with the seismic safety standards applicable to the seismic hazard zone in which the city is located. This standard condition of approval will be required as part of the City’s development review process for individual projects proposed within the project site as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. The geotechnical reports will identify whether seismic hazard conditions are present at each individual project site that could expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects. Should such conditions be identified, each geotechnical report will identify project design recommendations to be implemented to reduce the adverse effects. These measures ensure that potential public safety risks and risks to developed uses will be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.
IMPACT Development within Project Site Would Result in Risk to Public Safety and Structures from Seismically-Induced Liquefaction (Less than Significant)

The project site is located in an area designated as having low liquefaction susceptibility. Liquefaction risk within parcel 2 is demonstrated to be low. Public safety risks and risks from damage to new development from liquefaction will be less than significant, as liquefaction hazards for each future individual project within the project must be assessed and addressed through project-specific geotechnical studies as required per municipal code standards and required conformance with CBC requirements as described in the Regulatory Setting section above. This standard condition of approval will be required as part of the City’s development review process for individual projects proposed within the project site as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process.

IMPACT Public Safety and Structural Safety Risk from Unstable Slopes/Landslides within Parcel 4 (Less than Significant)

Existing slopes along the southern margin of parcel 4 could be unstable or become unstable if new development in this area is not designed to account for potential slope stability concerns. Slope failure could create risks for public safety and for the structural integrity/function of improvements placed in this area. The project-specific geotechnical analyses required as a condition of approval for all new development pursuant to municipal code standards and required conformance with California Building Code requirements as described in the Regulatory Setting section above will identify the extent to which slope failure is a hazard and identify site specific measures needed to avoid any identified hazards. The geotechnical analysis will be required as part of the City’s development review process for individual projects proposed within the project site as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. This will ensure that public safety risks and risks to developed uses will be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT Potential for Soil Erosion during Construction and Operation of New Development (Less than Significant)

Erosion of exposed soil surfaces during storm events or during construction and operation of future development is possible. Pursuant to the City’s NPDES, SWDS, and Standard Specifications, Design Standards, and Standard Plans requirements, new development must implement measures to reduce erosion (and indirect impacts on surface water quality) during construction and post-construction operations. The requirements are described in the Regulatory Setting section above, with significant detail on the NPDES requirements provided in the Regulatory Setting section of Section 13, Hydrology and Water Quality. Each of these regulations provides direction for on-site measures that must be implemented by individual development projects to reduce erosion. The SWPPP required pursuant to the NPDES permit identifies best management practices to prevent soil erosion during
construction. The SWDS identify a range of measures that will be incorporated into the design of projects to prevent erosion within downstream water bodies. The Standard Specifications, Design Standards, and Standard Plans require implementation of a range of measures during construction to prevent erosion of exposed soil surfaces and materials. The combination of these measures will substantially reduce the potential for soil erosion. Consistency of future development projects with these requirements will be assured as part of the City’s development review process for individual projects proposed within the project site as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. This will ensure that erosion potential is minimized to the extent that the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT Potential Impacts to Structures and Infrastructures from Expansive Soils (Less than Significant)

Soil expansiveness has been identified as an issue for development design within a portion of parcel 2. Future project-specific geotechnical analyses required by the City as a standard condition of approval will identify whether expansive soils are an issue for development design for projects proposed within the remainder of the project. Those analyses will determine if and what building and improvement design measures are needed to ensure that foundations and other improvements are designed consistent with the California Building Code to minimize risk. Conformance of future development with the performance standards contained in the California Building Code would be assured as part of the City’s development review process for individual projects proposed within the project site as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. Therefore, impacts from substantial risks to life or property from expansive soils would be reduced to less than significant.
Construction and operation of future development projects within the project site will generate greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) that contribute to global climate change. The primary sources of GHGs will be from combustion of fuel in vehicles and use of electricity generated by fossil fuels. These emissions will contribute to global warming. This section of the EIR includes discussion of the science of climate change, existing setting conditions, existing applicable policy and regulatory direction regarding climate change, the sources and projected volume of GHG emissions that would be generated by the proposed project, GHG emissions impacts in light of applicable thresholds of significance, and GHG reduction measures to lessen project impacts on climate change.

The localized generation of GHG emissions from the proposed project will contribute to climate change, an effect which is global in scale. The individual effect of the project on climate change cannot be reliably measured given the global scale of the effect. Therefore, the analysis in this section is inherently cumulative in nature. The analysis is conducted within the framework of the State of California’s climate change legislative and regulatory framework, which is designed to reduce GHG emissions in the state over time to levels that substantially reduce California’s contribution to global climate change.

Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- CalEEMod modeling included in the *Salinas Travel Center Draft Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment* (Illingworth & Rodkin 2017) included in Appendix C on the CD on the inside back cover of this EIR;

- *2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plans for Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties* (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments 2014; and


The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.
11.1 **GLOBAL, NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

**Climate Change Science**

The international scientific community has concluded with a high degree of confidence that human activities are causing an accelerated warming of the atmosphere. The resulting change in climate has serious global implications and consequently, human activities that contribute to climate change may have a potentially significant effect on the environment. In recent years, concern about climate change and its potential impacts has risen dramatically. That concern has translated into a range of international treaties and national and regional agreements aimed at diminishing the rate at which global warming is occurring. The federal government, under former President Obama, began to address concerns about climate change through a range of initiatives and regulatory actions. Many states and local agencies, private sector interests, and other public and private interests have also taken initiative to combat climate change. At the state level, California has taken a leadership role in addressing climate change, as evidenced by the programs outlined in the Regulatory Setting section below.

**Causes of Climate Change and Projected Local/State Effects**

The greenhouse effect naturally regulates the Earth’s temperature. However, human activity has increased the intensity of the greenhouse effect by releasing increasing amounts of greenhouse gasses GHGs into the atmosphere. GHGs can remain in the atmosphere for decades or even hundreds of thousands of years (depending on the particular GHG). The GHG emissions that are already in the atmosphere will continue to cause climate change for years to come, just as the warming being experienced now is the result of emissions produced in the past. Climatic changes are happening now and are projected to increase in frequency and severity before the benefits of GHG emission reductions will be realized. Increased concentrations of GHGs in the atmosphere result in increased air, surface, and ocean temperatures. Many of the effects and impacts of climate change stem from resulting changes in temperature and meteorological responses to those changes.

**Rising Temperatures**

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which includes more than 1,300 scientists from the United States and other countries, estimated that over the last century, global temperatures have increased by about 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change forecasts indicate that global temperatures can be expected to continue to rise between 2.5 and 10°F over the next century. According to the California Climate Adaptation Strategy, average state temperatures are currently predicted to increase
1.8 to 5.4°F by 2050 and 3.6 to 9°F by 2100. Some regional models show average temperatures in California increasing as much as 10.8°F. Salinas has already experienced a rise in average temperatures. Winters are now shorter and warmer than they were 30 years ago. Temperatures in California have already risen 1°F on average. According to Cal-Adapt, a climate change projection modeling tool developed by California Energy Commission, temperatures in Salinas have historically averaged about 56.9°F. Temperatures are projected to rise between 3.4 and 5.6°F by 2090, based on average low and high emissions scenarios.

While temperatures are relatively low in Salinas compared to other areas in the state, Salinas will still experience temperature changes related to climate change. Salinas has historically experienced four extreme heat days per year (over 91°F). In 2016, this number is projected to increase to six extreme heat days, but projections fluctuate on an annual basis. In 2017, 17 extreme heat days are projected. This number is projected at 75 extreme heat days per year by 2099. While in 2015 and nearly all previous years, the city had not experienced heat waves, up to six heat waves are projected for the year 2099 (Cal Adapt 2017).

**Precipitation Levels**

Precipitation levels are difficult to predict compared to other indicators of climate change. Annual rain and snowfall patterns vary widely from year to year, especially in California. Generally, higher temperatures increase evaporation and decrease snowfall, resulting in a drier climate. On average, projections show little change in total annual precipitation in California. Furthermore, among several models, precipitation projections do not show a consistent trend during the next century. The Mediterranean seasonal precipitation pattern is expected to continue, with most precipitation falling during winter from North Pacific storms. One of the four climate models projects slightly wetter winters, and another projects slightly drier winters with a 10 to 20 percent decrease in total annual precipitation. However, even modest changes would have a significant impact because California ecosystems are conditioned to historical precipitation levels and water resources are nearly fully utilized.

**Reduced Snowpack**

The Sierra Nevada snowpack acts as a large natural reservoir that stores water during the winter and releases it into rivers and reservoirs in the spring and summer. It is expected that there will be less snowfall in the Sierra Nevada and that the elevations at which snow falls will rise. Similarly, there will be less snowpack water storage to supply runoff water in the warmer months. It has already been documented that California’s snow line is rising. More precipitation is expected to fall as rain instead of snow, and the snow that does fall will melt earlier, reducing the Sierra Nevada spring snowpack. The spring snowpack in the Sierra Nevada decreased by 10 percent in the last century and may decrease up to 80 percent by 2100. It is estimated that for each 1.8°F increase in Earth’s average temperature, the Sierra snowpack will retreat 500 feet in elevation and an overall reduction of 25 to 40 percent
reduction in snowpack by 2050 is projected. The Sierra Nevada snowpack provides approximately 80 percent of California’s annual water supply. Although groundwater is the city’s water source, the rapid decrease in snowpack and spring melt poses a threat to groundwater resources in many parts of the state where rivers that recharge groundwater with melt water from the Sierra Nevada will have reduced groundwater recharge potential.

**Water Supply**

Climate change is expected to increase pressure on and competition for water resources, further exacerbating already stretched water supplies. Decreasing snowpack and spring stream flows and increasing demand for water from a growing population and hotter climate could lead to increasing water shortages. Water supplies are also at risk from rising sea levels. Competition for water between cities, farmers, and the environment is expected to increase.

Anticipated changes to source water conditions including more intense storm events, longer drought periods, reduced snowpack at lower elevations, and earlier spring runoff will likely impact the quality of the source waters. Changes in source water quantity and quality may impact the treatment necessary to produce potable drinking water. These changes could result in additional treatment processes required and increased costs for treated drinking water in order to avoid potential for human health risk via drinking water consumption.

**More Frequent and Extreme Storm Events**

Extreme weather is expected to become more common throughout California. More extreme storm events are expected to increase water runoff to streams and rivers during the winter months, heightening flood risks. Warmer ocean surface temperatures have caused warmer and wetter conditions in the Sierra Nevada, increasing flood risk. Strong winter storms may produce atmospheric rivers that transport large amounts of water vapor from the Pacific Ocean to the California coast. They often last for days and drop heavy rain or snow for days. Storms involving such atmospheric rivers occurred during the winter of 2016-2017. As the strength of these storms increase and transport increased amounts of precipitation, the risk of flooding is increased.

**Diminished Air Quality**

Climate change is expected to exacerbate air quality problems by increasing the frequency, duration, and intensity of conditions conducive to air pollution formation. Higher temperatures and increased ultraviolet radiation from climate change are expected to facilitate the chemical formation of more secondary air pollutants from ground-level sources. Conversely, decreased precipitation is expected to reduce the amount of particulates cleansed from the air.
Californians experience the worst quality air in the nation. More than 90 percent of California’s population lives in areas that have ozone or particulate matter levels above the State air quality standard. Incidents of wildfires in nearby foothills and mountain regions are expected to increase and further contribute to air quality problems.

**Environmental Protection**

Climate change effects will have broad impacts on local and regional ecosystems, habitats, and wildlife as average temperatures increase, precipitation patterns change, and more extreme weather events occur. Species have adapted to natural and more gradual environmental changes for millions of years. Species that cannot rapidly adapt are at risk of extinction. Some species could increase their habitat range. The risk of extinction could increase for many species. As temperatures increase, California vegetation is expected to change. Desert and grassland vegetation is projected to increase while forest vegetation is projected to generally decline. The natural cycle of plant flowering and pollination, as well as the temperature conditions necessary for a thriving locally adapted agriculture, may also be affected. Perennial crops, such as grapes, may take years to recover. Increased temperatures also provide a foothold for invasive species of weeds, insects, and animals.

**Social Vulnerability to Climate Change**

The impacts of climate change will not affect people equally. Some people are more likely to be impacted than others. People exposed to the most severe climate-related hazards are often those least able to cope with the associated impacts, due to their limited adaptive capacity. Climate change is expected to have a greater impact on larger populations living in poorer and developing countries with lower incomes that rely on natural resources and agricultural systems that will likely be affected by changing climates.

Certain groups in developed countries like the United States will also experience more impacts from climate change than others. People in rural areas are more likely to be affected by climate change impacts, such as droughts or severe storms, compared to their urban counterparts. However, certain groups living in cities will also be at higher risk than others. Salinas residents who are at greatest risk for the impacts described earlier in this section include children, the elderly, those with existing health problems (i.e., obese youth), the socially and/or economically disadvantaged (i.e., people of color, foreign born population, households speaking little English, low income households, unemployed, population without a high school diploma), those who are less mobile (i.e., living in group quarters, households without a vehicle), and those who work outdoors. Place of residence is another vulnerability indicator, as renters, households without air conditioning, households lacking access to grocery stores, households in treeless areas, and households on impervious land cover are also more vulnerable to climate change impacts.
Health Effects/Illness

As temperatures rise from global warming, the frequency and severity of heat waves will grow and increase the potential for bad air days, which can lead to increases in illness and death due to dehydration, heart attack, stroke, and respiratory disease. Additionally, dry conditions can lead to a greater number of wildfires producing smoke that puts people with asthma and respiratory conditions at risk of illness or death.

Higher temperatures and the increased frequency of heat waves are expected to significantly increase heat-related illnesses, such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke, while also exacerbating conditions associated with cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, diabetes, nervous system disorders, emphysema, and epilepsy. An increase of 10°F in average daily temperature is associated with a 2.3 percent increase in mortality. During heat waves mortality rates can increase to about nine percent. As temperatures in Salinas increase, vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, people with existing illnesses, and people who work outdoors will face the greatest risk of heat-related illness.

As climate change affects the temperature, humidity, and rainfall levels across California, some areas could become more suitable habitats for insects (especially mosquitoes), ticks, and mites that may carry diseases. Wetter regions are typically more susceptible to vector-borne diseases, especially human hantavirus cardiopulmonary syndrome, Lyme disease, and West Nile virus. Salinas is projected to have warmer winters with up to approximately 20 inches of rain under a low emissions scenario. This may attract vector populations (e.g., mosquito inhabited still-water pools may become more prolific). Floods can also increase the food supply available to rodents that may transmit Lyme disease, plague, tularemia, and rickettsial infections. In each of these cases the increase in vector-borne disease occurrences is expected to impact public health and increase demand on health care systems.

Flood Risk

Increased flood frequency and elevated flood risk are expected in California as a result of sea level rise, more intense storm events, and shifts in the seasonal timing of rainfall and snowpack runoff. Portions of Salinas are subject to flood hazards due to seasonal run-off along local creeks and flood flows in Carr Lake and the Reclamation Ditch. Flooding within Salinas could be exacerbated.

Greenhouse Gas Types

GHGs are emitted by natural processes and human activities. The human-produced GHGs most responsible for global warming and their relative contribution to it are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and chlorofluorocarbons. The contribution of these GHGs to the U.S. inventory of GHGs in 2013 is summarized in Table 11-1, GHG Types and Their Contribution to Global Warming.
Table 11-1  GHG Types and Their Contribution to Global Warming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greenhouse Gas</th>
<th>Percent of all GHG</th>
<th>Typical Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbon dioxide (CO2)</td>
<td>82 percent</td>
<td>Combustion of fuels, solid waste, wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methane (CH4)</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>Fuel production/combustion; livestock, decay of organic materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrous Oxide (N2O)</td>
<td>5 percent</td>
<td>Combustion of fuels, solid waste; agricultural and industrial processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)</td>
<td>3 percent</td>
<td>Industrial processes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Percentages reflect weighting for global warming potential.

Greenhouse Gas Global Warming Potentials

Each type of GHG has a different capacity to trap heat in the atmosphere and each type remains in the atmosphere for a particular length of time. The ability of a GHG to trap heat is measured by an index called the global warming potential (GWP) expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent. Carbon dioxide is considered the baseline GHG in this index and has a global warming potential of one. The GHG volume produced by a particular source is often expressed in terms of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e). Carbon dioxide equivalent describes how much global warming a given type of GHG will cause, with the global warming potential of CO2 as the base reference. Carbon dioxide equivalent is useful because it allows comparisons of the impact from many different GHGs, such as methane, perfluorocarbons, or nitrous oxide. If a project is a source of several types of GHGs, their individual global warming potential can be standardized and expressed in terms of CO2e.

Methane has a global warming potential of 21 times that of carbon dioxide, and nitrous oxide has a global warming potential of 310 times that of CO2. The families of chlorofluorocarbons, hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons have a substantially greater global warming potential than other GHGs, generally ranging from approximately 1,300 to over 10,000 times that of CO2. See Table 11-2, GHG Global Warming Potentials, for reference on the GWP of various GHGs. While CO2 represents the vast majority of the total volume of GHGs released into the atmosphere, the release of even small quantities of other types of GHGs can be significant for their contribution to climate change.

Inventories of Greenhouse Gases

California GHG Emissions Inventory

California is a substantial contributor of global greenhouse gases. Based on CARB’s most recent state GHG inventory, a net of about 441.5 million tons of CO2e were generated in 2014 (California Air Resources Board 2017). In 2014, about 37 percent of all GHG gases emitted in the state came from the transportation sector. Industrial uses and electric power generation (in state generation and out of state generation for imported electricity) were the second and
third largest categories at about 24 percent and 20 percent, respectively. The commercial and residential use sectors combined to generate about 11 percent of the 2013 emissions, while the agricultural sector contributed about eight percent.

Table 11-2  GHG Global Warming Potentials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GHG</th>
<th>Atmospheric Lifetime (Years)</th>
<th>Global Warming Potential (100-Year Time Horizon)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbon Dioxide CO₂</td>
<td>50-200</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methane CH₄</td>
<td>12 (+/- 3)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrous Oxide N₂O</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HFC-23</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>11,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HFC-134a</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HFC-152a</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFC Tetrafluoromethane CF₄</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>6,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFC Hexafluoropropene C₃F₆</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>9,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulfur Hexafluoride SF₆</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>23,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


City of Salinas GHG Emissions Inventory

In association with Local Governments for Sustainability, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) has assisted a number of local communities in the preparation of GHG emissions baseline inventories. The City of Salinas participated in this effort. In 2011 AMBAG produced the City of Salinas Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory 2005 Baseline Report. The baseline report provides data on the city’s 2005 emissions baseline volumes generated by community activities (i.e. land use development) and by government operations. Total 2005 GHG emissions were estimated at approximately 804,444 metric tons CO₂e. Emissions from commercial and industrial development were estimated at 271,143 metric tons CO₂e. The commercial and industrial emissions include only those related to the consumption of electricity and natural gas and do not include emissions from associated transportation or waste disposal/management.

Projections of emissions volumes in 2020 are also made, including emissions from new commercial and industrial development within Salinas as forecast in the general plan. Total emissions are estimated at approximately 900,103 metric tons CO₂e, an increase of 12 percent over 2005 baseline volumes. Emissions from commercial and industrial development are projected at 299,223 metric tons CO₂e, a 10 percent increase over 2005 baseline volumes.
11.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Federal, state, and regional policies and regulations pertaining to climate change are summarized below. These provide context for how climate change is being addressed and to identify policy and regulatory actions whose implementation would lessen the contribution of the proposed project to climate change. The federal government has taken significant regulatory steps toward addressing climate change. Generally, California policy and regulations are as or more comprehensive than federal actions; therefore, this regulatory section focuses on state activity. A number of policies and programs are included in the general plan are directly or indirectly targeted to reduce GHGs.

State policy and regulatory guidance has grown out of its effort to meet goals under Executive Order S-03-05, the landmark Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Global Warming Solutions passed in 2006, and Senate Bill 32 passed in 2016. Numerous additional legislative acts and executive orders provide further GHG emissions reduction guidance and have reinforced that CEQA is the appropriate evaluation tool for assessing climate change impacts of new development.

Federal

Climate Change Action Plan

In October 1993, President Clinton announced the Climate Change Action Plan, which had a goal of returning GHG emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000. This was to be accomplished through 50 initiatives that relied on innovative voluntary partnerships between the private sector and government aimed at producing cost-effective reductions in GHG emissions. On March 21, 1994, the U.S. joined a number of countries around the world in signing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Under the Convention, governments agreed to gather and share information on GHG emissions, national policies, and best practices; launch national strategies for addressing GHG emissions and adapting to expected impacts, including the provision of financial and technological support to developing countries; and cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of global climate change.

In June 2013, the Executive Office of the President released President Obama’s Climate Action Plan. The Climate Action Plan has three key pillars: cut GHG pollution in America, prepare the United States for the impacts of climate change, and lead international efforts to combat global climate change and prepare for its impacts. The Climate Action Plan was prepared as a blueprint for national and international action, and contains new steps to achieve the stated goals.
Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for GHGs

On April 2, 2007, in the court case of *Massachusetts et al. vs. the USEPA et al.* (549 U.S. 497), the U.S. Supreme Court found that GHGs are air pollutants covered by the federal Clean Air Act (42 USC §§ 7401-7671q). The Supreme Court held that the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency must determine whether or not emissions of GHGs from new motor vehicles cause or contribute to air pollution, which may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health or welfare, or whether the science is too uncertain to make a reasoned decision. In making these decisions, the Administrator is required to follow the language of Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. On December 7, 2009, the Administrator signed two distinct findings regarding GHGs under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act:

- Endangerment Finding: The Administrator finds that the current and projected concentrations of the six key well-mixed GHGs (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride) in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations.

- Cause or Contribute Finding: The Administrator finds that the combined emissions of these well-mixed GHGs from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the GHG pollution, which threatens public health and welfare.

These findings do not themselves impose any requirements on industry or other entities. However, this action was a prerequisite for implementing GHG emission standards for vehicles. In collaboration with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and CARB, the USEPA developed emission standards for light-duty vehicles (2012-2025 model years), and heavy-duty vehicles (2014-2027 model years).

Mandatory Reporting of GHGs Rule

On September 22, 2009, the USEPA issued a final rule for the mandatory reporting of GHG data and other relevant information from large sources in the United States (Code of Federal Regulations Title 40, Part 98). This comprehensive, nationwide emissions data is intended to provide a better understanding of the sources of GHGs and guide development of policies and programs to reduce emissions. The mandatory reporting rule applies to direct GHG emitting sources; suppliers of fossil fuel, industrial gas, and other products that would result in GHG emissions if released, combusted, or oxidized; and facilities that inject carbon dioxide underground for geologic sequestration or other reasons. In general, facilities that emit 25,000 MTCO2e or more per year of GHGs are required to submit annual reports to the USEPA.
Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards

First enacted by Congress in 1975, the purpose of the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards is to reduce energy consumption by increasing the fuel economy of passenger cars and light trucks. On April 1, 2010, the NHTSA and USEPA issued a joint final rule establishing a new national program to regulate passenger cars and light trucks in order to improve fuel economy and reduce GHG emissions. According to the latest update, issued on July 18, 2016, the NHTSA, EPA and CARB increased CAFE standards for passenger cars and light trucks from an average fuel economy of 34.1 miles per gallon by model year 2016 to 38.3 mile per gallon by model year 2021 and 46.3 miles per gallon by model year 2025. Together with the USEPA’s standards for GHG emissions, which also enable manufacturers to achieve compliance by improving the air conditioners of their vehicles, the national program overall is expected to result in improvement levels equivalent to 50.8 miles per gallon.

Clean Power Plan

On August 3, 2015, the U.S. EPA issued the Clean Power Plan, which will cut GHG emissions from existing power plants. The Clean Power Plan establishes interim and final carbon dioxide emission performance rates for two types of electric generating units—steam electric and natural gas fired power plants—under Section 111(d) of the Clean Air Act. The Clean Power Plan also establishes state-specific interim and final goals for each state, based on these limits and each state’s mix of power plants.

State

The California Legislature has enacted a series of statutes in recent years addressing the need to reduce GHG emissions all across the state. These statutes can be categorized into four broad categories: (i) statutes setting numerical statewide targets for GHG reductions, and authorizing CARB to enact regulations to achieve such targets; (ii) statutes setting separate targets for increasing the use of renewable energy for the generation of electricity throughout the state; (iii) statutes addressing the carbon intensity of vehicle fuels, which prompted the adoption of regulations by CARB; and (iv) statutes intended to facilitate land use planning consistent with statewide climate objectives. The discussion below will address each of these key sets of statutes, as well as CARB “Scoping Plans” intended to achieve GHG reductions under the first set of statutes and recent building code requirements intended to reduce energy consumption.

Statutes Setting Statewide GHG Reduction Targets

Assembly Bill 32 (Global Warming Solutions Act)

In September 2006, the California State Legislature enacted the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Health & Saf. Code, § 38500 et seq.), also known as Assembly Bill
(AB) 32 (Stats. 2006, ch. 488). AB 32 establishes regulatory, reporting, and market mechanisms to achieve quantifiable reductions in GHG emissions and a cap on statewide GHG emissions. AB 32 requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. This reduction will be accomplished through an enforceable statewide cap on GHG emissions that was phased in starting in 2012. To effectively implement the cap, AB 32 directs the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce statewide GHG emissions from stationary sources.

**Senate Bill 32**

Effective January 1, 2017, SB 32 (Stats. 2016, ch. 249) added a new section 38566 to the Health and Safety Code. It provides that “[i]n adopting rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective greenhouse gas emissions reductions authorized by [Division 25.5 of the Health and Safety Code], [CARB] shall ensure that statewide greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to at least 40 percent below the statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit no later than December 31, 2030.” In other words, SB 32 requires California, by the year 2030, to reduce its statewide GHG emissions so that they are 40 percent below those that occurred in 1990.

Between AB 32 (2006) and SB 32 (2016), the Legislature has codified some of the ambitious GHG reduction targets included within certain high-profile Executive Orders issued by the last two Governors. The 2020 statewide GHG reduction target in AB 32 was consistent with the second of three statewide emissions reduction targets set forth in former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger’s 2005 Executive Order known as S-3-05, which is expressly mentioned in AB 32. (See Health & Saf. Code, § 38501, subd. (i).) That Executive Branch document included the following GHG emission reduction targets: by 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels; by 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; by 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels. To meet the targets, the Governor directed several state agencies to cooperate in the development of a climate action plan. The Secretary of Cal-EPA leads the Climate Action Team, whose goal is to implement global warming emission reduction programs identified in the Climate Action Plan and to report on the progress made toward meeting the emission reduction targets established in the executive order.

In 2015, Governor Brown issued another Executive Order, B-30-15, which created a “new interim statewide greenhouse gas emission reduction target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 is established in order to ensure California meets its target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.” SB 32 codified this target.

Notably, the Legislature has not yet set a 2050 target in the manner done for 2020 and 2030 through AB 32 and SB 32, though references to a 2050 target can be found in statutes outside the Health and Safety Code. In the 2015 legislative session, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 350 (SB 350) (Stats. 2015, ch. 547) (discussed in more detail below). This legislation added to
the Public Utilities Code language that essentially puts into statute the 2050 GHG reduction
target already identified in Executive Order S-3-05, albeit in the limited context of new state
policies (i) increasing the overall share of electricity that must be produced through
renewable energy sources and (ii) directing certain state agencies to begin planning for the
widespread electrification of the California vehicle fleet. Section 740.12(a)(1)(D) of the Public
Utilities Code now states that “[t]he Legislature finds and declares [that] … [r]educing
emissions of [GHGs] to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and to 80 percent below 1990
levels by 2050 will require widespread transportation electrification.” Furthermore, Section
740.12(b) now states that the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC), in consultation
with CARB and the California Energy Commission (CEC), must “direct electrical
corporations to file applications for programs and investments to accelerate widespread
transportation electrification to reduce dependence on petroleum, meet air quality
standards, … and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to 40 percent below 1990 levels by
2030 and to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.”

**Statutes Setting Targets for the Use of Renewable Energy for the
Generation of Electricity**

**California Renewables Portfolio Standard**

In September 2002, the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 1078 (Stats. 2002, ch. 516), which
established the Renewables Portfolio Standard program, requiring retail sellers of electricity,
including electrical corporations, community choice aggregators, and electric service
providers, to purchase a specified minimum percentage of electricity generated by eligible
renewable energy resources such as wind, solar, geothermal, small hydroelectric, biomass,
aerobic digestion, and landfill gas. (See Pub. Utilities Code, § 399.11 et seq. [subsequently
amended].) The legislation set a target by which 20 percent of the State’s electricity would be
generated by renewable sources. (Pub. Utility Code, § 399.11, subd (a) [subsequently
amended].) As described in the Legislative Counsel’s Digest, Senate Bill 1078 required
“[e]ach electrical corporation … to increase its total procurement of eligible renewable
energy resources by at least one percent per year so that 20 percent of its retail sales are
procured from eligible renewable energy resources. If an electrical corporation fails to
procure sufficient eligible renewable energy resources in a given year to meet an annual
target, the electrical corporation would be required to procure additional eligible renewable
resources in subsequent years to compensate for the shortfall, if funds are made available as
described. An electrical corporation with at least 20 percent of retail sales procured from
eligible renewable energy resources in any year would not be required to increase its
procurement in the following year.”

In September 2006, the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 107 (Stats. 2006, ch. 464), which
modified the Renewables Portfolio Standard to require that at least 20 percent of electricity
retail sales be served by renewable energy resources by year 2010. (Pub. Utility Code, §
399.11, subd (a) [subsequently amended].)
In April 2011, the Legislature, in a special session, enacted Senate Bill X1-2 (Stats. 2011, 1st Ex. Sess., ch. 1), which set even more aggressive statutory targets for renewable electricity, culminating in the requirement that 33 percent of the state’s electricity come from renewables by 2020. This legislation applies to all electricity retailers in the state, including publicly owned utilities, investor-owned utilities, electricity service providers, and community choice aggregators. All of these entities must meet renewable energy goals of 20 percent of retail sales from renewables by the end of 2013, 25 percent by the end of 2016, and 33 percent by the end of 2020. (See Pub. Utility Code, § 399.11 et seq. [subsequently amended].)

Finally, in 2015, the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 350 (SB 350) (Stats. 2015, ch. 547) (discussed above). It increases the Renewable Portfolio Standard to require 50 percent of electricity generated to be from renewables by 2030. (Pub. Utility Code, § 399.11, subd (a); see also § 399.30, subd. (c)(2).) Of equal significance, Senate Bill 350 also embodies a policy encouraging a substantial increase in the use of electric vehicles. As noted earlier, Section 740.12(b) of the Public Utilities Code now states that the PUC, in consultation with CARB and the CEC, must “direct electrical corporations to file applications for programs and investments to accelerate widespread transportation electrification to reduce dependence on petroleum, meet air quality standards, ... and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.”

In March 2012, Governor Brown had issued an Executive Order, B-16-12, which embodied a similar vision of a future in which zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) will play a big part in helping the state meet its GHG reduction targets. Executive Order B-16-12 directed state government to accelerate the market for in California through fleet replacement and electric vehicle infrastructure. The Executive Order set the following targets:

- By 2015, all major cities in California will have adequate infrastructure and be “ZEV ready”;
- By 2020, the state will have established adequate infrastructure to support 1 million ZEVs in California;
- By 2025, there will be 1.5 million ZEVs on the road in California; and
- By 2050, virtually all personal transportation in the State will be based on ZEVs, and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector will be reduced by 80 percent below 1990 levels.

In sum, California has set a statutory goal of requiring that, by the year 2030, fully half of the electricity generated in California should be from renewable sources, with increased generation capacity intended to sufficient to allow the mass conversion of the statewide vehicle fleet from petroleum-fueled vehicles to electrical vehicles and/or other ZEVs. The Legislature is thus looking to California drivers to buy electric cars, powered by green
energy, to help the state meet its aggressive statutory goal, created by SB 32, of reducing statewide GHG emissions by 2030 to 40 percent below 1990 levels. Another key prong to this strategy is to make petroleum-based fuels less carbon intensive. A number of statutes in recent years have addressed that strategy. These are discussed immediately below.

Statutes and CARB Regulations Addressing the Carbon Intensity of Petroleum-based Transportation Fuels

Assembly Bill 1493, Pavley Clean Cars Standards

In July 2002, the Legislature enacted Assembly Bill 1493 (“Pavley Bill”) (Stats. 2002, ch. 200), which directed the CARB to develop and adopt regulations that achieve the maximum feasible reduction of GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks beginning with model year 2009. (See Health & Saf. Code, § 43018.5.) In September 2004, pursuant to this directive, CARB approved regulations to reduce GHG emissions from new motor vehicles beginning with the 2009 model year. These regulations created what are commonly known as the “Pavley standards.” In September 2009, CARB adopted amendments to the Pavley standards to reduce GHG emissions from new motor vehicles through the 2016 model year. These regulations created what are commonly known as the “Pavley II standards.” (See California Code of Regulations, Title 13, §§ 1900, 1961, and 1961.1 et seq.)

In January 2012, CARB adopted an Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) program aimed at reducing both smog-causing pollutants and GHG emissions for vehicles model years 2017-2025. This historic program, developed in coordination with the USEPA and NHTSA, combined the control of smog-causing (criteria) pollutants and GHG emissions into a single coordinated set of requirements for model years 2015 through 2025. The regulations focus on substantially increasing the number of plug-in hybrid cars and zero-emission vehicles in the vehicle fleet and on making fuels such as electricity and hydrogen readily available for these vehicle technologies. The components of the ACC program are the Low-Emission Vehicle (LEV) regulations that reduce criteria pollutants and GHG emissions from light- and medium-duty vehicles, and the Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) regulation, which requires manufacturers to produce an increasing number of pure ZEVs (meaning battery electric and fuel cell electric vehicles), with provisions to also produce plug-in hybrid electric vehicles in the 2018 through 2025 model years. (See California Code of Regulations, Title 13, §§ 1900, 1961, 1961.1, 1961.2, 1961.3, 1965, 1968.2, 1968.5, 1976, 1978, 2037, 2038, 2062, 2112, 2139, 2140, 2145, 2147, 2235, and 2317 et seq.)

It is expected that the Pavley regulations will reduce GHG emissions from California passenger vehicles by about 34 percent below 2016 levels by 2025, all while improving fuel efficiency and reducing motorists’ costs.
11.0   Greenhouse Gases

**Cap and Trade Program**

On October 20, 2011, in a related action, CARB adopted the final cap-and-trade program for California. (See California Code of Regulations, Title 17, §§ 95801-96022.) The California cap-and-trade program will create a market-based system with an overall emissions limit for affected sectors. The program is intended to regulate more than 85 percent of California’s emissions and staggers compliance requirements according to the following schedule: (1) electricity generation and large industrial sources (2012); (2) fuel combustion and transportation (2015).

According to 2012 guidance published by CARB, “[t]he Cap-and-Trade Program will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from major sources (covered entities) by setting a firm cap on statewide GHG emissions while employing market mechanisms to cost-effectively achieve the emission-reduction goals. The statewide cap for GHG emissions from major sources, which is measured in metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e), will commence in 2013 and decline over time, achieving GHG emission reductions throughout the program’s duration. Each covered entity will be required to surrender one permit to emit (the majority of which will be allowances, entities are also allowed to use a limited number of CARB offset credits) for each ton of GHG emissions they emit. Some covered entities will be allocated some allowances and will be able to buy additional allowances at auction, purchase allowances from others, or purchase offset credits.”

The guidance goes on to say that “[s]tarting in 2012, major GHG-emitting sources, such as electricity generation (including imports), and large stationary sources (e.g., refineries, cement production facilities, oil and gas production facilities, glass manufacturing facilities, and food processing plants) that emit more than 25,000 MTCO2e per year will have to comply with the Cap-and-Trade Program. The program expands in 2015 to include fuel distributors (natural gas and propane fuel providers and transportation fuel providers) to address emissions from transportation fuels, and from combustion of other fossil fuels not directly covered at large sources in the program’s initial phase.” In early April 2017, the Third District Court of Appeal upheld the lawfulness of the cap-and-trade program as a “fee” rather than a “tax.” (See California Chamber of Commerce et al. v. State Air Resources Board et al. (2017) 10 Cal.App.5th 604.)

In early 2017, the Legislature enacted, and the Governor signed, AB 398 (Stats. 2017, ch. 135), which extended the life of the existing Cap and Trade Program through December 2030.

**Statutes Intended to Facilitate Land Use Planning Consistent with Statewide Climate Objectives**

**California Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities Strategy)**

This 2008 legislation built on AB 32 by setting forth a mechanism for coordinating land use and transportation on a regional level for the purpose of reducing GHGs. The focus is to
reduce miles traveled by passenger vehicles and light trucks. CARB is required to set GHG reduction targets for each metropolitan region for the years 2020 and 2035. Each of California’s metropolitan planning organizations then prepares a sustainable communities strategy that demonstrates how the region will meet its GHG reduction target through integrated land use, housing, and transportation planning. Once adopted by the metropolitan planning organizations, the sustainable communities strategy is to be incorporated into that region’s federally enforceable regional transportation plan. If a metropolitan planning organization is unable to meet the targets through the sustainable communities strategy, then an alternative planning strategy must be developed which demonstrates how targets could be achieved, even if meeting the targets is deemed to be infeasible.

AMBAG is the metropolitan planning organization responsible for preparing the SCS. The current SCS is embedded in AMBAG’s 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plans for Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments 2014) (MTP/SCS). The SCS sets forth a forecasted development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies, is intended to reduce GHG emissions from passenger vehicles and light duty trucks to achieve the regional GHG reduction targets set by CARB.

CARB set targets for the AMBAG region as “not to exceed 2005 emissions levels” by 2020 and a five percent reduction from 2005 levels by 2035. AMBAG adopted these standards in September 2010. These targets applied to the AMBAG region as a whole for all on-road light duty trucks and passenger vehicles emissions, and not to individual cities or sub-regions. Therefore, AMBAG, through the 2035 MTP/SCS, must maintain or reduce these levels to meet the 2020 target and reduce these levels to meet the 2035 targets. Updates to the 2010 standards are included in CARB’s 2017 Scoping Plan as discussed below under the discussion of that plan.

SB 375 specifically states that local governments retain their autonomy to plan local general plan policies and land uses. The 2035 MTP/SCS provides a regional policy foundation that local governments may build upon, if they so choose. The 2035 MTP/SCS includes and accommodates the quantitative growth projections for the region. In addition, the 2035 MTP/SCS EIR lays the groundwork for the streamlined CEQA review of qualifying development projects. Such projects are defined as Transit Priority Projects that are located within an Opportunity Area that meet specific criteria, including:

- Consistent with the SCS;
- Contains at least 50 percent residential use;
Proposed to be developed at a minimum 20 dwelling units per acre; and

Located within one half mile of a major transit stop or high quality transit corridor that is included in the MTP/SCS.

The proposed project does not include residential uses. Therefore, future projects proposed within the project site would not be eligible for streamlined CEQA review.

Climate Change Scoping Plans

AB 32 Scoping Plan

In December 2008, CARB adopted the Climate Change Scoping Plan, which contains the main strategies California will implement to achieve reduction of approximately 118 million metric tons (MMT) CO₂e, or approximately 22 percent from the state’s projected 2020 emission level of 545 MMT of CO₂e under a business-as-usual scenario. This is a reduction of 47 MMT CO₂e, or almost 10 percent, from 2008 emissions. CARB’s original 2020 projection was 596 MMT CO₂e, but this revised 2020 projection takes into account the economic downturn that occurred in 2008. The Scoping Plan also includes CARB recommended GHG reductions for each emissions sector of the state GHG inventory. CARB estimates the largest reductions in GHG emissions would be by implementing the following measures and standards:

- improved emissions standards for light-duty vehicles (26.1 MMT CO₂e);
- the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (15.0 MMT CO₂e);
- energy efficiency measures in buildings and appliances (11.9 MMT CO₂e); and
- renewable portfolio and electricity standards for electricity production (23.4 MMT CO₂e).

In 2011, CARB adopted a cap-and-trade regulation. The cap-and-trade program covers major sources of GHG emissions in the state such as refineries, power plants, industrial facilities, and transportation fuels. The cap-and-trade program includes an enforceable emissions cap that will decline over time. The state distributes allowances, which are tradable permits, equal to the emissions allowed under the cap. Sources under the cap are required to surrender allowances and offsets equal to their emissions at the end of each compliance period. Enforceable compliance obligations started in 2013. The program applies to facilities that comprise 85 percent of the states GHG emissions.

With regard to land use planning, the Scoping Plan expects that reductions of approximately 3.0 MMT CO₂e will be achieved through implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 375, which is discussed further below.
2014 Scoping Plan Update

In response to comments on the 2008 Scoping Plan, and AB 32’s requirement to update the Scoping Plan every five years, CARB revised and reapproved the Scoping Plan, and prepared the First Update to the 2008 Scoping Plan in 2014 (2014 Scoping Plan). The 2014 Scoping Plan contains the main strategies California will implement to achieve a reduction of 80 MMT of CO2e emissions, or approximately 16 percent, from the state’s projected 2020 emission level of 507 MMT of CO2e under the business-as-usual scenario defined in the 2014 Scoping Plan. The 2014 Scoping Plan also includes a breakdown of the amount of GHG reductions CARB recommends for each emissions sector of the state’s GHG inventory. Several strategies to reduce GHG emissions are included: the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, the Pavley Rule, the ACC program, the Renewable Portfolio Standard, and the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

2017 Scoping Plan

With the passage of SB 32, the Legislature also passed companion legislation AB 197, which provides additional direction for developing the scoping plan. In response to these two pieces of legislation, CARB adopted an updated Scoping Plan in December 2017. The document represents a second update to the scoping plan to reflect the 2030 target of reducing statewide GHG emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels codified by SB 32. The GHG reduction strategies in the plan that CARB will implement to meet the target include:

- SB 350 - achieve 50 percent Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) by 2030 and doubling of energy efficiency savings by 2030;
- Low Carbon Fuel Standard - increased stringency (reducing carbon intensity 18 percent by 2030, up from 10 percent in 2020);
- Mobile Source Strategy (Cleaner Technology and Fuels Scenario) - maintaining existing GHG standards for light- and heavy-duty vehicles, put 4.2 million zero-emission vehicles on the roads, and increase zero-emission buses, delivery and other trucks;
- Sustainable Freight Action Plan - improve freight system efficiency, maximize use of near-zero emission vehicles and equipment powered by renewable energy, and deploy over 100,000 zero-emission trucks and equipment by 2030;
- Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy - reduce emissions of methane and hydrofluorocarbons 40 percent below 2013 levels by 2030 and reduce emissions of black carbon 50 percent below 2013 levels by 2030;
- SB 375 Sustainable Communities Strategies - increased stringency of 2035 targets;
- Post-2020 Cap-and-Trade Program - declining caps, continued linkage with Québec, and linkage to Ontario, Canada;
20 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the refinery sector; and
By 2018, develop an Integrated Natural and Working Lands Action Plan to secure California’s land base as a net carbon sink.

**Building Code Requirements Intended to Reduce GHG Emissions**

*California Energy Code*

The California Energy Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6), which is incorporated into the Building Energy Efficiency Standards, was first established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California’s energy consumption. Although these standards were not originally intended to reduce GHG emissions, increased energy efficiency results in decreased GHG emissions because energy efficient buildings require less electricity and thus less consumption of fossil fuels, which emit GHGs. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The current 2008 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, commonly referred to as the “Title 24” standards, include changes from the previous standards that were adopted, to do the following:

- Provide California with an adequate, reasonably priced, and environmentally sound supply of energy.
- Respond to Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, which mandates that California must reduce its GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.
- Pursue California energy policy that energy efficiency is the resource of first choice for meeting California’s energy needs.
- Act on the California Energy Commission’s Integrated Energy Policy Report, which finds that standards are the most cost effective means to achieve energy efficiency, states an expectation that the Building Energy Efficiency Standards will continue to be upgraded over time to reduce electricity and peak demand, and recognizes the role of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards in reducing energy related to meeting California’s water needs and in reducing GHG emissions.
- Meet the West Coast Governors’ Global Warming Initiative commitment to include aggressive energy efficiency measures into updates of state building codes.
- Meet Executive Order S-20-04, the Green Building Initiative, to improve the energy efficiency of non-residential buildings through aggressive standards.

The 2016 Title 24 standards, which became effective on January 1, 2017, are estimated to result in new buildings that use 28 percent less energy for lighting, heating, cooling, ventilation, and water heating than the previous 2013 Standards. The 2016 updates to Title 24 are focused on moving closer to zero net energy homes by getting energy loads down so that...
remaining electricity demand can be met by solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. The 2016 Title 24 standards require “solar-ready roofs” to accommodate future installations of solar PV panels. Additionally, the 2016 Title 24 standards will save millions of gallons of water per year.

**California Green Building Standards Code**

The purpose of the California Green Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 11) is to improve public health and safety and to promote the general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: 1) planning and design; 2) energy efficiency; 3) water efficiency and conservation; 4) material conservation and resource efficiency; and 5) environmental quality. The California Green Building Standards, which became effective on January 1, 2011, instituted mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up new construction of commercial, low-rise residential uses, and state-owned buildings, as well as schools and hospitals. The mandatory standards require the following:

- 20 percent mandatory reduction in indoor water use relative to baseline levels;
- 50 percent construction/demolition waste must be diverted from landfills;
- Mandatory inspections of energy systems to ensure optimal working efficiency; and
- Low-pollutant emitting exterior and interior finish materials such as paints, carpets, vinyl flooring, and particle boards.

The voluntary standards require the following:

- **Tier I:** 15 percent improvement in energy requirements, stricter water conservation requirements for specific fixtures, 65 percent reduction in construction waste, 10 percent recycled content, 20 percent permeable paving, 20 percent cement reduction, and cool/solar reflective roof.
- **Tier II:** 30 percent improvement in energy requirements, stricter water conservation requirements for specific fixtures, 75 percent reduction in construction waste, 15 percent recycled content, 30 percent permeable paving, 30 percent cement reduction, and cool/solar reflective roof.

**California Supreme Court Decisions**

*The “Newhall Ranch” Case*

On November 30, 2015, the California Supreme Court released its opinion on *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 204 (hereafter referred to as the Newhall Ranch Case).
Because of the importance of the Supreme Court as the top body within the California Judiciary, and because of the relative lack of judicial guidance regarding how GHG issues should be addressed in CEQA documents, the opinion provides very important legal guidance to agencies charged with preparing EIRs.

The case involved a challenge to an EIR prepared by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the Newhall Ranch development project in Los Angeles County, which consists of approximately 20,000 dwelling units as well as commercial and business uses, schools, golf courses, parks and other community facilities in the City of Santa Clarita.

In relation to GHG analysis, the Newhall Ranch Case illustrates the difficulty of complying with statewide GHG reduction targets at the local level using CEQA to determine whether an individual project’s GHG emissions will create a significant environmental impact triggering an EIR, mitigation, and/or statement of overriding consideration. The EIR utilized compliance with AB 32’s GHG reduction goals as a threshold of significance and modelled its analysis on the CARB’s business-as-usual (BAU) emissions projections from the 2008 Scoping Plan. The EIR quantified the project’s annual emissions at buildout and projected emissions in 2020 under a BAU scenario, in which no additional regulatory actions were taken to reduce emissions. Since the Scoping Plan determined a reduction of 29 percent from BAU was needed to meet AB 32’s 2020 reduction goal, the EIR concluded that the project would have a less-than-significant impact because the project’s annual GHG emissions were projected to be 31 percent below its BAU estimate.

The Supreme Court concluded that the threshold of significance used by the EIR was permissible; however, the BAU analysis lacked substantial evidence to demonstrate that the required percentage reduction from BAU is the same for an individual project as for the entire state. The court expressed skepticism that a percentage reduction goal applicable to the state as a whole would apply without change to an individual development project, regardless of its size or location. Therefore, the Supreme Court determined that the EIR’s GHG analysis was not sufficient to support the conclusion that GHG impacts would be less than significant.

In addition, the Supreme Court provided the following guidance regarding potential alternative approaches to GHG impact assessment at the project level for lead agencies:

1. The lead agency determination of what level of GHG emission reduction from business-as-usual projection that a new land development at the proposed location would need to achieve to comply with statewide goals upon examination of data behind the Scoping Plan’s business-as-usual emission projections. The lead agency must provide substantial evidence and account for the disconnect between the Scoping Plan, which dealt with the state as a whole, and an analysis of an individual project’s land use emissions (the same issues with CEQA compliance addressed in this case);
2. The lead agency may use a project’s compliance with performance based standards – such as high building energy efficiency – adopted to fulfill a statewide plan to reduce or mitigate GHG emissions to assess consistency with AB 32 to the extent that the project features comply with or exceed the regulation (See Guidelines Section 15064.4(a)(2), (b)(3); see also Guidelines Section 15064(h)(3)). A significance analysis would then need to account for the additional GHG emissions – such as transportation emissions – beyond the regulated activity. Transportation emissions are in part a function of the location, size, and density or intensity of a project, and thus can be affected by local governments’ land use decision making. Additionally, the lead agency may use a programmatic effort including a general plan, long range development plan, or a separate plan to reduce GHG emissions (such as Climate Action Plan or a SB 375 metropolitan regional transportation impact Sustainable Communities Strategy) that accounts for specific geographical GHG emission reductions to streamline or tier project level CEQA analysis pursuant to Guidelines 15183.5(a)-(b) for land use and Public Resources Code Section 21155.2 and 21159.28 and Guidelines Section 15183.5(c) for transportation.

3. The lead agency may rely on existing numerical thresholds of significance for GHG emissions (such as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District’s proposed threshold of significance of 1,100 MT CO2E in annual emission for CEQA GHG emission analysis on new land use projects). The use of a numerical value provides what is “normally” considered significant but does not relieve a lead agency from independently determining the significance of the impact for the individual project (See Guidelines Section 15064.7).

The SANDAG Case

In Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Association of Governments (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497 (SANDAG), the Supreme Court addressed the extent to which, if any, an EIR for a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) must address the proposed project’s consistency with the 2050 target set forth in Executive Order S-03-05 (i.e., 80 percent below 1990 levels). The Court held that SANDAG did not abuse its discretion by failing to treat the 2050 GHG emissions target as a threshold of significance. The Court cautioned, however, that its decision applies narrowly to the facts of the case and that the analysis in the challenged EIR should not be used as an example for other lead agencies to follow going forward. Notably, the RTP itself covered a planning period that extended all the way to 2050.

The Court acknowledged the parties’ agreement that “the Executive Order lacks the force of a legal mandate binding on SANDAG[.]” (Id. at p. 513.) This conclusion was consistent with the Court’s earlier decision in Professional Engineers in California Government v. Schwarzenegger (2010) 50 Cal.4th 989, 1015, which held the Governor had acted in excess of his executive authority in ordering the furloughing of state employees as a money-saving strategy. In that earlier case, which is not mentioned in the SANDAG decision, the Court held that the
decision to furlough employees was legislative in character, and thus could only be ordered by the Legislature, and not the Governor, who, under the state constitution, may only exercise executive authority. In SANDAG, the Court thus impliedly recognized that Governors do not have authority to set statewide legislative policy, particularly for decades into the future. Even so, however, the Court noted, and did not question, the parties’ agreement that “the Executive Order’s 2050 emissions reduction target is grounded in sound science.” (3 Cal.5th at p. 513.) Indeed, the Court emphasized that, although “the Executive Order ‘is not an adopted GHG reduction plan’ and that ‘there is no legal requirement to use it as a threshold of significance,’” the 2050 goal nevertheless “expresses the pace and magnitude of reduction efforts that the scientific community believes necessary to stabilize the climate.

This scientific information has important value to policymakers and citizens in considering the emission impacts of a project like SANDAG’s regional transportation plan.” (Id. at p. 515.) Towards the end of the decision, the Court even referred to “the state’s 2050 climate goals” as though the 2050 target from E.O. S-03-05 had some sort of standing under California law. (Id. at p. 519.) The Court seemed to reason that, because the Legislature had enacted both AB 32 and SB 32, which followed the downward GHG emissions trajectory recommended in the Executive Order, the Legislature, at some point, was also likely to adopt the 2050 target as well: “SB 32 … reaffirms California’s commitment to being on the forefront of the dramatic greenhouse gas emission reductions needed to stabilize the global climate.” (Id. at p. 519.) Finally, the Court explained that “planning agencies like SANDAG must ensure that CEQA analysis stays in step with evolving scientific knowledge and state regulatory schemes.” (Ibid.)

In sum, the Court recognized that the Executive Order did not carry the force of law, but nevertheless considered it to be part of “state climate policy” because the Legislature, in enacting both AB 32 and SB 32, seems to be following both the IPCC recommendations for reducing GHG emissions worldwide and evolving science. Nothing in the decision, however, suggests that all projects, regardless of their buildout period, must address the 2050 target or treat it as a significance threshold.

Regional/Local
Monterey Bay Air Resources District

Salinas is located in the North Central Coast Air Basin and within the boundary of the Monterey Bay Air Resources District ("air district"). To date, the air district has not adopted CEQA guidance for analysis of GHG effects of land use projects nor has it prepared a qualified GHG reduction plan for use/reference by local agencies.
City of Salinas

The City’s climate change impact reduction approach is embedded in the Final Supplement for the City of Salinas General Plan Final Program EIR (EDAW/AECOM 2007)(GP SEIR), which the City of Salinas certified in 2007. The GP SEIR focused primarily on analysis of potential environmental impacts of Salinas’ proposal to annex a large area of land to the north and east of the City known as the Future Growth Area. The general plan FEIR, certified in 2002, addressed impacts of the annexation at a programmatic level. However, between the time the general plan FEIR was certified in 2002 and the time the City of Salinas formally began consideration of the Future Growth Area sphere-of-influence amendment and annexation, the environmental setting utilized in the general plan FEIR had changed. The GP SEIR was prepared to address certain potential impacts of the Future Growth Area annexation under more current environmental setting conditions.

Climate change impacts of general plan buildout, including buildout of the Future Growth Area, were not evaluated in the general plan FEIR. With the passage of AB 32 in 2006 and the rising tide of international, state, and local concern about climate change, the City of Salinas incorporated analysis of potential climate change impacts of future development as guided by the general plan into the SEIR to address this change in regulatory setting that had occurred after 2002.

The GP SEIR included a basic GHG inventory and projection of GHG emissions under year 2020 conditions. A quantified emissions reduction target for 2020 was not included in the analysis. General plan buildout GHG emissions were projected to be 46 percent higher in 2020 than under baseline conditions in 2000. The analysis in the GP SEIR was used to conclude (page 5.5-15) that the incremental GHG emissions associated with development under the City of Salinas General Plan would:

…cause a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant cumulative (worldwide) impacts when viewed in connection with worldwide GHG emissions. By generating increased emissions that contribute to global climate change, development that occurs in accordance with the General Plan throughout the City of Salinas and within the SOI Amendment and Annexation areas would incrementally contribute to the adverse economic, public health, natural resources, and other environmental impacts mentioned earlier in this section that are projected to occur in California and throughout the world as a result of global climate change.

The GP SEIR includes nine global climate change mitigation measures (GCC measures) designed to reduce significant unavoidable climate change impacts. Several are based on the 2007 Pilot Version of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development Rating System. As stated on page 5.5-15 of the GP SEIR:
The mitigation measures shall be applied to development projects throughout the City of Salinas where feasible to reduce the cumulatively significant incremental contribution to global climate change.

Three of the nine GCC measures are either actions that are the responsibility of the City of Salinas (GCC measures 1 and 6) or do not apply to future commercial and industrial development as planned within the project site (GCC measure 5 regarding LEED Neighborhood Design). Six measures have relevance to development within the project site are summarized as follows:

- SEIR GCC 2: Prioritize parking for electric, hybrid, and alternative fuel vehicles;
- SEIR GCC 3: Construct 50 percent of the building square footage to be capable of being certified under one of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or equivalent rating systems;
- SEIR GCC 4: Incorporate renewable energy generation (on- or off-site) to provide 15 percent or more of the project’s energy needs;
- SEIR GCC 7: Recycle and/or salvage at least 50 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition debris;
- SEIR GCC 8: Reduce heat gain for 50 percent of the non-roof impervious site landscape (including roads, sidewalks, courtyards, parking lots, and driveways); and
- SEIR GCC 9: Incorporate green building points such as those achievable through Builditgreen or a similar checklist. Target energy efficiency, resource use, or other measures that result in GHG emissions reductions.

The GP SEIR was certified over 10 years ago. The state of the art in climate change planning and mitigation has advanced dramatically since that time. Salinas currently considers the GHG reduction approaches in the mitigations as a subset of a much broader suite of possible GHG reduction measures that have evolved since 2007 to reduce GHG emissions from land use development projects. Other GHG reduction measures can be substituted for the mitigation measures with the end goal of reducing emissions from individual projects.

**City of Salinas Municipal Code**

Section 37-50.330 of the zoning code requires that commercial and industrial and tourist-oriented projects that generate 2,500 average daily vehicle trips or more prepare a facilities trip reduction plan. For these types of uses, vehicle trip reduction measures to reduce trips by employees, customers, and/or tourists are to be incorporated. The purpose is to:

(1) Meet the state of California air quality and congestion management mandates in accordance with Section 65088 of the Government Code;
(2) Implement Salinas general plan policies related to achieving and maintaining acceptable level of service standards, supporting Monterey-Salinas transit goals, and encouraging the use of bicycles and walking activities;

(3) Implement the Salinas bikeways plan and Salinas pedestrian plan;

(4) Achieve a one and six-tenths percent per year trip reduction; one and thirty-five hundredths average vehicle ridership rate; and/or a sixty percent drive-alone rate; and

(5) Ensure that new development, redevelopment, and expansion of existing uses contain the needed infrastructure and programs to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips.

The facilities trip reduction plan must be reviewed and approved as part of the development approval process.

**Specific Plan**

New development within the specific plan boundary must be consistent with the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan. The information below summarizes information from the specific plan that is relevant to the issue of greenhouse gases. In this context, the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan support general plan policies, municipal code regulations, and/or other federal, State, or other local regulations presented above that serve to mitigate environmental effects of the proposed project.

The specific plan does not contain specific policy or guidance regarding GHGs or measures included or proposed to be included in the project design specifically to address GHGs. It does, however, include guidance and improvements whose implementation is required by City of Salinas and state regulation and that have GHG reduction benefits. These include, but are not limited to: bicycle and pedestrian circulation improvements (sections 4.4.3 and 4.4.4), a vehicle trip reduction plan (section 4.5), water efficient irrigation (section 3.4.6 and 3.4.7), and landscape tree plantings for carbon sequestration (sections 3.4.5 and 3.4.9).

### 11.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes two factual inquiries related to the subject of impacts from GHG emissions, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on the subject of impacts from GHG emissions, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. *(Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara* (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA
grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance." (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City of Salinas has done so here, though it has exercised its discretion to translate qualitative language in Appendix G into quantitative terms. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment (i.e., result in 3.51 metric tons of CO₂e per service population per year); or

- Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

The City has determined that, in light of current methodologies for evaluating the significance of greenhouse gases and their contribution to climate change, development of a quantified threshold of significance for the proposed project is appropriate. The discussion below identifies the background for why this approach is being taken and describes the methodology for crafting the threshold of significance. As indicated above, the quantified threshold of significance is 3.51 metric tons CO₂e per service population per year based on the conservative assumption that the project site builds out in 2025.

**Quantified Threshold of Significance Background**

The City has not formally adopted a quantified threshold of significance for GHGs and to date, has not adopted a qualified climate action plan. Either of these tools could otherwise be used to determine the significance of climate change impacts of the proposed project.

Further, the air district has not adopted thresholds of significance for non-stationary GHG sources that could be used as guidance by the City. In light of these circumstances, a GHG threshold of significance has been developed for use in this EIR. The threshold is a GHG efficiency metric that represents a rate of emissions generation from land use projects. If the proposed project rate of emissions is equal to or below the threshold, project emissions would not conflict with the state’s ability to achieve statewide GHG reduction targets embodied in applicable state legislation. As described below, the applicable GHG reduction goal is 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 as codified in SB 32.

The SB 32 emissions reduction target is applicable because buildout of the project site is assumed to occur within about five years of the project approval date, or about 2023. Development of parcels 1 and 2 (hotel and travel center, respectively) is anticipated within one to two years from the approval date, with future development within parcels 3 and 4 to follow. To be conservative, for purpose of this analysis, a buildout date of 2025 is utilized solely to evaluate GHG impacts. As will be discussed below, the later buildout date results in a threshold of significance that is incrementally more stringent than the 2023 buildout date. The buildout date is beyond the AB 32 emissions reduction target date of 2020. Therefore,
developing a threshold for the proposed project oriented to achieving the 2020 state reduction goal would not capture the deeper GHG emission reductions needed statewide after 2020 to be consistent with a GHG reduction trajectory towards achieving the 2030 reduction goal identified in SB 32. In summary, lacking local guidance for a quantified threshold of significance, this EIR relies on the 2030 emissions reduction goal as a basis for crafting a GHG efficiency based threshold of significance for the proposed project.

**Threshold of Significance Development Methodology**

**Background**

The threshold of significance methodology responds to the California Supreme Court’s ruling in the Newhall Ranch Case. That ruling is described in the California Supreme Court Decisions subsection of the Regulatory Setting section above. More specifically, the methodology addresses the first of the Court’s three potential options for evaluating the cumulative significance of a proposed land use development project’s GHG emissions. That approach is to determine what level of GHG emission reduction from the business-as-usual projection identified in the 2008 Scoping plan that a new land development at its proposed location would need to achieve to comply with statewide goals upon examination of the data behind the 2008 Scoping Plan’s business-as-usual emissions projections.

First, the methodology herein examines the data behind the 2008 Scoping Plan’s business-as-usual emissions projections. That data is comprised of the 1990 statewide GHG emissions inventory that CARB has previously used to project a statewide emissions reduction target, but is not the target itself. Note that although CARB recently adopted the 2017 Scoping Plan, the strategies in the 2017 Scoping Plan for reducing GHG emissions statewide to 40 percent below 1990 levels remain based on emissions data utilized in the 2008 Scoping Plan. Second, the methodology avoids the disconnect between consideration of GHG emissions from all sources in the state as a whole as listed in the 1990 inventory, and analysis of emissions from individual land use projects. This is achieved by isolating out of the 1990 statewide GHG emissions inventory the GHG sources to which land use sector driven development contributes (e.g. emissions produced by residential development, commercial development, and other similar land development end use types). The threshold of significance derived is, therefore, specific to evaluating the significance of GHG emissions generated solely from land use projects.

Individual land use projects commonly generate GHG emissions from similar sources: mobile, energy, area, water, and solid waste. The emissions profiles of common land use projects (e.g. residential, commercial, mixed use, etc.) generally do not vary substantially in terms of the proportions of emissions generated from each of these sources. This is true for land use projects as a class, regardless of their locations within the state. However, a project’s
density and its location affect the number of vehicle miles traveled from operation of a project, and thus the volume of mobile source GHG emissions and total volume of GHG emissions that it generates. Nevertheless, since climate change is a global phenomenon, the specific location at which GHG emissions are emitted by a land use project within the state is not highly informative as a measure of its potential to contribute to adverse climate change effects. Consequently, the threshold determination methodology focuses on the level of GHG emissions reduction an individual land use project should achieve to comply with statewide goals. As described below, the threshold of significance is represented as a GHG efficiency metric – a rate of emissions the proposed (land use) project must achieve to contribute its fair share for meeting statewide goals.

The threshold of significance development methodology defines the “fair share” of required statewide reductions needed for the project to have a less-than-significant impact. This approach is permissible, as the Supreme Court expressed conceptual support for approaches that attempt to ascertain a project’s “fair share” of required statewide reductions.

**Use of a GHG Emissions Efficiency Metric**

A GHG efficiency metric represents a rate of emissions generation. It is the ratio of total GHG emissions to “service population.” Service population is the sum of the number of jobs and the number of residents generated by a proposed project. A project that produces a high volume of GHG emissions relative to its service population is less GHG efficient than the same project that produces a lower volume of GHG emissions when the service population is held constant. Stated in another way, the rate of emissions for the first project exceeds the rate of emissions for the second project.

A GHG efficiency metric can be used to compare the rate of emissions from a particular land use project to the rate of statewide GHG emissions from land use projects at or below which the statewide 2030 emissions reduction goal identified in SB 32 would be achieved. With a reduced rate of emissions per resident + employee, California can accommodate expected population growth and achieve economic development objectives, while also abiding by the SB 32 emissions target. If the rate of GHG emissions from an individual project is equal to or below the statewide rate of GHG emissions from the land use sector, the individual project would not impede the state’s ability to achieve the 2030 statewide reduction goal and the project would have a less-than-significant impact.

Numerous air districts across the state have derived efficiency-based thresholds of significance for land use projects. Though the Monterey Bay Air Resources District has not adopted thresholds of significance for land use projects, the adjoining air districts to the north (Bay Area Air Quality Management District) and south (San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District) have done so.
Land Use Driven GHG Emissions Projection

CARB has stated that for implementation of the GHG reduction strategies in the 2017 Scoping Plan to be successful in meeting the state’s year 2030 GHG emissions target of 40 percent below business-as-usual, an average statewide GHG reduction of 5.2 percent per year to the year 2030 will be needed (California Air Resources Board 2015 and 2016). The first step in deriving an applicable statewide efficiency metric threshold is to determine the volume of statewide GHG emissions from land use driven sectors in 2025 (the projected specific plan area buildout year) that must be achieved to stay on trajectory towards meeting the statewide 2030 reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels. Land use driven emissions are those from sources that function to support population and employment growth.

Land use driven GHG emissions can be isolated out of the 2020 projected statewide emissions inventory by eliminating emissions sources that are not land use driven and that would not accommodate projected new population or employment growth. For example, emissions associated with ocean transport or agriculture are not related to new land use driven emissions. Conversely, emissions associated with on-road transportation, electricity production, natural gas combustion, wastewater treatment, and solid waste are land use driven as they contribute to accommodating new population and employment growth.

Table 11-3, 2020 California Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Land Use Driven Emissions, shows the 1990 state emissions inventory for land use driven GHG emissions. Total land use driven emissions are projected at 286.70 million metric tons (MMT) CO₂e.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 11-3</th>
<th>2020 California Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Land Use Driven Emissions</th>
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<td><strong>Land Use Type</strong></td>
<td><strong>Emissions (MMT CO₂e)</strong></td>
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<td>Domestic Wastewater Treatment</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.09</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Emissions</strong></td>
<td><strong>286.70</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** EMC Planning Group 2017

Table 11-4, 2025 Efficiency-Based GHG Threshold of Significance, shows how the following data is used to calculate a statewide efficiency-based GHG threshold of significance for the year 2025 that is applicable to land use projects. Applying CARB’s 5.2 percent annual emissions reduction rate to the 2020 projected state inventory volume of 286.7 MMT CO₂e for five years consecutive years yields a projected emissions volume of 219.25 MMT CO₂e in 2025. The 2025 service population is the sum of the projected statewide 2025 population and projected statewide 2025 employment. The projected 2025 statewide population is 42,407,005 (California Department of Finance 2017). The California Employment Development
Department, California Occupational Employment Projections 2014-2024, show that the 2024 employment projection is 19,720,000 jobs (California Employment Development Department 2016). The projected 2025 employment projection is equivalent to 19,720,000 jobs, plus an additional increment of job growth for the year 2025. The increment is assumed to be equal to the annual average rate of employment increase from 2014 to 2024, which equals 258,550 jobs per year. Therefore, total 2025 employment is 19,978,550 jobs.

The 2025 service population is 42,407,005 (population) plus 19,978,550 (jobs), for a total of 62,385,555. The 2025 target GHG efficiency threshold is 219.25 MMT CO2e/62,385,555 or 3.51 MT CO2e per service population. This value represents the threshold of significance for the proposed project.

Table 11-4 2025 Efficiency-Based Threshold of Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>42,407,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>19,978,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Population</td>
<td>62,385,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emissions Target</td>
<td>219.25 MMT CO2e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2025 Threshold</td>
<td>219.25 MMT CO2e/62,385,555 = 3.51 MMT CO2e/Service Population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017

11.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section includes information and data regarding GHGs that are relevant to the proposed project based on the threshold of significance of 3.51 MT CO2e per service population described above. The information and data are used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

Project GHG Emissions Inventory

Operational and Construction GHG Emissions

To derive the GHG emissions volume component of the proposed project GHG efficiency metric, project GHG emissions must be estimated for its 2025 buildout year. GHG emissions from annual project operations were estimated using California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2016.3.1 software. Construction phase emissions were also calculated. The results are reported starting on page 10 of the Salinas Travel Center Draft Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment (AQ/GHG Assessment) in Appendix C. The CalEEMod results are included in Attachment 1 of the AQ/GHG Assessment.
The estimated mitigated annual operational GHG emissions at project buildout in 2025 are projected at 5,775 MT CO₂e in 2025. The only mitigation applied in CalEEMod was taken for reduced energy emissions and results from increased energy efficiency requirements established in 2016 Title 24 requirements (relative to the 2013 standards included in CalEEMod as a default). A summary of the annual emissions by source is shown in Table 11-5, Projected 2025 GHG Emissions by Source.

### Table 11-5 Projected 2025 GHG Emissions by Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>GHG Emissions Volume (MT CO₂e/Yr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>1,291.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>3,953.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste</td>
<td>300.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>230.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,775.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SOURCE: Illingworth & Rodkin 2017*

Note also that CalEEMod provides emissions reductions from implementation of key state regulatory programs including the Pavley standards and Low Carbon Fuel Standard (applied to the mobile source category) as well as the Renewable Portfolio Standard reduction for 2020 of 33 percent (applied to energy source category).

Total construction emissions are estimated at 1,204 MT CO₂e. It is common practice for construction emissions to be amortized over 30 years, with yearly emissions added to annual operational emissions to arrive at a total annual emissions volume. Amortized construction emissions total 40.13 MT CO₂e per year. Therefore, total annual emissions (construction and operational) are 5,815 MT CO₂e per year.

**Baseline GHG Emissions Volume**

As identified in Section 6.0, Agricultural Resources, Table 6-1, Farmland Classification Acreages Parcels 1 – 4, shows that parcels 3 and 4 contain 16.99 acres of farmland that are currently in row crop production. Operations associated with on-going agricultural activity on these parcels are a source of GHG emissions that would be eliminated when parcels 3 and 4 are developed. The primary GHG emissions sources are electricity generation to supply power for irrigation water pumping and fuel combustion in farm equipment. To be conservative and due to uncertainty about the intensity of farm equipment use, this component of baseline emissions activities is not further evaluated.
To estimate GHG emissions volume from electricity generation for water pumping, total annual water demand, electrical energy demand per unit volume of water demand, and a GHG emissions factor per unit of electrical energy demanded for water pumping are needed. Irrigation water demand is based on the assumption that strawberries have been grown on the 16.99 acres half of the time and that cauliflower and broccoli have been grown the other half of the time and a total of two crops per year are planted and harvested. These are common crop types grown on production agricultural land in the vicinity of the city. Strawberries demand approximately 1.9 acre-feet (AF) per crop per acre and cauliflower/broccoli demand approximately 4.04 acre-feet per crop per acre, or an average of 3.0 AFY/acre. Under these assumptions, total agricultural water demand would be approximately 50.97 acre-feet per year (AFY). Table 11-6, Existing Agricultural Water Use, presents the total existing water use from agricultural activity within the project site.

Table 11-6 Existing Agricultural Water Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Average Water Demand per Acre¹ (AFY)</th>
<th>Total Agricultural Water Demand (AFY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>8.50</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>50.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli/Cauliflower</td>
<td>8.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017
NOTES: ¹Average water demand factor from Jeff Yarne, Consultant to Cal Water, February 15, 2018.

The typical energy intensity for electricity used to supply, treat, and distribute water in northern California as referenced in CAPCOA’s Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures (page 342) is 3,500 kWh per 1,000,000 gallons of water. Since irrigation water used within parcels 3 and 4 is sourced from local wells, the typical energy intensity value is likely lower and assumed to be 2,000 kWh per 1,000,000 gallons of water. Information obtained from utility providers, in this case, Pacific Gas and Electric, can be used to estimate electrical demand per unit of water demand and GHG emissions volumes per unit of energy consumed. At an estimated 16,608,064 gallons of annual agricultural water demand (50.97 AFY x 325,840 gallons/AF), agricultural water pumping generates demand for approximately 33.21 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity per year. Per Pacific Gas and Electric’s Greenhouse Gas Emission Factors: Guidance for PG&E Customers, April 2013, 0.194 metric tons of CO₂e are produced for each MWh of electricity produced within its service area. Applying this factor to the existing agricultural water pumping electricity demand yields a GHG emissions baseline of approximately 6.44 MT CO₂e per year.
Net GHG Emissions

Table 11-7, Project GHG Emissions, summarizes total GHG emissions for the proposed project at buildout.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emission Source</th>
<th>Annual GHG Emissions MT/Yr CO₂e</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Operational</td>
<td>5,775.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Amortized Construction¹</td>
<td>40.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Baseline</td>
<td>(6.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Annual GHG Emissions</td>
<td>5,808.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017, Illingworth & Rodkin 2017
NOTE: ¹Total construction emissions of 1,207 MT CO₂e amortized over 30 years = 40.13 MT CO₂e/year.

Project Service Population

The project service population is the sum of the new population and employment it generates. No new population would be generated as the project does not contain residential uses. Therefore, the service population is composed only of the project employment generation. Projected employment at buildout of the project site is described in Section 4.2, Project Characteristics, and summarized in Table 4-2, Employment Generation Projection. Total projected employment is estimated at 681 jobs. This represents the service population.

Comparison of Statewide and Project-Based GHG Efficiency Metrics for 2025

The statewide GHG efficiency-based rate of GHG emissions (threshold of significance) for land use driven sectors is 3.51 MT CO₂e per year per service population. The project GHG rate of emissions is 5,808.69 MT CO₂e per year divided by a service population of 681, or 8.52 MT CO₂e per year per service population. The proposed project rate of GHG emissions exceeds the statewide rate of GHG emissions for the land use sector.

11.5 IMPACT SUMMARY AND MITIGATION MEASURES

IMPACT Project-Generated GHG Emissions that Would Impede Attainment of State GHG Emissions Reduction Goals (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The proposed project will generate GHG emissions directly from mobile sources (transportation vehicles), indirectly from consumption of electricity produced off-site from fossil fuels, and from methane emissions generated at landfills (from decomposing organic
landfilled materials) to which project generated solid waste will be delivered. At a conservative buildout year of 2025, the proposed project would generate approximately 8.52 MT CO\textsubscript{2}e per service population. This exceeds the threshold of significance of 3.51 MT CO\textsubscript{2}e per service population rate of emissions generation for 2025 needed for proposed project emissions to remain within the statewide emissions trajectory required to meet the 2030 statewide emissions reduction goal of 40 percent below 1990 levels mandated by SB 32. Feasible mitigation measures must be implemented to reduce the significant impact.

**Mitigation Approaches**

As described in the Environmental Impacts Analysis section above, the specific plan does not include measures designed specifically to reduce GHG emissions. It does include information on alternative transportation improvements, vehicle trip reduction programs, and water conservation measures that are required per City regulations.

**Mobile Source Emissions Reduction**

The most effective GHG reduction (mitigation) measures in terms of emissions volume reduction potential would be those which reduce GHG emissions from the most substantial sources in the project GHG emissions profile. As can be calculated based on the data shown above in Table 11-5, Projected 2025 GHG Emissions by Source, presented earlier, approximately 66 percent of the operational GHG emissions from the project are from mobile sources. Transportation emissions can be reduced by improving the emissions profile of the vehicle fleet that travels the roads and/or by reducing the vehicle miles traveled by the fleet. Developers of individual projects have little control over the GHG emissions profile of vehicles – this responsibility is within the purview of state regulatory agencies such as CARB, which for example, implements regulations such as the Pavley standards and Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Reducing vehicle miles traveled can be accomplished by optimizing the location and types of land uses, and by site enhancements to roads, and to bike and pedestrian networks to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation. Project developers generally do not have control over site locations or the types of land uses for those sites; land use based opportunities for development are generally guided by local land use agencies such as cities or counties through their comprehensive plans such as general plans. Individual project developers generally do not have options for substantially reducing vehicle miles traveled unless a project site location and its land use designation is already optimized for such (e.g. infill sites which carry land use designations that allow mixed use development).

Transportation mode shifts (from vehicles to bicycling, walking, and/or transit) are encouraged by implementing parking policies, transit system improvements, and trip reduction coordination or incentive programs. These policy and regulatory mechanisms are also commonly within the control of local or regional agencies, rather than individual project developers.
developers. However, project developers often do have options for reducing vehicle miles traveled through site enhancements or project-specific measures over which they have control.

The hotel and travel center projects are highway oriented and together, generate approximately 66 percent of the daily trip volume (after internal trip reductions are subtracted) projected at buildout of the project site. The project site location adjacent to U.S. Highway 101 at a recently upgraded interchange is unique for its immediate and ready access from a major highway and high visibility to large numbers of motorists. This location lends itself to highway-oriented, visitor-serving types of uses. Development of these uses on sites (e.g. vacant infill parcels within the city) that would be more favorable for reducing vehicle trips and mobile source emissions would likely render these two projects infeasible and inconsistent with key project objectives related to the location and functions of the hotel and travel center as described in Section 4.1, Project Objectives. Further, significant impacts, especially transportation impacts and air quality impacts, which would not occur with the proposed project, may occur with development of an infill site. It is possible that project traffic would be distributed through a greater number of intersections and road segments in closer proximity to sensitive air emissions receptors. This may also be true for future uses within parcel 3 and 4, given these highly highway accessible, highly visible locations.

Energy Source Emissions Reductions

As required by the City, described in the specific plan, and described and illustrated in Section 16.0, Transportation, the proposed project includes pedestrian and bicycle access improvements. These improvements have potential to incrementally reduce vehicle trips to the site by encouraging alternative modes of access. However, they are likely only to have potential to incrementally reduce vehicle trips generated by employees, as the hotel and travel center projects would not likely be destinations for residents. Similarly, future uses within parcels 3 and 4 may be highway oriented. The project site is located at the south end of the city, at distance from the major residential areas of the city and separated from them by non-residential development. This too may depress use of alternative transportation modes to access the project site.

Based on the data presented earlier in Table 11-5, Projected 2025 GHG Emissions by Source, approximately 33 percent of the projected operational GHG emissions are from energy related sources including building and ancillary electricity use, waste (the component of electricity use associated with wastewater treatment), and water (electricity use for pumping water). Required compliance of all development within the project site to applicable energy related regulations, including but not limited to: CALGreen Green Building Code Standards (water conservation); Title 24, Part 6 building energy efficiency standards; California Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (water conservation), and City of Salinas water conservation ordinance (all of which are summarized in the Regulatory Setting above) will serve to incrementally reduce electricity demand and associated GHGs.
Developers of projects within the project site do have control over a number of site, building, landscaping and other development variables that can affect energy consumption. A number of measures to reduce energy consumption above and beyond those required by City and state regulations are applicable and appropriate. Measures assumed to be feasible for all new development within the project site are included in the mitigation measures described below. The potential for these measures to substantially reduce the overall project GHG emissions profile is limited because energy-related emissions comprise only about a third of the emissions.

**Additional Potential GHG Reduction Options**

On-site GHG reduction measures are to be prioritized for the proposed project. However, if the total volume of GHG emissions reduction from all feasible on-site reduction measures is insufficient to reduce project GHG emissions to below the threshold of significance, two options may exist for individual project applicants to further reduce emissions. One option is to participate in valid GHG emissions reduction projects or programs that result in GHG emissions within the vicinity of the city and/or within the air basin. Representative program types may include energy efficiency retrofit programs or engine replacement/retrofit programs that may be managed by the air district or other entities. Collaboration with such agencies may also be possible to identify new opportunities to fund GHG reduction measures or programs, the GHG reductions from which would need to be verified by the participating agency.

A second option is to purchase carbon off-sets that are certified through a recognized source such as the Climate Action Registry. Evidence of an executed off-set purchase contract would be required prior to approval of a building permit for each individual project.

**Mitigation Measure**

For the reasons enumerated above, mitigation measure GHG-1 requires that a range of GHG reduction measures be incorporated into new development within the project site. The measures are focused on reducing GHG emissions from energy. This source of emissions can be most readily affected by individual project applicants at the site/individual project level.

**GHG-1** Prior to issuance of a building permit for each individual project proposed within the project site, individual project developers shall prepare a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Plan for their respective projects. Each GHG Reduction Plan shall be designed to reduce GHG emissions from each individual project to 3.51 MT CO₂e per service population per year. This threshold is based on an assumed buildout year of 2025 for individual projects. A higher threshold of significance may be warranted for projects that build out prior to 2025 based on Senate Bill 32 and/or other legislation that may be adopted prior to the buildout year for individual projects. For such projects, individual project developers may provide
substantial evidence that a higher threshold of significance is warranted. The evidence shall be based on the threshold of significance determination methodology utilized in this EIR. Any proposed change in the threshold of significance shall be subject to review and approval of the City of Salinas Planning Commission.

The GHG Reduction Plan shall include the GHG reduction measures listed below and shall quantify the project-specific GHG reductions achieved with the measures. Additional measures may be added by the developer. Reductions from measures required by regulations of the City of Salinas (e.g. facilities trip reduction plan) and/or of the state (e.g. SB 350 renewable energy standard for 2030 and Advanced Clean Car Standards) may be included. The Reduction Plan shall list all of the required and additional measures (if any), identify reductions associated with each, and provide evidence supporting the level of reduction calculated for each. All measures within the control of individual project applicants shall be implemented and operational prior to occupancy of the associated project.

The following on-site GHG reduction measures shall be included in the plan. Other feasible reduction measures may be substituted for the measures listed below provided that the City’s Community Development Director determines, based on substantial evidence, that the substitute measures achieve an equal or greater volume of reductions:

- Design buildings to exceed the Title 24 energy efficiency standards currently in effect by at least 10 percent. The 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards are the standards currently in effect.

- Provide on-site renewable energy to replace demand for grid electricity. Rooftop solar installations and/or ground-mounted installations may be feasible options for on-site energy production.

- Exceed higher than mandated parking lot and area energy efficient lighting standards.

- Incorporate indoor water conservation measures, such as use of ultra-low-flow toilets and faucets (bathrooms).

- Incorporate low flow irrigation that exceeds requirements of the City of Salinas Zoning Code Section 37-50.330 and the state Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

- Install Energy Star appliances in all buildings.
Include the necessary infrastructure in the project design (e.g., physical design, energy, and fueling) to support the deployment of zero emission technologies now and into the future, including electric vehicle charging stations for passenger cars and heavy-duty trucks (the latter especially for the proposed travel center project), zero emission battery electric and hybrid electric passenger vehicles and electric forklifts.

- Electrify loading docks.

- Provide and prioritize locations of parking for electric cars and trucks.

- Include sufficient plug-in capabilities for transport refrigeration units to eliminate the time that a refrigeration system is powered by a fossil-fueled internal combustion engine while at the site (proposed travel center project only).

If the on-site GHG emissions reduction measures identified in each GHG reduction plan combined with reductions from City of Salinas and/or state regulatory reductions are insufficient to reduce project emissions to below the threshold of significance, individual project developers may then secure additional emissions reductions through off-site GHG reduction programs and/or through purchase of carbon off-sets.

Each GHG Reduction Plan is subject to review and approval by the Community Development Director prior to approval of building permits for the subject project.

Implementation of mitigation measure GHG-1 would reduce GHG emissions from each individual project proposed within the project site. Emissions must be reduced to a volume that ensures individual project emissions do not exceed the threshold of significance of 3.51 MT CO2e per year. This will be verified through the City’s review of each GHG Reduction Plan, each of which must contain quantified data on how the emissions reduction volume will be achieved and the GHG reduction measures that will be implemented prior to occupancy of individual projects. Therefore, the impact will be reduced to less than significant.

**IMPACT** Conflict with the State of California’s Plans to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Less than Significant)

As discussed in the Standards of Significance section above, to date, neither the City of Salinas, nor any regional agency has prepared a qualified GHG reduction plan that is applicable to the proposed project. The 2002 City of Salinas General Plan does not contain policy adopted specifically for the purpose of reducing GHGs because climate change was
Greenhouse Gases

not an environmental topic that had yet become an issue of concern for comprehensive community planning. As discussed in the Regulatory Setting section above, the GP SEIR, which was certified in 2007, is the only City document that provides direction for directly and indirectly reducing GHG emissions from land use development projects in the city.

The GP SEIR is not a plan, policy, or regulation of the City adopted for the purpose of reducing GHGs. Absent other local or regional plans for reducing GHGs, state legislative guidance included in SB 32 is considered to be the plan for reducing GHGs that is applicable to the proposed project. Nevertheless, the GHG mitigation measures included in the GP SEIR are worth discussion because they are applicable to new development within the City. The GP SEIR mitigation measures were developed 10 years ago when climate change policy, impact analysis, and mitigation approaches were notably less developed than at present. Not all of the mitigation measures may be applicable or feasible for every specific land use development project. Implementation of feasible GP SEIR mitigations would reduce GHG emission of individual projects, but not likely as effectively as do current GHG reduction strategies that have evolved, along with state legislation and regulations (described in the Regulatory Setting section above), to more effectively combat climate change.

The GHG mitigation approach identified in mitigation measure GHG-1 above is better targeted to the proposed project; includes specific reduction measures that are feasible for the proposed project; is more comprehensive and aggressive overall than applicable, feasible SP SEIR measures; is consistent with the intent of reducing GHG emissions from land use projects based on the statewide GHG emission reduction target identified in SB 32; and is consistent with current and future expectations of local, regional, and state stakeholders regarding Salinas’ effort to reduce GHG emissions from new development. Mitigation measure GHG-1 is designed to ensure that the proposed project is consistent with SB 32, the applicable state GHG reduction plan, by specifying GHG reduction measures that would reduce GHG volumes below a threshold of significance that is based on achieving project consistency with SB 32. Therefore, this impact is less than significant.
This section of the EIR addresses hazards and hazardous materials effects associated with development of the project site. The hazards include risk of release of hazardous materials from use, storage or transport of such materials; potential for accidental release if unknown, historical contaminated sites or materials are encountered during construction; and hazards from wildfires.

Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Love’s Travel Stop* (Terracon 2015) (included as Appendix E on the CD on the inside back cover of this EIR);
- *City of Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002a);
- *Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002);
- *2010 Monterey County General Plan* (Jones & Stokes 2010);
- *Monterey County General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report* (ICF Jones & Stokes September 2008);
- *Monterey County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan – Final Draft* (AECOM and Monterey County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team September 2014);
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor database;
- California State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker database;
- *Airport Boulevard Interchange Project on State Route 101 in the County of Monterey 05-101-Mon-KP 136.1/139.3 (PM 84.6/86.6) EA: 05-349500 Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment* (California Department of Transportation 2005); and

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

No comments on the NOP were received regarding hazards and hazardous materials issues.
12.1 **ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

**Historic Use and Storage of Hazardous Materials**

Terracon prepared a Phase 1 environmental site assessment to evaluate existing hazardous environmental conditions within parcel 2 (Terracon 2015). Terracon identifies that the hotel site and travel center site (parcels 1 and 2, respectively) were historically in agricultural production from the mid-1950s to the late 2000s (Terracon 2015). Parcels 3 and 4 are currently in agricultural production with row crops. Agricultural operations can be sources of hazardous materials conditions. Terracon concludes that the historic use of parcel 2 for agricultural production in and of itself constitutes a recognized environmental hazardous condition. Terracon did not identify any other environmental hazard conditions within parcel 2.

Based on review of aerial imagery, no school sites were identified within one-quarter mile of the project site. Los Padres Elementary School is the closest school. It is located approximately 0.65 mile to the north.

**Records of Hazardous Material Sites within the Project Site**

Two databases of known hazardous materials sites/investigations were consulted to determine if any are located within the project site. The first was the Envirostor database maintained by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. The second was the California Water Resources Control Board’s Geotracker database, which identifies locations of known leaking underground storage tanks.

A review of the Envirostor database showed that no known hazardous materials sites are located within the project site; nor does it identify that hazardous materials investigations have been conducted within the boundary of the project site. The nearest non-investigation record of a hazardous material site is Integrated Device Technology, Inc. located about 250 feet northeast of the project site at 1566 Moffett Street. Integrated Device Technology, Inc. is listed as an inactive site under the tiered permit program for the management, investigation, and/or clean-up of hazardous waste materials at the facility.

The Geotracker database was reviewed to identify if any hazardous, leaking underground storage tanks are known to exist within the project site or within about 1,000 feet of the project site. No records were found, which indicates that no known leaking underground storage tanks are present within or in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The closest active environmental site is Crop Production Services, Inc. located at 1143 Terven Avenue, approximately 1,800 feet to the northwest. The Crop Production Services, Inc. site is in the state’s Site Cleanup Program and is currently undergoing remediation for the discharge of nitrogen fertilizer and pesticides to the soil and groundwater.
Aerial Deposited Lead

Until their use in the 1990s was banned, additives in gasoline expelled lead-based compounds from engine exhaust. Consequently, lead was aerially deposited as a particulate in concentrations along the shoulders and medians of roadways. Concentrations are likely higher along roadways that have historically carried high volumes of traffic. Lead can be hazardous to human health and the U.S. EPA has classified lead as a probable human carcinogen (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2016).

U.S. Highway 101 has carried high volumes of traffic since the 1950s. It is possible that aerially deposited lead is present in surface soils that are located at the margin of the highway. Caltrans’ environmental documentation for the Airport Boulevard Interchange project (California Department of Transportation 2015) identified the potential presence of aerially deposited lead along the highway and included a project-specific lead compliance plan as a minimization measure to prevent or minimize lead exposure to employees and the public during construction of the interchange.

Airport Land Use Compatibility

As described in Section 3.1, Project Location, and Site and Vicinity Setting, the Salinas Municipal Airport is located in the southeastern portion of the city. The project site is located approximately 600 feet south of the Salinas Municipal Airport and entirely within the airport area of influence. Airport Overlay District standards apply to new development within the area of influence. Please refer to Regulatory Setting section below for applicable airport land use compatibility regulations.

Wildland Fire Hazards

The project site and lands to the southeast have historically been in agricultural production and are not considered wildland areas. Lands to the north, southwest and west are in urban use and are not classified as a wildland area. Existing fuel loads within the project site and on lands surrounding the site are low. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) produces wildland fire severity zone maps for counties across the state. The Monterey County Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map prepared in 2007 shows that the nearest fire hazard zone, classified as a moderate hazard zone, is located approximately three miles to the northeast of the project site (California Department of Forestry 2007).

12.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Federal, State, County and City regulations and standards for hazardous materials and hazards that are germane to the proposed project are summarized below.
Federal

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established in 1970 to consolidate a variety of federal research, monitoring, standard-setting, and enforcement activities in one agency to ensure environmental protection. EPA’s mission is to protect human health and safeguard the natural environment (i.e., air, water, land) upon which life depends. EPA works to develop and enforce regulations that implement environmental laws enacted by Congress. The agency is responsible for researching and setting national standards for a variety of environmental programs and delegates the responsibility for using permits and monitoring and enforcing compliance to states and tribes. Where national standards are not met, EPA can issue sanctions and take other steps to help states and tribes reach desired levels of environmental quality.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

Under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, individual states may implement their own hazardous waste programs in lieu of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act as long as the state program is at least as stringent as federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act requirements. The EPA must approve state programs intended to implement federal regulations. In California, the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) and the Department of Toxic Substances Control, a department within Cal/EPA, regulate the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. The EPA approved California’s RCRA program, called the Hazardous Waste Control Law, in 1992. The Department of Toxic Substances Control has primary hazardous material regulatory responsibility, but can delegate enforcement responsibilities to local jurisdictions that enter into agreements with the Department of Toxic Substances Control for the generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials under the authority of the Hazardous Waste Control Law.

The hazardous waste regulations establish criteria for identifying, packaging, and labeling hazardous wastes; prescribe the management of hazardous wastes; establish permit requirements for hazardous waste treatment, storage, disposal, and transportation; and identify hazardous wastes that cannot be disposed of in ordinary landfills. Hazardous waste generators must retain hazardous waste manifests for a minimum of three years. These manifests provide a description of the waste, its intended destination, and regulatory information about the waste. A copy of each manifest must be filed with the State. The generator must match copies of hazardous waste manifests with receipts from treatment, storage, and disposal facilities.
Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (Superfund)

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act and associated amendments provide the EPA with the authority to identify hazardous sites, require site remediation and recover the costs of site remediation from polluters. California has enacted similar laws intended to supplement the federal program.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s mission is to ensure the safety and health of American workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health. Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s staff establishes and enforces protective standards and reaches out to employers and employees through technical assistance and consultation programs. Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards are listed in 29 CFR 1910. CFR Chapter 29, Sections 1910 (General Industry) and 1026 (Construction), promulgates regulations for the preparation of Health and Safety Plans. Health and Safety Plans identify potential hazards associated with a proposed land use and may provide appropriate mitigation measures as required.

Federal Aviation Administration

The Federal Aviation Administration regulates aviation at regional, public, private, and military airports. The Federal Aviation Administration regulates objects affecting navigable airspace and structures taller than 200 feet according to Federal Aviation Regulation 49 CFR 77.13. The U.S. Department of Transportation and Caltrans require the project proponent to submit Federal Aviation Administration Form 7460-1, Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration. According to 49 CFR 77.17, notification allows the Federal Aviation Administration to identify potential aeronautical hazards in advance, thereby preventing or minimizing any adverse impacts on the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace. Any structure that would constitute a hazard to air navigation, as defined in this Federal Aviation Administration regulation, would require issuance of a permit from Caltrans’ Aeronautics Program. The permit is not required if the Federal Aviation Administration aeronautical study determines that the structure would have no impact on air navigation.

State

California Environmental Protection Agency

Cal/EPA was created in 1991. It unified California’s environmental authority in a single cabinet-level agency and brought California Air Resources Board, State Water Resources Control Board, Regional Water Quality Control Boards, CalRecycle, Department of Toxic Substance Control, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and the Department
of Pesticide Regulation under one agency. These agencies were placed within the Cal/EPA “umbrella” for the protection of human health and the environment to ensure the coordinated deployment of State resources. Their mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment and ensure public health, environmental quality, and economic vitality.

**Department of Toxic Control**

The Department of Toxic Control, a department of Cal/EPA, is the primary agency in California for regulating hazardous waste, cleaning up existing contamination, and finding ways to reduce the amount of hazardous waste produced in California. The Department of Toxic Control regulates hazardous waste primarily under the authority of the Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the California Health and Safety Code (primarily Division 20, Chapters 6.5 through 10.6, and Title 22, Division 4.5). Other laws that affect hazardous waste are specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning.

Government Code section 65962.5 requires the Department of Toxic Control and the Department of Health Services (now the Department of Public Health) to maintain a list (commonly known as the Cortese List) of hazardous waste facilities and sites, contaminated drinking water wells, sites listed by the State Water Resources Control Board as having underground storage tank leaks or a discharge of hazardous wastes or materials into the water or groundwater, and sites with a known migration of hazardous waste/material.

**California Office of Emergency Services**

To protect public health and safety as well as the environment, the California Office of Emergency Services is responsible for establishing and managing statewide standards for business and area plans related to the handling and release, or threatened release, of hazardous materials. The California Office of Emergency Services requires basic information regarding hazardous materials handled, used, stored, or disposed of (including location, type, quantity, and health risks) to be available to firefighters, public safety officers, and regulatory agencies. Typically, this information should be included in business plans to prevent or mitigate impacts on the environment or the health and safety of individuals from the release, or threatened release, of these materials into the workplace and environment.

These regulations are covered under Chapter 6.95 of the California Health and Safety Code, Article 1, Hazardous Materials Release Response and Inventory Program (Sections 25500 to 25520), and Article 2, Hazardous Materials Management (Sections 25531 to 25543.3).

Title 19 of the California Code of Regulation (CCR) establishes minimum statewide standards for hazardous materials business plans. These plans must include the following: 1) a hazardous material inventory in accordance with Sections 2729.2 to 2729.7, emergency response plans and procedures in accordance with Section 2731, and 3) training program information in accordance with Section 2732. Business plans should contain basic
information regarding the location, type, quantity, and health risks of hazardous materials stored, used, or disposed of in the State. Each business would prepare a hazardous materials business plan if that business uses, handles, or stores a hazardous material or an extremely hazardous material in quantities greater than or equal to the following:

- 500 pounds of a solid substance;
- 55 gallons of a liquid;
- 200 cubic feet of compressed gas;
- A hazardous compressed gas in any amount; or
- Hazardous waste in any quantity.

**California Occupational Safety and Health Administration**

The California Occupational Safety and Health Administration is the primary agency responsible for worker safety related to the handling and use of chemicals in the workplace. California Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards are generally more stringent than federal regulations. The employer is required to monitor worker exposure to listed hazardous substances and notify workers of exposure (8 CCR 337–340). The regulations specify requirements for employee training, availability of safety equipment, accident-prevention programs, and hazardous substance exposure warnings (8 CCR 5192 outlines standards for the preparation of Health and Safety Plans. Training requirements identified in California Code of Regulations Title 8, Section 5192(e) state that all employees working on site (such as but not limited to equipment operators, general laborers, and others) exposed to hazardous substances, health hazards, or safety hazards, and their supervisors and management responsible for the site shall receive training meeting the requirements of this subsection before they are permitted to engage in hazardous waste operations that could expose them to hazardous substances, safety, or health hazards, and they shall receive review training as specified in this subsection.

Regulations pertaining to protecting public health and safety from lead contamination related to construction (including disturbance of soils containing lead) lead are also promulgated by California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (8 CR 1532.1). These regulations address allowable exposure, exposure assessment, methods of compliance, respiratory protection and protective equipment/clothing, and employee/working training.

**California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Division 4.5**

Soils having concentrations of contaminants higher than certain acceptable levels must be handled and disposed of as hazardous waste when excavated. The California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4.5 contains over 30 chapters, each of which contains regulations that taken together, constitute a comprehensive framework for managing the
transfer, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. Chapter 11, Identification and Listing of Hazardous Waste, Article 3, Characteristics of Toxicity, identifies types of materials that are classified as hazardous wastes and describes the concentrations at which each material is considered to be toxic. These criteria are generally used to screen soil and groundwater data or set cleanup goals.

**Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program**

In January 1996, the Cal/EPA adopted regulations implementing the Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program. The program has six elements: 1) hazardous waste generators and hazardous waste on-site treatment; 2) underground storage tanks; 3) aboveground storage tanks; 4) hazardous materials release response plans and inventories; 5) risk management and prevention programs; and 6) Uniform Fire Code hazardous materials management plans and inventories. The plan is implemented at the local level. The local agency that is responsible for the implementation of the Unified Program is the Certified Unified Program Agency, and the Monterey County Department of Environmental Health Department is designated the Unified Program is the Certified Unified Program Agency.


The California Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Law requires that any business that handles hazardous materials prepare a business plan, which must include the following:

- Details, including floor plans, of the facility and business conducted at the site;
- An inventory of hazardous materials that are handled or stored on site;
- An emergency response plan; and
- A safety and emergency response training program for new employees with annual refresher courses.

**State Water Resources Control Board Underground Storage Tank Program**

The State Water Resources Control Board established regulations governing prevention of leaks from underground storage tanks. There are published standards and requirements for installation, tank construction, tank testing, leak detection, spill containment and overfill protection. California underground storage tank laws and regulations give local agencies (counties, cities, or other local agencies) authority throughout the State to issue permits for tank operation and to enforce tank testing requirements within their jurisdiction.
In Monterey County, the Monterey County Department of Environmental Health Department issues permits for the operation of underground storage tanks and oversees the installation, operation and removal.

**San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board – San Francisco – Environmental Screening Levels**

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board has developed a set of environmental screening criteria used to assess whether environmental contaminants may pose a threat to human health and safety. The criteria are described in a document entitled *User’s Guide: Derivation and Application of Environmental Screening Levels* as Environmental Screening Levels (ESLs). The user’s guide also identifies how the ESLs are to be used for this purpose. The ESLs have particular applicability to conditions at the project site given the potential presence of soil contamination from agricultural chemical residues as discussed in the Environmental Setting section above.

The ESLs allow dischargers and regulators to quickly focus on the most significant problems at potentially contaminated sites. This can streamline the investigation and cleanup process. ESLs have been established for over 100 commonly-found contaminants, and the ESLs address a range of media and concerns commonly found at contaminated sites, including soil contamination.

ESLs are considered to be protective for typical sites. Under most circumstances, the presence of a chemical in soil, soil gas, or groundwater at concentrations below the corresponding ESL can be assumed to not pose a significant threat to human health, water resources, or the environment. Additional evaluation will generally be necessary at sites where a chemical is present at concentrations above the corresponding ESL. For a site where chemical concentrations exceed the ESLs, the site may pose a chemical threat and require further investigation or evaluation to better assess the threat.

The ESLs are not default cleanup goals. Cleanup goals typically are chemical concentrations for a specific site that are agreed upon through evaluation and discussions between the overseeing regulatory agency and dischargers considering site-specific conditions. For many sites, ESLs are selected as cleanup goals, but only after going through the process of evaluation and adoption. For initial site cleanup orders, the Regional Water Board typically uses the ESLs as preliminary cleanup goals until site-specific cleanup goals have been developed.

**Hazardous Materials Transportation Regulations**

The State has also adopted U.S. Department of Transportation regulations for the intrastate movement of hazardous materials. State regulations are contained in 26 CCR. In addition, the State regulates the transportation of hazardous waste originating in the state and passing through the state as found in 22 CCR, Division 4.5, Chapter 11. Both regulatory programs...
apply in California. The two State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing federal and State regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies are the California Highway Patrol and the California Department of Transportation.

**California Vehicle Code Section 32000**

Common carriers are licensed by the CHP, pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 32000. This section requires the licensing of every motor (common) carrier who transports, for a fee, in excess of 500 pounds of hazardous materials at one time, and every carrier, if not for hire, who carries more than 1,000 pounds of hazardous material of the type requiring placards.

**California Accidental Release Prevention Program**

The California Accidental Release Prevention Program regulations became effective January 1, 1997, replacing the California Risk Management and Prevention Program. The California Accidental Release Prevention Program was created to prevent the accidental release of regulated substances. It covers businesses that store or handle certain volumes of regulated substances at their facilities. A list of regulated substances is found in Section 2770.5 of the California Accidental Release Prevention Program regulations. If a business has more than the listed threshold quantity of a substance, an accidental release prevention program must be implemented and a risk management plan may be required. The California Office of Emergency Services is responsible for implementing the provisions of California Accidental Release Prevention Program.

**California Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act**

The California Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act (Health & Safety Code § 25270 et seq.) requires the owner or operator of a tank facility, with an aggregate storage capacity of greater than or equal to 1,320 gallons of petroleum, to prepare and implement a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan in accordance with U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, part 112 (40CFR112). The Certified Unified Program Agency (Monterey County Department of Environmental Health) is required to conduct inspections at tank facilities with an aggregate storage capacity greater than or equal to 10,000 gallons of petroleum at least every three years. The purpose of the inspection is to determine whether the owner or operator is in compliance with the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan requirements of the California Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act.

**State Aeronautics Act, Caltrans and CEQA – Airport Safety**

The State Aeronautics Act requires each county with an airport to establish an Airport Land Use Commission to regulate land use around airports, in order to protect public safety and ensure that land uses near airports do not interfere with aviation operations.
The purpose of the California State Aeronautics Act pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 21001 et seq., “is to protect the public interest in aeronautics and aeronautical progress.” The California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics, administers much of this statute. Caltrans has prepared the California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook (“Handbook”) to provide guidance for conducting airport land use compatibility planning as required by Article 3.5, Airport Land Use Commissions, Public Utilities Code Sections 21670 – 21679.5. Article 3.5 outlines the statutory requirements for Airport Land Use Commissions (ALUCs), including the preparation of an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). Article 3.5 mandates that the Division of Aeronautics create a handbook that identifies essential elements for preparing an airport land use compatibility plan. The Handbook is intended to: 1) provide information to airport land use commissions, their staffs, airport proprietors, cities, counties, consultants, and the public; 2) identify the requirements and procedures for preparing effective compatibility planning documents; and 3) define exemptions where applicable.

Airport safety issues are considered for both those living and working near an airport as well as those using the airport. The issue of safety compatibility is one of evaluating “risk”, and determining the locations around an airport that are at the greatest risk of experiencing an aircraft accident. Typically accidents occur along the extended runway centerline. Proper safety and airspace protection minimizes the number of people on and off of the airport that are exposed to the risks associated with potential aircraft accidents and avoids flight hazards that interfere with aircraft navigation.

**CEQA**

When preparing an EIR for a project within airport land use plan boundaries or, in the absence of such a plan, within two nautical miles of a public airport or public use airport, a lead agency must use Caltrans’ Handbook (described above) as a technical resource for assessing airport safety hazards and noise problems. (PRC Section 21096; State CEQA Guidelines Section 15154(a).)

Notably, the California Supreme Court, in *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369, recognized that section 21096 created an exception to the general principle that “that agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental conditions on a project’s future users or residents.” The Court explained that, “[a]lthough CEQA does not generally require an evaluation of the effects of existing hazards on future users of the proposed project, it calls for such an analysis in … specific contexts involving certain airport (§ 21096) … projects ….” (62 Cal.4th at p. 391.) “Section 21096 requires a lead agency to use certain technical resources when addressing airport-related safety hazards and noise problems in EIRs for projects near airports (§ 21096, subd. (a)) ….” (62 Cal.4th at p. 391.)
Regional/Local

Monterey County Department of Environment Health-Local Regulatory Agency

The Monterey County Department of Environmental Health is designated by the California Environmental Protection Agency as a Certified Unified Program Agency. As a Certified Unified Program Agency, the Monterey County Department of Environmental Health is responsible, at the local level, for the administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement activities of six state level environmental and emergency response programs, including those that relate specifically to public safety and hazardous materials. The department fields the county’s hazardous materials Emergency Response Team which responds to any hazardous materials incidents that may occur in the county. The Monterey County Department of Environmental Health administers several programs designed to implement these regulations. The programs include the following:

- Hazardous Material Business Plan and Inventory Program;
- Hazardous Waste Generator Program;
- Hazardous Waste Onsite Treatment: Tiered Permitting Program;
- Underground Storage Tank Program;
- California Accidental Release Prevention Program; and
- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tank Program.

As a fundamental component of several of these programs, facilities which generate any quantity of hazardous waste or which handle hazardous materials in amounts greater than 55 gallons for liquids, 500 pounds for solids, and/or 200 cubic feet for compressed gases must prepare a Business Response Plan and Inventory. Business Response Plans must include specific information on hazardous materials handled (inventory), emergency contacts, notification procedures, evacuation plans, training procedures and a site map. Facilities which handle extremely hazardous (regulated materials) may also be required to prepare a Risk Management Plan. A Risk Management Plan must address several issues including types of substances handled, accidental release and chemical-specific prevention, accident history, emergency response program, etc.

Monterey County Office Emergency Services

The Office of Emergency Services is an agency of the County Administrative Office that develops and maintains various emergency plans, including incident response plans for certain types of incidents and coordinated emergency response plans for certain
geographical threat areas. The Office of Emergency Services works in concert with other State and local governments and federal agencies to provide for coordinated and effective multi-agency response and relief during emergency situations.

**Monterey County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan**

The 2014 Monterey County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan was prepared under the oversight of the Office of Emergency Services with a collaborative partnership with the Monterey County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and National Association of Counties. The plan evaluates various hazards in the County, including: agricultural emergencies, coastal erosion, flooding, dam failure, drought, earthquakes, landslides, sea level rise, tsunami, wildland fire, windstorms, and hazardous materials. Vulnerability analysis and capability assessments to identify and mitigate these hazards throughout the County are also discussed. The plan also contains countywide mitigation goals (Table 7.1, p. 7-3) and mitigation actions that incorporate government authorities, policies or codes from local plans and regulations that influence the way land and buildings are developed and built.

Appendix Q of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan includes the City of Salinas’s locally adopted Mitigation Action Plan. The Mitigation Action Plan includes a range of information intended to help direct City resources and actions in the event of an emergency or hazard condition. It includes information on: types and locations of critical facilities (e.g. emergency response, utility, care, educational, and airport facilities); City resources available for responding to a range of hazard and emergency conditions; data on the exposure of critical infrastructure such as roads, railroads, bridges, airports to hazards such as earthquakes, floods, dam failure, hazardous materials events, landslides, and wildland fire; the range of City legal and regulatory tools that address hazards and emergency response; financial resources available to support emergency response actions; and a mitigation action matrix that identifies actions the City is and/or will take to reduce and mitigate identified and potential hazard conditions.

**Monterey County Emergency Evacuation Plan**

Monterey County has designated emergency evacuation routes throughout the county. The evacuation routes are designated and maintained to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people, belongings, and emergency personnel including their support services during times of declared emergencies. These routes include U.S. Highway 101, state highways, several numbered county roads, and various other county roads. These routes are considered “Pre-designated Emergency Evacuation Routes” and may be deployed when necessary.
Monterey County General Plan

The Safety Element of the County of Monterey General Plan contains a range of goals and policies related to minimizing human-related hazardous conditions. Key policies and programs are as follows:

**Policy S-5.2.** The Monterey County Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan shall include general procedures to implement the nationwide National Incident Management System, statewide Standardized Emergency Management System, activate and operate the Operational Area Emergency Operations Center, coordinate responders, and implement other tactical response measures.

City of Salinas General Plan

The Safety Element of the City of Salinas General Plan contains a range of goals and policies related to minimizing human-related hazardous conditions. Key policies and programs are as follows:

**Goal S-3.** Protect the community from hazards related to air and ground transportation, hazardous materials, and air pollution, as well as other human activities.

**Policy S-3.1.** To reduce the risk posed by air pollution, work with responsible federal, state, and county agencies to decrease air pollution emissions occurring within the air basin.

**Policy S-3.2.** Ensure that hazardous materials used in residential, business and industry are properly handled and that information on their handling and use is available to residents, fire protection and other safety agencies.

**Policy S-3.3.** Work with federal and state agencies to identify toxic disposal or leakage sites and pursue prompt cleanup.

**Policy S-3.4.** Work with the State, agribusiness and agricultural worker organizations to ensure that agricultural use of pesticides and fertilizers do not negatively affect public health and safety.

**Policy S-3.5.** Limit hazardous waste facilities within the planning area to transfer stations, which shall be limited to the collection, temporary storage, and transfer of small quantity generator and household hazardous waste as specified in the Monterey County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

**Policy S-3.6.** Limit the location of a Hazardous Waste Transfer Station to land designated for General Industrial use and ensure that the station conforms to the siting criteria in the Monterey County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.
Policy S-3.7. Reduce the risk from ground transportation hazards, such as rail, truck, and roadway systems.

Policy S-3.8. Maintain open space adjoining Salinas Municipal Airport as required for safety for both the present runway configurations and for possible future expansions.


Policy S-3.10. Encourage development in the vicinity of the Salinas Municipal Airport that would not cause land use conflicts, hazards to aviation, or hazards to the public and that is in compliance with the California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook.

Policy S-3.11. Ensure that sensitive land uses are not negatively impacted by toxic air contaminant sources, including areas with concentrated diesel exhaust.

Policy LU-12.2. Review development proposals within areas affected by the operation of the airport to ensure airport and land use compatibility, protect the public safety, and allow for continued aviation operations. This includes minimizing residential population increases within the 55 decibel Community Noise Equivalent Level contour.

Policy LU-12.3. As a condition of development approval of projects within the Airport Local Area of Influence (as shown in general plan Figure LU-11), require dedication of an avigation easement. Said avigation easement shall include special provisions for properties within the 1-mile clear zone required for the California International Airshow.

City of Salinas Municipal Code

The municipal code includes standards related to hazardous materials and land use compatibility in the vicinity of the Salinas Municipal Airport. The standards are identified below.

Hazardous Materials

Chapter 16 Health and Sanitation Code, Article X, Hazardous Materials Storage and Registration. Article X provides a continuing source of current information concerning hazardous substances and chemicals being utilized in the City of Salinas to protect the general health and safety of the public and to enable emergency personnel (firefighters, health officials, health care providers, law enforcement agencies and emergency communication officers) to respond safely and speedily to emergency situations which may arise. This includes documentation of storage and use of hazardous materials on a hazardous material registration form for businesses that handles hazardous materials at any time.
during the calendar year. Article X also establishes orderly procedures that will ensure that newly constructed underground storage tanks storing hazardous substances or wastes meet appropriate standards and that existing tanks be properly maintained, inspected, and tested so that the health, property, and resources of the people of the city will be protected.

**Airport Safety**

The project site is within the City of Salinas Municipal Airport Overlay Zone. Regulations for development within the Airport Overlay Zone are included in the municipal code. The regulations are intended to guide new development such that it does not endanger or interfere with the landing, take off, or maneuvering of an aircraft. The regulations are intended to implement direction contained in the *Caltrans Airport Land Use Planning Handbook* (Caltrans 2011). The “Handbook” provides direction for airport planning and land use planning in locations near airports to ensure safety of airport operations. As described therein, lighting and glare from new development is one potential source of safety conflict. These issues are described in Section 5.0, Aesthetics.

Safety impacts from aircraft accidents near airports are typically handled by specifying the types of land uses and thus limiting the number of people who would be exposed to the risk of an accident. The City’s 2002 General Plan planning process included consideration of land use designations assigned to land within the airport area of influence for this reason. The other major safety concern is related to land uses that can create hazards to flight. Airspace protection primarily involves limitations on the height of objects on the ground near airports. Salinas Municipal Code, Chapter 37, Article IV, Overlay District Regulations, Division 7 includes several applicable regulations designed to address hazards to flight related to airspace protection. Section 37-40.420. (a) Development Review Applications, Structures, and Vegetation applies to development review applications, structures, and vegetation if located on or proposed for land situated within the “area of influence” of the Salinas municipal airport. It also applies to tall structures included in applications for construction or alteration of a structure (including antennas, poles, or towers) higher than two hundred feet above ground level at a site, regardless of the site’s location within the City. Any such structure must comply with the requirements of the Salinas Municipal Code, Chapter 4, Public Facilities, Article VII: Airport.

Section 37-40.430 states that any development review application identified in Section 37-40.420(a) or (b) shall be reviewed by the deputy city manager, or their designee, to ensure conformance with the Salinas Municipal Code, Chapter 4, Public Facilities, Article VII: Airport, prior to approval by the applicable reviewing body. Section 37-40.450 requires the dedication of an avigation easement from any property located in the Salinas Municipal Airport “area of influence” as a condition of approval of any development review.
application to protect the airport airspace from objects which could constitute hazards to air navigation, and to inform future owners and prospective purchasers of the property that aircraft may fly over the location at low altitudes while approaching, departing, or maneuvering near the associated airport.

### 12.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of hazards and hazardous materials, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on these subjects, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;
- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment (during operation or construction);
- Be located within an airport land use plan, or where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport, public use airport, or private airstrip, and result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area; or
- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

The Appendix G questions on the subject of hazards and hazardous materials also give rise to additional thresholds that are not relevant to the proposed project. Under these thresholds, significant effects would occur if a proposed project would:

- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within a quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;
- Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment; and
12.0 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.

As described in the Environmental Setting section, there are no schools within a quarter mile of the project site, the project site does not contain a known hazardous materials site, and there is no wildfire risk within or adjacent to the project site. No further discussion of these topics is required.

12.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section includes information and data regarding hazards and hazardous materials that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

Routine Transport, Use, or Disposal and/or Accidental Release of Hazardous Materials

Construction and operations of projects, particularly the travel center and possibly future industrial uses within parcels 3 and 4, could involve transport, use, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous materials. The travel center project planned on parcel 2 includes installation of below ground fuel storage tanks. These materials could include, but not be limited to, lubricants, solvents, gasoline, diesel, propane, and other types of fuel. Hazards could arise due to the accidental release of such materials that could result in contamination of air, soil, and/or water; explosions; fires; etc.

The federal and state regulations with which future development within the project site must comply are designed to minimize risks to public health and safety and to the environment from the accidental release of hazardous materials. Installation and operation of the proposed underground storage tanks associated with the travel center will require registration, permitting, and periodic inspections. As a Certified Unified Program Agency, the Monterey County Environmental Health Department will be responsible for ensuring that future projects/facilities planned within the project site will comply with these regulations such that risks to public safety and the environment would be minimized.

Agricultural Chemical Residue Exposure

Agricultural production has been the predominant historical land use activity within the project site. Previous agricultural practices may have resulted in accumulation of agricultural chemical residues in surface soils. If potentially harmful levels of agricultural chemicals are present, grading and earthmoving activities could expose construction workers and the general public to contaminated soils that pose a health risk.
Lead Exposure

It is possible that high concentrations of aerially deposited lead are located within the portions of the project site located adjacent to U.S. Highway 101. Lead is a known carcinogen and its release during grading or other ground disturbing activities could pose hazards to public health and safety.

Safety Hazards - Salinas Municipal Airport Operations

The project site is within the City of Salinas Municipal Airport Overlay Zone. Regulations for development within the Airport Overlay Zone are included in the municipal code. The regulations are intended to guide new development such that it does not endanger or interfere with the landing, take off, or maneuvering of an aircraft. The regulations are intended to implement direction contained in the Caltrans Airport Land Use Planning Handbook. Airport operations safety issues related to lighting and glare from new development are discussed in Section 5.0, Aesthetics.

The project site is within the Salinas Municipal Airport areas of influence. Development standards identified in the Salinas Airport Overlay District apply to new development proposed within the project site. The site plans for the proposed hotel and travel center show that no proposed structures (buildings, signage, etc.) would exceed the 200 feet in height, the height limit identified in in Chapter 37, Article IV, Division 7, as well as Chapter 4, Article VII, Airport, of the Salinas Municipal Code. Further, as a condition of approval, new development within the project site will be required to provide an avigation easement to address safety concerns as identified in municipal code section 37-40.450.

Development within this district is also subject to applicable state and federal FAA regulations. The proposed specific plan identifies that the project site is within the airport area of influence and that standards applicable to within an Airport Overlay District as contained in municipal code Chapter 37, Article IV, Division 7.

Interference with an Adopted Emergency Response Plan

The Monterey County General Plan Safety Element identifies emergency evacuation routes throughout the county. These routes include U.S. Highway 101, state highways, several numbered county roads, and various other county roads. These routes are considered “Pre-designated Emergency Evacuation Routes” and may be deployed when necessary. The project site is located adjacent to or near several of the emergency access routes; however, the proposed project would not physically interfere with use of any emergency evacuation routes. The project would also not interfere with implementation of the City’s Mitigation Action Plan which is included in the County of Monterey Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
12.5 **Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures**

**Impact**

New Development within the Project Site Could Pose Minimal Hazards to the Public or Environment from Routine Transport, Use, Disposal and/or Accidental Release of Hazardous Materials during Construction or Operations (Less than Significant)

Construction and operations of development within the project site will involve transport, use, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous materials. The potential exists that such materials could be accidentally released into the environment, thereby causing risks to public health and safety. The potential for such activities to result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment would be effectively managed through adherence to existing regulations and compliance with the safety procedures mandated by applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

**Construction**

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would involve transportation, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and petroleum products commonly used at construction sites (such as diesel fuel, lubricants, paints and solvents, and cement products containing strong basic or acidic chemicals). Standard accident and hazardous materials recovery training and procedures, enforced by the state and followed by private state-licensed, certified, and bonded transportation companies and contractors, reduce the potential for hazards associated with this routine use. Hazardous materials would be transported to the project area according to applicable hazardous materials transport and handling laws and regulations (such as the DOT Office of Hazardous Materials Safety regulations for the safe transportation of hazardous materials described in Title 49 of the CFR), and would only be stored in proper containers within a secured construction staging area. Hazardous wastes (including used oil, used oil filters, used gasoline containers, spent batteries, and other items) would be collected regularly and disposed of in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Further, pursuant to 40 CFR 112, a spill prevention, containment, and countermeasures plan or, for smaller quantities, a spill prevention and response plan, that identifies BMPs for spill and release prevention and provides procedures and responsibilities for rapidly, effectively, and safely cleaning up and disposing of any spills or releases would be established for the project. As required under state and federal law, plans for notification and evacuation of site workers and local residents in the event of a hazardous materials release would be in place throughout construction. Inspections would be conducted to verify consistent implementation of general construction permit conditions and BMPs to avoid and minimize the potential for spills and releases, and of the immediate cleanup and response thereto. BMPs include, for example, the designation of special storage areas and labeling, containment berms, coverage from rain, and concrete washout areas. Compliance with
various federal, state, and local regulations would minimize the risk of a spill or accidental release of hazardous materials. The Monterey County Environmental Health Department is responsible for implementing these regulations.

**Operations**

As described above for construction, conformance with DOT Office of Hazardous Materials Safety regulations for the safe transportation of hazardous materials described in Title 49 of the CFR and with hazardous materials spill requirements pursuant to 40 CFR 112 would be required to help prevent and respond to hazardous materials spills should they occur. In addition, federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards are listed in 29 CFR 1910. CFR Chapter 29, Sections 1910 (General Industry) and 1026 (Construction), promulgate regulations for the preparation of Health and Safety Plans. Health and Safety Plans identify potential hazards associated with a proposed land use and may provide appropriate mitigation measures as required. Through the California EPA, the Monterey County Environmental Health Department implements this regulation at the local level through its role as the designated Certified Unified Program Agency. Transportation risks associated with the transport of hazardous materials are minimized through transportation operator required compliance with federal regulations as implemented in the state through regulations contained in 26 CCR. In addition, the State regulates the transportation of hazardous waste originating in the state and passing through the state, with enforcement through the California Highway Patrol and the California Department of Transportation.

The Monterey County Environmental Health Department will also review the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan for the proposed above-ground storage tanks to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations. These are contained in California Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act (Health & Safety Code § 25270 et seq.) the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, part 112 (40CFR112).

The suite of regulations summarized above and discussed in more detail in the previous Regulatory Setting section are designed to minimize risks associated with all forms of hazardous materials transportation, handling, storage, and disposal, as well as avoiding risks associated with existing hazardous materials conditions. The regulations identify procedures to be followed by operations that are subject to the regulations, identify performance measures that must be met to demonstrate compliance with the regulations, and identify monitoring/licensing requirements as mechanisms to verify compliance.

Adherence to existing regulations and compliance with the safety procedures mandated by federal, state, and local laws and regulations identified in the Regulatory Section above would minimize the risks resulting from the routine transportation, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes associated with construction and implementation of the proposed project to a less than significant level.
IMPACT Pose Hazards to Public Health or the Environment from Exposure to Agricultural Chemical Residues in Site Soils during Construction (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Site preparation and construction activities associated with new development within the project site will include grading, excavations and other forms of ground disturbance. If agricultural chemicals are present in site soils, these activities could result in their release, thereby causing risk to public health and safety. A multitude of agricultural chemicals (e.g. pesticides/insecticides) may have historically been utilized at the site. The Phase 1 environmental site assessment conducted for the travel center project within parcel 2 identified this concern as a recognized environmental condition that warrants further analysis. Phase 1 environmental site assessments have not been prepared to identify this or other potential environmental conditions within the remainder of the project site. Risks to public health and safety could be significant lacking more detailed information about the character of this hazard.

This potentially significant impact would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of the following mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measure

HAZ-1 Prior to the issuance of grading permits for development within parcels 1, 3 and 4, developers of individual projects shall prepare Phase I Environmental Site Assessments to determine the potential for or actual presence of agricultural chemical residues that could pose a risk to the public health or workers. If potential or actual hazardous materials conditions are identified that require preparation of Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, future individual project developers shall be responsible for conducting the assessments and for implementing all recommendations and requirements for remediation of hazardous materials conditions identified therein. Performance standards in the form of Environmental Screening Levels utilized by the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board and identified in the *User’s Guide: Derivation and Application of Environmental Screening Levels* will be used to determine whether hazardous material conditions that pose a threat to public health and safety are present and as a guide for clean-up levels that must be attained to remediate such conditions. Hazardous materials removed from the site shall be managed consistent with regulations contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Division 4.5. Certification that remediation actions have been completed shall be provided to the City of Salinas Community Development Director prior to issuance of a grading permit.

HAZ-2 Prior to the issuance of grading permits for development within parcel 2, the project developer shall prepare a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. If
hazardous materials conditions related to agricultural chemical residues in site soils are found that pose a threat to public health and safety, the project developer shall implement all remediation actions identified in the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. Performance standards in the form of Environmental Screening Levels utilized by the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board and identified in the *User’s Guide: Derivation and Application of Environmental Screening Levels* will be used to determine whether hazardous material conditions that pose a threat to public health and safety are present and as an initial guide for clean-up levels that must be attained to remediate such conditions. Hazardous materials removed from the site shall be managed consistent with regulations contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Division 4.5. Certification that remediation actions have been completed shall be provided to the City of Salinas Community Development Director.

Implementation of mitigation measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2 would reduce significant impacts by requiring developers to prepare a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment to determine whether agricultural chemical residues are present and a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment if agricultural chemical residues are present. The site assessments would include recommendations and standards for remediating any hazardous materials conditions consistent with the applicable regulatory requirements that pertain to the particular hazardous materials condition(s) identified in the site assessments. As part of its development review process for individual projects as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process, the City of Salinas would require that the remediation actions be implemented. Remediation actions could also require review and discretionary approvals by one or more responsible agencies (e.g. the California Department of Toxic Substances Control for transport and disposal of contaminated soil) where approvals could include conditions placed on the remediation process to ensure protection of public health and safety and protection of environmental resources. These conditions would also need to be satisfied prior to approval of a building permit.

**IMPACT** Hazards to Public Health or the Environment from Exposure to Aerially Deposited Lead in Soils Located along U.S. Highway 101 that may be Disturbed by Construction Activities (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Site preparation and construction activities associated with new development within the project site will include grading, excavations and other forms of ground disturbance. If aerially deposited lead is present in site soils, particularly those located nearest U.S. Highway 101, these activities could result in its release, thereby causing risk to public health and safety. To ascertain whether lead concentrations are present that warrant special treatment/remediation during site preparation activities, testing and analysis of the soils is needed prior to initiation of ground disturbing activities.
This potentially significant impact would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of the following mitigation measure.

**Mitigation Measure**

HAZ-3  Prior to the issuance of grading permits for development, developers of individual projects within the project site that are located adjacent to U.S. Highway 101 shall retain a certified industrial hygienist or similar licensed professional to provide evidence about the potential presence of aerially deposited lead in soils within the individual project boundaries. If evidence suggests the presence of aerially deposited lead, developers shall retain a qualified expert to conduct soil testing for aerially deposited lead in locations where project grading and excavations may have potential to result in release of this material. The testing scope should include preparation of a site-specific work plan specifying surface sample or soil boring locations, sample collection, laboratory analysis, and preparation of findings, and recommendations. The testing report must identify lead concentrations in such locations and whether the lead concentration exceeds the Environmental Screening Level for lead identified in the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board’s *User’s Guide: Derivation and Application of Environmental Screening Levels*. The Environmental Screening Level will be used as a guide for clean-up levels that must be attained to remediate contamination if such exists and exceeds the Environmental Screening Level. Hazardous materials removed from the site shall be managed consistent with regulations contained in California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Division 4.5. The testing program and remediation plans (as needed) will be completed prior to initiation of ground disturbance activities in locations where the expert has deemed that testing for aerially deposited lead is warranted. If remediation is needed in specific locations, the remediation process will also be completed prior to initiation of project related ground disturbance activities in those locations.

HAZ-4  If the aerially deposited lead testing program identified in mitigation measure HAZ-3 identifies the presence of hazardous concentrations of lead in soils to be excavated or graded, project developers shall prepare and implement a worker health and safety plan training program. To avoid health effects on construction personnel, all personnel who may come in contact with contaminated soil will be trained in accordance with applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards contained in California Code of Regulations Title 8, Section 5192 (e), Training. A site-specific worker health and safety plan defining potential contaminants and, where appropriate, proper personnel protective equipment will be employed. Worker training will be completed prior to initiation of ground disturbance in the hazard areas.
Implementation of mitigation measures HAZ-3 and HAZ-4 requires developers of sites adjacent to U.S. Highway 101 to provide testing for aerially deposited lead in soils prior to the issuance of grading permits for development. If lead is detected, remediation and worker training will be required prior to site disturbance in the hazard areas. These measures will reduce potential impacts of public or environmental exposure to lead by ensuring that lead contaminated soils are identified and remediated, and construction workers are trained consistent with applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards. Remediation actions could also require review and discretionary approvals by responsible agencies (e.g. disposal of contaminated soil) where approvals could include conditions placed on the remediation process to ensure protection of public health and safety and protection of environmental resources. These conditions would also need to be satisfied prior to approval of a building permit.

**IMPACT Hazards to Public Safety from Operations of the Salinas Municipal Airport (Less than Significant)**

The proposed project would result in new development within the Salinas Municipal Airport area of influence. The safety of the public/employees within the project site and/or the safety of airport operations could be compromised if new development creates land use conflicts with airport operations. The hotel and travel center site plans and site plan review applications have been evaluated to determine if potential land use incompatibilities may exist that would interfere with airport operations. Hotel and travel center characteristics such as lighting, glare, building height, and noise compatibility have been reviewed in the context of development regulations contained in Salinas Municipal Code Chapter 4, Public Facilities, Article VII, Airport, and in Chapter 37, Division 7, Article IV Airport Overlay District. No incompatibilities were identified. In combination with the fact that implementation of new development must be consistent with these regulations, potential public safety hazards will be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.
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13.0 Hydrology and Water Quality

This section includes evaluation of watershed and surface water and groundwater quality conditions that could be affected by development within the project site. Project effects from changes to existing drainage patterns, generation of storm water runoff, discharge of storm water and resulting effects on surface water and groundwater quality, and placing new development in flood hazard areas are examined. Effects on the groundwater basin associated with the use of groundwater resources and groundwater recharge are discussed in Section 18.0, Water Supply. Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- *Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002b);
- *City of Salinas Stormwater Management Plan Update* (City of Salinas 2013) (SWMP);
- *City of Salinas Stormwater Development Standards for New and Redevelopment Projects* (RBF Consulting 2013) (SWDS);
- Fact Sheet/Rationale Technical Report for Order No. R3-2012-0005, NPDES Permit No. CA0049981 Waste Discharge Requirements for City of Salinas Municipal Storm Water Discharges (Central California Regional Water Quality Control Board 2012); and

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

No specific comments regarding flooding or surface water and groundwater quality issues were received on the NOP.
13.1 **ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

Regional Setting

Storm Water Hydrology

The city is located within the Salinas River watershed. Locally, four major creeks and several minor tributaries pass through the Salinas area and receive storm water discharges from development within the city and from lands adjacent to the city that are in agricultural production. Santa Rita Creek carries storm water discharges from a small portion of the city to the Espinosa Slough. Alisal Creek becomes the Reclamation Ditch. Natividad and Gabilan creeks flow through the northeastern portion of the city to Carr Lake. Carr Lake has functioned historically to attenuate spring flood flows in Natividad and Gabilan creeks, and continues to function as a large retention basin in the center of the city. Flows leave Carr Lake via the Reclamation Ditch.

Under existing conditions, storm water runoff is generated when rain falls on impervious surfaces and on pervious surfaces such as soil when the rainfall intensity exceeds the rate at which the rainfall can infiltrate into the soil. Within the city, storm water is collected within the existing system of storm drainage collection, conveyance, and retention/detention basin facilities. Storm water that does not infiltrate back into the soil/groundwater is discharged directly or indirectly into receiving waters, the most notable of which are the Reclamation Ditch and the Salinas River. Most storm water generated in the city is ultimately discharged to the Reclamation Ditch. Storm water generated in the southernmost portion of the city drains towards, and is pumped into, the Salinas River.

The Reclamation Ditch is an important flood control/storm water management feature that traverses through the city. It is a man-made drainage channel system that was primarily constructed in the early 1900s to drain lands for agricultural purposes. Urban areas of the city have become dependent on the Reclamation Ditch system for flood protection. The upstream end of the Reclamation Ditch is in Smith Lake to the north and east of the city. It then drains through Heinz Lake to the east, then through Carr Lake in the center of the city (Central California Regional Water Quality Control Board 2012). Flood flow and storm water exit the downstream portion of Carr Lake through a continuation of the Reclamation Ditch. The Reclamation Ditch ultimately discharges into the Trembladero Slough, which then empties into the Monterey Bay.

The Reclamation Ditch passes north of the project site and north of Roy Diaz Street. Refer back to **Figure 3-2, Aerial Photograph**, for the location of this feature.

Storm Water Quality

Water quality objectives for all waters in the State of California are established under applicable provisions of Section 303 of the Federal Clean Water Act and the state Porter-
Cologne Water Quality Control Act as described in the Regulatory Setting below. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards are charged with implementing Clean Water Act requirements within California. The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (regional board) has found that water quality and beneficial uses of water bodies in the vicinity of the city are impaired by various pollutants, including nitrate, ammonia, turbidity, enterococcus, E. coli, fecal coliform, pesticides, priority organics, PCBs, chlorpyrifos, diazinon, toxaphene, dieldrin, copper, low dissolved oxygen, temperature, pH, electrical conductivity, total dissolved solids, sodium, chloride, sediment toxicity, and unknown toxicity. In addition, the Clean Water Act section 303(d) list of impaired water bodies indicates that water bodies in the Salinas River watershed downstream of the City’s storm water discharges are impaired for the following pollutants: nutrients, nitrate, ammonia (unionized), chlorophyll-a, turbidity, total coliform, enterococcus, E. coli, fecal coliform, pesticides, chlorpyrifos; diazinon, low dissolved oxygen, pH, sediment toxicity, and unknown toxicity (Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board 2012).

**Agricultural and Urban Sources of Surface Water Pollution**

Agricultural practices impact watershed processes by altering runoff and flow characteristics of the landscape. Grading and vegetation removal affect the landscape’s capacity to hold soil and capture runoff and release it through infiltration and evapotranspiration. Stream channel alterations and riparian vegetation removal impacts flow regimes, habitat functions, and the capacity of the watershed to attenuate pollutants. Irrigated agricultural practices further alter flow regimes through groundwater extraction and release of excess irrigation water as non-storm water discharge. Groundwater extraction also depletes aquifers and contributes to salt water intrusion into groundwater as described in Section 18.0, Water Supply.

Agricultural practices are severely degrading water quality, aquatic habitat, and several beneficial uses in the Salinas River Watershed. Storm water and non-storm water discharges from agricultural lands result in significant nitrate pollution in receiving waters and groundwater due to fertilizer use, as well as severe receiving water and sediment toxicity resulting from pesticide use and other practices. In addition, agricultural lands discharge sediment due to erosion.

While it is clear that the agricultural practices surrounding the city are significant sources of impacts to water quality and watershed processes, there is evidence that storm water discharges from the City’s storm water system are also significant sources of pollutants that cause or may be causing or threatening to cause or contribute to water quality impairment in the Reclamation Ditch and Salinas River. Urban development in the Salinas River Watershed creates new pollution sources as human population density increases and brings with it proportionately higher levels of car emissions, car maintenance wastes, municipal sewage,
pesticides, household hazardous wastes, pet wastes, trash, and other anthropogenic pollutants, which can either be washed or directly dumped into the storm water system. As a result, the runoff leaving the developed portions of Salinas is significantly greater in pollutant load than would have been the pre-development runoff from natural, undeveloped and uncultivated land. Impervious surfaces collect these pollutants instead of allowing them to be filtered through vegetation or soil and storm water transports them into the storm water system. Pollutants can then be discharged from the municipal system into receiving waters, and eventually transported in the receiving waters to downstream habitats and into Monterey Bay. The regional board has found that there is a reasonable potential that municipal storm water discharges cause, or may cause or contribute to water quality standards being exceeded.

Increased impervious surfaces and storm drainage improvements designed to remove storm water as quickly as possible result in runoff flow rates, volumes, and durations that are elevated above pre-developed levels if storm water detention/retention or sufficient low-impact development (LID) best management practices (BMPs) are not provided. Increased runoff flow rate, volume, and duration impact important watershed processes, such as downstream flow regimes, stream channel stability, and groundwater recharge (Central California Regional Water Quality Control Board 2012).

As quoted in the SWMP, agricultural lands receive higher levels of known poisons than any other landscape in the state. Farm chemicals drain into ditch systems which ultimately empty into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Urban runoff is a lesser source of surface water pollution in the Salinas Valley than are farm sources (City of Salinas 2013).

**Groundwater Quality**

The lower Salinas River watershed overlies the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. Groundwater is the source for most of the urban and agricultural water needs in the Salinas Valley. An ongoing imbalance between the rate of groundwater withdrawal and recharge has resulted in overdraft conditions in the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin that have allowed seawater from Monterey Bay to intrude inland approximately six miles into the 180-foot deep aquifer and approximately two miles into the 400-foot deep aquifer, the two main aquifers from which water supply is extracted. Aquifers infiltrated with seawater are largely unusable for either agricultural or municipal purposes. Historically, the stratified coastal aquifers were supplied freshwater by aquifer flows from the upper Salinas River Valley. At present, groundwater recharge is accomplished primarily through infiltration through the bed of the Salinas River. As a result, pollutants in city storm water that discharges to the Salinas River have the potential to enter groundwater. In addition, flow regimes associated with development (e.g., higher flows of shorter duration than occur under predevelopment conditions) have the potential to reduce groundwater recharge and increase seawater intrusion. Urbanization has altered groundwater recharge regimes through the construction of impermeable surfaces (Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board 2012).
Further discussion regarding groundwater quality conditions related to seawater intrusion and to groundwater recharge can be found in Section 18.0, Water Supply.

**City of Salinas Municipal Storm Drainage System**

The City of Salinas municipal storm drainage system consists of a series of gravity-drained pipes and inlets, and outfalls that flow to nearby receiving waters and detention basins. Each of these inlets and outfalls is coded with a unique number corresponding to the drainage basin it empties into, and is stored in the Salinas GIS Watershed Characteristics data layers. As noted previously, storm water collected from most of the city is discharged either directly or indirectly into the Reclamation Ditch, but storm water from the southerly portion of the city is diverted and pumped into the Salinas River via a 66-inch corrugated metal outfall pipe.

Detention basins are employed throughout the city as part of its flood control and storm drain system. Many of these basins are contained within city parks. Detention basins also provide limited water quality benefits. Since most municipal detention basins drain into the Reclamation Ditch, which extends beyond the City’s boundaries into the unincorporated Monterey County, basins are designed to meet Monterey County standards. Studies throughout California have shown that through designs that detain surface flow (for two-year flood events at a minimum) water is filtered as it percolates through soil layers, and many pollutants may be removed. Detention basins are designed to handle 10-year flood events and function primarily to ameliorate flows and reduce the cost and size of downstream storm water infrastructure (City of Salinas 2013).

The City of Salinas makes improvements to and maintains the storm drainage system as part of its capital improvements program and collects storm drainage impact fees from new development for this purpose. New development is conditioned to provide storm drainage facilities consistent with City’s SWDS to ensure that the system is consistent with water quality requirements and post-development runoff leaving the site is limited to the pre-existing (before the effects of humans) and also complies with the City’s Floodplain Ordinance.

**Flood Hazard Conditions**

*Flood Hazard Zones*

Storm water runoff from the Gabilan Mountains poses one of the greatest flood risks to Salinas. Overflows from the Salinas River pose a lesser risk due to its distance from the city limits. Runoff from the Gabilan Mountains can pass quickly through cultivated farmlands, picking up sediments and exacerbating risks. The primary flood path from upstream areas draining the Gabilan Range is through several local creeks and through Carr Lake. For decades, Carr Lake has protected Salinas from flooding. However, extreme rainfall events have overtopped lake banks.
Carr Lake substantially contains flood events smaller than the 25-year flood. For larger storms this is not the case. In 1998, Salinas experienced a 33-year flood event. Areas immediately surrounding Carr Lake, such as Sherwood Lake Mobile Home Park, experienced flooding. During the 1998 storm, waters breached U.S. Highway 101 and Natividad Creek. During a 100-year flood, these areas would also be inundated. A 100-year flood would significantly affect areas southeast and west of Carr Lake. Areas to the south and east of the city also have potential to be impacted by flood events, as do areas along Gabilan and Natividad creeks. Flood waters also carry pollutants that adversely affect receiving waters (City of Salinas 2013).

Flood hazards also exist along the several streams that drain the Gabilan Range, including Gabilan and Natividad creeks.

**Tsunami, Seiche, and Mudflow Conditions**

The city is protected from tsunamis due to its inland location. However, tanks, reservoirs and seasonal lakes in the city are enclosed bodies of water that are subject to oscillation, or seiches, during earthquakes. The hazard is dependent upon specific earthquake parameters, and the degree of damage due to seiches is likely to be minor (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002b).

**Project Site Setting**

**Surface Water Conditions**

The project site does not contain areas of permanent surface water. The only surface water/storm water feature within parcels 1 through 4 is a storm drainage ditch that traverses through parcel 2. It is described in more detail below.

Land within parcels 1 – 4 is undeveloped. Land within parcels 1 and 2 was formerly in agricultural production and is currently vacant. Land within parcels 3 and 4 is currently in agricultural production. Under existing conditions, storm water with these areas generally either percolates to groundwater or migrates by sheet flow to the nearest improved or unimproved storm water conveyance then on to the nearest receiving waters. The project site is tributary to the Reclamation Ditch, located parallel to and north of adjacent Roy Diaz Street. The Reclamation Ditch system is generally deficient in capacity, and flooding may occur in 25-year rainfall events or larger.

As described in the draft specific plan, land within parcels 1 – 4 is nearly 100 percent pervious surface, with a small portion of parcel 3 containing part of the Roy Diaz Street cul-de-sac, which is impervious surface. Parcels 1 and 2 drain to the manmade storm drainage ditch that meanders northeasterly through parcel 2 until it discharges into a 24-inch concrete pipe that outfalls into the Reclamation Ditch. Figure 13-1, Parcel 2 Drainage, shows this feature. Parcel 1 drains into this swale via an 18-inch culvert under De La Torre.
Figure 13-1

Drainage Feature

Source: City of Salinas 2016, Esri 2016, Google 2016

Note: Ditch segment length (L) and width (W) shown in feet; width indicates the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM).
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Parcels 3 and 4 drain into a manmade storm drainage swale that runs adjacent to a farm road along the southern boundary of parcel 4. This swale meanders in a northeasterly direction along the farm road until it discharges into the Reclamation Ditch through a culvert under a farm road running parallel with the Reclamation Ditch. The portion of the Roy Diaz Street cul-de-sac located on parcel 3 drains in a northwesterly direction along the roadway until the intersection with U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A where field inlets on either side of the ramp collect water and discharge into the Reclamation Ditch via a 24-inch pipe that runs under Roy Diaz Street. Shallow man-made ditches are also located adjacent to the existing highway ramps. These features are located within the Caltrans right-of-way and are intended only to convey storm water from the on-ramps. These ditches will not be affected by the proposed project and are therefore not discussed further.

**Contribution to Water Quality Degradation**

Surface runoff from parcels 3 and 4, the portions of the project site that remain in agricultural production, is likely to contain residues of agricultural chemicals applied to row crops grown in this area. As described above, that runoff indirectly drains to the Reclamation Ditch, which in turn ultimately discharges to the Monterey Bay. Surface water discharge from the project site contributes to degradation of water quality in receiving waters, including the Reclamation Ditch and Monterey Bay. Surface water quality degradation from agricultural chemicals is a regional issue as described previously, to which existing agricultural operations at the site contributes.

**Flood Hazard Zones**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s FEMA Flood Map Service Center was used to identify flood hazard boundaries within the project site (Federal Emergency Management Agency 2009). Figure 13-2, Flood Hazard Zones, shows that locations along the southern margin of parcel 4 are located within flood hazard Zone A, with the remainder of the project site within Zone X. Zone A depicts areas where the base flood elevation has not been determined, but have a one-percent annual chance of flooding (100-year flood). Areas within Zone A are subject to the City’s flood management regulations as described in the Regulatory Setting section below. Zone X depicts areas with less than a one-percent annual chance of flooding. The City’s flood management regulations do not require special considerations for development within this zone. For information purposes only, the off-site Reclamation Ditch is shown as being within Zone AE, which denotes a regulatory floodway. This zone and the flood management regulations that apply to it do not affect future development within the project site.
13.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Federal, State, County and City regulations and standards related to hydrology and water quality that are germane to the proposed project are summarized below.

Federal

Clean Water Act and State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

Water quality objectives for all waters in the State of California are established under applicable provisions of Section 303 of the Federal Clean Water Act and the state Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. These laws seek to control the addition of point source and non-point source pollutants to surface waters and to protect the integrity of wetlands. Section 303 of the Clean Water Act requires states to adopt water quality standards for all surface waters. Section 304(a) requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to publish water quality criteria that accurately reflect the latest scientific knowledge on the kind and extent of all effects on health and welfare that may be expected from the presence of pollutants in the water.

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969 established the SWRCB and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards. The new SWRCB merged the functions of two previous Boards: the State Water Quality Control Board and the State Water Rights Board. The former had its roots in the late 1940s, when legislators created a streamlined regulatory agency to address rising water quality problems with the state’s explosive industrial and population growth. A water rights commission, which preceded the water rights board, was created in the early 1900s to arbitrate and resolve the state’s water battles, which began during the 1849 Gold Rush.

The SWRCB and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards are responsible for assuring implementation and compliance with the provisions of the Clean Water Act and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Salinas falls within Region 3 -- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control, which sets water quality standards, issues waste discharge requirements, determines compliance with those requirements, and takes enforcement action. The regional board developed a water quality control plan for the central coast basin that protects water quality through the designation of beneficial uses, establishment of water quality objectives, and administration of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program for storm water and construction site runoff.

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act as promulgated by the SWRCB and the regional boards, the NPDES program is designed to require municipal storm water systems to reduce the discharge of pollutants in storm water to the maximum extent practicable and to protect water quality and beneficial uses.
The City is required to obtain NPDES permit coverage to comply with Clean Water Act requirements for water quality protection. The City has obtained coverage from the regional board per Order No. R3-2012-0005, NPDES Permit No. CA0049981 Waste Discharge Requirements for City of Salinas Municipal Storm Water Discharges, which guides post-construction storm water quality management.

NPDES permits are required for several categories of storm water dischargers, including for cities that operate storm water management systems (e.g. roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, human-made channels, and storm drains) that collect, convey, and discharge storm water to surface water bodies. Issued in five-year terms, an NPDES permit usually contains components such as discharge prohibitions, effluent limitations, and necessary specifications and provisions to ensure proper treatment, storage, and disposal of storm water discharges.

As noted in the Environmental Setting section above, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (regional board) has found that water quality and beneficial uses of water bodies in the vicinity of the city are impaired by various pollutants. In addition, the Clean Water Act section 303(d) list of impaired water bodies indicates that water bodies in the Salinas River watershed downstream of the City’s storm water discharges are impaired for a range of pollutants. In light of this fact, the permit requires the City to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable and protect water quality and beneficial uses, including storm water discharge from the commercial, industrial, and residential components of the City’s storm water system. The permit includes specific performance requirements for these components, as well as a host of other components of the system.

Projects that create and/or replace 2,000 square feet or more of impervious surface collectively over a project site are generally considered as regulated projects under NPDES requirements. All regulated project must submit a stormwater control plan and practice BMPs such as source control such as LID, site design, and storm water treatment in accordance with the NPDES permit. The goal of LID per the City’s NPDES permit is to reduce runoff by minimizing disturbed areas and impervious coverage and then infiltrating, storing, detaining, evapotranspiring and/or bio-retaining storm water runoff close to its source. Practices used to adhere to these LID principals include measures such as rain barrels and cisterns, green roofs, permeable pavement, preserving undeveloped open space, and biotreatment through rain gardens, bio-retention units, bio-swales, and planter/tree boxes.

Storm water from developed sites generally will be greater in volume and runoff velocity than under pre-development conditions where land is in a natural or semi-natural state. Changes in the rate or volume of storm water delivered into receiving waters can result in modification of downstream drainage courses (“hydromodification”), resulting in erosion and related sedimentation impacts. NPDES stipulations include a requirement that post-
project runoff rates should not exceed pre-development runoff rates. This is intended to minimize potential for an increase in flow rates in receiving waters that can result in hydromodification.

Construction activity on projects that disturb one or more acres of soil, or less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acre, must obtain coverage under a Construction General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity per NPDES requirements. 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 Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP). A SWPPP should contain a site map(s) that shows the construction site perimeter, existing and proposed buildings, lots, roadways, storm water collection and discharge points, general topography (both before and after construction), and drainage patterns across the project. The SWPPP must list measures that will be used to protect storm water runoff and how those measures will be placed within a project site. Additionally, the SWPPP contains a visual monitoring program and testing to be implemented depending on the risk level.

The City’s NPDES permit requires source control measures and erosion control, when applicable, to be implemented by any construction activity regardless of size. The City categorizes projects as high and low priority depending on various factors including size, proximity to creeks, height of slopes, etc. All sites/projects which disturb the ground must provide erosion and sediment control plans and all construction sites regardless of ground disturbance must comply with required construction BMPs such as source control (i.e. trash collection, concrete washouts, etc.).

**Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Program**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers programs to address flood hazards. FEMA manages the National Flood Insurance Program for this purpose. The program provides federal flood insurance and federally financed loans for property owners in flood prone areas. For local property owners to qualify for federal flood insurance, the flood hazard areas are identified by FEMA and the City implements a system of protective controls, emergency procedures and distributes informational literature which ranks the City’s preparedness in FEMA’s rating system and provides discounts to residents with flood insurance. For this purpose, FEMA produces Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that define areas subject to inundation by flooding. Protective controls that must be implemented by project applicants to reduce flood hazards and damage to projects they proposed are generally incorporated onto a flood hazard management program and general plan policies of local jurisdictions. These tools assist cities in mitigating flooding hazards through land use planning and building permit requirements that must be implemented by applicants for projects located in specific flood hazard areas. The City’s flood hazard management program is described below.
State

California Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams

The State of California supervises all non-federal dams in California through the Dam Safety Program under the jurisdiction of the Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams. The Division of Safety of Dams engineers and engineering geologists review and approve plans and specifications for the design of dams and oversee their construction to ensure compliance with the approved plans and specifications. Reviews include site geology, seismic setting, site investigations, construction material evaluation, dam stability, hydrology, hydraulics, and structural review of appurtenant structures. In addition, the Division of Safety of Dams engineers inspect over 1,200 dams on a yearly schedule to ensure they are performing and being maintained in a safe manner.

The Nacimiento and San Antonio dams are located in south Monterey County. Their condition and management is the responsibility of the Division of Safety and Dams.

Regional/Local

Monterey County Water Resources Agency

The Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) oversees the development and implementation of water quality, water supply, and flood control projects in Monterey County, including operation and maintenance of the Reclamation Ditch.

City of Salinas General Plan

The general plan contains policies and implementation actions which address hydrology and water quality consistent with regulatory requirements, and whose implementation may serve as mitigation for significant impacts. These include the following:

- **Policy COS-1.6.** Enforce national (NPDES) requirements and participate in regional efforts to protect and enhance water quality.

- **Policy LU-8.1.** Actively coordinate and work with MCWRA to provide and maintain necessary flood control facilities.

- **Policy LU-8.2.** Apply appropriate development standards and fees to improve present drainage systems and provide adequate stormwater detention basins and sedimentation ponds with new construction.

- **Policy LU-8.3.** Require new development, to the extent feasible, to provide flood control facilities that are visually attractive and ecologically beneficial, and require on-going maintenance of the facilities by the development through a maintenance district.
City of Salinas Storm Water Development Standards

Point source storm water discharges to surface waters are generally controlled through NPDES waste discharge requirements. The City’s NPDES Permit, Order No. R3-2012-0005, NPDES Permit No. CA 0049981, Waste Discharge Requirements for City of Salinas, Municipal Storm Water Discharges became effective on June 17, 2012. One of the key goals of the permit is to ensure receiving water quality and beneficial use protection from the impacts of urban storm water discharges. This is achieved in part by emphasizing use and assessment of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in combination with water quality monitoring.

The permit requires compliance with receiving water limitations with adherence to water quality standards, and implementation of BMPs to reduce storm water pollutant discharges and protect water quality and beneficial uses. Best management practices to reduce pollutants in storm water discharges include: erosion control, sediment control, and construction site waste management practices; good housekeeping practices to control pollutants, promote waste management practices, and implement control practices to keep pollutants away from the storm drainage system; requirements to preserve pre-development hydrologic and pollutant conditions; requirements for development planning; and watershed characterization. The City is required to implement BMPs to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable and protect against violations of water quality standards. The permit requires that the City not cause exceedances of water quality objectives or cause certain conditions that cause a nuisance or water quality impairment in receiving waters.

The permit establishes total maximum day loads for discharges of pollutants from the City’s storm water system to impaired waters, including the Reclamation Ditch. Achieving the limits would eliminate impairment and attain water quality standards. The City is assigned a waste load allocation due to its municipal storm water system discharges into impaired receiving waters. The permit requires the City to identify BMPs in its SWMP that are reasonably expected to achieve the waste load allocations when implemented and properly maintained.

The City of Salinas has developed storm water management ordinances and programs to implement storm water management regulations pursuant to its NPDES permit. These are embedded in the SWMP and in the SWDS. The SWMP includes all of the required and recommended control programs for municipal facilities, industrial facilities, and commercial facilities needed to reduce pollutant loads in the municipal storm water system that are discharged to impaired waters, including the Reclamation Ditch. The SWMP describes the minimum procedures and practices used to reduce pollutants in storm water and non-storm water discharges. It outlines procedures and responsibilities for protecting water quality,
including the selection and implementation of BMP practices. Implementation of the BMPs is designed to achieve the effluent and total maximum day load limitations specified in the NPDES permit.

The SWDS are designed to implement the BMPs called for in the SWMP at a project specific level. Implementation of the BMPs for all qualifying projects in turn is designed to achieve effluent reduction and total daily maximum load limitations identified in the NPDES. In this way, receiving water quality and beneficial uses of receiving waters, including the Reclamation Ditch are protected consistent with NPDES requirements and goals. The SWDS also require in part that new sources of storm water be managed to ensure that the rate and volume of discharges to existing storm drainage facilities under post-development conditions does not exceed the pre-existing rate and volume of discharge.

The SWDS require the evaluation of post-construction storm water requirements that are based upon the creation and/or replacement of impervious and/or managed turf surfaces. To achieve consistency with the SWDS, LID storm water treatment measures, such as storm water planters, bioswales and pervious pavements, must be incorporated into new development as must other BMP practices. The SWDS describe the process for early consultation with the City to ensure that requirements are being met as part of the initial project design process. Final approval of individual projects is contingent on the City’s review and approval of project plans to ensure that they meet standards contained in the SWDS.

The City’s 2013 SWDS affect all new development which creates or disturbs impervious surface areas greater than 2,000 square feet, including new roadways.

The regional board requires that LID be applied to new and redevelopment projects to the maximum extent practicable as a way to minimize the impacts of urban runoff on receiving waters and to promote healthy watersheds. This can be achieved by the use of BMPs, which are any procedure, activity, facility or device that helps to achieve storm water management objectives at a designated site. These can include small on-site treatment control BMPs that are integrated into the site layout, landscaping, and drainage design of the development. The City’s SWDS are outlined in Chapter 29 of the City’s Municipal Code.

**City of Salinas Municipal Code**

Chapter 29 of the municipal code identifies regulations that support implementation of the City’s NPDES permit requirements. Key regulations address discharge prohibitions, illicit discharges, reduction of pollutants and best management practices, and spill prevention. Inspection and enforcement regulations are also provided.

Flood hazard information and flood hazard prevention regulations are contained in Chapter 9, Article VI of the municipal code. New development in the city must be consistent with the related development regulations. Among many topics, the regulations address definition of
flood hazard areas, procedures for identifying flood hazards for specific sites and projects, and standards of construction that apply to development proposed within flood hazard areas. Standards of construction to protect development from hazards associated with 100-year flood events (e.g. flood hazards within special flood hazard zones A, AE, AO, and AH as shown on flood insurance rate maps for the City of Salinas), include anchoring buildings and improvements, use of flood resistance construction materials and methods, and elevating and floodproofing new structures. The City’s designated floodplain administrator is required to review all developments proposed within flood hazard areas for conformance with the flood hazard regulations prior to approval of a building permit.

**City of Salinas Standard Specifications, Design Standards, and Standard Plans**

The City of Salinas Development and Engineering Services Department follows the guidelines presented in the City’s Standard Specifications, Design Standards, and Standard Plans – 2008 Edition for design and construction of development and improvement projects within the City. To minimize soil erosion and protect surface water quality during project construction phase, development plans within the City must also comply with the guidelines presented in Appendix A of this document - Standards to Control Excavations, Cuts, Fills, Clearing, Grading, Erosion, and Sediment. Section 3, General Provisions. Subsection (a) and (d) are particularly relevant to preventing erosion and water quality impacts:

(a) No person shall cause or allow the persistence of a condition on any site that could cause accelerated erosion. Accelerated erosion shall be controlled and/or prevented by Permittee or the property owner by using measures outlined in subsequent sections as applicable, especially when work is on geologically unstable areas, on slopes above twenty percent (20%), and/or on soils rated a severe erosion hazard. Additional measures may be necessary and may be specifically required by the City Engineer.

(e) The property owner and the person(s) doing or causing or directing the grading shall put into effect and maintain all Best Management Practices necessary to protect adjacent watercourses and public or private property from damage by erosion, flooding, or deposition of mud or debris originating from the site. Precautionary measures shall include provisions for properly designed erosion and sediment control measures, so that downstream properties are not affected by upstream erosion or sediment transport by storm water. If, in the opinion of the City Engineer, grading activities result in a need for post-construction runoff control measures, then such measures, (including Low Impact Development devices/systems), shall be required to be installed, as specified in the City of Salinas Storm Water Development Standards.

The standards reiterate the NPDES permit requirements and requirements for a SWPPP and implementing BMPs as required consistent with the City’s NPDES permit.
13.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of hydrology and water quality, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on these subjects, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here. Thus, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements;
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of a stream or river in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation;
- Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on-site or off-site;
- Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff;
- Otherwise substantially degrade water quality;
- Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows or expose persons or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death from flooding; or
- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam.

The Appendix G questions on the subject of hydrology and water quality also give rise to additional thresholds that are not relevant to the proposed project. Under these thresholds, significant effects would occur if a proposed project would:

- Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map; or
- Cause inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

As noted, neither one of these additional thresholds is relevant to the proposed project.
The proposed project does not include residential development, so no further discussion of the possibility of placing new housing within a 100-year flood hazard area is necessary. Similarly, as described in the Environmental Setting section above, risk from inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow within the project site is low. So no further discussion of this issue is necessary.

13.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section includes information and data regarding hydrology and water quality issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

Proposed Specific Plan

Proposed Storm Drainage Infrastructure

Storm water infrastructure and storm water management planning are addressed in Section 6 of the proposed specific plan. Storm water generated from development within parcels 1 and 2 that is permitted to be disposed off-site (volume equivalent to pre-existing site conditions) will be connected to a new 24-inch storm drain that will be located in De La Torre. The main will connect to the existing 24-inch storm drain inlet located at the intersection of Roy Diaz Street and De La Torre. This is the same inlet into which the existing drainage ditch that traverses parcel conveys storm water. The inlet discharges into the Reclamation Ditch through a pipe under Roy Diaz Street. The ditch will be replaced with the 24-inch drain pipe. The pipe sizing is based on the need to accommodate existing flows through the ditch plus additional flow volumes from parcels 1 and 2.

Storm water generated from future development of parcels 3 and 4 that is permitted to be disposed off-site (volume equivalent to pre-existing site conditions) will be conveyed in a new 24-inch storm drain pipe that will be constructed in the future extension of Roy Diaz Street. It is assumed that an outlet will be constructed under the roadway extension to enable storm water discharge to the Reclamation Ditch.

As described in the Proposed Storm Water Management Approach section below, based on current City SWDS standards, the rate and volume of storm water discharge to the Reclamation Ditch cannot exceed the rate and volume discharged under pre-existing conditions.
Proposed Storm Water Management Approach

Pursuant to the City’s SWDS described above, the proposed specific plan includes guidance for new development within the project site to facilitate its consistency with the SWDS. Section 6.0 of the specific plan includes the following storm water management policies:

**Policy 6-1.1.** Require projects to meet or exceed the City’s Stormwater Development Standards.

**Policy 6-2.1.** Provide stormwater retention and/or detention facilities.

**Policy 6-2.2.** Promote Low Impact Development (LID) design principles and practices.

The proposed specific plan includes information that mirrors the City’s SWDS requirements. This includes analysis of pre-existing site conditions; opportunities and constraints; grading and drainage description; and storm water control standards including LID principles, sources control measures, and post-construction structural best management practices. The specific plan also includes discussion of LID/BMP features that are being designed into the site plan for the hotel and travel center on parcels 1 and 2.

**Storm Water Control Plans for Parcels 1 and 2**

Because project-level information is available for the planned hotel and travel center projects, conceptual storm water control plans have been prepared for each project that incorporate two primary LID/BMPs - pervious pavement and bioretention areas/basins. Please refer back to Figure 4-5, Hotel and Travel Center Site Plan, which illustrates these features. For the hotel plan, both pervious pavement and bioretention features will be utilized. Surface storm water would be directed to pervious pavement located within parking stalls prior to flowing into bioretention areas. The travel center plan includes only bioretention areas/basins to treat, store, and infiltrate storm water. Bioretention basins would be landscaped with plant material that is drought tolerant and inundation tolerant, and that has storm water cleansing properties.

The applicant has prepared the conceptual storm water control plans for both the proposed hotel project and the proposed travel center project pursuant to the SWDS requirements.

**Storm Water Control Plans for Parcels 3 and 4**

Detailed storm water management planning will be required for future development within parcels 3 and 4 at the time specific projects are proposed for these areas. As described above, future projects will be required to comply with regulatory standards, including the City’s SWDS. Prior to planning approvals for future development, a conceptual storm water control plan will be required for each to demonstrate compliance with post-construction water quality standards.
Water Quality/Waste Discharge Requirements

Potential project impacts on water quality are can be considered in light of the related regulatory requirements and performance standards with which new development within the project site must conform. Key regulatory requirements are identified in the Regulatory Setting section above and elaborated on below in light of proposed project conditions.

Construction Phase Water Quality Impacts and Regulatory Requirements

Soil disturbance associated with site preparation, grading and construction activities; delivery, handling and storage of construction materials and wastes; refueling; and parked construction equipment can result in spills of oil, grease, or related pollutants. Improper handling, storage, or disposal of fuels and materials or improper cleaning of machinery also are potential sources of water pollution associated with construction activities. These activities have potential to cause water quality degradation if eroded soil or other pollutants are carried by storm water into the existing storm drainage system, drainage channels, and/or directly into downstream water bodies. Construction phase water quality degradation can damage aquatic ecosystem health, and deposition of sediment within surface water and creek channels can adversely modify their function while causing additional erosion that exacerbates water quality degradation. Future development within the project site would involve many, if not all, of these activities.

The applicant for the proposed hotel project within parcel 1 and the travel center project in parcel 2, as well as developers of future individual projects within parcels 3 and 4, will be required to comply with the City’s NPDES Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activities. This will involve preparing a SWPPP prior to beginning construction and implementing the SWPPP during construction.

Post-Construction Water Quality Effects and Regulatory Requirements

Urban development is widely regarded as a leading cause of surface water pollution resulting from altering watershed hydrology and introducing urban pollutants. Development within the project site will alter existing storm water drainage conditions by replacing largely undeveloped agricultural land with impervious surfaces such as parking lots, building rooftops, and roadways. The specific plan identifies that under post-development conditions for parcels 1 and 2, approximately 71 percent and 68 percent of these parcels, respectively, will be covered with impervious surfaces (Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar 2017). Impervious surface calculations for future projects within parcels 3 and 4 will be made at the time individual projects are proposed for those locations.

These changes in surface conditions will result in a substantial increase in storm water runoff volume relative to current conditions where a significant portion of storm water percolates
though exposed soil back to groundwater. Future development will also reduce the natural capacity of soils and vegetation to remove pollutants contained in storm water. Further, unless properly managed and pre-treated, storm water runoff from development sites will be greater in volume and velocity than under existing conditions. Changes in the rate or volume of storm water delivered into receiving waters can result in hydromodification of downstream drainage courses, resulting in further erosion and related water quality degradation.

Future development within the project site will introduce pollutants such as oil and grease and natural and non-natural debris that commonly are deposited on parking lot, loading area, and roadway surfaces. These pollutants can be carried in storm water runoff and delivered directly or indirectly to receiving waters. Storm water that travels through landscaped or other pervious developed portions of a development site can also be contaminated with pesticides, fertilizers, and other materials. Contaminated storm water can be delivered into the City’s regulated storm drainage system or carried indirectly into receiving waters.

All of these factors have potential to degrade water quality in receiving waters such as the Reclamation Ditch and Salinas River, and ultimately, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. As described in the Environmental Setting section, the existing agricultural use on parcels 3 and 4 is already a source of surface water quality degradation. Nevertheless, violation of the City’s NPDES permit conditions could result if future individual development projects within the project site fail to reduce sources of storm water related water quality degradation. As described below, such measures are required and their implementation would assure that water quality impacts are minimized.

Future development within the project site must implement water quality control measures consistent with the post-construction water quality criteria contained in the City’s NPDES requirements. The City’s SWDS are the primary implementation tool for ensuring that new development meets the water quality criteria. Developers of individual projects submit a storm water control plan for review and approval to demonstrate how post-construction water quality criteria will be met through implementing water quality control measures defined in the SWDS. Storm water control plans must identify measures for site design, storm water runoff source control, runoff reduction, storm water treatment; and baseline hydromodification management site specific measures that will be incorporated into individual projects. Examples include, but are not limited to: planting and preserving healthy trees; rerouting of rooftop drainage pipes to drain rainwater to rain barrels, cisterns, or permeable areas instead of the storm sewer; permeable pavement that allows runoff to pass through it, thereby reducing the runoff from a site and surrounding areas and filtering pollutants; green roofs; vegetated swales designed specifically to treat and attenuate storm water runoff; and rain barrels and cisterns that collect and store storm water runoff from a roof or other impervious surface.
Site design measures must be included to reduce storm water runoff volumes and to ensure that post-project rates of storm water discharge from a site do not exceed pre-existing runoff rates so that downstream hydromodification potential is reduced.

Source control measures generally address actions to avoid or minimize introduction of pollutants into storm water. Examples of pollutant sources to which management measures are to be applied include, but are not limited to: accidental spills or leaks; parking/storage areas; indoor and structural pest control; landscaping/outdoor pesticide use; industrial processes; fuel dispensing areas; etc. Low impact development features designed to reduce runoff, treat storm water, and provide baseline hydromodification management must also be included to reduce runoff volumes and pre-treat storm water to improve its quality.

The SWDS explicitly require project proponents conduct early consultation with the City to ensure that storm water management criteria contained in the SWDS are considered and incorporated into the their project designs. The SWDS require integration of measures into a project design from its earliest conceptual stages. Individual project developers must prepare a preliminary storm water control plan for review by the City for this purpose. In many cases, the design of new projects will be significantly affected by the need to incorporate storm water management measures such as biofiltration treatment areas and bioretention facilities. A conceptual storm water control plan is then required prior to receiving a "planning level approval". The SWDS then require that a final storm water control plan be provided and approved before a grading permit is issued by the City. Based on this process, the storm water design elements of new projects are distinct from mitigation measures that otherwise may be required to reduce residual impacts that are not avoided or substantially reduced through project design.

The SWDS were prepared to meet receiving water quality standards promulgated by the regional board. The overall purpose of the SWDS criteria is to limit post-development storm water peak flow rates to pre-existing levels or lower and to limit storm water discharge durations and flow volumes to pre-existing conditions or better under a variety of design storm conditions. Hence, where a project is designed to meet the SWDS criteria, it would not change storm water runoff quality or peak discharge flow rate or volume relative to pre-existing conditions on a project site.

**Flood Hazards**

Flood hazards related to the proposed project include its potential to contribute to on-site or off-site flooding and the potential for risk to public safety and improvements from development placed in the small portion of parcel 4 that is within flood hazard Zone A.
Project Contribution to Flood Hazards

Contribution to On-Site/Localized Flooding

As described above, the proposed project will result in currently undeveloped land being converted to largely impermeable surfaces in the form of roads, walkways, parking areas, roof tops, etc. The volume of storm water runoff from the project site will substantially increase under post-development conditions. The increased runoff could contribute to localized flooding if storm water infrastructure is not designed or sized to accommodate the increased flows.

Developers of individual projects must install storm drainage facilities (collection, conveyance and disposal) to meet the demand they create due to their generation of increased storm water runoff. Additionally, the City collects storm fees for all construction requiring a building permit. The fees are used in part to assure that the storm drainage infrastructure is maintained and improved to provide the capacity needed to accommodate existing and new development.

Contribution to Off-Site Flooding

As described in the prior discussion of water quality impacts, new development within the project site must comply with the SWDS. A key criterion in the SWDS stipulates that the rate of runoff discharge from individual development sites must not exceed the pre-existing (human intervention) rate or volume of discharge from a proposed development site. The purpose is to reduce potential for hydromodification - increased erosion within receiving waters due to an increase in the rate of storm water flow within the receiving water. New development must include on-site storm water control measures designed to achieve a no net increase in the rate or volume of storm water discharge relative to pre-existing conditions. This requirement is of benefit in reducing the potential that runoff from new development could exceed the capacity of downstream storm drainage/flood control facilities and contribute to off-site flooding.

Through the City’s development review process as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process, the City will review the applicant’s storm water control plans for the hotel and travel center for conformance with City storm drainage facility design standards and SWDS requirements and ensure compliance prior to approving building permits.

Flood Hazard Risk within Parcel 4

As shown in Figure 13-2, Flood Hazard Zones, the southern margin of Parcel 4 is within flood hazard Zone A. Zone A defines areas subject to inundation by a one-percent annual chance flood event (100-year flood), but where the extent or depth of flooding has not been determined by detailed methods.

Impacts to development within Zone A could occur if future development is not designed to minimize exposure to or resist damage from flood hazards. For flood hazard impacts to be
avoided or reduced to less than significant, new development must be designed consistent with applicable flood hazard regulations/development standards as defined in City of Salinas Municipal Code Chapter 9, Article VI. Among those standards is the requirement that finished floors of habitable structures must be elevated a minimum of two feet above the base flood elevation as determined through analysis required pursuant to other standards in the Article VI. Because the base flood elevation in Zone A may not yet have been precisely defined by FEMA, applicants for future development within parcel 4 that propose habitable structures within the flood zone may be required to model the base flood elevation pursuant to guidance provided in Article VI. If fill is required to elevate structures above the base flood elevation, an analysis of how such fill affects flood elevations downstream of such development may also be required. Measures to avoid or minimize loss of flood storage capacity may be required.

**Inundation from Dam Failure**

Portions of the City could be inundated in the event of a failure of the Nacimiento and San Antonio dams. According to the City’s Multihazards Emergency Plan, in the event that one of these dams were to fail during a normal wet river flow, approximately two thirds of the City would be flooded within 22 hours after failure. The 2007 County General Plan EIR concluded that potential for severe inundation in the Salinas Valley should either Nacimiento or San Antonio dams fail is unlikely. The City is required by Section 8589.5 of the California Government Code to have emergency procedures for the evacuation and control of populated areas within the limits of inundation below dams. In addition, real estate disclosure upon sale or transfer of property in the inundation area is required under Section 1103 of the Civil Code.

All dams in California must be periodically inspected for safety to ensure that potential risks from dam failure during a seismic event are minimized. Nacimiento and San Antonio dams are routinely inspected, monitored, and studied by the Department of Water Resource’s Division of Safety of Dams to verify their integrity and safety. This fact minimizes risk to property and public safety within the project site to less than significant.

**13.5 Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures**

**IMPACT** Changes to Existing Drainage Patterns within the Project Area with Potential to Cause Erosion, Degrade Surface Water Quality, and Violate Water Quality Standards (Less than Significant)

New development within the project site will substantially change existing drainage patterns and have potential to violate surface water quality standards by indirectly discharging polluted storm water runoff into receiving surface water, in this case, the Reclamation Ditch.
Figure 13-2
Flood Hazard Zones
Salinas Travel Center EIR

Source: ESRI 2017, FEMA 2016
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and ultimately Monterey Bay. New development within the project site must be designed consistent with the City’s NPDES and SWDS requirements, the main objectives of which are to protect water quality in waters which receive discharge from the City’s municipal storm water system. The NPDES permit contains quantified effluent and total maximum daily load limitations for a range of water pollutants that are discharged from the City’s storm water management system. The SWMP specifies how the City will achieve the pollutant limits, including through the use of BMPs. The SWDS are the technical guidance used by the City to guide new development to include BMPs in individual projects to achieve pollutant load reductions that contribute to meeting the pollutant limitations specified in the NPDES permit. Therefore, the City’s requirement that individual projects comply with the SWDS results in those projects contributing to protecting water quality and beneficial use of receiving waters.

The SWDS criteria also limit post-development storm water peak flow rates to pre-existing levels and to limit storm water discharge durations and flow volumes to pre-existing conditions or better under a variety of design storm conditions. In this regard, projects designed to meet the SWDS criteria would not generate a higher peak storm water discharge rate from a site, or generate a higher volume of storm water volume than occurs under pre-existing conditions.

As part of the process for complying with the City’s NPDES and SWDS requirements, the applicant for the hotel and travel center projects has submitted a conceptual storm water control plan to the City for each individual project. As described previously, compliance with the SWDS is required for the purpose of reducing water quality impacts on impaired downstream receiving waters. The plans incorporate two primary LID/BMPs - pervious pavement and bioretention areas/basins. These features are shown in Figure 4-5, Hotel and Travel Center Site Plan. For the hotel plan, both pervious pavement and bioretention features will be utilized. Surface storm water would be directed to pervious pavement located within parking stalls prior to flowing into bioretention areas. The travel center plan includes only bioretention areas/basins to treat, store, and infiltrate storm water. Bioretention basins would be landscaped with plant material that is drought tolerant and inundation tolerant, and that has storm water cleansing properties.

Given that compliance with SWDS requirements results in no increase between pre-existing and post-project storm water discharge rates or volumes, neither project would contribute to potential hydromodification (erosion) of receiving waters, most directly the Reclamation Ditch. Therefore, future development within these parcels would have less-than-significant impacts resulting from changes to existing drainage patterns with potential to cause erosion, degrade surface water quality, and violate water quality standards.
All future development within parcels 3 and 4 must also conform to the SWDS prior to receiving individual project approvals. Therefore, future development within these parcels would also have less-than-significant impacts resulting from changes to existing drainage patterns with potential to cause erosion, degrade surface water quality, and violate water quality standards. No mitigation measures required.

**IMPACT** Potential for Localized Flooding from Increased Storm Water Runoff (Less than Significant)

The specific plan includes preliminary storm water collection and disposal infrastructure plans. The sizing of storm water conveyance infrastructure needed to accommodate increased flows from developed parcels 1 and 2 has been determined by the applicant in conjunction with the applicant’s preparation of a preliminary storm water control plan pursuant to the City’s SWDS requirements. The sizing of storm water conveyance infrastructure for future development within parcels 3 and 4 will be determined in conjunction with specific projects proposed for those parcels.

Each individual future project within the project will be required to construct or contribute funding to construction of the infrastructure. Rates and volumes of storm water discharged to the Reclamation Ditch cannot exceed pre-existing conditions as required by the City’s SWDS described previously. Consequently, the potential for the project to exacerbate downstream flooding within the Reclamation Ditch drainage area is minimized. Considering the noted design and regulatory standards with which future development must be consistent, effects of development regarding potential to cause localized flooding will be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**IMPACT** Exposure of Development within Parcel 4 to Flooding (Less than Significant)

The southern margin of parcel 4 is within flood hazard Zone A. Zone A defines areas subject to inundation by the one-percent annual chance flood event (100-year flood), but where the extent or depth of flooding has not been determined by detailed methods. Hazards to property and public safety could occur if future projects within parcel 4 propose to locate habitable structures within the flood hazard boundary.

Through the City’s development permit review process described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process, the City’s floodplain administrator will review future development plans for projects planned within Zone A. Future development with this area must conform to the City’s flood hazard regulations contained in Chapter 9, Article VI of the municipal code as described in the Regulatory Setting section above. This will ensure that such development incorporates measures to mitigate hazards from a 100-year flood event. Required consistency of new development with the regulations will ensure that flood hazards are less than significant. No mitigation measures required.
IMPACT  Risk of Dam Failure Leading to Risks to Property and Public Safety
(Less than Significant)

The proposed project would place improvements within a dam inundation zone. Flood hazard risks to improvements and public safety are possible. The state’s dam inspection program substantially reduces risk from dam failure and the City has emergency evacuation procedures in place. These factors minimize risk to property and public safety within the project site such risks to property and public safety be less than significant. No mitigation measures required.

Notably, this particular impact is outside the scope of CEQA, as it is concerned with the potential of existing environmental hazards to adversely affect future project users. In California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369, 377 (“CBIA”), the California Supreme Court held that “agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental conditions on a project’s future users or residents.” (Italics added.) The court did not hold that CEQA never requires consideration of the effects of existing environmental conditions on the future occupants or users of a proposed project. But the circumstances in which such conditions may be considered are narrow: “when a proposed project risks exacerbating those environmental hazards or conditions that already exist, an agency must analyze the potential impact of such hazards on future residents or users. In those specific instances, it is the project’s impact on the environment—and not the environment’s impact on the project—that compels an evaluation of how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions.” (Id. at pp. 377-378.)

In light of the CBIA decision, the City is not required by CEQA to address the extent to which existing risks associated with Nacimiento and San Antonio dams could affect future occupants or users of lands that might be developed in the future. Future development under the proposed project does not create any risk of exacerbating whatever risks exist with respect to these two facilities. Thus, readers should treat the discussion of this impact on future project residents and users as being beyond the scope of CEQA. The discussion has been provided to the public on a voluntary basis in the interest of full disclosure.
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This section of the EIR examines changes in the noise environment that could result from new sources of noise created by the proposed project. Effects of noise on the proposed uses as well as on noise sensitive land uses located along roadways onto which project generated traffic would be distributed are also evaluated, as are effects of airport generated noise on the proposed project. Noise effects are evaluated at a level commensurate with the project description, which includes more detail for the proposed projects on parcels 1 and 2 than for future development that may occur on parcels 3 and 4. Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- *City of Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002);

- *Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan* (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002);

- *Salinas Travel Center Project Environmental Noise Assessment*, Salinas, California (Illingworth & Rodkin 2017) (included in Appendix F on CD on the inside back cover of this EIR); and


The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

Much of the information in this section of the EIR is taken from the *Salinas Travel Center Project Environmental Noise Assessment* (hereinafter “noise report”), which is included in Appendix F. The proposed project includes more detailed information on proposed development within parcels 1 and 2, the proposed hotel and travel center, respectively, than for potential future development within parcels 3 or 4. Therefore, the noise report includes more detailed information about noise effects for the hotel and travel center uses than for the balance of the project site. Nevertheless, information about effects of future development within parcels 3 and 4 is provided at the level of detail available for them.

In comments on the NOP, the Monterey County Health Department recommended assessment of noise impacts on workers, and permanent noise increases from jake brakes and increased traffic volumes.


14.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Acoustics Fundamentals

Prior to discussing noise effects of the proposed project, it is important to review the fundamental characteristics of noise and related terminology. Noise may be defined as unwanted sound. Noise is usually objectionable because it is disturbing or annoying. Noise is generated by many mobile sources (e.g., automobiles, trucks, and airplanes) and stationary sources (e.g., construction sites, machinery, and industrial operations).

Airborne sound is a rapid fluctuation of air pressure above and below atmospheric pressure. Sound levels are usually measured and expressed in decibels (dB) with 0 dB corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing. Most of the sounds we hear in our normal environment do not consist of a single frequency, but rather a broad range of frequencies. As humans do not have perfect hearing, environmental sound measuring instruments have an electrical filter built in so that the instrument’s detector replicates human hearing. This filter is called the ”A-weighting” network and filters out low and very high frequencies. The most common method of characterizing sound in California is the A-weighted sound level or dBA.

A-weighted noise level may adequately indicate the level of noise at any instant in time, community noise levels vary continuously. Most environmental noise includes a mixture of noise from distant sources that create a relatively steady background noise from which no particular source is identifiable. To describe the time-varying character of environmental noise, the statistical noise descriptors, L1, L10, L50 and L90 are commonly used.

The three most commonly used descriptors are $L_{eq}$, DNL (or “Ldn”), and CNEL. The energy-equivalent noise level, $L_{eq}$, is a measure of the average energy content (intensity) of noise over any given period. The day-night average noise level, DNL, is the 24-hour average of the noise intensity, with a 10-dBA “penalty” added for nighttime noise (10 PM to 7 AM) to account for the greater sensitivity to noise during this period. CNEL, the community equivalent noise level, is similar to DNL but adds an additional 5-dBA “penalty” for nighttime noise. Common noise level descriptors are summarized in Table 1 of the noise analysis report in Appendix F.

Effects of Noise on People

The human response to environmental noise is subjective and varies considerably from individual to individual. Unfortunately, there is no completely satisfactory way to measure the subjective effects of noise or the corresponding reactions of annoyance and dissatisfaction. This is primarily because of the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance and habituation to noise over differing individual experiences with noise. Thus, an important way of determining a person’s subjective reaction to a new noise is the
comparison of it to the existing environment to which one has adapted: the so-called “ambient” environment. In general, the more a new noise exceeds the previously existing ambient noise level, the less acceptable the new noise will be judged.

Regarding increases in A-weighted noise levels, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has determined the following relationships that will be helpful in understanding this analysis:

- Except in carefully controlled laboratory experiments, 1 dB change cannot be perceived by humans;
- Outside of the laboratory, a 3 dB change is considered a just-perceivable difference;
- A change in level of at least 5 dB is required before any noticeable change in community response would be expected. An increase of 5 dB is typically considered substantial; and
- A 10 dB change is subjectively heard as an approximate doubling in loudness and would almost certainly cause an adverse change in community response.

**Vibrational Noise**

Ground vibration consists of rapidly fluctuating motions or waves with an average motion of zero. Sources of ground vibration include large trucks and rail operations, and some construction activities such as pile driving and jackhammering. Several different methods are typically used to quantify vibration amplitude. One method is the peak particle velocity (PPV). The PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration wave. In this report, a PPV descriptor with units of inches/second is used to evaluate construction generated vibration for building damage and human complaints. Table 3 in the noise analysis report presents the human response and the structural effects that can result from continuous vibration levels.

The two primary concerns with construction-induced vibration, the potential to damage a structure and the potential to interfere with the enjoyment of life, are evaluated against different vibration limits. Studies have shown that the threshold of perception for average persons is in the range of 0.008 to 0.012 inches/second PPV. Human perception to vibration varies with the individual and is a function of physical setting and the type of vibration. Persons exposed to elevated ambient vibration levels, such as people in an urban environment, may tolerate a higher vibration level.

Structural damage can be classified as cosmetic only, such as minor cracking of building elements, or may threaten the integrity of the building. Safe vibration limits that can be applied to assess the potential for damaging a structure vary by researcher and there is no general consensus as to what amount of vibration may pose a threat for structural damage to
the building. Construction-induced vibration that can be detrimental to the building is very rare and has only been observed in instances where the structure is at a high state of disrepair and the construction activity occurs immediately adjacent to the structure.

**Overview of Existing Noise Conditions**

To establish a baseline against which changes in the noise environment generated by the proposed project can be measured, measurements of ambient (existing) noise at the project site were conducted as part of the noise analysis report. One long-term (LT-1) and two short-term (ST-1 and ST-2) noise level measurements were conducted at locations shown in Figure 14-1, Noise Measurement Locations. The project site is bordered on the west by U.S. Highway 101 and is bisected by the U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326A (Airport Boulevard on- and off-ramp). The Salinas Municipal Airport is located approximately 650 feet northeast of the project site. Existing adjacent land uses include hotels (Motel 6 directly adjacent to parcel 1), restaurants, commercial retail, and agricultural land. The noise environment at the site and in the surrounding area results primarily from vehicular traffic along U.S. Highway 101 and aircraft operations from the nearby airport. Traffic along the nearby on-ramp and local roadways also affects the ambient noise environment. These noise sources and others affect the existing ambient noise environment as described below.

**Long-Term Noise Measurement Results**

Long-term noise measurement LT-1 was made at the rear of the existing Motel 6 parking lot, along the northern boundary of the project site. During the measurement period, it was observed that the parking lot located to the north of LT-1 was occupied by numerous semi-trucks, most of which had idling engines. It was also observed that the northern part of the project site, which is currently a vacant lot, was also used by truck drivers for parking. Therefore, the noise measurements at LT-1 are mostly affected by heavy trucks in the parking areas. LT-1 was approximately 505 feet northeast of the centerline of the nearest through lane along northbound U.S. Highway 101, approximately 430 feet southwest of the centerline of Roy Diaz Street, and approximately 170 feet northwest of the centerline of De La Torre. Hourly average noise levels at this location typically ranged from 55 to 66 dBA Leq during the day, and from 51 to 66 dBA Leq at night. The day-night average noise level was 65 dBA Ldn.

**Short-term Noise Measurement Results**

The short-term noise measurement location ST-1 was made at the corner of Roy Diaz Street and De La Torre. ST-1 was approximately 85 feet southwest of the centerline of Roy Diaz Street and approximately 55 feet northwest of the centerline of De La Torre. Due to the proximity of the local roadways and the distance from U.S. Highway 101, ST-1 was most strongly affected by traffic noise levels on the local roadways. The ten-minute average noise
Figure 14-1
Noise Measurement Locations
Salinas Travel Center EIR

Source: Lane Engineers, Inc. 2015, Illingworth and Rodkins Inc. 2017
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level was 66 dBA $L_{eq}$ and the estimated day-night average noise level was 68 dBA $L_{dn}$. ST-2 was near the western corner of the project site, approximately 35 feet from the centerline of De La Torre and approximately 200 feet northeast of the centerline of the nearest through lane along northbound U.S. Highway 101. ST-2 is mostly representative of traffic noise from U.S. Highway 101. The ten-minute average noise level measured at ST-2 was 68 dBA $L_{eq}$ and the estimated day-night average noise level was 71 dBA $L_{dn}$.

**Sensitive Receptors and Locations**

Some types of land uses are more sensitive to environmental noise than others due to the types of activities that they support and the sensitivity of people occupying those uses to noise. Noise sensitive receptors typically include residences, motels and hotels, schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, nursing homes, auditoriums, and parks for passive use. Impacts of noise are generally considered in terms of effects on noise sensitive receptors.

The primary noise sensitive use in the immediate project site area is the Motel 6, which is located adjacent to the site on the northwest. The nearest residential uses are located approximately 1,500 feet to the north of the project site near Carr Lake. There are no schools or other sensitive uses within the immediate vicinity. Los Padres Elementary School is the closest school. It is located approximately 0.65 mile to the north.

**Airport Noise Conditions**

The Salinas Municipal Airport is located about 565 feet to the northeast of the project site. According to the 1982 Salinas Municipal Airport Land Use Plan, the project site falls within the airport’s 55 dBA CNEL contour line, but outside of the 65 dBA CNEL contour. City of Salinas General Plan Figure N-2, Salinas Airport Future Noise Contours, also shows that the project site is located outside the projected 65 dBA $L_{dn}$ noise contour of the airport.

### 14.2 Regulatory Setting

State, County and City regulations and standards related to noise that are germane to the proposed project are summarized below.

**State**

**California State Building Code**

The State Building Code, Title 24, Part 2 of the State of California Code of Regulations establishes uniform minimum noise insulation performance standards to protect persons within new buildings which house people, including hotels, motels, dormitories, apartment houses and dwellings other than single-family dwellings. Title 24 mandates that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources shall not exceed 45 dB $L_{dn}$ or CNEL in any habitable room.
Title 24 also mandates that for structures containing noise-sensitive uses to be located where the $L_{dn}$ or CNEL exceeds 60 dB, an acoustical analysis must be prepared to identify mechanisms for limiting exterior noise to the prescribed allowable interior levels. If the interior allowable noise levels are met by requiring that windows be kept closed, the design for the structure must also specify a ventilation or air conditioning system to provide a habitable interior environment.

In 2016 the State of California established exterior sound transmission control standards for new non-residential buildings as set forth in the 2016 California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) as Part 11 of Title 24. The sections that pertain to this project are as follows:

5.507.4.1 Exterior noise transmission, prescriptive method. Wall and roof-ceiling assemblies exposed to the noise source making up the building envelope shall meet a composite STC rating of at least 50 or a composite OITC rating of no less than 40, with exterior windows of a minimum STC of 40 or OITC of 30 when the building falls within the 65 dBA $L_{dn}$ noise contour of a freeway or expressway, railroad, industrial source or fixed-guideway noise source, as determined by the local general plan noise element.

5.507.4.2 Performance method. For buildings located, as defined by Section 5.507.4.1, wall and roof-ceiling assemblies exposed to the noise source making up the building envelope shall be constructed to provide an interior noise environment attributable to exterior sources that does not exceed an hourly equivalent noise level ($L_{eq}(1-hr)$) of 50 dBA in occupied areas during any hour of operation.

Airport Land Use Planning

The Public Utilities Code contains provisions governing Airport Land Use Commissions. The purpose of these statutes is “to protect public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring the orderly expansion of airports and the adoption of land use measures that minimize the public’s exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards within areas around public airports to the extent that these areas are not already devoted to incompatible uses.” (Pub. Util. Code, § 21670, subd. (a)(2).) The role of an Airport Land Use Commission is to “formulate an airport land use compatibility plan that will provide for the orderly growth of each public airport and the area surrounding the airport within the jurisdiction of the commission, and will safeguard the general welfare of the inhabitants within the vicinity of the airport and the public in general.” (Pub. Util. Code, § 21675, subd. (a).) The membership of each Airport Land Use Commission must include at least two aviation experts. (Pub. Util. Code, §§ 21670, subd. (b)(3), 21670.1, subd. (b).)
Where a county, such as Monterey County, has established an Airport Land Use Commission, the airport land use compatibility plan that the Airport Land Use Commission prepares “shall be guided by information” in the “Airport Land Use Planning Handbook” published by the Division of Aeronautics within California Department of Transportation (Caltrans); and “local agencies shall be guided by the height, use, noise, safety, and density criteria ... established by [the Handbook]” (Pub.Util.Code, § 21674.7, subds. (a), (b).)

In preparing an EIR for a project within airport land use plan boundaries or, in the absence of such a plan, within two nautical miles of a public airport or public use airport, a lead agency must use the Handbook as a technical resource for assessing airport safety hazards and noise problems. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21096, subd. (a); CEQA Guidelines, § 15154, subd. (a).)

Caltrans’ Handbook was consulted for the direction it provides for land use compatibility near airports. Airport compatible land uses are defined as those uses that can coexist with a nearby airport without either constraining the safe and efficient operation of the airport or exposing people living or working nearby to unacceptable levels of noise or (safety) hazards. The basic strategy for achieving noise compatibility in the vicinity of an airport is to prevent or limit development of land uses that are particularly sensitive to noise. A common land use strategy is to locate uses near airports that are not noise sensitive or that generate significant noise themselves, such as other transportation facilities or some industrial uses. Residences of all types, public and private schools, hospitals and convalescent homes, churches, synagogues, temples, and other places of worship, are identified as noise incompatible uses.

The Handbook identifies that land use tools such as general plans, specific plans, and zoning ordinances adopted by local governments are a key mechanism for avoiding encroachment of incompatible development into areas affected by significant airport noise. As described below under the City of Salinas General Plan and City of Salinas Zoning Code subheadings, the City uses these land use tools consistent with the guidance provided in the Handbook, in part to set acceptable noise exposure levels from airport-generated noise (primarily aircraft overflights). The Handbook notes that most federal and state regulations and policies set 65 decibel (dB) Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) or Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) as the basic limit of acceptable aircraft noise exposure for residential and other noise-sensitive land uses located in noisy urban areas.

In California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369, 377, 391, in which the California Supreme Court held generally that “agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental conditions on a project’s future users or residents,” the court recognized that Public Resource Code section 21096 created an exception to this rule. Thus, projects in areas subject to section 21096 are required to consider the effects of existing airport noise sources on the potential future residents and users of proposed projects.
Regional/Local
City of Salinas General Plan

The City of Salinas General Plan contains policies and programs to achieve and maintain noise levels compatible with various types of land uses. The policies and programs emphasize the need to control noise through land use regulation, as well as enforcement of other City ordinances. Three major issues related to noise are addressed in the Noise Element: 1) avoiding the negative impacts of noise through the use of land use planning and noise reduction measures; 2) minimizing the impact of transportation-related noise; and 3) minimizing the impact of non-transportation-related noise. In addition the Land Use Element includes a policy that addresses public health from airport operations as it relates to noise exposure; the policy also references guidance provided in the Caltrans Handbook, which is described above.

The following goals and policies are set forth in the City of Salinas General Plan:

Policy LU-12.2. Review development proposals within areas affected by the operation of the airport to ensure airport and land use compatibility, protect the public safety, and allow for continued aviation operations. This includes minimizing residential population increases within the 55 decibel Community Noise Equivalent Level contour.

Policy N-1.2. Require the inclusion of noise-reducing design features in development and reuse/revitalization project to address the impact of noise on residential development.

Policy N-1.3. Locate only urban development within the Salinas Municipal Airport “area of influence” that is compatible with the airport noise environment and meets the guidelines of the Caltrans handbook.

Policy N-1.4. Ensure proposed development meets Title 24 Noise Insulation Standards for construction.

Policy N-2.1. Ensure noise impacts generated by vehicular sources are minimized through the use of noise control measures (e.g., earthen berms, landscaped walls, lowered streets).

Policy N-2.2. Control truck traffic routing to reduce transportation-related noise impacts on sensitive land uses.

Policy N-2.3. Ensure new development within the vicinity of the airport does not result in a land use/noise compatibility conflict or hazard.

Policy N-3.1. Enforce the City of Salinas Noise Ordinance to ensure stationary noise sources and noise emanating from construction activities, private developments/residences and special events are minimized.
The City of Salinas General Plan also includes an Implementation Program, which describes actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the City of Salinas General Plan elements. These programs are discussed as follows:

**N-1 - Review Development Projects.** Review discretionary development proposals for potential on- and off-site stationary and vehicular noise impacts per the CEQA. Any proposed development located within a 60 dB or higher noise contour (per Figures N-1 and N-2 of the City’s General Plan) shall be reviewed for potential noise impacts and compliance with the noise and land use compatibility standards. The thresholds established in the Zoning Ordinance, Noise Ordinance, the Noise Contours Maps (Figures N-1 and N-2 of the City’s General Plan), and Tables 3 and 4 of the Noise Element will be used to determine the significance of impacts. If potential impacts are identified, mitigation in the form of noise reduction designs/structures will be required to reduce the impact to a level less than significant. If the impact cannot be reduced to a level less than significant or avoided with accepted noise reduction methods, the proposed project will be determined “Clearly Unacceptable” and will not be approved.

**N-2 - Minimize Commercial/Industrial Noise.** Limit delivery or service hours for stores and businesses with loading areas, docks, or trash bins that front, side, border, or gain access on driveways next to residential and other noise sensitive areas. Only approve exceptions if full compliance with the nighttime limits of the noise regulations is achieved.

**N-3 - Minimize Construction Noise.** Require all construction activity to comply with the limits (maximum noise levels, hours and days of allowed activity) established in the City noise regulations (Title 24 California Code of Regulations, Zoning Ordinance and Chapter 21A of the Municipal Code).

**N-4 - Salinas Municipal Airport Master Plan.** Upon any update of the Salinas Municipal Airport Master Plan, the County Airport Land Use Plan, or California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook, review and revise as necessary Table 7, Figure N-2 and the goals, policies, and noise plan within the General Plan Noise Element to correspond with the updated Airport Master Plan.

**N-5 - Reduce Vehicular Noise.** Reduce the impact of vehicular noise affecting existing residential development through the addition of noise reduction methods such as sound walls, berms or others.

*Figure 14-2, Noise/Land Use Compatibility Matrix, shows the land use compatibility guidelines presented in the Noise Element as Table N-3. These guidelines, which are consistent with noise exposure noise standards identified in the zoning code as described*
below, are used in coordination with the noted zoning standards to assist with determining the significance of impacts related to noise exposure as noted in Implementation Program N-1 above.

The City of Salinas General Plan includes a discussion regarding the 1990–2010 Salinas Airport Master Plan, which was adopted by Salinas in 1993 and represents the most recently adopted plan. As identified in the Salinas General Plan, the 1990–2010 master plan is used as a policy guide for development on or adjacent to the Salinas Municipal Airport. The airport master plan addresses aircraft noise, identifies specific locations affected by operations at the airport, and identifies specific noise/land use compatibility guidelines for development potentially affected by the Salinas Municipal Airport. Table N-4 of the Salinas General Plan includes noise compatibility guidelines for different types of land uses in the vicinity of the airport. Generally, urban development is permitted within areas where airport operational noise is below 65 dBA CNEL.

**City of Salinas Zoning Code**

Section 37-50.180 of the Zoning Code identifies performance standards for noise. Noise compatibility standards for various land uses are specified as are short-duration cumulative noise level standards. Requirements for noise studies are specified as are options for noise abatement and mitigation. Section 37-50.180, Performance Standards are presented below:

A. Noise. No use shall create ambient noise levels which exceed the following standards (see Table 37-50.50) as measured at the property boundary:

1. Duration and Timing. The noise standards in Table 37-50.50 shall be modified as follows to account for the effects of time and duration on the impact of noise levels:
   
   (A) In residential zones, the noise standard shall be 5.0 dBA lower between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
   
   (B) Noise that is produced for no more than a cumulative period of five minutes in any hour may exceed the standards above by 5.0 dBA.
   
   (C) Noise that is produced for no more than a cumulative period of one minute in any hour may exceed the standards above by 10.0 dBA.

2. Acoustic Study. The city planner may require an acoustic study for any proposed project or use that has the potential to create a noise exposure greater than that deemed acceptable by this section and require appropriate mitigation measures. The city planner or their designee shall prepare the study. The applicant shall be responsible for the cost of the study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Community Noise Exposure (Ldn or CNEL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transient Lodging – Motel, Hotel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgrounds, Parks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Course, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Buildings, Business Commercial, and Professional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


ZONE A - Normally Acceptable: Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved meet conventional Title 24 construction standards. No special noise insulation requirements.

ZONE B - Conditionally Acceptable: New construction or development shall be undertaken only after a detailed noise analysis is made and noise reduction measures are identified and included in the project design.

Zone C- Normally Unacceptable: New construction or development is discouraged. If new construction is proposed, a detailed analysis is required, noise reduction measures must be identified, and noise insulation features included in the design.

ZONE D- Clearly Unacceptable: New construction or development clearly should not be undertaken.

Source: City of Salinas 2002

Figure 14-2
Noise/Land Use Compatibility Matrix
Salinas Travel Center EIR
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3. Noise Measurement. Noise shall be measured with a sound level meter, which meets the standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI Section S1.4-1979, type 1 or type 2). Noise levels shall be measured in decibels from the property line closest to the noise source. The unit of measure shall be designated as dBA. A calibration check shall be made of the instrument at the time any noise measurement is made.

4. Noise Attenuation Measures. The city planner may require the incorporation into a project of any noise attenuation measures deemed necessary and feasible to ensure that noise standards are not exceeded.

5. Exceptions. Sporting events and the like shall be exempt from these noise standards. Events issued a special event permit by the city may also be exempted from these noise standards as part of the review and approval process for that permit.

6. Delivery Hours. The hours of delivery for commercial/industrial uses with loading areas/docks and related service areas that abut or have direct street access from adjoining residential districts or other noise sensitive uses shall be limited to 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., seven days a week, unless an acoustic study is prepared for the city planner by their designee which demonstrates that the proposed use and related delivery activities will not exceed the maximum noise levels established in Table 37-50.50.

### Table 37-50.50 Maximum Noise Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone of Property Receiving Noise</th>
<th>Maximum Noise Level, CNE/L_{dn}, dBA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural District</td>
<td>70 dBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential District</td>
<td>60 dBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial District</td>
<td>65 dBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial District</td>
<td>70 dBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use District</td>
<td>65 dBA(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks/Open Space District</td>
<td>70 dBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public/Semipublic District</td>
<td>60 dBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The interior noise level in any residential dwelling unit located in a mixed-use building or development shall not exceed a maximum of forty-five dBA from exterior ambient noise.

The municipal code does not contain maximum noise levels permitted during construction activities.
City of Salinas Noise Ordinance

The City’s Noise Ordinance, Chapter 21A of the municipal code, defines various classes of noise (A through D) and defines noise regulations that pertain to each. The City does not have specific vibration thresholds. Based on studies of vibration conducted by the Federal Transit Administration, when there are fewer than 70 vibration events per day, a vibration velocity level of 80 VdB or greater will result in annoyance to people, and a level of 100 VdB or less is suggested to prevent damage to fragile buildings.

Noise from “home construction projects” is considered Class B noise. “It is unlawful to create and emit Class B noise as defined in this code between the hours of 9:00 p.m. of one day and 7:00 a.m. of the following day.” (Municipal Code, § 21A-7.)

Specific Plan

New development within the specific plan boundary must be consistent with the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan. In this context, the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan support general plan policies, municipal code regulations, and/or other federal, State, or other local regulations presented above that serve to mitigate environmental effects of the proposed project. The information below summarizes information from the specific plan that is relevant to the issue of noise.

The proposed specific plan identifies that all future projects within the project site will be required to comply with regulations related to noise and notes that commercial and industrial uses that could be constructed are compatible with the surrounding noise environment, including noise from U.S. Highway 101 and from the Salinas Municipal Airport.

The proposed project includes more detailed information on proposed development within parcels 1 and 2, the proposed hotel and travel center, respectively. Project specific development projects have not yet been proposed for parcels 3 or 4. Therefore, the noise report includes more detailed information about noise effects for the hotel and travel center uses than for the balance of the project site. Nevertheless, information about effects of future development within parcels 3 and 4 is provided at the level of detail available for the anticipated uses.

14.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of noise, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on this subject, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059,
Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here, though in doing so it has exercised its discretion to do two things: first, the City has modified the Appendix G language to better reflect input it has received from noise experts based on their professional judgment; and second, the City has taken the generalized wording of the Appendix G inquiries and has made it more concrete and specific. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Expose people to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the Salinas general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies;

  Under this threshold, a significant noise impact would be identified if the proposed project would result in exposure of people to or generation of noise levels that would exceed applicable noise standards presented in the General Plan or municipal code. The applicable noise standards used in the analysis are the maximum noise standards identified in Table 37.50.50 of the zoning code shown on page 14-15, as measured at the property boundary.

- Expose Structures or People to Ground-borne Vibration

  Under this threshold, a significant impact would occur if construction activities would generate excessive vibration levels. Ground-borne vibration levels exceeding 0.3 inches/second PPV would have the potential to result in cosmetic damage to normal buildings.

- Expose People to Permanent Increases in Traffic Noise

  Future development within the project site would have a significant impact if traffic noise generated by development causes a noise increase of 3 dBA or more along a road segment where the existing noise level is 60 dBA or more, or causes a noise increase of 5 dBA or more along a road segment where the existing traffic noise level is less than 60 dBA.

- Cause a Substantial Temporary Increase in Ambient Noise Level during Construction

  Temporary construction noise impacts would be substantial if the hourly average construction noise level exceeds 60 dBA $L_{eq}$ at the property line of noise sensitive uses and the noise level increase is 5 dBA $L_{eq}$, or more above ambient levels for a period of more than one year. At non-residential uses, the temporary noise increase would be substantial if the hourly average construction noise level exceeds 70 dBA $L_{eq}$ and the noise increase is at least 5 dBA $L_{eq}$ above ambient levels for a period exceeding one year.
The general plan does not include policies or programs that limit the duration or intensity of construction noise. Except for noise from construction of residential uses, neither the zoning code nor noise ordinance contains regulations or standards that limit the intensity or duration of construction noise for non-residential projects. For this reason, the construction noise threshold of significance identified above is being utilized in this EIR. The threshold is based on three primary considerations: the noise level, the ambient noise environment, and the construction duration. The exterior noise level thresholds at sensitive uses (hotel) and non-sensitive uses (commercial and industrial) is specified to ensure that interior noise levels at these use types would not exceed 45 dBA Leq. Interior noise levels at or below 45 dBA Leq have a low probability for activity interference indoors.

The construction noise volume must also exceed the ambient noise environment volume by at least 5 dBA Leq. This increase is identified because it would be clearly noticeable above the ambient noise level. The one-year bench mark is considered to be a reasonable amount of time over which a person can be subjected to ongoing construction noise. This timeframe allows for small projects to be constructed, assuming a person of normal sensitivity would not be adversely affected by temporary construction noise. Construction durations exceeding one year would be considered significant if construction noise levels are not controlled.

The Appendix G questions on the subject of noise give rise to a threshold for which the proposed project has no impact:

- 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, or within the vicinity of a private airstrip would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

The general plan and zoning ordinance provide guidance for acceptable exposure of different types of land uses to noise generated by airport activities. The guidance in these documents mirrors guidance contained in the Caltrans Handbook. Based on information in the general plan and as described in the Environmental Setting section above, the project site is located outside the 65 dBA CNEL contour for aircraft activities associated with Salinas Municipal Airport. Consequently, new development within the project site would not be exposed to aircraft overflight noise that exceeds the City’s exterior noise exposure threshold of 65 dBA CNEL for airport operations noise as shown in Table N-4 of the City of Salinas General Plan. No further discussion is required.

- For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

There are no private airstrips within the vicinity of the project site. No further discussion of this issue is required.
14.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section includes information and data regarding noise that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

Exterior/Interior Noise and City of Salinas General Plan/State Standards

The future noise environment at the project site would continue to result primarily from vehicular traffic along U.S. Highway 101, with contributions from vehicular traffic along Roy Diaz Street and De La Torre. U.S. Highway 101 traffic would increase by approximately 20 percent by the year 2045, which would result in a noise level increase of 1 dBA Ldn along the western boundary of the project site. Peak hour traffic volumes for the local roadway intersections surrounding the project site were provided for the proposed project. The future cumulative plus project traffic volumes would not result in a noise level increase at the project site due to the low volumes of traffic along the adjacent local roadways. Based on this information and the existing noise measurements reported in the Environmental Setting section above, future exterior noise levels would be 68 dBA Ldn along Roy Diaz Street (ST-1) and 72 dBA Ldn at the northwestern corner of the project site (ST-2).

Exterior Noise Exposure

The proposed project does not include residential uses. Therefore, exterior noise exposure and compatibility of future uses with City of Salinas General Plan standards is guided by the non-residential exterior exposure standards in the City of Salinas General Plan.

Proposed Hotel Use

The patio area adjacent to the proposed hotel within parcel 1 is the only common outdoor use area that can currently be identified for the proposed project based on Figure 4-5, Hotel and Travel Center Site Plan. The center of the patio would be approximately 140 feet from the centerline of De La Torre and approximately 530 feet from centerline of the nearest through lane of northbound U.S. Highway 101. The patio would be mostly shielded from U.S. Highway 101 traffic due to the existing Motel 6 and the proposed hotel building. Additionally, the construction of the proposed project would eliminate the area currently used for truck parking near the Motel 6. With the elimination of the dominating noise source at noise measurement site LT-1 and the shielding provided by the existing and proposed hotel building, the future exterior noise levels at the patio would be at or below 60 dBA Ldn, the outdoor use exposure threshold for hotels as shown in Table 4 of the City of Salinas General Plan. This would meet the City’s “normally acceptable” exterior noise threshold.
14.0 Noise

Future Industrial Uses

It is possible that the future projects proposed within parcels 3 and 4 could include common outdoor areas. According to the Noise/Land Use Compatibility Matrix provided in the City of Salinas General Plan (Table 4), outdoor use areas at industrial uses are required to be maintained at or below 70 dBA L$_{dn}$. While details regarding the proposed industrial uses on parcels 3 and 4 were not available at the time of this study, the projected future noise contours provided in the City of Salinas General Plan indicate that parcels 3 and 4 would lie outside the 70 dBA L$_{dn}$ contour. Since the outdoor use areas are required to be maintained at or below 70 dBA L$_{dn}$ at industrial developments, it is expected that any outdoor use area at the future development sites would meet the City’s threshold.

Interior Noise Exposure

Proposed Hotel Use

The proposed hotel is the only noise sensitive use currently planned within the project site. While an interior noise threshold for hotels is not established in the City of Salinas General Plan, the State of California (State Building Code, Title 24, Part 2 of the State of California Code of Regulations) requires interior noise levels within new buildings which house people, including hotels, to be maintained at or below 45 dBA L$_{dn}$ in any habitable room.

The nearest hotel façade facing U.S. Highway 101 would be approximately 310 to 335 feet from the centerline of the nearest through lane. Assuming at least two floors at the proposed hotel, the exterior-facing rooms along this façade would be exposed to future exterior noise levels ranging from 65 to 68 dBA L$_{dn}$. The northern and southern building façades would be partially shielded by the existing Motel 6 building and the proposed hotel. These façades would have setbacks from the centerline of the nearest through lane along U.S. Highway 101 ranging from approximately 310 to 465 feet. At these distances, and assuming partial shielding from the intervening building, the rooms along the northern building façade would be exposed to future exterior noise levels at or below 60 dBA L$_{dn}$, while the southern façade would be exposed to future exterior noise levels ranging from 62 to 64 dBA L$_{dn}$.

Standard hotel construction provides approximately 20 to 25 dBA of exterior-to-interior noise reduction, assuming the windows are closed to control noise. Where exterior noise levels range from 65 to 70 dBA L$_{dn}$, the inclusion of adequate forced-air mechanical ventilation is often the method selected to reduce interior noise levels to acceptable levels. Where noise levels exceed 70 dBA L$_{dn}$, forced-air mechanical ventilation systems and sound-rated construction methods are normally required. Such methods or materials may include a combination of smaller window and door sizes as a percentage of the total building façade facing the noise source, sound-rated windows and doors, sound rated exterior wall assemblies, and mechanical ventilation so windows may be kept closed at the occupant’s discretion.
Assuming closed windows, the interior noise levels for the proposed project would be up to 48 dBA L_{dn} at the rooms facing U.S. Highway 101. This would exceed the 45 dBA L_{dn} threshold for interior noise.

**Proposed Travel Center Buildings**

According to the City of Salinas General Plan, the project site falls within the 65 dBA L_{dn} contour line of U.S. Highway 101. The commercial buildings that lie within the 65 dBA L_{dn} contour line of U.S. Highway 101 will be subject to interior noise performance standards contained in the Cal Green Code. The Cal Green Code requires that wall and roof-ceiling assemblies meet Sound Transmission Class ratings included in the code. The Cal Green Code also requires that interior noise levels to be maintained at 50 dBA L_{eq}(1-hr) or less during hours of operation.

The proposed developments on parcel 2 would include a convenience store with an attached fast food restaurant and a mechanic’s building. The proposed mechanic shop would have direct line-of-sight to traffic noise along U.S. Highway 101. The building façade facing the roadway would be approximately 425 feet from the centerline of the nearest through lane along northbound traffic. At this distance, the mechanic shop would be exposed to future exterior noise levels ranging from 62 to 68 dBA L_{eq}(1-hr) during daytime hours. The nearest building façade of the convenience store and fast food restaurant would be approximately 770 feet from the centerline of the nearest through lane of northbound U.S. Highway 101, approximately 230 feet from the centerline of De La Torre, and approximately 225 feet from the centerline of Roy Diaz Street. At these distances, this commercial use building would be exposed to future exterior noise levels ranging from 52 to 63 dBA L_{eq}(1-hr) during daytime hours.

The Cal Green Code performance standards that apply would provide at least 35 to 40 dBA of noise reduction in interior spaces. The inclusion of adequate forced-air mechanical ventilation systems is normally required so windows may be kept closed at the occupant’s discretion. Required conformance with the code in combination with forced-air mechanical ventilation would satisfy the daytime threshold of 50 dBA L_{eq}(1-hr) for these uses.

**Future Industrial Uses**

Since any non-residential building exposed to exterior noise levels greater than 65 dBA L_{dn} in the State of California would be required to meet the Cal Green Code, the same standards described above for the proposed travel center buildings on parcel 2 would apply to the future industrial buildings on parcels 3 and 4. While the western corner of parcel 4 would lie within the 65 dBA L_{dn} contour line of U.S. Highway 101, parcel 3, which would be 1,145 feet or more from the centerline of the nearest through lane would lie outside the 65 dBA L_{dn} contour. Therefore, the buildings located on parcel 4 would be required to have wall and
roof-ceiling assemblies per the Cal Green Code, and provide an adequate form of forced-air mechanical ventilation, in order to achieve the 50 dBA $L_{eq}(1\text{-hr})$ interior noise level threshold.

Without knowing the setbacks of the proposed industrial buildings on parcel 4, worst-case scenario conditions are assumed. The westernmost corner of parcel 4 would have setbacks similar to those of the travel center mechanic’s building on parcel 2. Therefore, the exterior noise levels expected at the mechanic’s shop, which range from 62 to 68 dBA $L_{dn}$ during daytime hours, would represent the worst-case scenario at parcel 4. The Cal Green Code performance standards that apply would provide at least 35 to 40 dBA of noise reduction in interior spaces. The inclusion of adequate forced-air mechanical ventilation systems is normally required so windows may be kept closed at the occupant’s discretion. Required conformance with the code in combination with forced-air mechanical ventilation would satisfy the daytime threshold of 50 dBA $L_{eq}(1\text{-hr})$ for these uses.

**Stationary Noise and City of Salinas General Plan/Zoning Ordinance Standards**

**Stationary Mechanical Equipment Noise**

*Proposed Hotel and Travel Center*

Policy N-3.1 of the City of Salinas General Plan enforces the Noise Ordinance to ensure stationary noise sources are minimized. The Zoning Ordinance provides maximum noise levels, as measured at the property lines of specific land uses, to address potential noise effects on off-site uses. For all proposed and future uses within the project site, the nearest sensitive receptor would be the Motel 6 located adjacent to the project site on the north, next to the proposed hotel. The Motel 6 is within the City’s “commercial thoroughfare” zoning district. The noise exposure threshold for a commercial district is 65 dBA $L_{dn}$. For a 24-hour noise source, this would be equivalent to a noise level of 65 dBA $L_{eq}$ during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and 55 dBA $L_{eq}$ during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.). Therefore, a daytime threshold of 65 dBA $L_{eq}$ and a nighttime threshold of 55 dBA $L_{eq}$ can be used to assess the effects of stationary noise generated within the project site on the adjacent motel.

The proposed hotel and travel center buildings, and likely the future buildings proposed within the remainder of the project site, would include mechanical equipment, such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning systems, exhaust fans, emergency generators, etc. These are likely to be the only stationary sources of noise from development within the project site. Information regarding the number, type, size, and location of the mechanical equipment units to be used for the hotel and travel center was not available at the time of this study. However, mechanical equipment is typically located along the perimeter of buildings on the
ground level or on rooftops. Since the site plan for the hotel and travel center does not indicate ground floor locations surrounding the buildings, for the purposes of this analysis, the mechanical equipment is assumed to be located on the rooftop.

Typical air conditioning units and heat pumps for hotel buildings range from about 63 to 67 dBA $L_{eq}$ at a distance of 50 feet. Assuming worst-case conditions, these units would potentially operate during daytime and nighttime hours. If the air conditioning units for the proposed hotel are located approximately 10 feet from the edge of the rooftop and the proposed hotel is at least two stories, the mechanical equipment noise measured at the property line of the Motel 6 would be less than 55 dBA $L_{eq}$.

The convenience store/fast food restaurant and mechanic shop buildings within the travel center are 400 and 585 feet, respectively, from the property line of the Motel 6. At these distances, mechanical equipment would be below 55 dBA $L_{eq}$.

**Future Industrial Uses**

**Effects at Motel 6.** Future buildings proposed within the remainder of the project site (parcels 3 and 4) would also likely include mechanical equipment, such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning systems, exhaust fans, emergency generators, etc. Specific information about equipment types would only be available for these uses once specific projects are proposed. Regardless, these use and noise sources would be located a minimum of about 1,000 feet away from the Motel 6 property line, or more than 20 times further than the proposed hotel use. As described above, mechanical equipment noise volumes for the latter would not exceed acceptable levels at the Motel 6 property. It is possible that the future industrial uses would employ a larger number of mechanical equipment types with varying noise intensities relative to the hotel use. Even so, given the significant distance to the sensitive motel use, it is unlikely that related mechanical noise would exceed acceptable levels at the motel property line.

**Effects at Travel Center Uses on Parcel 2.** At the proposed travel center on parcel 2, mechanical equipment noise generated by future development on nearby parcels 3 and 4 must meet the 65 dBA $L_{dn}$ exterior noise standard established by the City of Salinas. Future development within parcels 3 and 4 would be a minimum of approximately 185 feet from the parcel 2 property line.

The northern property line of parcels 3 and 4, which is in-line with the northern edge of Roy Diaz Street, is approximately 195 feet from the nearest property line of the existing industrial uses located east of the site. The City requires that noise levels measured at the property line of industrial land uses be maintained at or below 70 dBA $L_{dn}$.

Because no specific projects are proposed within parcels 3 and 4, no information is available to estimate noise intensities at the proposed travel center on the adjacent parcel 2 uses resulting from mechanical equipment. It is possible that related noise intensities could exceed City of Salinas General Plan standards at the travel center uses.
14.0 Noise

**Truck Loading and Unloading**

*Proposed Hotel*

Section 37-50.180 of the Zoning Ordinance regulates delivery hours for commercial and industrial uses that adjoin residential districts to between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. seven days a week unless an acoustical study is prepared that demonstrates that the proposed use would not exceed the maximum permitted noise level. The project does not adjoin a residential district and would not be subject to these designated delivery hours.

*Proposed Travel Center*

One to three small deliveries to the convenience store and fast food restaurant are expected per day, and the convenience store/fast food restaurant would have an additional two deliveries per week. Small truck deliveries would have the potential to generate maximum noise levels ranging from 65 to 70 dBA $L_{\text{max}}$ at a distance of 50 feet. While the delivery service doors were not identified in the travel center site plan, the worst-case scenario would include docking locations to be along the building façades nearest the Motel 6 property line. At a distance of 400 feet from the nearest travel center dock locations, noise levels ranging from 47 to 52 dBA $L_{\text{max}}$ would occur at the property line of the Motel 6. With typical ambient noise levels ranging from 65 to 75 dBA $L_{\text{max}}$ during daytime hours and from 60 to 67 dBA $L_{\text{max}}$ during the nighttime hours, the estimated maximum noise levels due to truck deliveries at the convenience store/fast food restaurant would be below existing ambient conditions and would not be audible at the Motel 6 over roadway and parking lot noise. Deliveries at the proposed mechanic shop would occur at a greater distance from the Motel 6 property line; maximum noise levels from these operations would be below 50 dBA $L_{\text{max}}$ and would not be audible at the adjacent hotel.

*Future Industrial Uses*

Based on the travel center analysis above, loading operations at the frequency and location noted for that use would result in noise levels at the Motel 6 property line where those operations are at least 400 feet from the property line. Loading docks for future uses within parcels 3 and 4 would be located a minimum of about 1,100 feet from the property line of the Motel 6. The number of deliveries/loading dock events per day and per week could be higher for the future uses. However, considering the minimum 1,100-foot distance from the motel property line and that noise levels drop off at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of the distance between the source and receptor, it is unlikely that loading dock operations at future uses would exceed the permitted noise level. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that building screening can provide an additional 5 to 10 dBA noise reduction at distant receptors; buildings associated with the proposed hotel and travel center would serve this function for future uses within parcel 3 and 4.
**Groundborne Construction Vibration**

Construction activities associated with the hotel, travel center, and future industrial uses may generate perceptible vibration when heavy equipment or impact tools (e.g., jackhammers, hoe rams) are used. Construction activities may include preparation work, grading, trenching, new building framing and finishing, and paving. It is not expected that pile driving, which can cause excessive vibration, will be required.

For structural damage, the California Department of Transportation recommends a vibration exposure limit of 0.5 in/sec peak particle velocity for buildings that are structurally sound and designed to modern engineering standards. Buildings constructed since the 1990s typically have these characteristics. A conservative vibration limit of 0.3 in/sec peak particle velocity has been used for buildings that are found to be structurally sound but where structural damage is a major concern. For historical buildings or buildings that are documented to be structurally weakened, a conservative limit of 0.08 in/sec peak particle velocity is often used to provide the highest level of protection. No historical buildings or buildings that are documented to be structurally weakened adjoin the project site. For the purposes of this study, therefore, groundborne vibration levels exceeding the conservative 0.3 in/sec peak particle velocity limit would have the potential to result in a significant vibration impact.

Table 8 in the noise report presents typical vibration levels that could be expected from construction equipment at a distance of 25 feet. Project construction activities, such as drilling, the use of jackhammers, rock drills and other high-power or vibratory tools, and rolling stock equipment (tracked vehicles, compactors, etc.) may generate substantial vibration in the immediate vicinity. Vibration levels would vary depending on soil conditions, construction methods, and equipment used.

The adjacent Motel 6 building is approximately 45 feet from the boundary of parcel 1. At this distance, the existing structure could be exposed to vibration levels up to 0.11 in/sec peak particle velocity. Other nearby hotels, commercial buildings, and industrial buildings would be located a minimum of approximately 215 to 350 feet from the project site. At these distances, vibration levels would be expected to reach up to 0.02 in/sec peak particle velocity. The nearest residence is about 1,500 feet to the north of the project site. At this distance, vibration levels are expected to be up to 0.002 in/sec peak particle velocity. At these peak particle velocities, construction activities within the project site are not expected to result in “architectural” damage to any nearby buildings or at the nearest residences.

**Traffic Generated Changes in Ambient Noise Level**

A significant impact would result if traffic generated by the project would substantially increase noise levels at sensitive receptors in the project vicinity. A substantial increase would occur if: a) the noise level increase is 5 dBA Ldn or greater, with a future noise level of
less than 60 dBA L_{dn}, or b) the noise level increase is 3 dBA L_{dn} or greater, with a future noise level of 60 dBA L_{dn} or greater. Based on the results of the noise measurement survey, existing noise levels at the nearby noise sensitive Motel 6 exceed 60 dBA L_{dn} and would incrementally increase under future conditions. The nearest existing residential land use is located about 1,500 feet north of the project site. While existing measurements were not made at this location, a conservative increase of 3 dBA L_{dn} from traffic noise on any road located adjacent to the residential uses would be considered a significant impact. For reference, a 3 dBA L_{dn} noise increase is possible if the proposed project would double existing traffic volumes along one of those roadways.

By comparing the traffic results for the existing and the existing plus project conditions, the noise level increase due to traffic volumes associated solely with the construction of the proposed project (i.e., proposed hotel, convenience store/fast food restaurant, mechanic’s shop, and future development) was calculated. An increase in traffic volumes at the intersections surrounding the project site resulted in a 48 percent increase or less. This increase in traffic volumes is equivalent to a 2 dBA L_{dn} increase in traffic noise levels. At all other intersections included in the traffic study, traffic volumes increased by 25 percent or less with the inclusion of traffic from the proposed project, which results in a traffic noise increase of 1 dBA L_{dn} or less along all other roadway segments. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial increase in traffic volumes and associated noise levels.

**Temporary Construction Noise**

Noise impacts resulting from construction depend upon the noise generated by various pieces of construction equipment, the timing and duration of noise-generating activities, and the distance between construction noise sources and noise-sensitive areas. Construction noise impacts primarily result when construction activities occur during noise-sensitive times of the day (e.g., early morning, evening, or nighttime hours), when the construction occurs in areas immediately adjoining noise-sensitive land uses, or when construction lasts over extended periods of time.

City of Salinas General Plan Policy N-3.1 provides guidance to minimize noise emanating from construction activities by enforcing the Noise Ordinance. City of Salinas General Plan Implementation Program N-3 controls construction noise activities by requiring compliance with Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, the zoning code, and Chapter 21A of the municipal Code. As stated above, the zoning code defines a maximum acceptable noise level of 65 dBA L_{dn} at the property line of the adjacent Motel 6, the nearest adjacent commercial land uses. This would be equivalent to a noise level of 65 dBA L_{eq} during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and 55 dBA L_{eq} during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.). Assuming construction activities would be limited to daytime hours only, temporary construction noise would be considered a significant impact if it exceeded 65 dBA L_{eq} at the property line of the adjacent commercial land uses during daytime hours.
Typically, temporary construction noise is compared to the ambient noise environment at the project site to determine whether the impact is significant. For commercial uses, a significant impact would be identified if construction noise were to exceed 70 dBA $L_{eq}$ at the receiving property and exceeds the ambient noise environment by at least 5 dBA $L_{eq}$ for a period exceeding one year. The City criteria of 65 dBA $L_{eq}$ at the property line would be a more conservative threshold. In consideration of ambient levels, temporary construction noise would be a significant impact if the daytime construction noise limit criteria of 65 dBA $L_{eq}$ is exceeded and if the ambient noise environment is exceeded by 5 dBA $L_{eq}$ or more for a period of more than one year.

Industrial uses are not typically considered noise-sensitive uses, so industrial related uses located near the site and adjacent to the airport would not be adversely affected by construction noise. Since the nearest residential land use is over 1,500 feet from the project site, construction activities would not impact these receptors.

Construction details, including phasing information, equipment lists, and durations for the hotel and travel center were not available for consideration in the noise report. However, typically, construction for a branded hotel like the one proposed would be less than one year, while construction of the travel center is expected to take eight to nine months. Since both uses are likely to be constructed concurrently, it is assumed that total construction time would be up to one year. Construction activities would most likely include site preparation, excavation, grading, trenching, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. During each stage of construction, there would be a different mix of equipment operating, and noise levels would vary by stage and vary within stages, based on the amount of equipment in operation and the location at which the equipment is operating.

Construction timing and duration for future industrial uses within the remainder of the project site is not known, as there are currently no specific projects planned for parcels 3 or 4.

Construction activities generate considerable amounts of noise, especially during earth-moving activities when heavy equipment is used. The highest maximum noise levels would typically range from about 80 to 90 dBA $L_{max}$ at a distance of 50 feet from the noise source (as shown in Table 9 of the noise report). Typical hourly average construction-generated noise levels for hotels range from about 78 to 89 dBA $L_{eq}$ measured at a distance of 50 feet from the center of a site during busy construction periods (e.g., earth moving equipment, impact tools, etc.) (as shown in Table 10 of the noise report). Hourly average construction noise levels associated with the construction of stores and service stations range from 77 to 89 dBA $L_{eq}$, as measured 50 feet from the center of a busy construction site. Once construction moves indoors, minimal noise would be generated at off-site locations. Construction-generated noise levels drop off at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of the distance between the source and receptor. Shielding by buildings or terrain can provide an additional 5 to 10 dBA noise reduction at distant receptors.
Since the proposed hotel would adjoin the existing Motel 6, construction noise levels shown in Table 10 of the noise report for hotel structures were used to calculate construction noise levels at the common property line with the adjacent Motel 6. The distances used for the calculations for noise levels at other nearby commercial uses were taken from center of the proposed hotel parcel to the property lines of the specific receptor. These estimated noise levels would represent the worst-case scenario for construction noise. Table 14-1, Estimated Proposed Hotel Construction Noise Levels at Nearby Commercial Uses, summarizes the results of the analysis.

### Table 14-1 Estimated Proposed Hotel Construction Noise Levels at the Nearby Commercial Uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Motel 6 (70 ft)</th>
<th>Denny’s (280 ft)</th>
<th>Inns of California (275 ft)</th>
<th>Jack in the Box (595 ft)</th>
<th>Near Airport (660 ft)</th>
<th>Opposite U.S. 101 (515 ft)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ground Clearing</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excavation</td>
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<td>64-74^a</td>
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<td>58-68^a</td>
<td>57-67^a</td>
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<td>60-74^a</td>
<td>54-68^a</td>
<td>53-67^a</td>
<td>55-69^a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin 2017

Note: ^The range of levels reflects the minimum required equipment present at the site to all pertinent equipment present at the site.

As shown in Table 14-1, noise levels for several construction phases for the hotel project are expected to exceed 65 dBA $L_{eq}$ and exceed ambient levels by more than 5 dBA $L_{eq}$ at the property lines of several of the nearest commercial uses. Construction noise emanating from other parcels could exceed 65 dBA $L_{eq}$ but would not exceed ambient noise levels by more than 5 dBA $L_{eq}$.

Reasonable regulation of construction hours, arrival and operation of heavy equipment, and delivery of construction material is necessary to reduce construction noise effects. Limiting construction to daytime hours is often a simple construction noise impact reduction method. Controls such as constructing temporary noise barriers and utilizing “quiet” construction equipment can also reduce the potential for noise impacts.

Noise generated by construction activities at the proposed hotel site would temporarily elevate noise levels at adjacent noise-sensitive receptors. Noise levels can be substantially
Reduced if construction activities are conducted in accordance with construction best management practices for noise reduction. Representative non-residential use types of best management practices described in the noise report include:

- Restrict noise-generating activities at construction sites or in areas adjacent to construction sites to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Construction shall be prohibited on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays unless prior written approval is granted by the building official.

- Construct temporary noise barriers, where feasible, to screen stationary noise-generating equipment to provide a minimum of 5 dBA noise reduction.

- Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.

- Prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.

- Locate stationary noise-generating equipment such as air compressors or portable power generators, as far as possible from sensitive receptors as feasible. If they must be located near receptors, require adequate muffling/enclosures.

- Utilize "quiet" air compressors and other stationary noise sources where possible.

- Locate construction staging areas, material stockpiles, and maintenance/equipment and parking areas as far as feasible from residential receptors.

- Route all construction traffic via designated truck routes where possible. Prohibit construction related heavy truck traffic in residential areas where feasible.

- Designate a "disturbance coordinator" responsible for responding to complaints about construction noise and for defining reasonable measures to correct complaint issues. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the disturbance coordinator at the construction site and include in it a notice to be sent to adjacent property owners.

Given that the proposed travel center site is located about 400 feet from the nearest noise sensitive use (Motel 6) and that noise intensity declines by 6 dBA with each doubling of distance between noise source and receptor, construction noise volumes at the adjacent commercial land uses would be much lower than construction noise from the proposed hotel. Future industrial uses within the remainder of the project site are located a minimum of about 1,100 feet from the motel property line. Therefore, like the travel center construction noise, construction noise for these future projects would not exceed acceptable levels at the commercial uses.
14.5 IMPACT SUMMARY AND MITIGATION MEASURES

IMPACT Exposure of the Proposed Project to Exterior Noise Levels in Excess of Standards (Less than Significant)

At the level of information available for the proposed project, only the proposed hotel project includes a common outdoor use area (patio) that could be affected by existing and future exterior noise levels, including noise generated by the proposed project, that exceed City of Salinas General Plan standards. However, the calculated noise levels at this location would not exceed the “normally acceptable” 60 dBA noise limit identified in the City of Salinas General Plan for this use type. Future industrial uses within parcels 3 and 4 could include common outdoor areas that could be adversely affected by existing and future exterior noise levels. Future developments proposed within parcels 3 and 4 must comply with the City of Salinas General Plan noise policies and with regulations contained in the zoning code and municipal code as described in the Regulatory Setting section above. Compliance with the policies and standards would be assured through the development review process for individual projects as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process, to ensure that potentially significant impacts are avoided. No mitigation measures required.

Notably, this particular impact is outside the scope of CEQA to the extent that it is concerned with the potential of existing environmental conditions to adversely affect future project residents or users. In California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District (2015) 62 Cal.4th 369, 377 (“CBIA”), the California Supreme Court held that “agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental conditions on a project’s future users or residents.” (Italics added.) The court did not hold that CEQA never requires consideration of the effects of existing environmental conditions on the future occupants or users of a proposed project. But the circumstances in which such conditions may be considered are narrow: “when a proposed project risks exacerbating those environmental hazards or conditions that already exist, an agency must analyze the potential impact of such hazards on future residents or users. In those specific instances, it is the project’s impact on the environment—and not the environment’s impact on the project—that compels an evaluation of how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions.” (Id. at pp. 377-378.)

In light of the CBIA decision, the City is not required by CEQA to address the extent to which existing noise levels in the area surrounding the project site could adversely affect future occupants or users of the project site. The City is required, however, to consider the extent to which noise generated by the project itself will exacerbate existing or future noise levels. Here, the City voluntarily accounted for noise not attributable to the project in assessing future noise levels within the project site. Such noise sources were considered together with the project as a separate noise source. Because the analysis concluded that, even when such other noise sources are taken into account, the impact would be less than significant, the same is necessarily true of noise levels attributable solely to the project.
IMPACT Expose Proposed Project Hotel Room Interiors to Noise Levels in Excess of State Standards (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Interior noise levels within hotel rooms could exceed the state standard of 45 dBA even with noise reductions from construction methods that are consistent with Cal Green Code standards. These noise levels include existing and future noise levels, including noise generated by the proposed project. Integrating forced-air mechanical ventilation into the hotel so that windows can be kept closed to control noise would reduce interior noise to below the standard. As noted earlier, CEQA does not require the City to consider the effects of existing environmental conditions on future project residents or users. Even so, the City has done so here on a voluntary basis, and has considered existing and projected future noise levels without the proposed project together with the noise levels expected to occur due to the project. When all such noise sources are considered together, the impact is potentially significant. Implementation of the following mitigation, however, would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

N-1 A suitable form of forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) to be identified in coordination with the City of Salinas Building Department shall be installed at the hotel to ensure that interior noise levels in all rooms are less than 45 dBA. The applicant for the hotel project shall provide evidence to the City of Salinas Building Department that interior noise levels will meet this standard prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Implementation of mitigation measure N-1 would reduce potential impacts associated with noise levels in excess of standards at the hotel by requiring that forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) is provided for all rooms of the hotel, so that windows can be kept closed to control interior noise and achieve the interior noise standards. Implementation of this interior noise attenuation solution, as would be assured through the City’s development review process, would reduce interior noise levels to 45 dBA Ldn or less, thereby reducing the impact to a less-than-significant level.

IMPACT Expose Travel Center Buildings to Interior Noise Levels in Excess of State Standards (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Interior noise levels within the travel stop buildings could exceed the state standard of 45 dBA even with noise reductions from construction methods that are consistent with Cal Green Code standards. As noted above, CEQA does not require the City to consider the effects of existing environmental conditions on future project residents or users. Even so, the City has done so here on a voluntary basis, and has considered existing and projected future noise levels without the proposed project together with the noise levels expected to occur due to the project. When all such noise sources are considered together, the impact is
potentially significant. Integrating forced-air mechanical ventilation into buildings so that windows can be kept closed to control noise, however, would reduce interior noise to below the standard. Implementation of the following mitigation would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

N-2  A suitable form of forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) to be identified in coordination with the City of Salinas Building Department shall be installed to service travel center buildings that are designed to remain fully closed (e.g. convenience store, fast food restaurant, etc.) to ensure that interior noise levels are less than 45 dBA. The applicant for the travel center project shall provide evidence to the City of Salinas Building Department that interior noise levels will meet this standard prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Implementation of mitigation measure N-2 would reduce potential impacts associated with noise levels in excess of standards by requiring that forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) is provided for all noise-sensitive rooms of the travel center building, so that windows can be kept closed to control interior noise and achieve the interior noise standards. Implementation of this interior noise insulation feature, as would be assured through the City’s development review process, would reduce interior noise levels to 45 dBA L_{dn} or less, thereby reducing the impact to a less-than-significant level.

IMPACT  Expose Interiors within Future Buildings within Parcel 3 to Noise Levels in Excess of State Standards (Less than Significant)

Any non-residential building exposed to exterior noise levels greater than 65 dBA L_{dn} in the State of California would be required to meet the Cal Green Code of maintaining interior noise levels of 45 dBA or lower. Parcel 3 does not lie within the 65 dBA L_{dn} noise contour. Therefore, it is not subject to the Cal Green Code requirements and interior noise levels would not exceed 45 dBA L_{dn}. As noted above, CEQA does not require the City to consider the effects of existing environmental conditions on future project residents or users. Even so, the City has done so here on a voluntary basis, and has considered existing and projected future noise levels without the proposed project together with the noise levels expected to occur due to the project. Even when all such noise sources are considered together, however, this impact is less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT  Expose Interiors within Future Buildings within Parcel 4 to Noise Levels in Excess of State Standards (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Interior noise levels within future buildings located within parcel 4 could exceed the state standard of 45 dBA even with noise reductions from construction methods that are
consistent with Cal Green Code standards. As noted above, CEQA does not require the City to consider the effects of existing environmental conditions on future project residents or users. Even so, the City has done so here on a voluntary basis, and has considered existing and projected future noise levels without the proposed project together with the noise levels expected to occur due to the project. When all such noise sources are considered together, the impact is potentially significant. Integrating forced-air mechanical ventilation into the buildings so that windows can be kept closed to control noise would reduce interior noise to below the standard. Implementation of the following mitigation would reduce this impact to less than significant.

**Mitigation Measure**

N-3 A suitable form of forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) to be identified in coordination with the City of Salinas Building Department shall be installed in future buildings within parcel 4 to ensure that interior noise levels are less than 45 dBA. The applicant(s) for future development within parcel 4 shall provide evidence to the City of Salinas Building Department that interior noise levels will meet this standard prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Implementation of mitigation measure N-3 would reduce potential impacts associated with noise levels in excess of standards by requiring that forced-air mechanical ventilation or equivalent internal noise attenuation measure(s) is provided for future buildings within parcel 4, so that windows can be kept closed to control interior noise and achieve the interior noise standards. Implementation of this noise attenuation solution, as would be assured through the City’s development review process, would reduce interior noise levels to 45 dBA Ldn or less would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

**IMPACT** Noise Generated from Mechanical Equipment and Loading Dock Operations Associated with Future Development (Less than Significant)

The proposed hotel within parcel 1 is the closest proposed development to the adjacent Motel 6. Neither rooftop mounted nor ground mounted mechanical equipment that would be installed at the proposed hotel would exceed acceptable noise levels at the property line with the Motel 6, nor would it be audible above existing roadway and parking lot noise. Equipment associated with the travel stop uses on parcel 2 and future industrial uses on parcels 3 and 4 would be located at significantly greater distance from the Motel 6 use and would not generate mechanical noise that exceeds City standards or be audible at the Motel 6.

Loading dock operations for the travel stop convenience store/fast food/mechanic’s uses would be the closest such operations to the Motel 6. Noise volumes from loading dock
operations would not exceed the City standard at the Motel 6 property line. Industrial use loading dock operations at future uses within parcels 3 and 4 would be a substantial distance to the Motel 6 relative to the travel stop uses. Noise from these activities is not expected to exceed City of Salinas General Plan standards.

Proposed project impacts from noise associated with mechanical equipment and loading dock operations on existing noise sensitive uses would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**IMPACT**  
**Noise Generation from Future Operations within Parcels 3 and 4 that Affects the Adjacent Proposed Travel Center Uses and Existing Industrial Uses to the East (Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

At its closest, future development within parcels 3 and 4 would be approximately 185 feet from the parcel 2 (travel center site) property line. The mechanical equipment noise generated on parcels 3 and 4 must meet the 65 dBA L_{dn} threshold established by the City of Salinas at these commercial uses. At their closest, the property lines of parcels 3 and 4 are approximately 195 feet from the property line of the existing industrial uses located east of the site. Noise levels measured at the property line of industrial land uses must be maintained at or below 70 dBA L_{dn}.

Because no specific projects are proposed within parcels 3 and 4, no information is available to estimate mechanical noise intensities at the parcel 2 property line or at the property line of the existing industrial uses. It is possible that related noise intensities could exceed City of Salinas General Plan standards at the proposed travel center uses within parcel 2 and/or at the existing industrial uses. This would be a significant impact. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to less than significant.

**Mitigation Measure**

N-4  
Potential impacts on adjacent commercial uses within parcel 2 and on existing industrial uses located to the east of parcels 3 and 4 from mechanical equipment employed in future development within parcels 3 and 4 shall be assessed in acoustical studies for each project proposed within parcels 3 and 4. The studies shall identify whether mechanical equipment noise will exceed City standards at the respective property lines of the commercial and industrial uses as identified in municipal code Table 37-50.50, Maximum Noise Standards. If standards are exceeded, methods to reduce noise exposure to levels below the applicable standard shall be identified and included as conditions of approval for the future use(s). Measures could include, but are not limited to: placing noise generating equipment as far from the affected uses as possible, and/or employing noise controls such as fan silencers, equipment enclosures, and screen walls. Prior to approval of individual projects within parcels 3 and 4, the City of Salinas Building
Department will be responsible for reviewing the noise study(s) and ensuring that noise attenuation measures are included incorporated into individual projects required.

Implementation of mitigation measure N-4 will reduce potential impacts associated with noise in excess of City standards from development on parcels 3 and 4 by requiring acoustical studies that assess noise exposure levels and include specific requirements for reducing equipment noise levels where such exceed zoning code standards. The requirements must be incorporated in project designs as would be assured through the City’s development review process described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process.

**IMPACT**  
Ground Vibration during Construction with Potential to Damage Nearby Improvements/Buildings (Less than Significant)

Construction activities such as drilling, and/or use of jackhammers, rock drills and other high-power or vibratory tools, and rolling stock equipment (tracked vehicles, compactors, etc.) have potential to generate substantial vibration in the immediate vicinity. Vibration levels would vary depending on soil conditions, construction methods, and equipment used. However, given the distance to nearby buildings (the adjacent Motel 6 being the closest to any construction activities within the project site), peak particle velocities are not expected to reach levels with potential to cause damage to buildings. This impact would be less than significant. No mitigation measures required.

**IMPACT**  
Permanent Increase in Ambient Noise Levels along Local Roadways due to the Addition of Noise from Project-Generated Traffic (Less than Significant)

When traffic volumes from the proposed project are added to the street network that was evaluated in the traffic impact analysis for the proposed project (see Section 16.0, Transportation), traffic noise volumes along the roadways would not increase more than 2 dBA along any road segment. A permanent increase in ambient noise from project traffic would occur if the noise level increase is 5 dBA $L_{dn}$ or greater, when future noise levels are less than 60 dBA $L_{dn}$, or the noise level increase is 3 dBA $L_{dn}$ or greater, when future noise levels are 60 dBA $L_{dn}$ or greater. Neither condition would be met. Therefore, the impact is less than significant. No mitigation measures required.

**IMPACT**  
Construction Noise from Development of the Proposed Hotel with Potential to Adversely Affect the Adjacent Off-Site Motel 6 Use (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Construction noise from development of the proposed hotel on parcel 1 is projected to exceed 65 dBA $L_{eq}$ at the property line of the adjacent Motel 6 and to be 5 dBA $L_{eq}$ higher than ambient noise levels. This noise intensity exceeds the threshold of significance used in this EIR for construction noise impacts. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to less than significant.
Implementation of noise attenuation measures during the construction phase would reduce noise intensity from construction activities. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would result noise attenuation that reduces construction noise impacts to less than significant.

**Mitigation Measure**

N-5 The applicant for the proposed hotel project on parcel 1 shall prepare a construction noise attenuation plan which shall be implemented during hotel construction activities. The plan shall be subject to review and approval by the Community Development Director, prior to the issuance of a grading permit. The construction noise attenuation plan shall include the following best management practices to reduce construction noise at the common property line with the adjacent Motel 6 to the north of parcel 1:

- Restrict noise-generating activities at construction sites or in areas adjacent to construction sites to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Construction shall be prohibited on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays unless prior written approval is granted by the building official.

- Construct temporary noise barriers, where feasible, to screen stationary noise-generating equipment. Temporary noise barrier fences would provide a 5 dBA noise reduction if the noise barrier interrupts the line-of-sight between the noise source and receiver and if the barrier is constructed in a manner that eliminates any cracks or gaps.

- Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.

- Prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.

- Locate stationary noise-generating equipment, such as air compressors or portable power generators, as far as possible from the Motel 6 as feasible. If they must be located near the motel, adequate muffling (with enclosures where feasible and appropriate) shall be used to reduce noise levels. Any enclosure openings or venting shall face away from the motel.

- Utilize "quiet" air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.
• Construction staging areas shall be established at locations that will create
  the greatest distance between the construction-related noise sources and the
  Motel 6 during all project construction.

• Locate material stockpiles, as well as maintenance/equipment staging and
  parking areas, as far as feasible from the Motel 6.

• Route all construction traffic via designated truck routes where possible.
  Prohibit construction related heavy truck traffic in residential areas where
  feasible.

• Control noise from construction workers’ radios to a point where they are
  not audible at the adjacent Motel 6.

• The contractor shall prepare a detailed construction schedule for major
  noise-generating construction activities. The construction plan shall identify
  a procedure for coordination with the adjacent Motel 6 use so that
  construction activities can be scheduled to minimize noise disturbance.

• Designate a “disturbance coordinator” who would be responsible for
  responding to any complaints about construction noise. The disturbance
  coordinator will determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., bad
  muffler, etc.) and will require that reasonable measures be implemented to
  correct the problem. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the
  disturbance coordinator at the construction site and include in it the notice
  sent to the Motel 6 regarding the construction schedule.

The construction noise attenuation plan shall be in place prior to the start of
construction and all associated measures implemented during construction to
reduce noise impacts on neighboring sensitive receptors.

Implementation of the construction noise attenuation plan would reduce construction noise
levels emanating from construction activities associated with the proposed hotel project and
minimize potential disruption and annoyance. With the implementation of these measures,
the lack of high-intensity construction equipment required, and the fact that noise generated
by construction activities would occur over a temporary period of less than one year, the
temporary increase in ambient noise levels at this new development site would be a less-
than-significant impact.
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The project site is located outside the city limits. If the project is approved and the project site is annexed to Salinas, the City would be responsible for providing services to new development. This section discusses potential changes in demand on the City’s fire and police protection services and whether such changes require new facilities, the construction of which could lead to environmental impacts. Information about changes in service demand and related facility needs is based primarily on communications with representatives of the fire department and police department.

The proposed project does not include new land capacity for residential uses; it would not be directly population inducing. Therefore, it would not increase demand for other types of public services or facilities such as new or expanded schools, parks and recreation, or library facilities. These topics are discussed in Section 19.0, Effects Found Not to Be Significant.

Information in this section is derived from sources that include the Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan (Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar 2017) and communications with public service providers. The Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan is available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

The City did not receive comments on the NOP regarding public services impacts.

15.1 EXISTING SETTING

Fire Protection

Monterey County Regional Fire District

The project site is currently located with the service boundary of the Monterey County Regional Fire District. The fire district service area is approximately 360 square miles with a population of about 40,000 residents. The fire district staffs six fire stations. The 55 full-time employees are supported by 20 volunteer firefighters.

The fire district responds to structure, wildland, vehicle, and other types of fires that occur in the fire district. Public service calls, medical emergencies, vehicle accidents and hazardous material responses are also provided.
The fire district is part of the Monterey County Fire Service Mutual Aid system, and the district provides and receives assistance when emergency situations cannot be handled by City resources (Monterey County Regional Fire District 2017).

**City of Salinas Fire Department**

Fire protection services within the city limits of Salinas are provided by the City of Salinas Fire Department. The fire department headquarters is located at 65 West Alisal Street #210. The fire department is organized into six divisions: Suppression Division, Fire Prevention Bureau, Emergency Medical Services, Training Division, Vehicle Maintenance Division, and Hazardous Materials Team. As of late 2016, there were 99 full-time employees and one part-time employee. The fire department maintains six pumper trucks, two ladder trucks, a crash truck for airport emergencies, an Office of Emergency Services fire truck for state wide emergency response needs, and other service vehicles. The department operates six fire stations located at:

- Fire Station #1 at 216 West Alisal Street;
- Fire Station #2 at 10 West Laurel Drive;
- Fire Station #3 at 827 Abbott Place;
- Fire Station #4 at 308 Williams Road;
- Fire Station #5 at 1400 Rider Avenue; and
- Fire Station #6 at 45 East Bolivar Street.

The station locations are shown in City of Salinas General Plan Figure LU-9, Public Facilities. Plans are in place to construct a new fire station in the area of East Boronda Road and Natividad Road within the boundary of a proposed project known as the Central Area Specific Plan.

The City recognizes that new fire station facilities, equipment, staff, and associated support facilities for administration, training and vehicle maintenance are needed to meet fire protection services standards. Three of the existing six fire stations need to be replaced and two new fire stations are needed. The typical response time to any location in the city is approximately six minutes from the nearest station. The City of Salinas General Plan reports the goal of the department is to arrive on the scene of emergencies within six minutes of notification, 90 percent of the time. Currently, the department is able to meet the goal 86 percent of the time (Brett Loomis, City of Salinas Fire Department, personal communication, December 8, 2016).

The fire department receives funding through several sources, including the General Fund, Measure G funds, development impact fees, first responder fees, vehicle accident response fees, false alarm fees, inspection fees, grants, Certified Unified Program Agency funds,
contractual services with Monterey County Regional Fire District, and County Service Area 74 allocations. Funding from these sources supports staffing, facility maintenance, capital improvement programs, equipment purchases, emergency response and training, fire prevention and training, and hazardous materials team operations.

In addition to serving the communities within the city limits, the fire department provides protection service to the unincorporated areas adjacent to the city limits, including the communities of Bolsa Knolls, Country Club Estates, Boronda, and Valle San Juan. The City has automatic aid agreements with Monterey County Regional Fire District and North County Fire Protection District. The city fire department also participates in the Monterey County Mutual Aid Plan, Statewide California Master Mutual Aid Agreement, and the California Fire Assistance Agreement, and also provides automatic and contractual response to the wildland mutual threat areas within the county (Brett Loomis, Salinas Fire Department Chief, personal communication, December 8, 2016).

**Police Protection**

**Monterey County Sheriff Department**

The Monterey County Sheriff’s Department provides service in the unincorporated areas of the county through its Central Patrol, Coastal Patrol, and South County Patrol stations. The Central Patrol Station (Salinas) provides law enforcement for approximately 1,400 square miles, which consists of all of unincorporated North Monterey County, the Salinas Valley south to Gonzales and west, halfway to Monterey. The Central Patrol Station is located at 1414 Natividad Road in Salinas.

**City of Salinas Police Department**

Police protection services in Salinas are provided by the Salinas Police Department. The police department operates out of a station located at 222 Lincoln Avenue. The Department is staffed with 172 sworn officers that include the Chief, one Assistant Chief, one Deputy Chief, seven Commanders, 23 Sergeants, and 139 Officers including detectives at a ratio of approximately 1.07 officers per 1,000 persons (based on the Department of Finance 2016 population estimate of 161,042). The department also consists of 64 authorized civilian employees including a Police Services Administrator, Police Records Coordinator, Technical Services Coordinator, Police Services Technicians, Word Processing Operators, Evidence Technicians, Community Service Officers, Facilities Workers, Statistics and Citations, Vehicle Maintenance, Payroll and Administrative Clerical Support.

The Monterey County Office of Emergency Communications screens and assigns Salinas calls based on priority. The department’s average time responding to calls can vary from 6 to 33 minutes depending on several things including the priority, the time dispatched, availability of officers, as well as the other calls the department is responding to at the time (Henry Gomez, Salinas Police Department, personal communication, November 15, 2016).
The department receives its funding primarily from the Salinas General Fund and taxes generated from public approved Measure V and Measure G. A smaller portion of funding is received from grants. The funds support the police department salaries, equipment, training, and operations.

15.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Regulations and standards related to public services that are germane to the proposed project are summarized below.

Regional/Local

City of Salinas General Plan

The Land Use Element of the City of Salinas General Plan contains a range of goals and policies that address public services service levels and funding. Illustrative policies include the following:

Policy LU-4.1. Provide an effective and responsive level of fire protection, public education and emergency response service (including facilities, personnel, and equipment) through the Salinas Fire Department.

Policy LU-5.1. Provide an effective and responsive level of police protection (including facilities, personnel, and equipment) through the Salinas Police Department.

Implementation Program LU-9. Review the City’s current development fee schedule and revise as necessary to ensure that the development fees reflect the facility improvements required to implement the general plan and provide adequate levels of service. Fees to be considered include traffic, sanitary sewer, storm drainage, fire protection, law enforcement, and libraries and others.

Implementation Program LU-12. Review the level of services and funding levels at budget time, adjusting when necessary to ensure that adequate levels of service are provided and facilities are maintained.

15.3 THRESHOLDS OR STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of public services, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on these subjects, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to
develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City of Salinas has done so here. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would result in substantial adverse physical impacts or significant environmental impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, in order to maintain acceptable services ratios, response times or other performance objectives for:

- Fire protection;
- Police protection;
- Schools; and
- Parks.

The proposed project does not include residential uses. Therefore, it would not generate new population, and potential effects on public services that are population related would not occur. These services include schools and parks. No further discussion of service ratios or facility needs for these services is required. The analysis below is therefore limited to possible construction-related impacts associated with providing fire and police protection. Notably, CEQA does not treat impacts on service ratios or responses times to be adverse effects on “the environment.” (City of Hayward v. Board of Trustees of the California State University (2015) 242 Cal.App.4th 833, 843.) Rather, what matters under CEQA is whether, in order to maintain adequate service ratios or response times, a city, county, or other service provider would have to build new or expanded physical facilities, which themselves could result in environmental effects. (Id. at pp. 843-844; see also Goleta Union School Dist. v. Regents of University of California (1995) 37 Cal.App.4th 1025, 1032-1033 [CEQA is not concerned with school overcrowding, which is a socio-economic effect, but is concerned with the impacts of school construction needed to alleviate overcrowding].)

### 15.4 Environmental Impact Analysis

The proposed project includes annexation of the project site into the city limits of Salinas and detachment of the project site from the Monterey County Regional Fire District. This section includes information and data regarding environmental impacts associated with these actions; specifically, whether it would be necessary to build new or expanded facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or response times for police and fire protection services (City of Salinas) that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section below.
**Proposed Specific Plan**

The proposed specific plan includes a goal to create a safe environment through adequate fire protection and law enforcement services. Policies to support this goal include the following:

**Policy 7-2.1.** Require future projects to consult with the City Fire Department to ensure adequate access and amenities (e.g. fire hydrants) are provided.

**Policy 7-2.2:** Require future projects to provide adequate lighting, visibility and security consistent with the design guidelines and standards in Section 3 and this section.

The proposed specific plan requires that the preliminary design of future projects consider lighting, visibility and security as a component of the overall project design and that future projects within the specific plan area pay their fair share for police and fire services that contribute to maintain adequate levels of service.

**Fire Protection Capacity/Need for New Facilities**

The proposed project represents future development contemplated in the City of Salinas General Plan. New development within the project site can be served by existing facilities and would not, in and of itself, trigger the need for a new fire station (Brett Loomis, City of Salinas Fire Department, personal communication, December 8, 2016). It will, however, contribute to future demand for new fire protection facilities. The fire department already projects the need to construct up to six additional fire stations to meet existing and projected demand. The specific locations of the future fire stations have not yet been defined. The project site is on the service area response boundary between Station 3 and Station 4.

Lacking precise information about where new station(s) may be located, the specific environmental impacts of constructing new stations cannot be determined at this time. Impacts of constructing new fire stations would be similar to impacts associated with constructing common types of land development projects.

Ultimately, the precise impacts of constructing and operating new fire protection facilities will be assessed in future CEQA documentation prepared for the facilities or for larger projects within which a future fire protection facility site is planned.

**Police Services**

The proposed project will put additional demand on police protection services, mainly during the weekday business hours, but also during off hours. The planned new police station on East Alisal Street at the intersection with Work Street will have the capacity to serve all existing and planned new development through 2025. (Henry Gomez, Salinas Police
Department, personal communication, January 9, 2017). The plans for the new building have been completed. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2018 with completion expected by end of 2019. The City will be reviewing effects of constructing the new police station through a separate CEQA process. The proposed project would have no impact from construction of police protection facilities.

15.5 Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures

The impact summary for fire and police services effects differs from other sections of this EIR. It is not anticipated that the project itself will trigger the need for expanding the capacity of these services through construction of new facilities. Therefore, the project is not expected to individually result in adverse environmental effects resulting from construction of such facilities. Even if the proposed project did trigger this need, the locations of new facilities have not been defined such that it would be speculative to assess the environmental impacts resulting from their construction.

The proposed project will, along with existing development and anticipated future development, contribute to the need for new facilities. The environmental impacts of constructing new fire facilities will be evaluated once individual station locations are defined. Environmental impacts of constructing a new police protection facility needed to meet future demand, including demand from the proposed project, are being evaluated in a separate CEQA process for that facility.

New development within the project site will be required to pay City of Salinas Public Facility impact fees to help fund expanded fire and police protection services needed to meet the needs of new development. Fees will be required as a condition of project approval and must be paid prior to issuance of a building permit. This will be assured through the City’s development review process for individual projects as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process.
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Development of the project site will generate a substantial volume of traffic. That traffic will be distributed onto the local and regional transportation network. Potential exists that the added traffic could have an adverse effect on the performance of intersections within the city and the U.S. Highway 101 interchange at Airport Boulevard. This section of the EIR includes analysis of these potential impacts and includes review of potential impacts related to alternative forms of transportation.

Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- *Salinas Travel Center Draft Traffic Impact Analysis* (Hexagon Transportation Consultants 2017)(TIA) (included in Appendix G on CD on the inside back cover of this EIR; and


The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC), and the Monterey County Resource Management Agency – Public Works (Monterey County Public Works) submitted NOP responses that address transportation. Caltrans’ comments focused on issues to address in the TIA, including analysis of multimodal travel demand, use of the appropriate analysis model, use of current traffic count data, focus on impacts to the U.S. Highway 101/Airport Boulevard, and consideration of encroachment permit approval. TAMC recommended that the EIR describe applicable City and TAMC traffic fees, potential impacts on the U.S. Highway 101/Airport Boulevard interchange, multimodal transportation needs, and opportunities for infrastructure to support alternative transportation modes and alternative fuel vehicles. Monterey County Public Works commented on the need for the segments of De La Torre and Roy Diaz Street now located in unincorporated Monterey County to be part of the proposed annexation.
16.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The potential impacts of the proposed project were evaluated following the standards and methodologies set forth by the City, TAMC, and Caltrans. The TIA includes an analysis of AM and PM peak-hour traffic conditions for twelve signalized intersections, eight unsignalized intersections, eight freeway segments, and four freeway ramps. Roadway segments outside the city limits (e.g. roadways under Monterey County jurisdiction), with the exception of De La Torre and Roy Diaz Street, were not evaluated because the proposed project is expected to add relatively few trips to those roadways (less than one percent of the capacity of any County roadway onto which incidental trips are distributed). The study intersections, freeway segments, and freeway ramps are identified below along with analysis of their current operating conditions.

Existing City Street Network and Levels of Services

City Street Network

The project site is located at the southernmost boundary of the city, adjacent to the U.S. Highway 101/Airport Boulevard interchange. The proposed hotel and travel stop components of the project are highway oriented. Due to the benefits of the site location adjacent to the interchange (access, visibility, etc.), future development within parcels 3 and 4 will also likely be oriented to capturing traffic passing by the site on U.S. Highway 101. Consequently, traffic generated by the proposed project is likely to travel a limited portion of the City’s road network, with the bulk of these trips traveling through intersections in the immediate project area.

The City of Salinas road network in the project area is shown in Figure 16-1, Existing Road Network, along with the locations of the 20 study intersections that were evaluated in the TIA. U.S. Highway 101 is shown traversing adjacent to the western boundary of the project site. The study intersections were selected by City staff in collaboration with the traffic consultant. They represent the City’s informed projection of intersections most likely to be affected by project-generated traffic. Employee, customer, and truck trip (especially for the travel stop component of the proposed project) origins and destinations were considered for this purpose. The functions of the proposed hotel and travel center strongly suggest that most of the vehicle trips related to these uses would travel to and from the highway. The selected intersection study locations form a ring around the specific plan boundary and best represent where non-highway originating trips have potential to affect the circulation network.

Main City roadways in the immediate project area that provide direct access to it and onto which a majority of project traffic would be distributed include the following:
Figure 16-1
Existing Road Network
Salinas Travel Center EIR

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017
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Airport Boulevard is a two-to-four-lane roadway that provides access to and from northbound U.S. Highway 101 via Roy Diaz Street and southbound U.S. Highway 101 via Terven Avenue. Airport Boulevard is an east-west roadway that extends from Skyway Boulevard in the east to Hansen Street in the west and ends at a cul-de-sac.

Roy Diaz Street is a four-lane roadway that extends south from Airport Boulevard and ends at a cul-de-sac at the project site. Roy Diaz Street provides direct access to Parcels 3 and 4. It also provides access to the hotel and travel center parcels via De La Torre.

De La Torre is a two-lane roadway that forms a loop that starts and ends at Roy Diaz Street. De La Torre traverses the southern boundary of the hotel parcel and the northern boundary of the travel center parcel and provides direct access to both parcels.

The 20 study intersections evaluated in the TIA are as follows:

1. State Route (SR) 68 and Blanco Road (Caltrans intersection);
2. E. Romie Lane and Abbott Street;
3. Blanco Road/Sanborn Road and Abbott Street;
4. Harkins Road and Abbott Street;
5. Harkins Road and Hansen Street;
6. Airport Boulevard and Hansen Street (stop controlled);
7. Sanborn Road and Work Street/Terven Avenue;
8. Terven Avenue and U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps (Caltrans intersection);
9. Roy Diaz Street and Airport Boulevard;
10. Roy Diaz Street and De La Torre South (stop controlled);
11. Roy Diaz Street and U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramps (stop controlled);
12. Moffett Street and Airport Boulevard;
13. Skyway Boulevard and Airport Boulevard (stop controlled);
14. Sanborn Road and E. Alisal Street;
15. Skyway Boulevard/Quilla Street and E. Alisal Street (roundabout);
16. E. Market Street and E. Alisal Street (stop controlled);
17. Bardin Road and E. Alisal Street (stop controlled);
18. Williams Road and Quilla Street (stop controlled);
19. Williams Road and E. Market Street; and
20. Williams Road and Bardin Way/Bardin Road.

**Scope of Traffic Model Used for Traffic Analysis**

The TIA analysis of project effects on the circulation network is based on use of the latest version of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Government (AMBAG) Regional Travel Demand Model. This model includes all of the approved and reasonably foreseeable growth anticipated in Monterey Bay area by the year 2035 with base year 2010. AMBAG’s travel demand model covers the three-county region of Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito counties. The City and AMBAG have coordinated to refine the regional model to add detail and improve the validation of conditions and projections for the City.

**Existing City Intersection Levels of Service**

Level of service (LOS) is a qualitative description of operating conditions ranging from LOS A, or free-flow conditions with little or no delay, to LOS F, or jammed conditions with excessive delays. LOS is commonly used as the measure of the level of congestion on a road segment or intersection. As described in Section 16.3, Thresholds or Standards of Significance, impacts of a proposed project on circulation facilities is typically a function of whether traffic from a proposed project causes the level of congestion on a road segment or at an intersection to fall below a minimum desired level of service.

The results of the intersection level of service analysis under existing conditions are summarized in Figure 16-2, Existing Intersection Levels of Service. The results show that, measured against the applicable level of service standards, most of the study intersections currently operate at an acceptable level of service under existing conditions during both the AM and PM peak hours, with the following exceptions:

- SR 68/Blanco Road (#1) – both AM and PM peak hours;
- Blanco Road/Sanborn Road/Abbott Street (#3) – PM peak hour; and
- Terven Avenue/U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps (#8) – both AM and PM peak hours.

For the unsignalized study intersections, the levels of service and delay values shown in Figure 16-2 reflect the worst controlled approach to the intersections. Field observations conducted at the study intersections identified operational deficiencies at some of the intersections operating at an unacceptable level of service. Traffic conditions in the field were also observed to confirm the accuracy of the calculated levels of service. Overall, the level of service analysis appears to accurately reflect actual existing traffic conditions.
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<td>32.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: For two-way stop controlled intersections, the average delay and LOS is reported for the worst approach.

¹ Denotes Caltrans Intersection

LOS results are based on adjusted volumes including the estimated growth in traffic from the year 2014 to 2016.

**BOLD** indicates unacceptable level of service.

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017

Figure 16-2

Existing Intersection Levels of Service

Salinas Travel Center EIR
Existing (Caltrans) Facilities and Levels of Service

Existing Caltrans Facilities

Project effects on Caltrans’ facilities are expected to be limited to segments of U.S. Highway 101 in the vicinity, the four ramps associated with the U.S. Highway 101/Airport Boulevard interchange, and intersections formed by City and Caltrans operated roadways. The latter are limited to the SR 68/Blanco Road intersection and the Terven Avenue and U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps – these are included in the list of City study intersections shown above.

In the vicinity U.S. Highway 101 is mostly a four-lane, north/south freeway. North of Boronda Road, it is a six-lane facility. It connects Salinas to the Prunedale area and Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco counties to the north and the Salinas Valley and southern Monterey County cities to the south. Access to the project area is provided via its ramps at Terven Avenue and Roy Diaz Street.

The U.S. Highway 101 segments evaluated are:

- U.S. Highway 101, north of Boronda Road;
- U.S. Highway 101, between Boronda Road and Laurel Drive;
- U.S. Highway 101, between Laurel Drive and Main Street (SR 183);
- U.S. Highway 101, between Main Street and E. Market Street;
- U.S. Highway 101, between E. Market Street and John Street;
- U.S. Highway 101, between John Street and Sanborn Road;
- U.S. Highway 101, between Sanborn Road and Airport Boulevard; and
- U.S. Highway 101, between Airport Boulevard and Abbott Street/Hartnell Road.

The highway ramps evaluated include the U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps at Terven Avenue and the U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramps at Roy Diaz Street.

Caltrans Facilities Levels of Service

Existing traffic volumes for the study freeway segments were obtained from Caltrans. These and the highway segment level of service results are shown in Figure 16-3, Existing Freeway Levels of Service. The results show that the following three directional study freeway segments currently operate at an unacceptable level of service during one or both peak hours:

- Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from John Street to E. Market Street during the PM peak hour;
- Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from E. Market Street to Main Street during the PM peak hour; and
- Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from Main Street to Laurel Drive during the PM peak hour.

The ramp analysis showed that all freeway ramps currently have sufficient capacity to serve the existing traffic volumes. For all study ramps, the existing traffic demand is far lower than the ramp capacity during both AM and PM peak hours.

**Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**

**Existing Pedestrian Facilities**

Pedestrian facilities consist of sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals at signalized intersections. Pedestrian facilities are lacking on many roadways near the project site. There are currently no sidewalks along the project frontages. Roy Diaz Street has a sidewalk on the west side of the street between Airport Boulevard and the southern intersection of De La Torre. De La Torre also has sidewalks on both sides of the street for approximately 500 feet on the segment that extends west from its northern intersection at Roy Diaz Street to near U.S. Highway 101. On the segment that parallels U.S. Highway 101, De La Torre Street has a sidewalk on only the east side of the street where it turns southward for approximately 500 feet or one side, excluding the project frontages. Airport Boulevard has sidewalks along only the south side of the street.

The study intersection of Roy Diaz Street and Airport Boulevard has a crosswalk on the south approach, while the Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre and Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 NB Ramp intersections have crosswalks on the west approach. The existing crosswalks are sufficient to connect the limited sidewalk network found on those streets.

**Existing Bicycle Facilities**

The Monterey County Bike Map describes the existing bicycle network in the city. The existing bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the project site are shown on Figure 16-4, Existing Bicycle Facilities. Airport Boulevard has Class II bicycle lanes from Skyway Boulevard to Terven Avenue. Roy Diaz Street has Class II bicycle lanes the entire length of the street. Airport Blvd provides a bicycle connection to Monterey-Salinas Transit and can provide bicyclists with a greater range of mobility.

**Existing Transit Service**

Monterey-Salinas Transit provides bus service in the city. The #48 line provides service between the Salinas Transit Center and Salinas Airport Business Center via Moffett Street, Airport Boulevard and East Alisal Street, with 30 minute headways during AM peak hour and 90-minute headways during PM peak hour. The Salinas Transit Center is located in the
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Notes:
1. Existing freeway count data from October 2014 to September 2015 was obtained from Caltrans.

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017

Figure 16-3
Existing Freeway Levels of Service
Salinas Travel Center EIR
16.0 Transportation

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Figure 16-4

Existing Bicycle Facilities

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017

Salinas Travel Center EIR
downtown area where transit users may connect to 16 other bus routes and the Coast Starlight transit rail line operated by Amtrak. The bus stop nearest the project site is on Moffett Street approximately 0.4 miles away. Existing transit lines that serve the project area are shown on Figure 16-5, Project Area Transit Lines.

16.2 REGULATORY SETTING

State
California Department of Transportation
Caltrans is responsible for state highways and associated highway ramps and for intersections where freeway ramps intersect the local street system. Caltrans generally strives to maintain operations for signalized intersections at the “cusp” between LOS C and LOS D on its facilities, but recognizes that circumstances may limit its ability to do so. Caltrans has jurisdiction over the operations of mainline U.S. Highway 101 and over the on- and off-ramps to the highway. The proposed project will generate traffic that affects U.S. Highway 101 mainline operations and ramps.

Regional/Local
Regional Transportation Plan
TAMC is responsible for preparing the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Monterey County. The RTP includes: policy guidance, plans, and programs to attain a balanced comprehensive, multimodal transportation system; proposed solutions to transportation issues; addresses all modes of travel; and identifies anticipated funding for projects and programs. The RTP is embedded in the Association of Monterey Bay Area Government’s 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plans for Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments 2014) (MTP/SCS). The objective of the RTP and the MTP/SCS is to comply with current California Transportation Commission Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines.

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), as the federally-designated metropolitan planning organization representing Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties, is required by both federal and state law to prepare a long-range (at least 20 years) transportation planning document known as a metropolitan transportation plan. The metropolitan transportation plan contains a compilation of the projects proposed in the RTPs prepared by the Council of San Benito County Governments, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and TAMC. The metropolitan transportation plan is a document used to achieve a coordinated and balanced regional transportation system.
In the vicinity of the city, the RTP includes a number of regionally significant projects, including the following:

- **U.S. Highway 101 – Alvin Drive.** Construct overpass/underpass and four lane street structure;
- **Russell Road Widening.** Widen street from U.S. Highway 101 to San Juan Road;
- **U.S. Highway 101 Salinas Corridor.** Widen U.S. Highway 101 to 6 lanes within the existing right of way at locations where feasible;
- **U.S. Highway 101 Harris Road Interchange.** Construct new Interchange on U.S. Highway 101 at Harris Road, Post Mile 83.71;
- **Salinas Bus Rapid Transit.** Construct Bus Rapid Transit improvements along Alisal Street and North Main Street; and
- **Rail Extension to Monterey County.** Extends existing rail service from San Jose to Salinas and constructs station improvements in Gilroy, Pajaro, Castroville and Salinas. Kickstart phase to be completed by 2020 will establish stops in Gilroy and Salinas with limited Salinas station improvements.

**TAMC Regional Development Impact Fee Program**

The RTP also includes funding sources and strategies for financing improvements to the regional transportation system. Key components of the funding strategy are a regional development impact fee and a sales tax increase. The regional fee is applied to new development within local jurisdictions that are members of TAMC, including the City of Salinas. Funds generated through the regional development impact fee would, among other major projects, be used to fund projects included in the RTP that would benefit circulation conditions in and around the city. Member agencies must adopt the regional development impact fee before they can begin to collect the fee from new development. The City of Salinas adopted the fee program in August 2008.

**City of Salinas General Plan**

The City of Salinas General Plan Circulation Element contains a range of policies that address transportation and alternative transportation. The following policies are particularly relevant to the proposed project:

**Policy C-1.2.** Strive to maintain traffic Level of Service (LOS) D or better for all intersections and roadways.

**Policy C-1.3.** Require that new development and any proposal for an amendment to the Land Use Element of the General Plan demonstrate that traffic service levels meeting established General Plan standards will be maintained on arterial and collector streets.
Figure 16-5
Project Area Transit Lines

Salinas Travel Center EIR

LEGEND
- City of Salinas
- Project Site
- Bus Route 23
- Bus Route 48
- Bus Route 82
- Bus Route 86

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017
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Policy C-1.4. Continue to require new development to contribute to the financing of street improvements, including formation of roadway maintenance assessment districts, required to meet the demand generated by the project.

Policy C-1.6. Discourage diversion of traffic to local streets by providing maximum capacity on arterial streets and locating high traffic-generating uses on or near arterial frontages.

Policy C-1.7. Design roadway capacities to adequately serve planned land uses.

Policy C-2.2. Cooperate with Caltrans in making improvements to U.S. Highway 101 and support construction of Prunedale freeway improvements by Caltrans to serve through trips, and trips to and from Salinas.

Policy C-2.3. Continue efforts to reduce adverse impacts of truck traffic and parking in non-industrial areas of Salinas while recognizing and accepting the community’s economic dependence on trucking.

Policy C-3.2. Design development and reuse/revitalization projects to be transit-oriented to promote the use of alternative modes of transit and support higher levels of transit service.

Policy C-3.4. Support public transportation that is “bike” friendly, such as buses with bicycle racks and reduced fares for bicycle riders and provision of bicycle racks at public transportation stations.

Policy C-4.1. Continue to develop a network of on- and off-street bicycle routes to encourage and facilitate the use of bicycles for commute, recreational, and other trips. Eliminate gaps and provide connections between existing bicycle routes.

Policy C-4.2. Increase availability of facilities, such as bike racks and well-maintained and well-lit bike lanes that promote bicycling.

Policy C-4.3. Encourage existing businesses and require new construction to provide on-premise facilities to aid bicycle commuters, such as on-site safe bicycle parking.

Policy C-4.4. Improve the biking environment by providing safe and attractive cut-throughs, bike lanes, and bike paths for both recreational and commuting purposes.

Policy C-4.5. Where possible, ensure that roadway improvements (i.e., widening and re-stripping), as well as new overpasses and underpasses, allow for safe on-street bike lanes or adequate right-lane space for bicycles.
Policy C-4.7. Encourage parking lot designs that provide for safe and secure bicycle parking.

Policy C-5.1. Increase availability of safe and well-maintained sidewalks in all areas of the City.

Policy C-5.2. Encourage all new bus stops and changes in existing bus stops to take pedestrian access into consideration.

Policy C-5.4. Encourage parking lot designs that promote pedestrian access and safety.

City of Salinas Traffic Improvement Program

The City has an adopted traffic improvement program that helps fund transportation infrastructure improvements that become necessary as a result of new development. Traffic impact fees are paid by project developers to off-set the impacts of their projects on the City’s circulation facilities and in some cases, on facilities operated Caltrans. The fees are used for circulation network improvements that are designed to ensure that the City’s circulation facilities operate at an acceptable level of service. Fees collected for improvements to the limited number of Caltrans facilities included in the TIP in some cases fund the full set of improvements needed and in others, the fees fund a portion of the full cost of the improvements.

The City periodically updates the traffic impact fee amount to reflect costs to construct new circulation facilities or improve existing facilities. The City of Salinas Traffic Improvement Program 2010 Update (Wood Rogers 2010) (TIP) is the latest major update of the program. It reflects the costs of improving the circulation network to accommodate traffic volumes anticipated at buildout of the city as foreseen in the City of Salinas General Plan. The general plan and the TIP identify the specific circulation network improvements that are needed. Several of the improvements are particularly relevant to the proposed project, as the traffic it would generate has been found to have a significant impact on a number of circulation facilities that are included in the TIP (as described in Section 16.5 below). A project applicant’s payment of the impact fee for impacts on City facilities is considered to be mitigation for project impacts on City facilities, provided the impacts of the project on the facilities were anticipated when the TIP was prepared.

City of Salinas Bikeways Plan/TAMC Monterey County Bike Map

The City of Salinas 2002 Bikeways Plan (City of Salinas 2002) includes goals and actions along with maps identifying the City’s existing and proposed bikeways, bike parking facilities, bike support facilities, routes for buses with bike racks, and the design requirements for those facilities. A list of existing and planned bicycle facilities is included in plan.
TAMC’s Bike/Pedestrian Facilities Program has produced a 2016 version of the Monterey County Bike Map. The map includes facilities within the city. Because it is more recent, the TIA includes the portion of the city map which shows bicycle facilities within the vicinity of the project site.

City of Salinas Pedestrian Plan

The City of Salinas 2004 Pedestrian Plan (City of Salinas 2004) contains goals and strategies for improving and expanding pedestrian access and safety throughout the City. Goal 3 requires that new development be conditioned to install appropriate streets, sidewalks, pedestrian access ramps, traffic calming measures and related facilities to encourage walking. Future development within the project site is subject to such conditions.

City of Salinas Roadway Standards

The City of Salinas Standard Specification, Design Standards, and Standard Plans (City of Salinas 2008) along with its Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (Fehr & Peers 2008) include standards for the design of the City’s circulation network. Among a multitude of other standards for design and construction of improvements associated with new development, the document includes standards for roadway markings, pavement markers, signals and lighting, roadway materials, street lighting, and parking and circulation. A major purpose of these standards is to promote circulation safety for motorized and non-motorized forms of transportation.

The intent of the neighborhood traffic management program is to ensure that public streets are designed to reduce the negative effects of vehicle use and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. It contains guidance for circulation design that address issues ranging from speed control, pedestrian/vehicle conflict reduction, street network design, etc.

Proposed Specific Plan

New development within the specific plan boundary must be consistent with the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan. The information below summarizes information from the specific plan that is relevant to the issue of transportation. In this context, the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan support general plan policies, municipal code regulations, and/or other federal, State, or other local regulations presented above that serve to mitigate environmental effects of the proposed project.

The proposed specific plan includes a range of proposed circulation improvements and a goal to provide a circulation system that adequately meets needs created by buildout of the specific plan area. The following policies are the framework for the improvements proposed in the specific plan:
**Policy 4-1.1.** Provide a circulation network that facilitates the movement of large vehicles.

**Policy 4-1.2.** Design roadways to meet the City’s acceptable level of service.

**Policy 4-1.3.** Require the dedication of land for public roadways, ensuring public access to the remaining Future Growth Area.

**Policy 4-1.4.** Provide a circulation system that promotes pedestrian access and safety.

**Policy 4-1.5.** Minimize driveway entrances from streets to reduce conflicts.

**Policy 4-1.6.** Provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant facilities.

The proposed specific plan also includes policy intended to reduce vehicle trips to and from the site:

**Policy 4-2.1.** Provide a circulation network that promotes alternative modes of transportation.

**Policy 4-2.2.** Provide on-site amenities for users of alternative modes of transportation.

Section 4.4 of the specific plan identifies the proposed circulation concept for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements, as well as standards to which improvements would be made. It also includes proposed roadway sections. Requirements for trip reduction plans pursuant to zoning code Section 37-50.330 as described in the Regulatory Setting section above are described in Section 4.5 of the specific plan. The TIA evaluates the traffic impacts of the proposed project in light of the proposed roadway improvements, and includes review of the sufficiency of the planned bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

### 16.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subjects of transportation, as it does on a whole series of environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on these subjects, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (*Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara* (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, agencies have discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance. Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here, though in doing so it has exercised its discretion to take the
generalized wording of several of the Appendix G inquiries and has made them more concrete and specific. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.

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

- Result in inadequate emergency access.

- Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit. Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures.

The applicable circulation system performance standards are as follows:

**City of Salinas Definition of Significant Intersection Level of Service Impacts**

A proposed project creates a significant adverse impact on traffic conditions at a signalized intersection if for either peak hour:

- The level of service at the intersection degrades from an acceptable level (LOS D or better) under background conditions to an unacceptable level (LOS E or F) under project conditions, or

- The project would add traffic to a signalized intersection already operating at LOS E or F.

The minimum acceptable level of service for the worst approach at a two-way stop-controlled unsignalized intersection is LOS D. For two-way stop-controlled intersections, a significant impact would occur if:

- The level of service for the worst approach at the unsignalized intersection degrades from an acceptable LOS D or better under background conditions to an unacceptable LOS E or F under background plus project conditions and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways peak-hour signal warrant is satisfied under background plus project conditions, or
• The project would add traffic to a two-way stop-controlled unsignalized intersection in which the level of service for the worst approach is operating below LOS D and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways peak-hour signal warrant is satisfied under background plus project conditions.

**Caltrans Definitions of Significant Level of Service Impacts**

**Signalized Intersections**

Caltrans defines an acceptable level of service for signalized intersections over which it has jurisdiction as LOS C/D (on the “cusp” or the transition between LOS C and LOS D). The project is said to create a significant adverse impact on traffic conditions at a signalized intersection under Caltrans’ jurisdiction if:

• The level of service at the signalized intersection degrades from an acceptable LOS C/D threshold or better under background conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under background plus project conditions, or

• The project would add traffic to a signalized intersection already operating at LOS D or worse.

A significant impact is satisfactorily mitigated when measures are implemented that would restore intersection level of service to better than background conditions.

**Freeway Impacts**

Caltrans defines an acceptable level of service for freeway segments as LOS C or better. A significant adverse impact on traffic conditions would occur on a freeway segment if for either peak hour:

• The level of service on the freeway segment degrades from an acceptable LOS C or better under baseline conditions to an unacceptable LOS D or worse under project conditions; or

• New trips are added to a facility already operating at an unacceptable LOS D or worse under baseline conditions.

A significant impact is satisfactorily mitigated when measures are implemented that would restore freeway conditions to better than background conditions.

**Freeway Ramp Impacts**

A freeway ramp analysis was performed to verify that the freeway ramps would have sufficient capacity to serve the expected traffic volumes with and without the project. For the purpose of this study, the project would a significant adverse impact on a freeway ramp if it:
• Causes the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio of the freeway ramp to exceed 1.0; or
• Increases the amount of traffic on a freeway ramp that is already exceeding its capacity (V/C >1.0).

Checklist Questions not Applicable
As described below, the Appendix G questions on the subject of transportation includes a threshold that is not relevant to the proposed project. Under this threshold, significant impacts would result if a proposed project would:

• Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that result in substantial safety risks;

The proposed project does not include actions that would affect operations of the Salinas Municipal Airport. Issues related to effects of the proposed project on and from Salinas Municipal Airport operations are described in Section 5.0, Aesthetics (regarding light and glare), Section 12.0, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Section 14.0, Noise. Please refer to these sections for more information.

16.4 Environmental Impact Analysis
This section includes information and data regarding transportation issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

Traffic Impact Analysis Scenarios
Based on the thresholds of significance for performance of the road network described in Section 16.3 above where project impacts are evaluated relative to background conditions, the TIA includes analysis of the following transportation scenarios:

Background Conditions
Background conditions are defined as conditions just prior to the time that new development within the specific plan area is open for business. Full buildout of the specific plan area is conservatively projected to occur by 2025 such that all businesses would be open for business by that time. Traffic volumes for background conditions comprise volumes from existing traffic counts plus traffic generated by other approved developments in the vicinity of the project site. The only approved but not yet completed development assumed for this purposes is the Salinas-Ag Industrial Center project, which is described later in this section, and referenced in Section 20.0, Cumulative Impacts. A list of the approved but not yet completed developments was provided by the City of Salinas.
CEQA case law allows lead agencies, in formulating an “existing conditions” traffic baseline (see CEQA Guidelines, § 15125(a)), to account for reasonably foreseeable changes in existing conditions (e.g., worsened traffic) expected to occur by the time a proposed project, if approved, would be open for business. Such foreseeable changes can result from fully approved projects not yet open for business themselves at the time of EIR preparation. Traffic from such approved projects may not yet exist at the time of EIR preparation, but may foreseeably exist by opening day of the proposed project under consideration. (Neighbors for Smart Rail v. Exposition Metro Line Const. Authority (2013) 57 Cal.4th 439, 451-453; Pfeiffer v. City of Sunnyvale City Council (2011) 200 Cal.App.4th 1552, 1571-1573.)

**Background Plus Project Conditions**

Background plus project conditions reflect the projected traffic volumes on the existing roadway network with implementation of the project. Background plus project traffic volumes were estimated by adding to background traffic volumes the trips associated with the proposed project. Background plus project conditions were evaluated relative to background conditions in order to determine potential project impacts.

**Cumulative Conditions**

Cumulative traffic volumes were obtained from the city-wide travel demand model forecasts provided by AMBAG.

**Cumulative Plus Project Conditions**

Cumulative plus project conditions reflect the projected traffic volumes on the existing roadway network with implementation of the project. Projected peak-hour traffic volumes were estimated by adding to cumulative traffic volumes the additional traffic generated by the project. Cumulative plus project conditions were evaluated relative to cumulative no project conditions in order to determine the proposed project’s potential incremental contribution to overall anticipated cumulative impacts.

**Focus of the Analysis**

This section of the EIR reports on the impacts of the proposed project based on the background plus project conditions for intersections and on existing plus project conditions for freeway segments and freeway ramps. Section 20.0, Cumulative Impacts, includes discussion of the proposed project contribution to cumulative impacts based on cumulative conditions and cumulative plus project conditions described in the TIA.

**City of Salinas Roadway System Effects**

**Background Conditions**

*Background Transportation Network*

The road network under background conditions is assumed to include an improvement at the East Alisal Street and Bardin Road intersection. As part of the Bardin Road Safe Route to
School Project, a small roundabout will be constructed at this intersection. This project has been approved and funded, with completion assumed in 2020.

**Background Traffic Volumes**

Background peak-hour traffic volumes were estimated by adding to existing volumes the estimated traffic from approved, but not yet constructed and occupied projects in the City of Salinas. The only project expected to generate a significant number of vehicle trips at any study intersection is the Salinas-Ag Industrial Center, which comprises 257 acres of agricultural-related industrial land uses. A specific plan was adopted, and the property was annexed. Though no development has occurred to date, new development could occur at any time with the City’s consideration of project-level improvements for individual projects. The trips generated by this project were obtained from the Salinas Ag-Industrial Center Traffic Impact Analysis, prepared by Higgins Associates and dated July 6, 2009. They are included in the background traffic volumes to be conservative, as new development could occur within the year 2025 timeframe during which the specific plan is projected to build out.

Trips generated by the approved projects were added to existing traffic volumes to estimate background traffic volumes.

**Background Intersection Levels of Service**

The results of the intersection level of service analysis under background conditions show that, measured against City of Salinas and Caltrans level of service standards, the following signalized intersections would operate at an unacceptable level of service during one or both peak hours:

- SR 68/Blanco Road (#1) – both AM and PM peak hour (Caltrans);
- Blanco Road/Sanborn Road/Abbott Street (#3) – both AM and PM peak hours;
- Harkins Road/Abbott Street (#4) – AM peak hour;
- Harkins Road/Hansen Street (#5) – both AM and PM peak hours;
- Airport Boulevard/Hansen Street (#6) – PM peak hour;
- Terven Avenue/U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps (#8) – both AM and PM peak hours (Caltrans); and
- Skyway Boulevard/Airport Boulevard (#13) – PM peak hour.

The remaining study intersections would operate at acceptable levels of service during both the AM and PM peak hours of traffic under background conditions.

**Project Conditions**

The magnitude of traffic produced by a new development and the locations where that traffic would appear are estimated using a three-step process: 1) trip generation, 2) trip
distribution, and 3) trip assignment. In determining project trip generation, the magnitude of traffic entering and exiting the site is estimated for the AM and PM peak hours. As part of the project trip distribution, an estimate is made of the directions to and from which the project trips would travel. In the project trip assignment, the project trips are assigned to specific streets and intersections.

**Trip Generation**

Through empirical research, data have been collected that indicate the amount of traffic that can be expected to be generated by common land uses. The standard trip generation rates can be applied to help predict the future traffic increases that would result from a new development. The standard trip generation rates are published in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual.

The trip estimates for the proposed hotel on parcel 1 and tire store component of the travel center project on parcel 2 are based on trip rates published in the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 9th Edition. Based on local hotel occupancy data provided by the project applicant, it was assumed that the proposed hotel would have 80 percent of the total rooms occupied on a typical weekday.

For the other components of the travel center project, peak-hour trip estimates are based on surveys of three existing travel centers located in California. Each of the surveyed sites contains a fueling station, convenience store, and fast food restaurant with drive-through. Since none of the sites include a tire store, the trips generated by this use were estimated separately. To be conservative, trip estimates for the proposed travel center were estimated based on the average of the rates observed at the three sites. Daily trips for the travel center were estimated based on the average peak-hour trip rates observed at the three California travel centers and the ratio of daily rates and peak-hour rates for ITE Land Use 934 "Fast Food Restaurants with Drive-Through Window".

At this time, there are no specific development proposals for Parcels 3 and 4. Trip generation for these two parcels is based on a total of 390,510 square feet of light industrial uses (the maximum allowed at a 0.5 floor-to-area ratio) with the ITE light industrial trip rate applied. The ITE light industrial rate was applied for several reasons. The future end users for these parcels are unknown. The City desires to utilize a trip rate that fairly represents an average of the diverse range of potential end uses that could be located on Parcels 3 and 4 consistent with the City of Salinas General Plan land use designation. Light industrial uses generate a moderate level of trips compared to other use types allowed under the proposed zoning. Other allowed uses, such as telecommunication facilities, utility service yards, warehouses and storage would generate less traffic than the assumed light industrial use. The proposed zoning also allows some uses that would generate many more trips than the light industrial uses. While the light industrial trip rate is moderate compared to other general land use classification trip rates, it is being applied based on a maximum intensity of 0.5 floor-to-area.
ratio for the General Industrial land use designation as described in the City of Salinas General Plan. In all likelihood, the building intensity of future end uses is likely to be lower. Application of the moderate trip rate to a maximum potential building intensity (maximum permitted building square footage) yields a trip volume that is representative of a range of potential future end uses. Trips from future development on parcels 3 and 4 are estimated to comprise approximately 79 percent passenger vehicles and 21 percent trucks.

Trips to multi-use developments such as planned and proposed development within the project site are interrelated, and some trips are made among different uses on the same site. This capture of trips internal to the site has the net effect of reducing vehicle trip generation for the multiuse development site below the total number of trips generated by comparable, stand-alone sites. Internal trip reductions for this project were estimated based on the methodology described in the ITE Trip Generation Handbook, Second Edition. Overall, approximately nine percent of the AM and PM peak-hour project trips are estimated to be internal to the project (total of 824 internal trips divided by 8,554 total project trips).

Diverted linked trips are defined as trips that already occur on study area roadways, but divert from their original route to a secondary destination such as a gas station, before returning to their original routes. Thus, diverted linked trips add trips to the adjacent roads and driveways at the proposed site, but do not add trips to nearby major highways or freeways. It is anticipated that a significant portion of the trips associated with the travel center and tire store would be diverted linked trips from U.S. Highway 101. The diverted linked trips for the travel center were estimated based on pass-by rates for gasoline service stations with convenience mart published in the ITE Trip Generation Handbook, Second Edition. The pass-by rates for this related use are thought to be conservative because travel centers next to the freeways may have an even higher proportion of diverted linked trips than gasoline service stations with convenience market. However, this conservative assumption would not alter the study conclusions. Before applying the pass-by reduction, the internal trips were subtracted from the total trips generated by the multi-use site. Figure 16-6, Project Trip Generation, summarizes the trip generation information for the proposed project by proposed/planned uses.

The TIA includes discussion of how traffic generated by the proposed project is expected to be distributed onto the surrounding roadway system. The methodology used to distribute traffic is described on page 27 of the TIA.

**Background Plus Project Conditions Intersection Effects**

The results of the intersection level of service analysis under background plus project conditions are summarized in Figure 16-7, Background Plus Project Intersection Levels of Service. The results show that, measured against the City of Salinas and Caltrans level of service standards, the following intersections would operate at an unacceptable level of service during one or both peak hours:
SR 68/Blanco Road (#1) – Addition of one trip to LOS D operations under background conditions during both AM and PM peak hours (Caltrans intersection)

Blanco Road/Sanborn Road/Abbott Street (#3) – LOS E during both AM and PM peak hours (City intersection)

Harkins Road/Abbott Street (#4) – Addition of one trip to LOS F operations under background conditions during AM peak hour (City intersection)

Harkins Road/Hansen Street (#5) – Addition of one trip to LOS F operations under background conditions during both AM and PM peak hours (City intersection)

Airport Boulevard/Hansen Street (#6) – Addition of one trip to LOS F operations under background conditions during PM peak hour (City intersection)

Terven Avenue/U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps (#8) – Addition of one trip to LOS D operations under background conditions during both AM and PM peak hours (Caltrans intersection)

Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre South (#10) – Reduction from LOS C operations under background conditions to LOS F during PM peak hour (City intersection)

Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramps (#11) – Reduction from LOS A operations under background conditions to LOS F during PM peak hour (City intersection)

Skyway Boulevard/Airport Boulevard (#13) – Addition of one trip to LOS F operations under background conditions during PM peak hour (City intersection)

All the other study intersections would operate at an acceptable level of service.

**Caltrans Circulation Facility Effects**

As noted previously, Caltrans’ thresholds of significance are based on existing plus project conditions. Therefore, existing conditions for Caltrans facilities are discussed below and compared to existing plus project conditions to determine project effects on those facilities.

**Existing and Existing Plus Project Freeway Segment Effects**

Traffic volumes on the study freeway segments under project conditions were estimated by adding project trips to the existing volumes obtained from the Caltrans. The results of the freeway analysis are shown in Figure 16-8, Existing Plus Project Freeway Levels of Service. The results show that the project would have a significant impact on the following four freeway segments:

- Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from John Street to E. Market Street during the PM peak hour;
### Table 9: Trip Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Daily Rate</th>
<th>Daily Trips</th>
<th>AM Peak Hour</th>
<th>PM Peak Hour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proposed Use</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Center¹</td>
<td>10.573 ksf</td>
<td>480.18</td>
<td>5,077</td>
<td>31.00</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Trip Reduction (Daily, AM, PM) (8%/8%/7%)²</td>
<td></td>
<td>(406)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tire Store³</td>
<td>3 service bay</td>
<td>21.21</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel⁴</td>
<td>67 occupied rooms</td>
<td>8.92</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Trip Reduction (Daily, AM, PM) (37%/42%/45%)³</td>
<td></td>
<td>(221)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Industrial⁵</td>
<td>390.510 ksf</td>
<td>7.21</td>
<td>2,815</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Trip Reduction (Daily, AM, PM) (7%/3%/3%)²</td>
<td></td>
<td>(197)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diverted Linked Trips:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Stop (Daily, AM, PM) (59%/62%/56%)⁶</td>
<td>(2756)</td>
<td>(103)</td>
<td>(84)</td>
<td>(187)</td>
<td>(109)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tire Store (Daily, AM, PM) (14%/0%/28%)⁷</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Diverted Linked Trips</strong></td>
<td>(2,765)</td>
<td>(103)</td>
<td>(84)</td>
<td>(187)</td>
<td>(110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net New Primary Trips:</strong></td>
<td>4,965</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

1. Includes vehicle fueling, convenience store, and fast-food restaurant space. Trip rates based on surveys conducted at the three travel centers with drive-through in California. Used average of trip estimates based on building size and pumps (vehicle fueling positions). Daily trips are based on ratio between average daily rates and average of AM and PM peak hour rates for ITE Land Use 945 "Gasoline/Service Station with Convenience Market" from ITE *Trip Generation Manual* (9th Edition).
3. Rates from ITE *Trip Generation Manual*, 9th Edition, 2012, for Tire Store (ITE land use #848). Daily trips are based on ratio between average daily rates and AM or PM peak hour average vehicle trips per 1,000 Sq. Feet gross floor area of the Tire Store.
6. AM & PM peak hour Diverted Linked trips are based on pass-by rates for ITE Land Use 945 "Gasoline Service Station With Convenience Market" from ITE *Trip Generation Handbook* (Second Edition). Daily diverted linked trips were estimated by averaging AM & PM peak hour percentages.
7. PM peak hour Diverted Linked trips are based on pass-by rates for ITE Land Use 848 "Tire Store" from ITE *Trip Generation Handbook* (Second Edition). No reduction for diverted linked trips was assumed for the AM peak hour because there is no information available about the AM peak hour diverted linked trips in ITE *Trip Generation Handbook* (Second Edition). Daily diverted linked trips were estimated by averaging AM & PM peak hour percentages.

**Source:** Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017

**Figure 16-6**

**Project Trip Generation**

Salinas Travel Center EIR
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Intersection</th>
<th>Control Type</th>
<th>Peak Hour</th>
<th>Avg. Delay (sec)</th>
<th>LOS</th>
<th>Avg. Delay (sec)</th>
<th>LOS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SR 68 and Blanco Road*</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>E. Romie Lane/Abbott Street</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Blanco Road/Sanborn Road/Abbott Street</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Harkins Road/Abbott Street</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Harkins Road/Hansen Street</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>122.9</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>143.6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>156.4</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Airport Boulevard/Hansen Street</td>
<td>Two-Way Stop</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>198.8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>213.7</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Sanborn Road/Work Street/Terren Avenue</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Terren Avenue US 101 southbound ramps*</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Roy Diaz Street/Airport Boulevard</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre Street South</td>
<td>Side Street Stop</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Roy Diaz Street/US 101 northbound ramps</td>
<td>Side Street Stop</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Moffett Street/Airport Boulevard</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Skyway Boulevard/Airport Boulevard</td>
<td>Side Street Stop</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sanborn Road/E. Alisal Street</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Skyway Boulevard/Quilla Street/E. Alisal Street</td>
<td>Roundabout</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>E. Market Street/E. Alisal Street</td>
<td>Side Street Stop</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Bardin Road/E. Alisal Street(^2)</td>
<td>Roundabout</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Williams Road/Quilla Street</td>
<td>Side Street Stop</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Williams Road/E. Market Street</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Williams Road/Bardin Way/Bardin Road</td>
<td>Signal</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** For two-way stop controlled intersections, the average delay and LOS is reported for the worst approach.

\(^*\) Denotes Caltrans Intersection.

\(^2\) Background conditions reflect the planned roundabout.

# Denotes the average delay for the intersection is greater than the computational value (>300 seconds).

**Bold** indicates unacceptable level of service.

**Bold** indicates a significant project impact.

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017

Figure 16-7

Background Plus Project Intersection
Levels of Service
Salinas Travel Center EIR
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freeway Segment</th>
<th>Dir</th>
<th>Peak Hour</th>
<th>Density (veh/mi/ln)</th>
<th>LOS</th>
<th>Project trips</th>
<th>Volume (veh/hr)</th>
<th>Density (veh/mi/ln)</th>
<th>LOS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US101 Abbott Street / Hartnell Road to Airport</td>
<td>NB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>1,775</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>1,886</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boulevard</td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>2,272</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2,303</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US101 Airport Boulevard to Sanborn Road</td>
<td>NB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>1,864</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1,897</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>2,619</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>2,980</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US101 Sanborn Road to John Street</td>
<td>NB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>1,960</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1,963</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>2,940</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>3,069</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US101 John Street to E. Market Street</td>
<td>NB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>1,967</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,987</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>3,536</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,656</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US101 E. Market Street to Main Street</td>
<td>NB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>1,967</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,987</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,978</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>US101 Main Street to Laurel Drive</td>
<td>NB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>1,838</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>1,858</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PM</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,745</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
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<td>AM</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2,059</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<td><strong>119</strong></td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3,149</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>US101 Abbott Street / Hartnell Road to Airport</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>1,631</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1,655</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Boulevard</td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>2,131</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>US101 Airport Boulevard to Sanborn Road</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>2,373</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>2,323</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2,359</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
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<td>US101 Sanborn Road to John Street</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>2,710</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2,648</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>US101 John Street to E. Market Street</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>3,138</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3,248</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>2,970</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2,994</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>US101 E. Market Street to Main Street</td>
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<td>AM</td>
<td>3,206</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3,316</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>PM</td>
<td>3,151</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3,175</td>
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<tr>
<td>US101 Main Street to Laurel Drive</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>2,986</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3,096</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>2,999</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3,023</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US101 Laurel Drive to Boronda Road</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>2,994</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3,104</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>3,093</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3,117</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US101 Boronda Road to Sala Road</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>2,722</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>110</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2,984</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
1. Existing peak hour volumes from October 2014 to September 2015 are obtained through e-mail communication with Caltrans on December, 2016.
2. **Bold** indicates a significant project impact.

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017

Figure 16-8

Existing Plus Project Freeway Levels of Service Summary

Salinas Travel Center EIR
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- Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from E. Market Street to Main Street during the PM peak hour;
- Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from Main Street to Laurel Drive during the PM peak hour; and
- Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from Laurel Drive to Boronda Road during the PM peak hour.

Three freeway segments on northbound U.S. Highway 101 between John Street and Laurel Drive currently operate at unacceptable levels. According to the Caltrans significance criteria, the addition of one project trip to these freeway segments constitutes a significant impact. Therefore, any amount of development would cause a significant impact. The addition of project trips to the segment of northbound U.S. Highway 101 between Laurel Drive and Boronda Road would cause the freeway segment to degrade from an acceptable LOS C to an unacceptable LOS D during the PM peak hour. Because the freeway segment is very near the LOS C/D boundary, an increase of only three trips would cause the freeway segment to degrade to LOS D. Therefore, any amount of new development would result in a significant impact on this freeway segment.

**Existing and Existing Plus Project Freeway Ramp Effects**

Freeway ramp volumes under existing plus project conditions were estimated by adding project trips to the existing volumes obtained from Caltrans. Figure 16-9, Existing Plus Project Freeway Ramp Effects, shows the peak-hour ramp volumes under existing and existing plus project conditions. The analysis shows that the selected ramps would continue to have sufficient capacity to serve the projected traffic volumes under existing plus project conditions; volume to capacity ratios would remain below Caltrans thresholds of significance.

**Existing and Existing Plus Project Intersection Effects**

As described above and shown in Figure 16-7, Background Plus Project Intersection Levels of Service, two Caltrans intersections (State Route 68/Blanco Road and Terven Avenue/U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps) are addressed in the discussion of City circulation facilities. Under background plus project conditions, both intersections operate at LOS D, which is below Caltrans’ intersection level of service thresholds.

**Other Transportation Effects**

**Pedestrian Facility Access/Effects**

There are currently no sidewalks along the project frontages as shown on the site plan illustrated in Figure 4-5, Hotel and Travel Center Site Plan, presented earlier in this EIR. The hotel and travel center will include new sidewalks along the frontage on both sides of De La
Torre and will extend the sidewalk on the west side of Roy Diaz Street to run the length of the project frontage. Pedestrian ways will also be included within each site to connect pedestrians to sidewalks along the street frontage.

The study intersections of Roy Diaz Street and Airport Boulevard has a crosswalk on the south approach, while the Roy Diaz Street / De la Torre Circle and Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramp intersections have crosswalks on the west approach. The existing crosswalks are sufficient to connect the planned sidewalk network on those streets.

**Bicycle Facility Access/Effects**

Within the vicinity of the project site, designated bike lanes are present along Airport Boulevard and Roy Diaz Street. The existing bike facilities provide direct access to the project site.

**Transit Facility Access/Effects**

The project site is not within ready walking distance of existing transit services. The proposed travel center and hotel developments are primarily auto-oriented uses. Even if busses directly served the project site, very few customers of these businesses would be expected to use transit. However, some employees may consider alternative modes, including transit, if direct bus service was available. The future development of parcels 3 and 4 would greatly increase the employment population along Roy Diaz Street and may warrant changes to existing bus routes to better serve this area. The developer(s) of parcels 3 and 4 should work with Monterey-Salinas Transit to provide appropriate transit improvements including bus stops along Roy Diaz Street. Consultation between such developers and the Monterey-Salinas Transit would be required by mitigation measure TRANS-7.

**Project Design/Location and Circulation Hazards**

Development within parcels 1 and 2 will be accessed from existing streets that are built to City standards. Future development within parcels 3 and 4 will be responsible for extending De La Torre to the south to provide access to those parcels; this extension would be constructed to City standards.

16.5 **IMPACT SUMMARY AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

**IMPACT** Degraded Performance of Seven City-Controlled Intersections Due to Traffic Generated by the Proposed Project (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The proposed project will generate 4,965 daily vehicle trips that will be distributed onto the local City and regional transportation network. With the additional traffic, seven City-controlled intersections would be significantly impacted based on the City’s thresholds of
**Project Conditions Ramp Analysis**

Freeway ramp volumes under project conditions were estimated by adding project trips to the existing volumes obtained from Caltrans. Table 1 shows the peak-hour ramp volumes under project conditions. The ramp analysis under existing plus project conditions shows that the selected ramps would continue to have sufficient capacity to serve the projected traffic volumes under existing plus project conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freeway</th>
<th>Ramp</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Peak Capacity</th>
<th>Peak Volume</th>
<th>V/C</th>
<th>Travel Center Project Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>US 101 Southbound</td>
<td>SB on-ramp from Airport Boulevard</td>
<td>Loop</td>
<td>AM 1,800</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 1,800</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>121</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SB off-ramp to Airport Boulevard</td>
<td>Diagonal</td>
<td>AM 2,000</td>
<td>867</td>
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<td>PM 2,000</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US 101 Northbound</td>
<td>NB off-ramp to Roy Diaz Street</td>
<td>Diagonal</td>
<td>AM 2,000</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 2,000</td>
<td>209</td>
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<td>161</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 2,000</td>
<td>747</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
1. Ramp capacities were obtained from the *Highway Capacity Manual 2010*, and considered the free-flow speed and the number of lanes on the ramp.
2. Existing peak-hour volumes were obtained from Caltrans.

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017

**Figure 16-9**

Existing Plus Project Freeway Ramp Effects

Salinas Travel Center EIR
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significance described in Section 16.3. These intersections are listed below along with the background plus project circumstance that results in the significant impact:

- **Blanco Road/Sanborn Road/Abbott Street (#3)** – Addition of one trip to LOS E operations under background conditions during the AM and PM peak hours;
- **Harkins Road/Abbott Street (#4)** – Addition of one trip to LOS F operations under background conditions during the AM peak hour;
- **Harkins Road/Hansen Street (#5)** – Addition of one trip to LOS F operations under background conditions during both the AM and PM peak hours;
- **Airport Boulevard/Hansen Street (#6)** – Addition of one trip to LOS F operations under background conditions during the PM peak hour;
- **Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre South (#10)** – Reduction from LOS C operations under background conditions to LOS F during the PM peak hour;
- **Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramps (#11)** – Reduction from LOS A operations under background conditions to LOS F during the PM peak hour; and
- **Skyway Boulevard/Airport Boulevard (#13)** – Addition of one trip to LOS F operations under background conditions during the PM peak hour (City intersection).

**Payment of City Traffic Impact Fee as Mitigation**

Improvements needed to intersections 3, 4, 5, 6 to improve operations to acceptable levels of service are identified as projects #68, #71, #70, and #69 in the City’s TIP, respectively. The TIP is described in Section 16.3 above. These intersection projects generally consist of a combination two or more of the following improvement types: new through lanes, new turn lanes, reconfiguration of existing lanes, traffic controls (e.g. traffic signals), striping, and sidewalks.

Payment of the City traffic impact fee at the time building permits are requested for individual projects within the project site will reduce their respective impacts on these four intersections to less than significant. Payment of the City’s traffic impact fee prior to issuance of building permits will be required by the City as a condition of approval for all individual projects, as will be assured through the City’s development review process as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. No further mitigation for impacts on these intersections is required.

**Mitigation Measures for Impacts on Intersections 10, 11, and 13**

Improvements to City intersections 10, 11, and 13 are not included in the City’s TIP. Therefore, significant impacts to these intersections must be mitigated solely by developers.
of projects within the specific plan area through construction of improvements needed to ensure the intersections operate to acceptable LOS standards under background plus project conditions. As described in the following mitigations, individual project developers within the project site will be required to pay a fair share of the costs of the improvements and the improvements must be constructed in parallel with the individual project(s) that trigger the significant impacts. The TIA includes an analysis of fair share costs to be spread between Phase 1 (parcels 1 and 2) and Phase 2 (parcels 3 and 4) development. The analysis is found on pages 51-52 of the TIA.

**Mitigation for Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre (South) Traffic Signal (Intersection 10)**

TRANS-1 Prior to issuance of building permits, all developers of individual projects within the specific plan area shall pay a fair share of the cost of a traffic signal at Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre (South), which would restore the intersection from unacceptable LOS F to an acceptable LOS A during the PM peak hour.

TRANS-2 Prior to issuance of the first building permit, either the hotel developer or the travel center developer (whichever is first to request a building permit) shall construct a traffic signal at Roy Diaz Street/De La Torre (South). Traffic generated by only 20 percent of total development capacity proposed for these projects combined triggers the need for this improvement. The subject developer shall enter into a reimbursement agreement with the City of Salinas for reimbursement of costs when fair-share costs are paid by developers of all other projects within the specific plan area as required pursuant to mitigation measure TRANS-1. Traffic signal design and construction shall be subject to review and approval by the City of Salinas Public Works Department. The City of Salinas Public Works Department shall ensure that the improvements have been completed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for the subject project.

**Mitigation for Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 Northbound Ramps Traffic Signal (Intersection 11)**

TRANS-3 Prior to issuance of building permits, all developers of individual projects within the specific plan area shall pay a fair share of the cost of a traffic signal at Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramps. This improvement would restore the intersection from unacceptable LOS F to an acceptable LOS C during the PM peak hour.

TRANS-4 Prior to issuance of a building permit, the developer of the future individual project within Phase 2 of the project (within parcels 3 or 4) whose traffic generation represents more than 82 percent of the projected PM peak traffic volume for Phase 2 as shown in TIA Table 15, Fair Share Analysis, shall construct a traffic signal at Roy Diaz Street/U.S. Highway 101 northbound ramps. The
developer shall enter into a reimbursement agreement with the City of Salinas for reimbursement of costs when fair-share costs are paid by developers of all other projects within the specific plan area as required pursuant to mitigation measure TRANS-3. Traffic signal design and construction shall be subject to review and approval by the City of Salinas Public Works Department. The City of Salinas Public Works Department shall ensure that the improvements have been completed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for the subject project.

**Mitigation for Skyway Boulevard/Airport Boulevard Improvements (Intersection 13)**

**TRANS-5** Prior to issuance of building permits, all developers of individual projects within the specific plan area shall pay a fair share of the cost of a traffic signal at Skyway Boulevard/Airport Boulevard. This improvement would restore the intersection from unacceptable LOS F to an acceptable LOS C during the PM peak hour.

**TRANS-6** Prior to issuance of the first building permit, either the hotel developer or the travel center developer (whichever is first to request a building permit) shall restripe the eastbound right-turn lane on Airport Boulevard to a shared left- and right-turn lane and reconfigure the intersection so that the eastbound Airport Boulevard approach is uncontrolled and stop control is added for the northbound left-turn and through movements and the southbound through movement on Skyway Boulevard. The westbound receiving leg of Airport Boulevard would have a single lane to receive the northbound left-turn movement and then pick up a second lane from the uncontrolled southbound right-turn movement from Skyway Boulevard. Traffic generated by either project triggers the need for this improvement. The subject developer shall enter into a reimbursement agreement with the City of Salinas for reimbursement of costs when fair-share costs are paid by developers of all other projects within the specific plan area as required pursuant to mitigation measure TRANS-5. Improvement designs and construction shall be subject to review and approval by the City of Salinas Public Works Department. The City of Salinas Public Works Department shall ensure that the improvements have been completed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for the subject project.

Implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-6 will ensure that traffic generated by the proposed project does not significantly degrade the performance of intersections 10, 11, and 13 by requiring that necessary improvements to restore each to an acceptable levels of service are completed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit. Levels of service with mitigation are identified in mitigation measures TRANS-1, TRANS-3, and TRANS-5, respectively.
IMPACT Degraded Performance of Two Caltrans-Controlled Intersections Due to Traffic Generated by the Proposed Project (Less than Significant)

The addition of any amount of project traffic to two Caltrans-controlled intersections would significantly impact the performance of the intersections based on the Caltrans thresholds of significance described in Section 16.3. These intersections are listed below along with the background plus project circumstance that results in the significant impact:

- SR 68/Blanco Road (#1) – Addition of one trip to LOS D operations under background conditions during both AM and PM peak hours; and
- Terven Avenue/U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps (#8) – Addition of one trip to LOS D operations under background conditions during both AM and PM peak hours.

It is likely that encroachment permits will be needed from Caltrans at the time improvements to these intersections are constructed.

Payment of City Traffic Impact Fee as Mitigation for Impacts on Caltrans-Controlled Intersections

While these two intersections are under Caltrans control, improvements needed to improve operations to acceptable levels of service are included in the City’s TIP as projects #59 and #38, respectively. TIP project #59 includes new turn lanes and signalization at the SR 68/Blanco Road intersection. The fees collected through the TIP are sufficient to construct the full set of improvements needed at this intersection. TIP project #38 to Terven Avenue (Airport Boulevard)/U.S. Highway 101 interchange. The TIP does not reference specific improvements at the intersection as Caltrans is responsible for designing the improvements. While a number of improvements to the interchange were already completed using a combination of City fees and TAMC fees, additional funds are being collected to make additional improvements. The TIP is described in Section 16.2 above. Payment of the City traffic impact fee at the time building permits are requested for individual projects within the project site will reduce their respective impacts on these intersections to less than significant.

Payment of the City’s traffic impact fee prior to issuance of building permits will be required by the City as a condition of approval for all individual projects. No mitigation is required.

IMPACT Degraded Performance of Caltrans-Controlled Freeway Segments Due to Traffic Generated by the Proposed Project (Less than Significant)

As described in Section 16.4 above, addition of traffic from the proposed project to U.S. Highway 101 would result in significant impacts on the four U.S. Highway 101 segments listed below. The first three segments currently operate at below acceptable LOS and addition of even one trip to them is a significant impact. The last segment would degrade from acceptable LOS C/D to LOS D with the addition of only three new trips:
• Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from John Street to E. Market Street during the PM peak hour;
• Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from E. Market Street to Main Street during the PM peak hour;
• Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from Main Street to Laurel Drive during the PM peak hour; and
• Northbound U.S. Highway 101, from Laurel Drive to Boronda Road during the PM peak hour.

Payment of City Traffic Impact Fee as Mitigation for Impacts on Caltrans-Controlled U.S. Highway 101 Segments

The significant freeway segment impacts could be satisfactorily mitigated by widening northbound U.S. Highway 101 from a four-lane to a six-lane freeway through the City of Salinas. This improvement is included in the City’s TIP as project #32. Payment of the City traffic impact fee at the time building permits are requested for individual projects within the project site will reduce their respective impacts on these segments to less than significant.

Payment of the City’s traffic impact fee prior to issuance of building permits will be required by the City as a condition of approval for all individual projects. No mitigation is required.

IMPACT Degraded Performance of Caltrans-Controlled Freeway Ramps Due to Traffic Generated by the Proposed Project (Less than Significant)

As described in Section 16.4 above, addition of traffic from the proposed project to the northbound and southbound ramps to U.S. Highway 101 at Airport Boulevard and at Roy Diaz Street would affect their operations, but would not cause the operations of ramps to drop below Caltrans’ thresholds of significance. The traffic volume/ramp capacities would be acceptable. No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT Conflict with Pedestrian or Bicycle Facilities Plans (Less than Significant)

As described in the TIA, the proposed hotel and travel center project site plans include pedestrian facilities that provide connectivity both within these two sites and to existing adjacent roadways. The TIA also concludes that the pedestrian facilities would be constructed to City standards. The City will require inclusion of pedestrian facilities consistent with City standards and specifications for future development proposed within parcels 3 and 4 to ensure acceptable connectivity is provided within and between those developments and adjacent sites.

Existing bicycle lanes along Roy Diaz Street provide bicycle access to the project site. These lanes will be extended to the eastern boundary of the project with the extension of Roy Diaz Street that will be required in association with development of parcels 3 and 4.
Given the availability of existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities included in the site plans for the proposed hotel and travel center developments, the City’s standard requirement that pedestrian facilities be included along frontages of new development sites (e.g. with site plans for future development within parcels 3 and 4), and the City’s intention to implement the bicycle circulation plan that calls for extending the existing bicycle lane on Roy Diaz Street consistent with City standards as part of the extension of the roadway, the proposed project would be consistent with City pedestrian and bicycle plans and standards. Inclusion of the proposed improvements for the hotel and travel center project and the future inclusion of pedestrian and bicycle improvements for future projects within parcels 3 and 4 will be assured through the City’s development review process as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. No mitigation measures are required.

**IMPACT** Insufficient Provision of Transit Facilities (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Based on the fact that Phase 1 development (hotel and travel center) will be highway oriented, demand for transit access would be created primarily by the limited number employees projected for these uses. Limited demand would not warrant modification of the existing 48 line bus route along Moffett Street that runs approximately 0.4 miles from the project site. However, with buildout of parcels 3 and 4, demand from employees could grow, and depending on the future end uses, some demand from customers could be generated.

To ensure that ready access to transit service in the immediate vicinity of the project is considered to respond to potential demand created by future development within parcels 3 and 4, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented.

**Mitigation Measure**

TRANS-7 Each applicant for individual future projects proposed within parcels 3 and 4 shall consult with Monterey-Salinas Transit to determine whether the individual project triggers the need to provide transit. Such facilities could include bus stops, shelters, pull-outs, or other improvements deemed warranted by Monterey-Salinas Transit. Each applicant shall provide written evidence from Monterey-Salinas Transit as part of the project level entitlement application which verifies whether the project triggers the need for transit facilities. The information may be verified at the discretion of the Community Development Director. If facilities are needed, the applicant shall provide facility improvement plans designed to Monterey-Salinas Transit specifications to the City as part of the project application. The improvement plans shall be subject to review and approval of the Public Works Department and shall be installed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit.
Implementation of mitigation measure TRANS-7 would reduce potential impacts associated with the need to provide transit access/facilities to a less-than-significant level by requiring that if transit facility improvements are required, that required facilities are installed prior to issuance of an occupancy permit.

**IMPACT Circulation Hazards Resulting from Design of Project Improvements (Less than Significant)**

The proposed project includes new circulation facilities and the site designs for new development projects provide for vehicle ingress and egress and for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Safety hazards for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians are possible if the facilities are not designed to avoid such hazards.

The TIA includes a review of proposed circulation design for the hotel and travel center. The analysis concludes that there is no on-street parking or curves in the roadway along the project frontage on De La Torre that would interfere with vehicle sight distance. Clear sight distance triangles should be provided at the project driveways to optimize sight distance. The driveway widths, distance between driveways, and distance between the driveways and the intersection at De La Torre and Roy Diaz Street meet the City’s requirements. The on-site circulation was reviewed in accordance with generally accepted traffic engineering standards. Generally, the proposed plan would provide adequate connectivity through the parking areas for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. The width of all drive aisles and parking space dimensions meet required standards, including those contained in the City’s Standard Specification, Design Standards, and Standard Plans and Neighborhood Traffic Management Program.

Future development proposed within parcels 3 and 4 will also be similarly reviewed for circulation safety issues as part of the development review process for those projects at the time project specific applications/site plans are submitted as described in Section 1.4, Development Review Process. Through that review process, potential circulation hazards resulting from possible inconsistencies with City standards and accepted engineering practices would be identified and rectified through project design modification requirements and/or conditions of approval.

To provide access to parcels 3 and 4, Roy Diaz Street will need to be extended from its existing terminus through parcels 3 and 4. The roadway must be designed to City standards and specifications, which are crafted in part to ensure circulation safety. The City’s Standard Specification, Design Standards, and Standard Plans and Neighborhood Traffic Management Program contain such roadway design standards.

With required consistency of the hotel and travel center projects and future development within parcels 3 and 4 with the City’s design standards and accepted engineering practices, hazards from circulation design would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.
17.0 Wastewater

Wastewater from new development within the project site must be conveyed and treated. This section of the EIR includes evaluation of the adequacy of wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities and capacities to accommodate the new development, whether treatment can be accomplished while meeting regulatory requirements, the wastewater facilities planned in the specific plan, and whether new conveyance and/or treatment facilities are required. Information in this section is derived from a variety of sources including:

- Final Environmental Impact Report, Salinas General Plan (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002);
- City of Salinas Sewer System Management Plan Sanitary Sewer Collection System General Waste Discharge Requirements (GWDR) Order 2006-0003-DWQ, May 2, 2006 (City of Salinas 2014);
- Consolidated Final Impact Report for the Pure Water Monterey Groundwater Replenishment Project (Denise Duffy & Associates 2016);
- Regional Treatment Plant Wastewater Flow Projection Report (Brezak & Associates Planning 2014); and
- Draft Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan (Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar 2017).

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

No comments on wastewater issues were received on the NOP.

17.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Wastewater Conditions within the Project Site

The project site contains no public wastewater conveyance or treatment facilities, nor does it contain other forms of wastewater treatment or collection such as septic systems.
Wastewater and Recycled Water Service

Wastewater service in the city is organized at two levels. The City is responsible for maintenance and extension of sewer lines within its boundaries, and the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA) is responsible for development and operation of regional treatment facilities, trunk main pipelines, and pump stations. The MRWPCA serves the cumulative wastewater treatment needs of the approximately 250,000 customers within its service area. Its service area includes portions of unincorporated Monterey County; the cities of Salinas, Del Rey Oaks, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Sand City, and Seaside; the Boronda County Sanitation District; the Castroville Community Services District, the Marina Coast Water District; and the Moss Landing County Sanitation District.

The City operates two separate wastewater systems. Sanitary wastewater that is generated largely by households, commercial businesses, and offices, is conveyed via a system of collection pipes to the MRWPCA Salinas Pump Station. The Salinas Pump Station is located at 146 Hitchcock Road. From the Salinas Pump Station, wastewater is conveyed through MRWPCA facilities to the regional treatment plant, located north of Marina. The City also owns and operates an industrial wastewater conveyance and treatment system. The industrial sewer system is separate from the sanitary sewer system. Industrial wastewater is collected from industrial uses located in southeastern Salinas and transported to the industrial wastewater treatment facility (the Salinas Treatment Facility) located west of Salinas, north of Davis Road and adjacent to the Salinas River. Industrial wastewater is also shunted directly to the MRWPCA lift station and the regional plant during certain times of the year when flows to the regional plant are required to be supplemented due to low volumes of sanitary wastewater. Certain volumes are needed to provide the required flows to support the MRWPCA recycled water production projects. This is all accomplished through the Pure Water Monterey program discussed below.

Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency

Regional Treatment Plant

The system provides centralized wastewater treatment for cities and communities through a network of wastewater pump stations and pressure pipelines that convey wastewater to the regional treatment plant for treatment, disposal, and recycling. The regional treatment plant primarily treats municipal wastewater.

Wastewater at the regional treatment plant is treated to primary and secondary treatment standards and for use as influent for the tertiary treatment system that produces recycled water for crop irrigation. Recycled water is produced at the Salinas Valley Reclamation Plant, which is co-located at the regional treatment plant, for irrigation of farmland in the northern Salinas Valley in the area referred to as the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project area.
The regional plant has an average dry weather design capacity of 29.6 million gallons per day (MGD) and a peak wet weather design capacity of 75.6 MGD. It currently receives and treats approximately 16 to 17 MGD of wastewater, and therefore, has existing capacity to treat additional flows.

The volume of wastewater treated at the regional treatment plant varies throughout the year, with the highest flows occurring during the non-irrigation season (November through March). The lowest flows occur during the irrigation season (April through October) when a large portion of the secondary effluent from the regional treatment plant is diverted to the Salinas Valley Reclamation Plant for additional tertiary treatment and subsequent use for crop irrigation within the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project area.

A forty-year wastewater flow projection analysis was conducted as part of the planning process for the Groundwater Replenishment Project (GWR Project). The projections were based on review of historical population changes and historical wastewater flow data, which were used to calculate average flow generated per person in units of gallons per capita per day (gpcd) for the years 2000 through 2012. Population growth is the most significant source of changes in wastewater generation volume. Trends in population in each community were projected forward to the year 2055, and wastewater flow projections were calculated from these trends.

The amount of wastewater that the plant receives and treats has been decreasing over time. It is projected that wastewater flows to the regional treatment plant will continue to decrease until approximately the year 2030, when per capita flows are projected to reach a minimum of between 17.1 and 19.2 MGD. Based on the “high” and “low” projections of population growth and assuming a minimum of 59.0 gallons per capita per day, flows are projected to increase after 2030 and may range between 22.7 and 24.3 MGD by the year 2055, or 77 percent to 82 percent of regional treatment plant design capacity (Brezack & Associates Planning 2014). The existing regional treatment plant therefore, has capacity to treat projected future flows with additional capacity remaining. Projected flows from population and other growth projected in the City of Salinas General Plan, including growth within the project site, are included in the flow projections.

**Regional Wastewater Collection and Treatment System**

MRWPCA operates the Salinas Pump Station, a pump station that serves Salinas. The pump station is located on Hitchcock Road, a half mile southeast of the intersection of Blanco and Davis roads at the site of the City’s former municipal wastewater treatment plant, known as Treatment Plant No. 1 or “TP1.”

Existing stormwater, municipal wastewater (sanitary sewer), and agricultural (industrial) wash water pipelines traverse the pump station property in close proximity to one another, but most commonly flow to different ultimate endpoints. Municipal wastewater enters the
pump station and is conveyed from there to the regional treatment plant in a 36-inch diameter interceptor force main pipeline that is approximately 7.5 miles in length. The average daily and peak flows through the pump station have been relatively constant at approximately 12 MGD and 25 MGD, respectively, over the last several years (Denise Duffy & Associates 2016). Flows at the pump station are highest during summer months when the population of Salinas expands due to the large migrant workforce associated with the agricultural industry. The City has embarked on a collection system improvement program and has reduced winter infiltration and inflow of stormwater into the municipal wastewater system and has thereby reduced total flows reaching the pump station. Flow testing of the pump station has indicated a pumping capacity of 32.8 to 35.4 MGD (assuming one pump is out of service), and a total capacity of 38.5 MGD with all pumps running.

City Industrial Wastewater Conveyance and Treatment System

The City’s industrial wastewater conveyance system consists of approximately 24,000 linear feet of pipe that serves approximately 25 agricultural processing and related businesses located in the southeastern area of Salinas. The conveyance system is separate from the Salinas municipal wastewater collection system and includes 14-inch to 33-inch diameter gravity pipelines that flow to the Salinas Pump Station, then flow into a 42-inch gravity pipeline to the Salinas Treatment Facility.

Over eighty percent of the wastewater flows in this system are from fresh vegetable packing facilities (typically, wash water used on harvested row crops), and the remainder of flows originate from businesses associated with seafood processing, refrigerated warehousing, manufactured ice, preserves (frozen fruits, jams and jellies) and corrugated paper boxes.

17.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Federal

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States (waters of the U.S.) and regulating quality standards for surface waters. Its goals are to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters. Under the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has implemented pollution control programs and established water quality standards. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program under section 402 of the Clean Water Act and enabling regulations controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. The EPA has delegated authority of issuing NPDES permits in California to the State
Water Resources Control Board (State Board), which has nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards. The Central Coast regional board regulates water quality in the project area. The NPDES permit program is further described below.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) and EPA regulate discharge of dredged and fill material into waters of the U.S. under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and its implementing regulations. Waters of the U.S. are defined broadly as waters susceptible to use in commerce (including waters subject to tides, interstate waters, and interstate wetlands) and other waters (such as interstate lakes, rivers, streams, mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds) (33 CFR 328.3, 40 CFR 230.3(s)(1), 40 CFR 122.2).

Section 401 of the Clean Water Act requires that, prior to the issuance of a federal license or permit for an activity or activities that may result in a discharge of pollutants into navigable waters, the permit applicant must first obtain a certification from the state in which the discharge would originate. A state certification indicates that the proposed activity or activities would not result in a violation of applicable water quality standards established by federal or state law, or that no water quality standards apply to the proposed activity.

Water bodies that may not be covered under USACOE jurisdiction may require a Section 401 Water Quality Certification for impact on waters of the state. Placement of structures, fill, or dredged materials into waters of the State requires Section 401 Water Quality Certification. Activities that require a federal Section 404 permit also require a Section 401 Water Quality Certification. The regional boards issue Section 401 Water Quality Certifications and waivers.

Under the authority of Clean Water Act Section 303(d), the regional board and State board list water bodies as impaired when not in compliance with designated water quality objectives and standards. Section 303(d) also requires preparation of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program for waters identified by the state as impaired. A TMDL is a quantitative assessment of a problem that affects water quality. The problem can include the presence of a pollutant, such as a heavy metal or a pesticide, or a change in a physical property of the water, such as reductions in dissolved oxygen or increases in temperature. A TMDL is established at the level necessary to implement the applicable water quality standards. A TMDL requires that all sources of pollution and all aspects of a watershed’s drainage system be reviewed (both point and non-point sources) and establishes load allocations to sources to achieve water quality standards. The Clean Water Act does not expressly require implementation of TMDLs. However, the State Board has interpreted the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code Section 13000 et. seq.) to require that implementation be addressed when TMDLs are incorporated into Basin Plans. The EPA has established regulations (40 CFR 122) requiring that NPDES permits be revised to be consistent with any approved TMDL.
The regional board lists numerous water bodies within the lower Salinas River Watershed as impaired. TMDLs have been adopted on the lower Salinas River Watershed for the pesticides chlorpyrifos and diazinon, as well as for fecal coliform, and nitrogen compounds and orthophosphate. TMDLs are currently under development for salts and sediment toxicity (Denise Duffy & Associates 2016).

NPDES Waste Discharge Program

In California, the NPDES program is administered by the State Board through the Regional Water Quality Control Boards and requires point sources to obtain NPDES permits (also called Waste Discharge Requirements in California). Point sources include municipal and industrial wastewater facilities and stormwater. There are two types of NPDES permits: individual permits tailored to an individual facility and general permits that cover multiple facilities within a specific category. Effluent limitations serve as the primary mechanism in NPDES permits for controlling discharges of pollutants to receiving waters. When developing effluent limitations for an NPDES permit, a permit writer must consider limits based on both the technology available to control the pollutants (i.e., technology-based effluent limits) and limits that are protective of the water quality standards of the receiving water (i.e., water quality-based effluent limits if technology-based limits are not sufficient to protect the water body). For inland surface waters and enclosed bays and estuaries, the water-quality-based effluent limitations are based on criteria in the National Toxics Rule and the California Toxics Rule, and objectives and beneficial uses in the Basin Plan. For ocean discharges, the Ocean Plan contains beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and effluent limitations.

State

Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969 (Porter-Cologne) is California’s statutory authority for the protection of water quality. The Act applies to surface waters, wetlands, and groundwater, and to both point and nonpoint sources. Under Porter-Cologne, the State Board has the ultimate authority over state water rights and water quality policy. The State Board implements the provisions of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 403 pertaining to wastewater discharges, and California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Chapter 15 with regard to land disposal of wastewater. However, Porter-Cologne also establishes nine regional boards to oversee water quality on a day-to-day basis at the local/regional level. Monterey County is located within Region 3 – Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Ocean Plan

The Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California (Ocean Plan), adopted by the State Board in 2012, establishes water quality objectives and beneficial uses for waters of the
Pacific Ocean adjacent to the California coast outside of estuaries, coastal lagoons, and enclosed bays. The Ocean Plan objectives for ocean discharges were adopted to preserve the quality of ocean water for beneficial uses, including the protection of both human and aquatic ecosystem health. The plan establishes effluent quality requirements and management principles for specific waste discharges. The water quality requirements and objectives are incorporated into all NPDES permits.

The Ocean Plan establishes objectives for many bacterial, physical, chemical, biological, and radioactive parameters. For typical wastewater discharges, when released from an outfall, the wastewater and ocean water undergo rapid mixing due to the momentum and buoyancy of the discharge. The mixing occurring in the rising plume is affected by the buoyancy and momentum of the discharge, a process referred to as initial dilution. The Ocean Plan objectives are to be met after the initial dilution of the discharge into the ocean. The current wastewater discharge is governed by NPDES permit R3-2014-0013 issued by the regional board based on Ocean Plan objectives.

Regional/Local
Regional Treatment Plant
The NPDES permit for the MRWPCA Regional Treatment Plant (R3-2014-0013) regulates the treated wastewater discharge from the regional treatment plant that flows into Monterey Bay through the outfall. The permit allows for a discharge up to 81.2 MGD, and specified influent flows to the secondary treatment system (29.6 MGD average dry weather flow and 75.6 MGD peak wet weather flow). In most winter months, secondary treated wastewater from the regional treatment plant is discharged to Monterey Bay through the ocean outfall, which includes a diffuser that extends 11,260 feet offshore at a depth of approximately 100 feet. In summer months, treated wastewater is diverted to the Salinas Valley Reclamation Plant to produce tertiary-treated recycled water for irrigation of 12,000 acres of farmland in the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project area.

The minimum dilution requirement for the effluent discharge at the outfall is 145:1 (parts seawater to effluent), which is used by the regional board to determine the need for water quality-based effluent limitations and, if needed, to calculate those limitations based on water quality objectives contained in the Ocean Plan. The NPDES permit also includes effluent limitations in the Ocean Plan and a monitoring and reporting program for influent to and effluent from the regional treatment plant.

City of Salinas General Plan
The City of Salinas General Plan contains policies and implementation actions which address wastewater issues consistent with regulatory requirements, and whose implementation may serve as mitigation for significant impacts. These include the following:
Policy PSU2. The City will implement Implementation Program LU-16, which requires the City to continue to work with the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency to plan for and ensure adequate capacity for sewage treatment facilities.

Policy PSU3. The City will implement Implementation Program LU-14, which requires the City to review development proposals and require necessary studies, as appropriate, and water conservation and mitigation measures to ensure adequate water and sewer service.

Policy PSU4. The City will implement Implementation Program LU-15, which requires the City to continue to implement and update the Sewer and Drainage Master Plan as necessary. In addition, as part of the Master Plan update, the City will analyze the need for additional pump station capacity and identify methods to reduce the wet weather flows.

City of Salinas Municipal Code
The municipal code contains regulations that address industrial wastewater and municipal wastewater collection and discharge. Chapter 36 contains measures regarding the use of sanitary sewers in the City (Article II) and industrial wastewater (Article III). Each article includes specific requirements regarding wastewater.

Proposed Specific Plan
Land within the project site is not currently connected to the City’s municipal or industrial wastewater treatment conveyance systems. The specific plan requires that any industrial wastewater generated by future development with parcels 3 and 4 (none would be generated by development within parcels 1 and 2) must connect to the City’s sanitary wastewater collection system.

The proposed specific plan includes a conceptual collection system for wastewater. Wastewater collection infrastructure will be connected to the existing City conveyance system, extended through the project site, and stubbed at the southern project site boundary to provide a connection for future development within the balance of the Future Growth Area of which the project site is a part.

The proposed specific plan includes goals to provide adequate utility infrastructure that meet the needs of planned and future development (Goal 5-1) and to provide efficient expansion of utilities to accommodate planned and future development (Goal 5-2). Policies to support these goals include the following:

Policy 5-1.1. Size utilities to accommodate future projects within the Specific Plan Area.

Policy 5-2.1. Phase utility expansion as future projects develop.

Policy 5-2.2. Stub utilities for future projects.
The specific plan does not include infrastructure improvements to tie the project site to the City’s industrial wastewater treatment facility. The specific plan states that all wastewater, including industrial wastewater, shall be discharged to the sanitary wastewater system. As such, the proposed project would not affect the existing industrial wastewater conveyance system or the existing industrial wastewater treatment facility.

17.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subjects of utilities and service systems, including wastewater systems, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on these subjects, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. (Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here. Thus, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project:

- Requires or results in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; or

- Results in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project’s projected demand.

The Appendix G questions on the subjects of wastewater also give rise to an additional threshold that is not relevant to the proposed project. Under this threshold, significant impacts would result if a proposed project would:

- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Development within the project site will result generate new sources of wastewater which would be directed to the regional treatment plant. The character of the effluent will be similar to that produced throughout the city that is currently conveyed to the regional treatment plant. As identified in the Regulatory Setting of this section, the regional treatment plant operates under a waste discharge permit administered by the regional board.
Effluent from future development within the specific plan area would not be of an “industrial” character and would conflict with the character of effluent treated at the regional treatment plant. Thus, no conflict with the existing waste discharge permit would occur. It is the MRWPCA’s responsibility to ensure that the treatment plant remains in compliance with the discharge requirements. Therefore, no further discussion of this topic is required.

17.4 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS**

This section includes information and data regarding wastewater generation, conveyance, and treatment issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

**Wastewater Requiring Conveyance and Treatment Capacity**

**Wastewater Generation**

The specific plan includes information on the projected volume of wastewater that would be generated by new development within the project site. Table 17-1, Projected Wastewater Generation, shows the projected volumes. The volumes shown for each parcel represent 90 percent of the projected non-landscape water demand estimate for each parcel as described in Table 18-3 in Section 18, Water Supply. As is shown, total annual wastewater generation is estimated at 42.88 acre-feet per year (AFY).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
<th>Proposed End Use/ Future Use</th>
<th>Generation as % of Water Demand (AFY)(^1)</th>
<th>Generation (AFY)</th>
<th>Generation (Gal/Day)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>7.90 AFY x .9</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>6,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Travel Center</td>
<td>12.40 AFY x .9</td>
<td>11.16</td>
<td>9,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>General Industrial</td>
<td>4.62 AFY x .9</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>3,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>General Industrial</td>
<td>22.72 AFY x .9</td>
<td>20.45</td>
<td>18,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>42.88</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,256</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Ruggeri, Jensen, Azar 2017

**NOTE:** \(^1\)Projected water demand for each parcel is shown in Table 18-3 in Section 18, Water Supply.

**Proposed Wastewater Conveyance Improvements**

The specific plan includes information on proposed wastewater conveyance infrastructure needed to serve future development within the project site. An existing eight-inch
wastewater collection main is located in De La Torre and stubs out to the west of parcel 1. As part of the proposed phase 1 development (hotel and travel center), the main would be extended through to Roy Diaz Street within the existing roadway right-of-way. As part of Phase 2 (future development within parcels 3 and 4), it would be extended to the south within the Roy Diaz Street right-of-way.

The project site would be served by an existing pump station located to the west of the site. It has a capacity of 200 gallons per minute and currently operates at about 30 percent of capacity. Based on analysis by City staff, the pump station would have adequate capacity to serve the wastewater flows identified in Table 17-1 (Frank Aguayo, City of Salinas Senior Engineer, email message, April 4, 2017).

17.5 **IMPACT SUMMARY AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

**IMPACT** Wastewater Treatment Capacity and Environmental Effects from Construction of New Wastewater Treatment Facilities (Less than Significant)

The proposed project will generate an estimated 42.88 acre-feet of wastewater per year. With the conveyance improvements identified in the specific plan, the additional flows can be accommodated within the City’s conveyance system. No improvements to the existing conveyance system are required for the proposed project.

No constraints to treatment of project-generated wastewater at the regional treatment plant are projected. The regional plant has adequate capacity to meet projected flows to 2050, including flows from the project site. Construction of new wastewater treatment capacity is not required. The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding adequacy of existing conveyance system and wastewater treatment capacity and would not result in the need to construct new off-site wastewater conveyance facilities or treatment facilities, the construction of which would have significant environmental impacts.

Construction of the on-site wastewater conveyance mains requires trenching. Construction of the mains would not result in impacts that are not already addressed, and mitigated to less than significant where the impacts are significant, in other sections of this EIR regarding project activities that result in subsurface ground disturbance. No additional mitigation measures are required.
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New development within the project site will require water supply. This section of the EIR includes discussion of the existing water supply setting with a focus on groundwater resource conditions, analysis of water demand from existing agricultural lands that would be converted to urban use with implementation of the proposed project, a projection of water demand from the proposed project, and assessment of the effects of that demand on groundwater resource conditions. This section also includes discussion of proposed water supply infrastructure and the environment effects related to its construction.

Information in this section is derived primarily from:

- 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, Salinas District (California Water Service 2016) (UWMP);
- State of the Salinas River Groundwater Basin (Brown and Caldwell 2015);
- West Area Specific Plan, Salinas, California, SB 610 Water Supply Assessment (Yarne & Associates, Inc. 2015) (WASP WSA); and
- Draft Salinas Travel Center Specific Plan (Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar 2017).

The documents listed above are available for review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the offices of the City of Salinas Planning Department at 65 West Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901.

No water supply related comments were received as part of the NOP process.

18.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Regional Environmental Setting

Groundwater Supply, Demand, and Basin Overdraft

There is no available data regarding how the 2016-2017 storms have affected the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin (groundwater basin). The following discussion is based upon reports prepared prior to the recent storms.

Groundwater is currently the dominant source of water supply for agricultural and municipal water demands in the Salinas Valley. Agricultural water use represents
approximately 90 percent of all water used in the Salinas Valley. Unlike the trend in reduced agricultural pumping, urban water use has been increasing. Increases in urban water use, particularly on non-irrigated lands in the northern portion of the Salinas Valley, will place additional pressure on groundwater pumping (Brown and Caldwell 2015, pp. 2-4 – 2-5). The Target Areas are located on irrigated agricultural land. Hence, water demand from their development with urban uses will replace water demand for irrigation.

Municipal urban water supply to Salinas is currently derived exclusively from groundwater. There are no sources of imported water available to augment groundwater supplies within the district or within the groundwater basin. For this reason, the condition of groundwater resources from a supply and demand perspective is critically important in considering potential effects of water demand that would result from development of the project site. Due to the growth of urban development and agricultural activities over time, demand for groundwater has increased, resulting in impacts on groundwater availability and quality.

Salinas is situated at the northern end of the Salinas Valley, a relatively narrow, elongated, fault down-dropped, sedimentary basin in the California Central Coast Range. The uplifted mountainous boundary consists of older granitic, metamorphic and marine sedimentary rocks of the Salinian tectonic block. Beneath the valley, a thick sequence of Tertiary marine sedimentary rocks is overlain by late Tertiary to Recent non-marine sedimentary deposits of fluvial and alluvial fan origin. The uppermost 1,000 feet, or more, of this non-marine sequence contains the fresh ground-water basin that is utilized for various water supply purposes.

Cal Water extracts groundwater from two hydraulically connected subbasins of the groundwater basin known as the Pressure Subarea and the East Side Subarea. Much of the water supply for Salinas is extracted from the Pressure Subarea. The Pressure Area is a region of gradually declining groundwater elevations and is characterized by three confined aquifer systems, overlain and separated by thick clay layers that act as aquicludes. These aquifers are named for their relative depths, and are known as the “180-foot”, the “400-foot”, and “900-foot” aquifers, respectively. The groundwater level in the East Side Area is declining more rapidly than any other area in the groundwater basin. The East Side Area is comprised of unconfined, randomly scattered water bearing strata (Yarne & Associates 2015).

As described in Cal Water’s 2015 UWMP, the groundwater basin was in an overdraft condition at the time the UWMP was adopted. The state has designated the 180-foot and 400-foot aquifers as critically overdrafted. While the basin remains un adjudicated, the California Department of Water Resources has listed the groundwater basin as a high priority. The main concern of the overdraft is not water level, but rather seawater intrusion into these two aquifers. Seawater intrusion threatens the quality of water extracted from the aquifers.
The UWMP notes the annual non-drought overdraft of the groundwater basin is approximately 45,300 AFY. Because of the hydrologic continuity between the ocean and the aquifers of the Pressure Area, seawater has been intruding into these aquifers at a rate of approximately 28,800 AFY. During droughts, the annual overdraft can escalate to between 150,000 and 300,000 AFY per year.

Refined data on the imbalance of the groundwater basin can be found in the State of the Salinas River Groundwater Basin (Brown and Caldwell 2015). That report investigates conditions in “Zone 2C” of the groundwater basin. Zone 2C is comprised of seven of the subbasins within the groundwater basin. The report further focuses on the four water-producing subareas, including the Pressure Subarea and the East Side Subarea, that produce nearly all of the reported groundwater use within Zone 2C. The report states that the basin appears to be out of hydrologic balance. The average annual groundwater extraction for the four noted subareas that compose Zone 2C was about 523,000 AFY from 1959 to 2013. The average annual change in storage was about 17,000 to 24,000 AFY, including seawater intrusion. Based on the continued large storage declines in the East Side and Pressure Subareas (and resulting groundwater declines and seawater intrusion), the current distribution of groundwater extractions is not sustainable. Seawater intrusion can account for up to 18,000 AFY of the total storage loss of 24,000 AFY. Sustainable use of groundwater can only be achieved by aggressive and cooperative water resources planning to mitigate seawater intrusion and groundwater head declines (Brown and Caldwell 2015, p. ES-16). Brown and Caldwell note three possible options for reducing seawater intrusion impacts. These are: 1) reducing pumping in the Pressure and East Side subareas; 2) shifting pumping to areas farther away from the coast as long as it is shifted to areas far enough inland; and 3) shifting pumping from the 180-foot and 400-foot aquifers to the deep 900-foot aquifer. Regarding the latter, it is uncertain whether this is a viable option given lack of information about connectivity between the three aquifers and whether pumping in the 900-foot aquifer would lead to the onset of regional seawater intrusion (Brown and Caldwell 2015, pp. 6-3 – 6-4).

Figure 18-1, 180-Foot Aquifer Seawater Intrusion Map and Figure 18-2, 400-Foot Aquifer Seawater Intrusion Map, illustrate the historic progression of seawater intrusion into the respective aquifers. Intruding seawater has advanced into the 180-foot aquifer to within one mile of Cal Water’s closest well. Cal Water has shifted production as much as possible out of the 180-foot and East Side aquifers and located it further south and more in the 400-foot aquifer of the Pressure area. Cal Water does not pump from the 900-foot aquifer. No change was observed in the location of the intrusion contours between the years 2011 and 2013. It is possible that the first two years of the current drought did not have an apparent effect on the movement of the seawater intrusion front (Brown and Caldwell 2015, p. ES-13). However in 2015, marginal advancement was documented in the 180-foot aquifer and significant
advancement was documented for the 400-foot aquifer. 2015 is the most recent year for which analysis is available (Monterey County Water Resources Agency 2017).

Current/Planned Water Projects to Reduce Groundwater Overdraft

Seawater intrusion into the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin has been a problem for many years. A solution was identified as early as 1946 when the State of California proposed a three-part solution:

- Construct several large reservoirs to capture excess storm flow on the upper reaches of the Salinas River and its tributaries;
- Recharge groundwater in the upper valley and Forebay sub-areas of the Salinas Valley with the captured runoff; and
- Extract portions of the augmented groundwater and transmit it via a conveyance system to the East Side and Pressure sub-areas of the basin so that the water users in this northern-most region of the valley can reduce their use of groundwater.

The first two parts of this solution have been constructed and are in operation. Nacimiento and San Antonio reservoirs were built and are operated by the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA). The water that they capture is released in a controlled manner to recharge the aquifers in the upper and Forebay areas through the natural riverbeds. The final (third) part of the solution as described above has not been implemented (Cal Water 2016).

A number of additional projects have been implemented, are currently being implemented, or are planned to reduce overdraft and reduce/halt seawater intrusion within the groundwater basin. Several of these are summarized below.

Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project

The Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project was completed in 1998. It generates recycled water for use by agricultural water users in the Castroville area during the irrigation season. By providing recycled water for agricultural use, the need for groundwater pumping to meet agricultural demand is significantly reduced. This in turn results in reduced intensity and rate of seawater intrusion.

Salinas Valley Water Project

The MRWPCA has utilized a collaborative effort with Salinas Valley interests to develop the Salinas Valley Water Project to address water resources management issues within the Salinas Valley. The project was approved in 2003. The Salinas Valley Water Project provides for the long-term management and protection of groundwater resources in the basin by attempting to meet the following objectives: stopping seawater intrusion and providing adequate water supplies and flexibility to meet current and future (year 2030) needs. The project provides the surface water supply to support water management efforts among
Note: The scale and configuration of all information shown hereon are approximate and are not intended as a guide for survey or design work. Contour lines are drawn from best available data.

Source: MCWRA 2017
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Figure 18-2

400-Foot Aquifer Seawater Intrusion Map

Salinas Travel Center EIR

Note: The scale and configuration of all information shown herein are approximate and are not intended as a guide for survey or design work. Contour lines are drawn from best available data.

Source: MCWRA 2017
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numerous agencies to attain a hydrologically balanced groundwater basin in the Salinas Valley. The Salinas Valley Water Project includes Nacimiento Dam spillway modification and a rubber dam on the Salinas River near Marina, to allow diversion of river water for treatment and piping to nearby farms for irrigation. The project is also intended improve flood control and Nacimiento Dam safety, recharge the aquifers and improve river flow for migration of the federally designated threatened Steelhead trout. Construction of the Nacimiento spillway modifications was completed in 2009 and Salinas River diversion facility began its operation in April 2010 (Monterey County Water Resources Agency 2017).

**Salinas Valley Groundwater Project Phase II**

A conceptual design for Phase II of the Salinas Valley Water Project has been developed by MCWRA. Under this plan additional winter flood flows would be diverted from the Salinas River. These diversions, up to 135,000 AFY, could be directly used by urban customers. A technical memorandum was completed in 2013. Phase II incorporates two surface water diversion points and will be accompanied by conveyance and delivery facilities. The project is not yet funded, so its implementation has not begun (Howard Franklin, Monterey County Water Resources Agency, phone conversation, December 7, 2016). A Notice of Preparation was prepared to initiate the CEQA process approximately one year ago, but the environmental review process has not advanced since that time.

**Pure Water Monterey Project**

The approved Pure Water Monterey Groundwater Replenishment Project will serve northern Monterey County. The project will provide both purified recycled water for recharge of the Seaside Groundwater Basin that serves as drinking water supply, and recycled water to augment the existing Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project’s crop irrigation supply. The project is jointly sponsored by the MRWPCA and the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, and also includes participation by the City of Salinas, the Marina Coast Water District, and the MCWRA. CEQA documentation has been completed for the project. The project includes collection of a variety of new source waters and conveyance of that water to the MRWPCA’s regional wastewater treatment plant (regional plant) for treatment and recycling. New source waters include: 1) water from the City of Salinas agricultural wash water system; 2) storm water flows from the southern part of Salinas and Lake El Estero in Monterey; 3) surface water and agricultural tile drain water that is captured in the Reclamation Ditch and Tembladero Slough; and 4) surface water and agricultural tile drain water that flows in the Blanco Drain. The project would enable California American Water Company to reduce its diversions from the Carmel River system by up to 3,500 acre-feet per year by injecting the same amount of purified recycled water into the Seaside Groundwater Basin. The project would also provide additional recycled water for agricultural irrigation in northern Salinas Valley through the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project’s agricultural irrigation system. It is anticipated that in normal and wet years approximately 4,500 to 4,750
acre-feet per year of additional recycled water supply could be created for agricultural
irrigation purposes. In drought conditions, the project could provide up to 5,900 acre feet per
year for crop irrigation (Denise Duffy & Associates 2016). It is this latter source of new
agricultural water that would replace an equivalent volume that is now pumped from the
overdraft and seawater intrusion.

**Other Water Supply Projects**

Cal Water’s UWMP includes discussion of new water supply projects from which Cal Water
may be able to obtain water supply that would reduce its need to pump groundwater from
the groundwater basin. These include Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project (referenced
in the UWMP as the former named Coastal Water Project) and the DeepWater Desal project
in Moss Landing.

The Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project is designed to supply supplemental water to
consumers on the Monterey Peninsula. The primary purpose is to enable California
American Water, the primary water purveyor for these customers, to reduce California
American Water’s diversion of water from the Carmel River as mandated by the State.
Therefore, this project is not expected to have significant potential to reduce groundwater
extraction within the Salinas Valley.

The DeepWater Desal project, proposed for a location in Moss Landing, is in the planning
stages. Environmental review is underway and expected to be completed in late 2017 or early
2018. If approved, the project is projected to be operational in 2021. If the project proceeds as
proposed, it could become a source of municipal water supply for the City of Salinas, thereby
potentially reducing the volume of groundwater extracted to serve demand in the city.

Other potential water sources include enhanced recycling and expanded surface water
diversions from the Salinas River.

**Recent and Existing Weather Conditions**

According to the California Department of Water Resources, California in late 2016 and early
2017 experienced record wet conditions following five consecutive years of drought.
Between October 2016 and March 2017, California averaged 30.75 inches of precipitation, the
second-highest average since such records began being kept in 1895, according to the
National Centers for Environmental Information, part of the National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration.

In 2015, the state had record low statewide mountain snowpack of only five percent of
average. The three driest consecutive years of statewide precipitation in the historical record
were in 2012-14. Water year 2017 (October 1, 2016-September 30, 2017) has surpassed the
wettest year of record (1982-83) in the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River watersheds
and is close to becoming the wettest year in the Tulare Basin (set in 1968-69). Mountain
snowpack is already well above the April 1 seasonal averages throughout the Sierra Nevada, with the southern Sierra being more than 200 percent of average for the year as of February 2017.

California experiences the most extreme variability in yearly precipitation in the nation. The summary on California Precipitation by the Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes at the Scripps Institution explains how large storms (often atmospheric river storms) contribute to those extreme changes. Water year 2017 has been an active year for atmospheric river storms.

The potential for wide swings in precipitation from one year to the next shows why the state must be prepared for either flood or drought in any year. Although this year may be wet, dry conditions could return again next year. 2017 may be only a wet outlier in an otherwise dry extended period. Unfortunately, the scientific ability to determine if next year will be wet or dry (known as sub-seasonal to seasonal forecasting, or long-range weather forecasting) does not exist, as forecasters are not yet capable of delivering reliable predictions from year to year (California Department of Water Resources 2017).

**Existing Site Setting**

**Water Use Under Baseline Conditions**

The project site contains approximately 17.93 acres (within parcels 3 and 4) that are currently committed to row crop production. To be conservative, it is assumed that approximately one acre of this area consists of farm roads that are not in active production. This activity is the only source of existing water demand from the project site. Parcel 1 (2.19 acres) and parcel 2 (13.86 acres) were historically in agricultural production and continued in production as recently as the year 2012 when construction of the new Airport Boulevard interchange made continued farming functionally challenging. Approximately 30 acres of land within the project site that is now within Caltrans and City roadway rights-of-way and developed with U.S. Highway 101 Ramp 326 A, the extension of Roy Diaz Street, and the new segment of De La Torre, all of which were constructed as part of the interchange improvements, were also in agricultural production until that time. Consequently, agricultural use of parcels 3 and 4 is the only assumed source of baseline water demand. Agricultural production is a significant source of irrigation water demand. Water supply for agricultural irrigation operations in unincorporated Monterey County, including the project site, is pumped from groundwater.

This existing demand analysis follows the methodology used in Cal Water’s *West Area Specific Plan Water Supply Assessment* (Yarne & Associates 2015). That is, water demand factors for various crop types are multiplied by the number of crops grown per year and the acreage of production for each crop type to arrive at gross demand. The volume of irrigation water that percolates back to groundwater is then calculated and subtracted from the gross demand to arrive at the net consumptive agricultural demand.
Cool season crops are the predominant crop types grown in the north end of the Salinas Valley, including in the Salinas area. Broccoli, cauliflower, and strawberries, lettuce, celery, spinach, and artichokes are representative of these crop types. They are commonly grown on agricultural land within and adjacent to the City. For purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that strawberries are grown on the site half of the time and broccoli/cauliflower are grown the other half of the time. The assumption that strawberries can and are grown on the site is verified by the fact that this was the crop type being produced during visits to the site in 2016. Between two and three crops of each type are grown annually, as is also true for other cool season crop types. While as many as three crops can be produced in a year, normal practice is to grow two crops. Irrigation is typically by sprinkler or drip systems, with irrigation water pumped from agricultural wells.

Strawberries demand approximately 1.9 acre-feet (AF) per crop per acre, and cauliflower and broccoli demand approximately 4.04 AF per crop per acre, or an average of 3.0 AF per crop per acre (Yarne & Associates 2015). Under these assumptions, gross irrigation water demand would be approximately 107.58 acre-feet per year (AFY). An average of 30 percent of agricultural irrigation water is estimated to percolate back to groundwater, such that 70 percent of applied irrigation water is consumed by plants, evaporates, is lost to evapotranspiration, etc. Approximately 30 percent percolates back to groundwater such that the net consumption of water is 70 percent of the irrigation volume. With this assumption, the number of irrigated acres, number of crops grown per acre per year, the average volume of irrigation water applied/acre, and the net volume of agricultural water demand from groundwater is calculated at 75.30 AFY. Table 18-1, Existing Agricultural Water Demand, presents the total existing agricultural groundwater demand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demand Source</th>
<th>Acres Irrigated</th>
<th>Irrigation (AF/Crop)¹</th>
<th>Crops Per Year/Acre</th>
<th>Gross Demand (AFY)</th>
<th>% of Gross Used</th>
<th>Net Baseline Demand (AFY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Irrigation</td>
<td>17.93</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>107.58</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017
NOTES: ¹Average water demand factor from Jeff Yarne, Consultant to Cal Water, February 15, 2018.

**Existing Water Supply Infrastructure**

The project site currently does not contain water supply infrastructure to support its development with urban uses. Irrigation water supply for the existing agricultural production that occurs on parcels 3 and 4 is supplied by an irrigation well.
18.2 REGULATORY SETTING

State

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

On September 16, 2014, Governor Brown signed into law Assembly Bill 1739, Senate Bill 1168, and Senate Bill 1319 (AB-1739, SB-1168, and SB-1319). This three-bill legislative package is known collectively as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The act was amended in the later part of 2015 by Senate Bill 13, Senate Bill 226 and Assembly Bill 1390 to provide clarity to the original law and guidance on groundwater adjudications. This new legislation defines sustainable groundwater management as the “management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results.” The legislation defines “undesirable results” to be any of the following effects caused by groundwater conditions occurring throughout the basin:

- Chronic lowering of groundwater levels indicating a significant and unreasonable depletion of supply;
- Significant and unreasonable reduction of groundwater storage;
- Significant and unreasonable seawater intrusion;
- Significant and unreasonable degraded water quality;
- Significant and unreasonable land subsidence; and
- Surface water depletions that have significant and unreasonable adverse impacts on beneficial uses of the surface water.

The legislation provides for financial and enforcement tools to carry out effective local sustainable groundwater management through formation of groundwater sustainability agencies consisting of local public agencies, water companies regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission, and mutual water companies. The legislation requires that groundwater sustainability agencies within high- and medium-priority basins under the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Program subject to critical conditions of overdraft prepare and submit groundwater sustainability plans for the basin by January 31, 2020, and requires groundwater sustainability agencies in all other groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins to prepare and submit a groundwater sustainability plan by January 31, 2022. Following state approval, the basin would thereafter be managed under the groundwater sustainability plan. The legislation does not require adjudicated basins to develop groundwater sustainability plans, but they are required to report their water use.
The key intended outcomes and benefits of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act are numerous, and include:

- Advancement in understanding and knowledge of the State’s groundwater basins and their issues and challenges;
- Establishment of effective local governance to protect and manage groundwater basins;
- Management of regional water resources for regional self-sufficiency and drought resilience;
- Sustainable management of groundwater basins through the actions of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, utilizing State assistance and intervention only when necessary;
- All groundwater basins in California are operated to maintain adequate protection to support the beneficial uses for the resource;
- Surface water and groundwater are managed as “a Single Resource” to sustain their interconnectivity, provide dry season base flow to interconnected streams, and support and promote long-term aquatic ecosystem health and vitality;
- A statewide framework for local groundwater management planning, including development of sustainable groundwater management best management practices and plans;
- Development of comprehensive and uniform water budgets, groundwater models, and engineering tools for effective management of groundwater basins;
- Improved coordination between land use and groundwater planning; and
- Enforcement actions as needed by the SWRCB to achieve region-by-region sustainable groundwater management in accordance with the 2014 legislation.

As ultimately approved, groundwater sustainability plans must include, among other things, (i) a “general discussion of historical and projected water demands and supplies,” (ii) “[m]easurable objectives, as well as interim milestones in increments of five years, to achieve the sustainability goal in the basin within 20 years of the implementation of the plan, and (iii) a “description of how the plan helps meet each objective and how each objective is intended to achieve the sustainability goal for the basin for long-term beneficial uses of groundwater.” (Wat. Code, § 10727.2, subds. (a)(3), (b)(1), and (b)(2).)

To assist in attaining the above outcomes, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) will provide groundwater sustainability agencies with the technical and financial assistance necessary to sustainably manage their water resources. The benefits of these outcomes include:
A reliable, safe and sustainable water supply to protect communities, farms, and the environment, and support a stable and growing economy; and

Elimination of long-term groundwater overdraft, an increase in groundwater storage, avoidance or minimization of subsidence, enhancement of water flows in stream systems, and prevention of future groundwater quality degradation.

In short, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act is landmark legislation that, for the first time in the history of California, requires comprehensive groundwater management, with the mandatory goal of bringing all currently overdrafted basins into sustainable conditions by no later than 2040 or 2042, with five-year increments of progress starting in 2025 and 2027.

As part of its responsibilities to implement the act, DWR has defined the 180-foot, the 400-foot, and the Paso Robles aquifers within the groundwater basin as high priority basins. Groundwater sustainability plans must be implemented for these aquifers by 2020. The other aquifers within the groundwater basin must have adopted plans by 2022 (California Water Service 2016).

A process is underway in Monterey County to form the groundwater sustainability agency that would be responsible for preparing groundwater sustainability plans. The goal is to form the agency by mid-2017 and develop a groundwater sustainability plan consistent with the act’s requirements (Salinas Groundwater Planning 2016).

**California Green Building Standards Code**

The Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), which requires all new buildings in the state to be more energy efficient and environmentally responsible, took effect on January 1, 2011. These comprehensive regulations will achieve major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption and water use. Water use reductions are specified based on performance standards contained in the code that target indoor plumbing fixtures such as toilets, showerheads, faucets, etc., as well as outdoor water use through installation of irrigation controllers.

**Regional/Local Water Supply Purveyor**

Urban water supply is provided to users in Salinas by two water purveyors, California Water Service Company (Cal Water) and the Alco Water Company. The project site is within Cal Water’s existing district boundary. Therefore, Cal Water would provide water service to future development within the project site.
Cal Water has a total of 28 wells that supply the Salinas service area. The design production capacity of active operational wells is 27,880 gallons per minute (gpm), which is equivalent to 40 million gallons per day (mgd) or 44,843 acre-feet per year (AFY). Cal Water has three new wells being constructed and scheduled to become operational in 2017 and 2018. Well capacities range from 500 gallons per minute (gpm) to 2,000 gpm. It is assumed that the three new wells will have an average design capacity of 1,200 gpm for a total of 3,600 gpm or 5.18 mgd, which is equivalent to 5,812 AFY. Three additional wells are planned within the boundary of the proposed West Area Specific Plan, a project currently being considered by the City that is located in the north of Boronda Road Future Growth Area. The design capacity for each of these three wells would be is 1,200 gpm each. The first of these is scheduled to come online in 2020 (Cal Water 2015).

**California Water Service Urban Water Management Plan**

California’s Urban Water Management Plan Act requires urban water suppliers to prepare an UWMP every five years and to file this plan with the DWR, the California State Library, and any city or county within which the supplier provides water supplies. All urban water suppliers, either publicly or privately owned, providing water for municipal purposes either directly or indirectly to more than 3,000 customers or supplying more than 3,000 acre-feet annually, are required to prepare an Urban Water Management Plan.

The Urban Water Management Plan is a foundational document and source of information about the Cal Water Salinas District’s historical and projected water demands, water supplies, supply reliability and vulnerabilities, water shortage contingency planning, and demand management programs, including water conservation planning. Among other things, it is used as:

- A long-range planning document by Cal Water for water supply and system planning; and
- Source data on population, housing, water demands, water supplies, and capital improvement projects used in regional water resource management plans prepared by wholesale water suppliers and other regional planning authorities, general plans prepared by cities and counties, and statewide and broad regional water resource plans prepared by DWR, SWRCB, or other state agencies.

Urban Water Management Plans are updated every five years. The Urban Water Management Plan Act was enacted in 1983. Over the years it has been amended in response to water resource challenges and planning imperatives confronting California. A significant amendment was made in 2009 as a result of the governor’s call for a statewide 20 percent reduction in urban water use by 2020. Colloquially known as 20x2020, the Water Conservation Act of 2009 (also referred to as SB X7-7) required urban retail water suppliers to establish water use targets for 2015 and 2020 that would result in statewide water savings.
of 20 percent by 2020. Beginning in 2016, urban retail water suppliers are required to comply with the water conservation requirements in SB X7-7 in order to be eligible for state water grants or loans. Chapter 5 of Cal Water’s Salinas District UWMP contains the data and calculations used to determine compliance with these requirements (California Water Service 2015).

City of Salinas General Plan

The general plan contains policies and implementation actions which address water supply and water demand consistent with regulatory requirements, and whose implementation may serve as mitigation for significant impacts. These include the following:

- **Policy LU-6.2.** Review development proposals to ensure that adequate water supplies, treatment, and distribution capacity is available to meet the needs of the development without negatively impacting the existing community.

- **Policy LU-6.5.** Review projects such as residential projects with 500 or more units for compliance with Sections 10910-10915 of the California Water Code.

- **Policy COS-2.2.** Work with water providers to institute conservation programs to address water supply problems caused by groundwater overdrafting.

- **Policy COS-2.3.** Apply standards that promote water conservation in agricultural, residential, and non-residential uses.

- **Policy COS-2.4.** Enforce the City’s Water Conservation Ordinance.

- **Implementation Program COS-1.** To reduce pollutants in urban runoff, require new development projects and substantial rehabilitation projects to incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) pursuant to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to ensure that the City complies with applicable state and federal regulations.

Salinas Stormwater Development Standards for New and Redevelopment Standards (2013)

The Salinas Stormwater Development Standards (SWDS) are described in the Regulatory Setting section of Section 13.0, Hydrology and Water Quality. Regarding their relationship to water supply, the SWDS require in part that new sources of storm water be managed to minimize changes in the rate and volume of new discharges to existing storm drainage facilities. For example, the SWDS require the evaluation of post-construction storm water requirements that are based upon the creation and/or replacement of impervious and/or managed turf surfaces. To achieve consistency with the SWDS, Low Impact Development
(LID) storm water treatment measures, such as storm water planters, pervious pavements, and infiltration basins, must be incorporated into new development as must other BMP practices. These types of measures would facilitate groundwater recharge in future projects proposed within the project site.

**City of Salinas Municipal Code**

Municipal Code Chapter 36A specifically addresses water conservation and its relationship to water resource management. The purpose of the regulation is to facilitate water conservation in Salinas. This is to be done by implementing the City’s Urban Water Conservation Plan, designed in significant part to reduce pumping from the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. The City’s goal is to reduce pumping by 15 percent relative to the baseline year of 1987. The regulation is also intended to ensure that water conservation actions are integrated into the design and construction of new development projects and to address water efficient landscaping.

**Specific Plan**

New development within the specific plan boundary must be consistent with the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan. The information below summarizes information from the specific plan that is relevant to the issue of water supply. In this context, the policies, development standards, and design standards contained in the specific plan support general plan policies, municipal code regulations, and/or other federal, State, or other local regulations presented above that serve to mitigate environmental effects of the proposed project.

Specific plan section 3.4.6, Irrigation, states that all irrigation and landscape materials shall comply with City of Salinas Municipal Code Chapter 36A, Water Conservation, and with the State’s Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance as codified in the California Code of Regulations Title 23. Waters, Division 2.

**18.3 Thresholds or Standards of Significance**

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of groundwater impacts, as it does on a whole series of additional environmental topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on this subject, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. *(Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara* (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” *(Ibid.)* Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that
language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Substantially deplete groundwater supplies resulting in insufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or resulting in the need for new or expanded entitlements; or
- Interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., would the production rate of preexisting nearby wells drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted).

18.4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section includes information and data regarding water supply issues that are relevant to the proposed project based on the thresholds of significance described above. The information and data is used as a basis for determining impact significance and for the mitigation measures described in the following Impact Summary and Mitigation Measures section.

Change in Demand for Groundwater

The proposed project would replace demand for groundwater from agricultural use with demand for groundwater from urban uses. The net change in water demand derived from this conversion is the difference between the existing agricultural baseline demand from existing agricultural activities on Parcels 3 and 4 and water demand from future development within the entire project site, including Parcels 1 and 2. The groundwater basin is currently in overdraft. If the proposed project results in increased water demand that must be met by expanded groundwater pumping within the Pressure Subarea and/or the East Side Subarea, the proposed project would likely exacerbate overdraft and seawater intrusion conditions. In this case, the sufficiency of water supply entitlements from Cal Water could be in question given the impact. The following analysis examines the net change in water demand.

Proposed Project Gross Water Demand

With implementation of the proposed project, water demand would shift from existing agricultural use on Parcels 3 and 4 to urban demand associated with the proposed hotel, travel center, and future industrial uses on Parcels 1, 2, 3, and 4. Table 18-2, Proposed Project Gross Water Demand, summarizes the net project annual water demand at 62.70 AFY. Note that water demand factors from the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District were used to forecast water demand even though the project site is within Cal Water’s service area.
area. Cal Water was contacted to verify the validity of using these factors. Cal Water staff concurred that this is a valid approach for the proposed project (Michael Bolzowski, Cal Water, email communication, October 16, 2017).

### Table 18-2  Proposed Project Gross Water Demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel/Area/Use</th>
<th>Calculation</th>
<th>Acre-Feet Per Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Area 1, Hotel</td>
<td>79 Rooms @ 0.1 AF/Room&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Area 1, Landscaping</td>
<td>(ETo) x (0.62) x (0.45 x 28,000)&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Area 2, Travel Center</td>
<td>11,065 GPD&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>12.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Area 2, Landscaping</td>
<td>(ETo) x (0.62) x (0.45 x 190,000)&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>6.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Area 3, General Industrial</td>
<td>65,990 SF @ 0.00007 AF/YR&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Area 3, Landscaping</td>
<td>(ETo) x (0.62) x (0.45 x 39,596)&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Area 4, General Industrial</td>
<td>324,522 SF @ 0.00007 AF/YR&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>22.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Area 4, Landscaping</td>
<td>(ETo) x (0.62) x (0.45 x 194,713)&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>6.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>62.79</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Ruggeri, Jensen, Azar 2017

NOTES:
1. Water demand rate from the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, Table 2: Non-Residential Water Use Factors.
2. Information provided by applicant based on existing travel centers in Ripon and Santa Nella County.
3. Landscape water use calculations are based on the State of California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance maximum annual water allocation formula and the total landscape area on the preliminary site plans for the hotel and travel center dated March 25, 2017 provided by Lane Engineers, Inc.
4. Landscape water use calculations are based on the State of California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance maximum annual water allocation formula and an estimated 30 percent of each parcel used for landscaping. ETo = evapotranspiration

### Gross Water Demand Reductions

The gross project water demand shown in Table 18-2 will be reduced in several ways. The net water demand (or “consumptive use”) reflects reductions in gross demand resulting from several sources of project-related groundwater recharge. Each of these is described below.

#### Recharge from Landscape Irrigation

Based on site plan information submitted by the applicant, approximately 30 percent of the land within the hotel and travel center sites combined would be landscaped. For purposes of this analysis, it is also assumed that 30 percent of parcels 3 and 4 will also be placed in landscaping. Consequently, 30 percent of the total buildout water demand, or 18.83 AFY, is projected for landscape irrigation. Of that amount, approximately 20 percent is assumed to infiltrate to groundwater (Yarne & Associates 2015). Applying these factors to the total gross water demand volume, approximately 3.76 AFY of the total project demand would be recharged to groundwater: 62.799 AFY x 0.30 x 0.20 = 3.76 AFY.
**Indirect Recharge via Wastewater Percolation/Reuse**

The balance of urban water demand, which equals 70 percent of total demand, would be generated from indoor use (sinks, toilets, showers, kitchens, laundry, etc.) within new the hotel, travel center and future industrial use buildings. Approximately 85 percent of the gross project water demand is discharged as wastewater. This equates to 62.79 AFY x .70 x .85 = 37.36 AFY. This wastewater would be conveyed for treatment at the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency’s regional treatment plant in Marina.

Approximately 60 percent of tertiary treated effluent produced at the regional treatment plant is used for agricultural crop irrigation through the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project. Based on 2015 MRWPCA data, annual average daily flow to the plant was about 23,540 AFY. Salinas contributes approximately 60 percent of the total wastewater flows to the regional plant. In 2015, approximately 14,124 AFY, or 60 percent of all treated water was used for agricultural irrigation. Therefore, the City supplies approximately 36 percent of the wastewater flow to the regional plant that is treated and used for agricultural irrigation (Yarne & Associates 2015, p. 9). Consequently, the proposed project would generate approximately 37.36 AFY x .36 = 13.44 AFY of irrigation water that would replace an equivalent volume of irrigation water that would otherwise be pumped by agricultural users from groundwater.

**Net Change in Water Demand**

Table 18-3, Net Project Water Demand, summarizes total proposed project water demand information when recharge volumes are subtracted from total gross project demand. The table illustrates that future development that would be enabled by the proposed specific plan would have a net positive effect on groundwater overdraft and seawater intrusion by increasing the amount of groundwater that remains in storage by approximately 29.71 AFY relative to existing baseline agricultural water demand. Thus, sufficient groundwater would be available for Cal Water to provide service to the proposed project. No additional water supply resources would be required for this purpose.

As described in the Environmental Setting section above, Cal Water extracts groundwater from the hydraulically connected subbasins of the groundwater basin known as the Pressure Subarea and the East Side Subarea. Much of the water supply for Salinas is extracted from the Pressure Subarea. The project site is located in the Pressure Subarea. Therefore, the reduced groundwater pumping that would occur under post-project conditions will benefit groundwater storage within the same subarea from which Cal Water extracts the majority of its water supply.

The positive increase in groundwater storage volume is considered to be somewhat conservative. Future urban use water demand from the project is likely to be lower than projected in part due to existing and anticipated future water conservation regulations. Further, the non-residential water demand factor provided by Cal Water is based on existing
average non-residential water use in the city. As older existing non-residential development is replaced through redevelopment, the average water demand factor for non-residential uses is likely to decline over time as regulation-driven improvements in water conservation are implemented by new development.

Table 18-3  Net Project Water Demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demand/Savings Source</th>
<th>AFY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross Project Water Demand</td>
<td>62.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundwater Recharge/Agricultural Reuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Water Recharged</td>
<td>(3.76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor Water Recharged/Recycled</td>
<td>(13.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal Groundwater Recharge/Agricultural Reuse</td>
<td>(17.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Proposed Project Groundwater Demand</td>
<td>45.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Baseline Irrigation Groundwater Demand (see Table 18-1 above)</td>
<td>75.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in Groundwater Storage (Net Baseline – Net Project)</td>
<td>29.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017

Changes in Groundwater Recharge Potential

The primary sources for recharge of the Salinas Valley aquifers are stream infiltration mainly from the Salinas River, Arroyo Seco River, and other smaller tributaries, with a lesser extent percolation of irrigation return flows and precipitation. Development within the project site will result in a substantial increase in impervious area relative to existing conditions. Vacant and agricultural land would be converted to impervious surfaces for roads, parking areas, buildings, etc. This would result in an incremental loss of groundwater recharge potential relative to existing conditions.

Groundwater recharge potential will be largely retained under project site buildout conditions. All of the 33.98 acres of land within parcels 1-4 is conservatively assumed to be available for percolating irrigation water under existing conditions. For the hotel and travel center projects proposed on parcels 1 and 2, approximately 30 percent of the total parcel area would remain in landscaping/storm water management features; this same assumption is made for future development within parcels 3 and 4. A portion of landscape irrigation water would percolate to groundwater. Required storm water management actions would incrementally reduce loss of storm water recharge potential. Post-development storm water management requirements identified in the City’s SWDS include measures that must be incorporated into new development to improve the quality of storm water discharged from development sites. Measures such as bioswales, planters, and pervious pavements are used to limit post-project runoff volumes and rates to pre-existing conditions. Several of these
features are shown in the site plans for the hotel and travel center as shown in Figure 4-5. Therefore, substantial recharge of storm water is required and storm water recharge under post-project conditions would not be appreciably lower than under current baseline conditions. Please refer to Section 13.0, Hydrology and Water Quality, for more information on the SWDS requirements.

18.5 IMPACT SUMMARY AND MITIGATION MEASURES

IMPACT Increase in Groundwater Storage within a Groundwater Basin in Overdraft Condition (Beneficial Impact)

The proposed project would result in agricultural land being converted to urban use. Relative to the historic agricultural baseline use, the proposed project would reduce groundwater pumping by approximately 29.71 AFY. This is a beneficial impact for a groundwater basin currently in overdraft condition. No mitigation measures are required.

IMPACT Potential for Reduced Groundwater Recharge from Increase in Impervious Surface Area (Less than Significant)

The proposed project will substantially change hydrological conditions within the site by converting a substantial percentage of the existing vacant land and agricultural land to impervious surfaces. However, the City regulatory requirements for inclusion of landscaping within each future project site and through the City’s SWDS standards that require on-site water quality treatment (including bioswales, storm water planter, and permeable pavements through which storm water can percolate back to groundwater), substantial capacity for stormwater recharge will remain under post-development conditions. Therefore, this impact is less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.
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19.0

Effects Not Found to be Significant

CEQA Guidelines 15128 state that an EIR shall contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR.

19.1 Land Use & Planning

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G is a sample Initial Study checklist that includes a number of factual inquiries related to the subject of land use and planning, as it does on a whole series of additional topics. Notably, lead agencies are under no obligation to use these inquiries in fashioning thresholds of significance on these subjects, or indeed on any subject addressed in the checklist. \( (\text{Save Cuyama Valley v. County of Santa Barbara (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1068.}) \) Rather, with few exceptions, “CEQA grants agencies discretion to develop their own thresholds of significance.” (Ibid.) Even so, it is a common practice for lead agencies to take the language from the inquiries set forth in Appendix G and to use that language in fashioning thresholds. The City has done so here. Therefore, for purposes of this EIR, a significant impact would occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- Physically divide an established community;
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; or
- Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

The project site is planned for urban development in the City of Salinas General Plan. Its future development with urban uses including those proposed in the specific plan is consistent with the City’s vision for the site as identified in the City of Salinas General Plan, as the General Plan shows the site as a Future Growth Area that is designated for industrial development. The proposed project would enable development that is compatible with existing adjacent urban land uses. Therefore, the proposed project would not physical divide an established community.
The potential for the proposed project to conflict with existing plans, policies or regulations that serve to mitigate environmental effects is addressed in other sections of this EIR. City of Salinas General Plan policies and City of Salinas Municipal Code standards that serve this purpose are identified throughout the analysis of individual environmental topics in Section 3.0 where applicable. Where the proposed project may be inconsistent with policies and standards, this is so noted either directly or indirectly through the determination of project impacts and associated mitigation measures. Similarly, plans and policies of other agencies with jurisdiction over/interest in the proposed project are also identified throughout this EIR.

The project site is not located within a habitat conservation or natural community plan. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with such plans.

**Relationship of the Proposed Project to LAFCO Reorganization Proposal Standards**

The proposed project will be subject to review and approval of LAFCO because it includes two or more changes of organization contained within a single proposal. Changes of organization include annexations and attachments/detachments from a district. The LAFCO actions associated with the proposed project as listed in Section 4.4, Approvals and Intended Uses of the EIR, shows that two annexations and two detachments are proposed.

As part of its deliberations on a proposal for reorganization, LAFCO will evaluate the consistency of the proposal with its Standards for the Evaluation of Proposal for a Change of Organization or Reorganization (Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission 2013). Standards that are applicable to the proposed project are included in parts D, E, and F of this document. Part A is the Introduction, Part B includes Definitions, and Part C addresses sphere of influence changes. Since the proposed reorganization does not include a sphere of influence amendment (the project site is already within the City’s sphere of influence), Part C is not applicable. Part G addresses terminations of applications and is not germane to the current proposal.

To assist LAFCO in its consistency determination, the applicable standards in parts D, E, and F of the policies and procedures are listed in Appendix H, LAFCO Reorganization Standards Evaluation, and project consistency with the standards are described. Where a particular standard is not applicable, this is so noted.

No inconsistencies were identified as a result of the analysis. In several cases, consistency can only be determined once additional technical information is prepared and incorporated into a formal application to LAFCO for reorganization. As of the date of this draft EIR, the reorganization application had not yet been completed. The application must be completed prior to the City’s consideration of the reorganization approval.
19.2 POPULATION & HOUSING

Using language taken from the sample Initial Study Checklist found in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, the City has determined that a proposed project may have a significant effect as a result of population growth and construction of replacement housing if the project would:

- Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere; or
- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The proposed project does not include housing, so it would not be a source of direct population growth. The proposed project will be a source of new employment opportunities. Given the significant demand for new employment opportunities in the City, the broader Salinas Valley and Monterey County, as well as the large number of potential workers already living within that same geographical area, it is logical to assume that a substantial number of the jobs created will be filled by local residents currently living within a reasonable commuting time of the project site.

There is no existing housing on the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere that would result in significant environmental effects.

19.3 SOLID WASTE

Using language taken from the sample Initial Study Checklist found in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, the City has determined that a proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- Be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project’s solid waste disposal needs; or
- Fail to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

New development within the project site will generate solid waste during its construction and operations. Solid waste would likely be delivered to the Johnson Canyon Landfill, which is operated by the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority, of which the City is a member, or to other facilities that may be developed or secured by the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority over time. Based on regulations contained in City of Salinas Municipal Code Section 14-12, all commercial and industrial generators of recyclables, green waste, and/or food waste must separate the materials and enter into a contract with the City of Salinas’ waste collection
franchisee to collect these materials at the generator’s premises. The Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority also operates a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility that collects waste oil, batteries, household pesticides, antifreeze, electronic wastes and other household hazardous waste that is self-hauled to the facility.

The Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority is responsible for ensuring that the cumulative solid waste disposal capacity needs of its member jurisdictions are met over time through expansion of existing landfill capacity, creation of new landfill capacity, and/or deployment of waste conversion technology that substitutes for landfill disposal capacity. The Johnson Canyon Landfill service life is approximately 38 years at current permitted capacity and rate of waste fill with no new waste diversion programs. If the landfill is expanded, the anticipated service life will range from 80 to 100 years. In the event that the landfill reaches full capacity, the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority has several other options to choose amongst, including expanding the landfill beyond its current permitted capacity, reconsidering expansion of the closed Jolon Road Landfill, or seeking landfill capacity in the region but outside of their service area (i.e. Monterey Peninsula Landfill located north of Marina, Kirby Canyon Landfill in Santa Clara County or John Smith Landfill in San Benito County).

The Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority is also evaluating the potential use of a Clean Fiber and Organics Recovery System, which is an advanced waste recovery technology that could conservatively extend the life of Johnson Canyon Landfill (without any further expansion) to approximately 90 to 100 years. With further expansion of the Johnson Canyon Landfill or export of residual waste from the advance waste recovery technology process, the landfill life could be extended well beyond 200 years.

Other waste reduction programs are also in planning such as expanded construction and demolition waste processing and food waste composting that would further reduce landfill dependence beyond the above-noted service life estimates for Johnson Canyon Landfill (Patrick Mathews, Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority General Manager, email communication with the consultant, November 22, 2016).

At this time, there is no evidence to suggest that solid waste capacity demand of new development within the project site will trigger the need for development of additional landfill capacity. New landfill capacity/disposal projects proposed by the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority for this purpose will undergo separate CEQA review at the time such projects are proposed, with the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority acting as lead agency.

The Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority is responsible for ensuring that its solid waste management activities are consistent with related state regulatory requirements. As needed, the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority would, through its member agencies, including the City, implement programs (e.g. recycling, diversion, etc.) with which new development within the project site must participate. The proposed project would not have significant impacts related to solid waste.
20.0 Cumulative Impacts

20.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA requires that an EIR contain an assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with a proposed project. This assessment involves examining project-related effects on the environment in the context of similar effects that have been caused by past or existing projects, as well as the anticipated effects of probable future projects. Although a project impact can be minor, the significance of its incremental contribution to the cumulative effects caused by the project together with other projects must be evaluated. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 requires a discussion of cumulative impacts when a project has possible environmental effects that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable. The definition of cumulatively considerable found in Section 15065(a) (3) states:

"Cumulatively considerable means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects."

Where a lead agency is examining a project with an incremental effect that is not "cumulatively considerable," the lead agency need not consider that effect significant, but must briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable. Incremental effects which are not considered cumulatively considerable need not be discussed in detail in an EIR. A lead agency must identify facts and analysis supporting its conclusion that the cumulative impact is less than significant.

Where a lead agency concludes that a cumulative effect of a project, taken together with the impacts of past, present, and probable future projects is significant, the lead agency then must determine whether the project’s incremental contribution to such significant cumulative impact is “cumulatively considerable.”

A lead agency may determine that a project’s contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and therefore, is not significant if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact. The lead agency is required to identify facts and analysis supporting its conclusion that the contribution will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable.
The discussion of cumulative impacts is required to reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the other identified projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact.

An EIR must examine reasonable, potentially feasible options for mitigating or avoiding a project’s contribution to any significant cumulative effects.

20.2 **Cumulative Development Scenario**

CEQA requires a cumulative development scenario to consist of either 1) a “list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency” or 2) a “summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect. Such plans may include: a general plan, regional transportation plan, or plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. A summary of projections may also be contained in an adopted or certified prior environmental document for such a plan. Such projections may be supplemented with additional information such as a regional modeling program. Any such document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency (CEQA Guidelines, § 15130, subd. (b)(1)).”

The geographic scope of the area affected by cumulative impacts can vary with the specific environmental topic being evaluated. Generally, for specific projects, the geographic scope of the area affected by cumulative impacts is larger than the boundary of the project site itself. For purposes of analyzing cumulative impacts in this section of the EIR, the geographic scope of the area affected ranges from development within Salinas as projected in the City of Salinas General Plan to much broader areas such as the county or the air basin. For example, the entire air basin is the geographic boundary used in the cumulative air quality analysis; the proposed project effect on climate change is evaluated at a regional/global scale; and cumulative traffic conditions include consideration of traffic generated in the county as well as the city to which traffic from the project would combine to affect cumulative circulation conditions. The first issue addressed in the discussion of each cumulative impact topic in this section is the geographic scope being used to evaluate the particular cumulative impact.
Plan Projections and Projects Contributing to Cumulative Development Conditions for the City

As noted above, for a number of environmental topics, the geographic scope of the area affected by a cumulative effect is the city. Where this is the case, the cumulative development scenario for the city consists of buildout projections contained in the general plan plus two additional large projects. This section describes the cumulative development scenario for the City as referenced in the discussion of cumulative impacts for individual environmental topics where this scenario is utilized.

City of Salinas General Plan

The development projections associated with the general plan are based on development within the City’s sphere of influence as identified in the general plan. General plan development projections and conditions most applicable to assessing specific cumulative effects where the city is the boundary of the area affected are identified in Table 20-1, City of Salinas Cumulative Development Scenario. The general plan projections are taken directly from general plan EIR Table 3-1, Comparison of Existing Land Uses and General Plan Land Uses.

Table 20-1 City of Salinas Cumulative Development Scenario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Dwelling Units</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Building Square Footage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Plan</td>
<td>58,056</td>
<td>213,063</td>
<td>72,337,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salinas-Ag Industrial Center</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4,334,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development Element</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,255,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>58,056</strong></td>
<td><strong>213,063</strong></td>
<td><strong>81,927,179</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: City of Salinas General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report, 2002, Table 3-1; Salinas-Ag Industrial Center Draft Environmental Impact Report, 2009; EMC Planning Group 2017

Additional Projects

To ensure that the general plan growth projections from 2002 are updated as necessary to reflect current and anticipated conditions, two individual projects are shown in Table 20-1. The first is the Salinas-Ag Industrial Center and the second is the City of Salinas Draft Economic Development Element (EDE). In 2010, the City of Salinas approved the Salinas-Ag Industrial Center. The project included modification of the City’s sphere of influence boundary, annexation of an approximately 257-acre project site located at the southwest corner of the Harris Road/Abbott Street intersection in the southwestern portion of the city, and approval of a specific plan to guide development of the site. The project includes a probable development capacity of about 4,334,220 square feet of agricultural industrial oriented uses.
20.0 Cumulative Impacts

The second project is the City of Salinas Economic Development Element (EDE), a new economic development element to the general plan. The Draft EIR for the EDE was published on September 1, 2017, and the City Council took action to approve the EDE (as modified with an alternative included in the Draft EIR) in early December 2017. The EDE is a long-term economic development vision that includes specific policies and actions to grow the Salinas economy. Implementation of the EDE could ultimately result in expansion of the Salinas sphere of influence by up to approximately 443 acres and a building development capacity increase of 5,255,959 square feet relative to projections in the general plan. The purpose is to create additional land capacity for job-generating retail, business park, and industrial development to meet the long-term employment needs resulting from projected population growth.

Salinas is in the process of considering two additional major projects – the West Area Specific Plan and the Central Area Specific Plan. The West Area Specific Plan encompasses approximately 797 acres. It is located within a Future Growth Area identified in the City of Salinas General Plan that is north of Boronda Road. As such, development within the West Area Specific Plan boundary has been contemplated. The area was annexed to the city after the general plan was adopted. Primary planned uses include residential and commercial development consistent with uses contemplated in the General Plan. The Central Area Specific Plan area is within the same Future Growth Area and located adjacent to the West Area Specific Plan area. It covers approximately 760 acres. Primary planned uses also include residential and commercial development consistent with uses contemplated in the General Plan. The development proposed within both specific plan areas is already part of the development projections for the general plan as shown in Table 20-1.

At 461,230 square feet of projected building development, the Salinas Travel Center project represents about 0.6 percent of the 72,337,000 square feet of total building capacity projected in the general plan and about 5.6 percent of the total cumulative building development potential identified in Table 20-1.

20.3 Proposed Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts

The methodology for addressing each cumulative impact topic is to: 1) identify the geographic boundary or scope for the environmental topic; 2) determine whether past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects (including the proposed project), have or will likely combine to create a significant cumulative impact; and, if so, 3) evaluate the incremental contribution of the proposed project to the cumulative effect and determine whether that contribution is cumulatively considerable (and thus significant in and of itself). Mitigation measures are proposed to avoid or reduce cumulatively considerable impacts.
Aesthetics

Geographic Scope

The geographic scope for cumulative aesthetic impacts is agricultural land and urban areas visible from the segment of U.S. Highway 101 that passes through the Salinas Valley. This scope is selected because the proposed project affects visual conditions at the interface between urban development and adjacent agricultural land. The visual conditions it affects are characteristic of those found at similar urban/agricultural land interfaces along the U.S. Highway 101 corridor within the Salinas Valley. That is, the cumulative geographic scope includes agricultural land visible from the highway, as well as the cities along the corridor that are visible from the highway. These cities include Salinas, Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City, where urban development at their fringes has, and will continue to convert agricultural land to urban use, and where lighting from urban development has, and will continue to contribute to sky glow.

Existing urban development within the cities and the projections for future urban development that would continue to contribute to these visual effects are found in the general plans for the respective cities, and in the Monterey County’s Greater Salinas Area Plan and Central Salinas Valley Area Plan, both of which encompass unincorporated areas within the Salinas Valley.

Cumulative Impacts

Past and existing cumulative urban development within Salinas Valley cities and development within the Salinas Valley portions of the two Monterey County area plans noted previously has substantially changed scenic resource conditions by converting agricultural land, a major visual resource within the Salinas Valley, to urban landscape. Continued conversion of agricultural landscapes will occur as the cities continue to grow within their respective spheres of influence, and in their more distant futures, possibly beyond their existing spheres of influence as those boundaries may be expanded. The perception of change will be especially noticeable by travelers on U.S. Highway 101 given the substantial frequency of views from the highway. Views to open agricultural lands could also be blocked from the highway and from other local roadways within and adjacent to the cities, including Salinas.

Conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural, developed uses also occurs within the Salinas Valley in unincorporated Monterey County. This most commonly occurs in individual locations for agricultural support related services projects.

Consequently, past, present, and probable future development in the Salinas Valley that is or would be visible from U.S. Highway 101 and has converted agricultural land to urban use is considered to have cumulatively significant impacts on scenic resource conditions.
Similarly, past and present urban development and development in unincorporated Monterey County require lighting that contributes to sky glow effects in the vicinity of the lighting sources. This is particularly true in the vicinity of the cities, where sky glow is commonly visible. Future development within the cities and unincorporated Monterey County, including the proposed project if approved, will require lighting that contributes to existing skyglow. Past, present, and probable future development in the Salinas Valley that is or would be visible from U.S. Highway 101 is considered to have cumulatively significant impacts from sky glow.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

The proposed project would result in conversion of approximately 17 acres of active agricultural land and an additional approximately 13 acres of vacant land formerly in agricultural use to urban development. This will alter the visual character of the project site. However, as described in Section 5.0, Aesthetics, the project site is bordered on three sides by existing urban development in the city. Therefore, the perception of change in visual conditions from its development as seen from U.S. Highway 101 is not expected to be substantial. The project’s contribution to visual change would be further diminished in the cumulative context where broad vistas of agricultural use will continue to be available from U.S. Highway 101 despite existing development, continued incremental growth of cities at their urban fringe, and individual agricultural support development that may be permitted within the Salinas Valley consistent with the Monterey County Greater Salinas Area Plan and Central Salinas Valley Area Plan. Therefore, the proposed project contribution to a change in visual resource quality would be less than cumulatively considerable.

The proposed project will result in an increase in sky glow due especially to building and parking lot lighting. The project-generated change is within the broader vicinity context of urban development within the city, within other cities in the Salinas Valley, and development in unincorporated Salinas Valley. The incremental change in sky glow effect from developed uses within the project site would not likely be discernable in relationship to sky glow conditions in the city as they may be viewed from locations adjacent to the city or from more distant locations in the Salinas Valley, especially when viewed in combination with sky glow from other cities and isolated development in unincorporated areas of the Valley. Therefore, the proposed project contribution to skyglow effects is considered to be less than cumulatively considerable. Skyglow effects will be reduced to the extent feasible by implementation of municipal code regulations described in Section 5.0, Aesthetics.

**Agricultural Resources**

**Geographic Scope**

The geographic scope for cumulative agricultural resources impacts is Monterey County. Agricultural resources are critical to the economies of Salinas, as well as all of Monterey County.
County. Salinas and the project site are located within the broader Salinas Valley on agricultural land which is recognized as some of the most productive in the nation.

**Cumulative Impacts**

Past and existing cumulative development consist primarily of urban development (residential, commercial, industrial, infrastructure, etc.) within incorporated cities and development within unincorporated areas of the county that have converted productive farmland (Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland) to non-agricultural use. Past and present projects have contributed to substantial loss of productive farmland in the county over time. The California Department of Conservation monitors conversion of important farmland through its Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.

The Department of Conservation reports in its Monterey County 1984 to 2014 Land Use Summary table that, approximately 10,591 acres of Prime Farmland within the county were converted to non-agricultural use or reclassified as another type of farmland during this period (www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrv/fmmp/Pages/Monterey.aspx). However, acreage in farmland that is classified as Farmland of Statewide Importance increased by 6,232 acres and acreage classified as Farmland of Local Importance increased by 15,226 acres. These significant acreage increases may well result from the fact that 18,811 acres of land formerly classified as Grazing Land have been converted, likely as a result of reclassification to one or both of the noted farmland classifications, as former grazing land has been brought into agricultural production. A large percentage of this conversion may owe to significant expansion of vineyard land in south Monterey County. This data does not include farmland lost to non-agricultural use prior to 1984. Consequently, the data substantially under represents the total acreage of productive farmland converted over time. The most productive farmland in the county is located on the floor of the Salinas Valley and substantial urban development in incorporated cities and developed uses in unincorporated Monterey County has occurred on the valley floor. Therefore, the total cumulative loss of productive farmland solely from conversion to urban development has been substantial over time.

Cities within the Salinas Valley will continue to expand at their edges over time and the County is likely to continue to permit individual development projects on agricultural land in unincorporated areas that convert agricultural land to non-agricultural use. The general plans of the cities define spheres of influence boundaries that include agricultural land, as each is either partially or entirely surrounded by agricultural land. Future growth within the spheres of influence will continue to result in loss of agricultural land. The general plans include growth policies intended to support necessary growth while minimizing conversion of agricultural land where possible. The Monterey County General Plan also includes such policies.
Past and existing development within the county has resulted in a cumulatively significant impact on productive farmland, especially Prime Farmland, through conversion to urban and other uses. Probable future development within city spheres of influence, including the proposed project if approved, and within unincorporated areas of the county consisting of farmland, will worsen the significant cumulative impact.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

The proposed project would result in the permanent conversion of approximately 33 acres of important farmland to non-agricultural uses as described in Section 6.0, Agricultural Resources. Mitigation measure AG-1 in Section 6.0 requires that applicants for future development within the project site dedicate permanent conservation easements to a qualified third-party farmland conservation entity on off-site agricultural land of equal or better quality at a minimum ratio of 1:1. However, this mitigation measure does not reduce the significant impact to less than significant, as the project will still result in the net loss of 33 acres of important farmland. Due to the high value of productive agricultural land to the City and the County, the project’s incremental contribution to the significant cumulative impact is considered to be cumulatively considerable and thus significant and unavoidable in and of itself.

**Air Quality**

**Geographic Scope**

The geographic scope for criteria air emissions impacts of the proposed project is the boundary of the North Central Coast Air Basin, which encompasses Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties. This is the area for which the Monterey Bay Air Resources District has prepared plans for reducing specific types of air emissions and otherwise manages air quality to meet federal and state air quality standards.

**Cumulative Impacts**

Past and present projects within the air basin have generated criteria air emissions through construction and operational activities. The air basin is currently in state non-attainment for ozone and particulate matter. That is, past and present projects have generated these emission types to the extent that their concentration within the air basin exceeds applicable standards. The air district has prepared air quality plans designed to bring cumulative emissions from past, present, and future projected development to below the standards. Though the effect has been diminishing in recent years with cleaner fuel and engine technologies, cumulative development, including the proposed project if approved, also has potential to result in traffic congestion wherein vehicles can produce air emissions, particularly carbon monoxide, at concentrations in localized areas (e.g. at congested intersections or along congested roadways) that could adversely affect adjacent sensitive
receptors. Point sources of air emissions can adversely affect adjacent sensitive receptors, but due to the localized effects of point sources, it is unlikely that they would combine in a cumulative context to adversely affect the same population of sensitive receptors.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

Impacts of the proposed project on air quality are identified in Section 7.0, Air Quality. Consistent with air district guidance, a consistency determination serves as the analysis of cumulative impacts from generation of ozone precursors. Emissions of ozone precursors (i.e. NOx) that are not consistent with the air quality plan are not accommodated by programs in the air quality plan and will have a significant cumulative impact unless offset. Because the proposed project is not population-generating, it is considered consistent with the air quality plan for ozone. Therefore, the air quality impact from ozone/ozone precursors would be less than cumulatively considerable.

The air district considers cumulative impacts from contribution of particulate matter to be less than considerable if individual projects implement measures to reduce production of particulate matter during construction activities. Mitigation measure AQ-1 in Section 7.0 represents the measures needed for this purpose. This mitigation applies to all development projects within the project site. Consequently, the proposed project contribution to particulate matter impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable if mitigation measure AQ-1 is adopted.

It is probable that other new development within the air district boundaries would include new point sources of air emissions. Without compliance to air district regulations, new point sources could potentially impact sensitive receptors in the immediate vicinity of the specific point source. However, the project site is not in proximity to sensitive receptors, so the proposed project contribution to this effect would be less than cumulatively considerable.

The proposed project would contribute to elevated mobile source (vehicle) pollutant concentrations along roadways. Based on analysis included in Section 16.0, Transportation, and Section 7.0, Air Quality, pollution concentrations along roadways onto which project traffic would be distributed would not experience a significant increase in congestion. Therefore, pollutant concentrations along the roadways would not reach potentially hazardous levels. The proposed project contribution to exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations would be less than cumulatively considerable.

**Biological Resources**

**Geographic Scope**

The geographic distribution ranges for special-status species vary greatly depending largely on environmental factors such as habitat suitability criteria (e.g. some species may only occur locally while others may range throughout large geographic areas such as the western U.S.).
For the purposes of cumulative analysis for special status species and other biological resources, including jurisdictional wetlands and waterways, the geographic boundary for cumulative impacts is generally defined as the nine 7.5-minute U.S. Geological Survey quadrangles centered on the project site. These include the Prunedale, San Juan Bautista, Hollister, Salinas, Natividad, Mount Harlan, Spreckels, Chualar, and Gonzales quadrangles. A 7.5 minute quadrangle map typically covers an area of about 49 to 70 square miles. An analysis at this level is considered adequate for determining whether impacts could affect the sustainability of special status species and their habitats. Within this area, regulatory agencies and conservation organizations including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and California Native Plant Society, work to establish and update critical distribution range information for species thought to be declining within their geographic ranges due to habitat loss and degradation.

**Cumulative Impacts**

Past and present projects within the nine-quadrangle geographic boundary identified above have permanently removed plant and wildlife habitats to varying degrees. This development has reduced the range and number of multiple plant and wildlife species and contributed to threats to their continued viability. The fact that federal and state agencies recognize numerous plant and wildlife species with special status, which requires that the species be given specific consideration and protection, reflects the agencies’ concern that the species are declining in number and range relative to their historic occurrences. Special-status species are generally considered rare, restricted in distribution, declining throughout their range, and/or to have a critical, vulnerable stage in their life cycle, that warrants their protection and monitoring. Such development has also caused the loss and decline of sensitive natural plant communities including riparian, woodlands, and wetland communities; constrained wildlife movement; and reduced nesting and foraging habitat for resident and migratory avian species. The impacts of past and present projects on special-status species and protected habitat communities are cumulatively significant. Future probable projects, including the proposed project if approved, would further exacerbate these impacts and worsen cumulative impacts.

Past and present cumulative projects have resulted in impacts to wetlands and waterways under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Many of these projects were approved since enactment of federal and state legislation that mandate protecting or conserving these resources through regulatory permitting processes. These permits commonly include wetland habitat restoration requirements or other appropriate mitigation to ensure no net loss of habitat functions and values. Probable future projects, including the proposed project if approved, will be subject to the same regulatory requirements. Regardless, impacts of cumulative development on wetlands and waterways are cumulatively significant.
Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts

Impacts of the proposed project on biological resources are discussed in Section 8.0, Biological Resources. Please refer to that section for more information. Potentially significant impacts on the special-status Congdon’s tarplant and burrowing owl, as well as protected nesting birds, are possible. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 to BIO-3 would reduce impacts and potential impacts on these species to less than significant. The proposed project also has potential to impact jurisdictional wetlands and/or waterways within parcel 2 of the project site. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-4 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

The proposed project site contains land that generally has low habitat value for native plants and wildlife. The project site is comprised of ruderal (weedy) areas and non-native grassland, with the balance comprised of active agricultural land. In general, land that has been disturbed by prior mechanical activities associated with historic and current agricultural use resulting in the loss of native habitats and plant communities is of marginal habitat value. Given the relatively low quality of the habitat that would be affected by the proposed project, as well as the historical effectiveness of mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-4, the impacts of the proposed project on biological resources are considered to be less than cumulatively considerable.

Cultural Resources

Geographic Scope

The geographic scope for cumulative impacts on cultural resources is the general plan buildout plus additional development projects scenario. Urban development within the city typically involves surface and subsurface disturbance activities such as grading, trenching, and excavations. These activities have a higher potential to impact historical resources and/or unique archaeological resources than do common agricultural practices within the portions of unincorporated Monterey County that largely surround the city. The general plan EIR identified that potential impacts on known historical resources within the planning area could be significant and unavoidable. Impacts on unique archaeological resources and paleontological resources were found to be less than significant with implementation of general plan implementation programs requiring evaluation of cultural resources as part of discretionary approval process.

Cumulative Impacts

Past and present projects within the city have likely resulted in the demolition and alteration of significant historical resources and/or unique archaeological resources. Much of the cumulative development likely took place prior to implementation of protections for cultural resources established through California planning law, the California Government Code and Public Resources Code, and other state and federal regulatory measures. Future probable
cumulative projects, including the proposed project if approved, may also have potential to
damage or destroy historical resources and/or unique archaeological resources. However, in
the case of future probable projects, the potential is considered to be lower than for past
projects given the more stringent regulatory requirements that are now in place. General
plan policy COS-12 and mitigation measure CR2 included in the general plan EIR are
designed to avoid or substantially lessen the contribution of individual projects to
cumulative impacts on historical and unique archaeological resources. Nevertheless, given
the probability that past and present development within the city has damaged historical
resources and unique archaeological resources over time, cumulative impacts on historical
and unique archaeological resources are considered to be significant.

There are no known paleontological resources within the city. The city is located on deep
alluvial soils that have low potential for containing fossils. The alluvium was recently
deposited – likely in the last 10,000 years. To be considered a fossil, an object generally must
be more than 10,000 years old. Most fossils recorded in Monterey County to date have been
found in geologic formations that are millions of years old. Consequently, it is unlikely that
fossils would be found during excavations or other related construction activities conducted
within this alluvium. Therefore, it is also unlikely that past and present cumulative
development within the city has adversely affected paleontological resources, as it would
also be the case for future probable development, including the proposed project if
approved. Therefore, cumulative impacts on paleontological resources are considered to be
less than cumulatively significant.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

Potential project effects on historical resources and/or unique archaeological resources are
discussed in Section 9.0, Cultural Resources. Regarding historical resources, the project site
has been historically used for agricultural production; therefore, the potential that subsurface
historical resources are present is low. Further, a year 2000 cultural resources assessment
concluded that the project site does not contain any known historical resources.

Though none are known to exist within the project site, it is possible that activities associated
with site development could adversely affect historical resources and/or unique
archaeological resources, and/or human remains if any are present. Mitigation measures CR-
1 and CR-2 in this EIR require site development activities to immediately stop if subsurface
archaeological resources are uncovered. These mitigation measures are consistent with
general plan implementation program COS-12 and with general plan EIR mitigation
measure CR1. These measures are designed to substantially reduce the potential for
historical and/or unique archaeological resources to be demolished or destroyed. In the
unlikely event that subsurface historical resources were uncovered, these mitigations would
also serve to substantially reduce potential that they would be demolished or destroyed.
Therefore, the project contribution to cumulative impacts on historical and/or unique
archaeological resources is less than cumulatively considerable.
Geology and Soils

As described in Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, the California Supreme Court held in the 2015 “California Building Industry Association (CBIA)” case that agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental hazards or other adverse conditions on a project’s future users or residents, except where a proposed project risks exacerbating those existing environmental hazards or conditions, in which case agencies should evaluate how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions. Prior to the CBIA case, CEQA analyses of potential geology and soils impacts of a project typically focused on existing geologic hazards that have potential to cause risk to public health and safety. While Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, includes these analyses, they are included only for informational purposes and the information is to be considered outside the purview of CEQA, except where effects would extend to properties beyond the project site and where the proposed project risked exacerbating existing hazards or conditions. The analysis below takes the same approach. Some of the analysis is not required by CEQA but is included anyway for informational purposes. Other parts of the analysis are required by CEQA and are included for that reason.

Geographic Scope

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative geologic hazard impacts generally is site specific because each project site has a different set of geologic considerations and development of specific sites would be subject to uniform site development and construction standards as a means to address site-specific hazards.

In contrast, the geographic scope for slope stability impacts is the entire Salinas Valley, as, with some exceptions, the floor of the valley is generally uniformly topographically level and generally consists of alluvial soils. The Salinas Valley is also the geographic scope for soil erosion impacts for a similar reason, as well as the fact that cumulative development occurs on alluvial soils that have specific erosion characteristics.

Cumulative Impacts

Past cumulative development in the city and future development, including the proposed project, would increase the number of people and structures that could be exposed to hazards associated with seismic activity, primarily ground shaking and potentially liquefaction, as well as hazards that include landslides, expansive soils, and unstable geologic units. Future probable cumulative development, including the proposed project if approved, will increase exposure to geologic hazards by introducing significant new development and population. Though future probable development will be subject to regulatory requirements that will reduce its contribution to cumulative exposure to geologic hazards, the cumulative impact from exposure to geologic hazards is nevertheless considered to be significant.
Past cumulative development in the Salinas Valley has occurred largely on the level floor of the valley on land that is generally topographically level. Slope stability hazards are not common, with the possible exception of locations along the top of the banks of the Salinas River and/or along the edges of fluvial terraces, such as the one located along the southern margin of parcel 4. Slope stability hazards in these locations have been minimal due largely to the rural character of the valley and the fact that that agricultural uses predominate throughout the valley; little urban development has occurred in locations near these features. Further, where such development has occurred, it has been subject to uniform standards regarding geologic hazards identification and measures to substantially reduce potential slope stability concerns through site and development design. Therefore, cumulative impacts relating to slope stability hazards are considered to be less than significant.

Past cumulative development in the Salinas Valley has occurred on soils with a range of erosion potential. Nevertheless, erosion and sedimentation of surface waters has been a significant contributor to cumulatively significant impacts on water quality in the Salinas Valley. The water quality impacts of erosion and sedimentation are considered to be cumulatively significant.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

Existing geologic hazards that have potential to affect new development within the specific plan area include seismic shaking, seismic-shaking related ground failure, including liquefaction, and landslides. The proposed project could result in cumulatively considerable impacts if it were to exacerbate these hazards, and by doing so, worsen exposure of structures and people to risks from such hazards. Seismic shaking, liquefaction, and expansive soils are natural phenomena; new development does not have potential to exacerbate these hazards. Furthermore, as described in Regulatory Setting subsection of Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, new development within the project site must comply with a range of general plan policies and state and local regulations designed to reduce exposure of structures and people to geologic hazards.

The proposed project’s incremental contribution to potential cumulative slope stability hazards is considered to be less-than-cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant). The nature of the hazard condition along the southern boundary of parcel 4 will be investigated through a geotechnical report that will be prepared as condition of future project development within parcel 4. If hazard conditions exist, future development must be designed to avoid the risk through site design measures to be recommended by a registered geologist or other similarly qualified professional.

The proposed project’s incremental contribution to cumulative soil erosion impacts is also considered to be less-than-cumulatively considerable. Through a range of regulatory requirements described in Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, including preparation of a SWPPP, City grading standards, and the City’s SWDS, potential for construction and post-construction soil erosion will be substantially lessened.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Geographic Scope

GHG emissions effects are not localized to areas where they are produced. Climate change is a global phenomenon resulting from the combined effects of GHG emissions produced worldwide. Consequently, the analysis of climate change impacts from production of GHGs as included in Section 11.0, Greenhouse Gasses, is inherently cumulative in nature. While the true geographic scope of the area affected by GHG emissions is global, for purposes of this EIR, the geographic scope is considered to be the State of California. This scope is selected because California’s legislative and regulatory climate change framework is designed to reduce GHG emissions whose regulation is directly or indirectly within the control of the state. The CEQA process is considered to be the appropriate mechanism for assessing the impacts of GHG emissions from land development projects in light of the state’s comprehensive climate change mitigation strategy.

Cumulative Impacts

Potential effects of global warming at the local, regional and state scale are described in Section 11.2. The cumulative impacts of global warming are significant given projections of a range of adverse social, economic, and environmental effects resulting therefrom. This is also true for the climate change setting within the state.

Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts

GHGs produced by development within the project site would exceed the statewide rate of land use driven GHG emissions that must be maintained for GHG impacts from statewide population and employment growth in the land use sector (e.g. residential, commercial, mixed-used development) to be less than cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation measure GHG-1 requires applicants for individual development projects to prepare GHG reduction plans. The purpose is to reduce emissions from each project to below the threshold of significance. Mitigation measure GHG-1 includes a mandatory performance standard that will ensure that GHG emissions from the project site will be consistent with statewide efforts to achieve the 2030 GHG reduction goal set by SB 32 (40 percent below 1990 levels).

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Geographic Scope

Hazardous Materials

The geographic scope for cumulative hazardous materials conditions is the general plan buildout plus additional development projects scenario. The primary hazardous materials issues of concern for the proposed project are site specific - the potential to create health risks to construction workers and the public from exposure to agricultural chemicals that may
have accumulated in site soils over time and to aerially deposited lead in soils along the margin of U.S. Highway 101. These potential risks result from site preparation and construction activities for individual projects that could cause such chemicals to be released as soils are graded, trenched, and excavated. Unlike typical agricultural practices (e.g. within adjacent unincorporated portions of Monterey County), site preparation and construction activities associated with urban development can result in substantial surface and subsurface displacement and manipulation of soils.

The general plan EIR identified that potential impacts related to hazardous materials can be reduced to less than significant with implementation of general plan policies that are listed as mitigation measures in the general plan EIR.

**Airport Operations Hazards/Safety**

The geographic scope of cumulative impacts regarding airport hazards/safety is the area within the City of Salinas Airport Area of Influence. The area of influence is a boundary around the airport within which land use activities are monitored and regulated to minimize land use activities that could compromise the on-going safety of airport operations. The geographic scope is limited to activities within this boundary as activities outside of it are not regulated for the safety of airport operations. The general plan EIR identified that potential airport hazards impacts are reduced to less than significant with implementation of general plan policies that are listed as mitigation measures in the general plan EIR. The general plan contemplated development of the specific plan area with industrial uses that were deemed at that time to be compatible with airport operations. With the exception of the proposed hotel use, which requires a general plan amendment to change the existing Industrial land use designation for parcel 1 to Retail, future development would occur consistent with the Industrial land use designation. As has been discussed in Section 5.0, Aesthetics; Section 12.0, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; and Section 14.0, Noise, future development of parcel 1 with the proposed hotel is not anticipated to conflict with airport operations. Nor are the other land uses contemplated for the remainder of the specific plan area.

**Cumulative Impacts**

**Hazardous Materials**

As of 2017, exposure of construction workers and the public to aerially deposited lead or to agricultural chemical residues in soils has not resulted in significant public health risks. Through the CEQA process, as evidenced by the like proposed project, probable future projects planned on sites where these conditions have potential to occur, including the proposed project if approved, will be required to prepare soil investigations. The investigations will determine whether these materials exist at concentrations that could pose hazards; if so, soil remediation would be required to reduce the impact to less than significant. Therefore, impacts from these conditions are considered to be less than cumulatively significant.
Past and present development within the city has resulted in a range of hazardous materials conditions. Leaking above- or below-ground storage tanks are among the most common, as evidenced by review of lists of hazardous materials sites in Salinas, wherein soils and/or groundwater remediation activities are undertaken to rectify the condition. Hazardous materials spills have also occurred over time with the effect of posing public health and/or environmental risks. These risks and hazards related to these conditions are considered to be cumulatively significant. Probable future development, including the proposed project if approved, may contribute further to these impacts, but potentially to a lesser degree given the rigor of current federal and state laws regarding hazardous materials management.

**Airport Operations Hazards/Safety**

Regarding airport operations hazards, all new development within the airport area of influence is regulated through standards contained in the City of Salinas Municipal Code. The standards address a range of issues, including building height, lighting, etc. New development, including the proposed project if approved, must be consistent with the standards. This ensures that cumulative land-use related impacts related to airport operations safety are less than cumulatively significant.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

**Hazardous Materials**

Proposed project impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials are described in Section 12.0, Hazards and Hazardous Materials of this EIR. The proposed project would have potentially significant impacts including exposure of people to existing hazardous materials conditions (exposure to agricultural chemical residues and to aerially deposited lead in soils). The potential impacts from both hazards would be reduced to less than significant through implementation of mitigation measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2 for agricultural chemicals, and HAZ 3 and HAZ-4 for aerially deposited lead. Developers of individual projects within the project site must prepare environmental site assessments to determine the extent to which such hazards exist, and if so, to specify remediation measures required to reduce the hazard to less than significant (through complying with federal and state laws). As noted above, the cumulative impact from these hazards is less than significant. The proposed project contribution to the cumulative effect would not cause that effect to rise to a cumulatively considerable level.

**Airport Operations Hazards/Safety**

Like all new development within the airport area of influence, the proposed project must be consistent with the City of Salinas Municipal Code standards. The cumulative impact from development hazards on airport operations is less than significant. The proposed project contribution to this effect would not cause the effect to rise to a cumulatively considerable level.
Hydrology and Water Quality

Geographic Scope

Water Quality

The geographic scope for assessment of cumulative hydrology and water quality impacts is the general plan buildout plus additional projects scenario, plus past, present and future agricultural production activity within the county in the vicinity of the city. Agricultural production in the county is included in this scenario due to its adverse impacts on water quality resulting from discharge of agricultural chemicals to surface water as reflected in surface water quality analyses reported in Section 13.0, Hydrology and Water Quality.

Flood Hazards

The geographic scope for flood hazard conditions is the general plan buildout plus additional projects scenario. This scenario is selected because conversion of agricultural land to urban development within the city changes surface hydrological conditions with potential to affect flood hazard conditions; past, present and future continued agricultural uses adjacent to the city do not have this potential.

Cumulative Impacts

Water Quality

Past and existing cumulative development has contributed to significant cumulative surface and groundwater quality impacts during construction and during operations in a variety of ways. These include, but are not limited to: erosion of soils exposed during site preparation/construction processes and subsequent sedimentation of surface water bodies, release of urban pollutants such as oils or hazardous materials stored in underground storage tanks or elsewhere, and release of urban pollutants contained in storm water discharged from developed project sites, roadways, etc., to surface water. In many cases, water quality standards have likely been violated with the effect that water quality in surface water bodies in the vicinity is considered impaired. Probable future development within the city, including the proposed project if approved, and continued agricultural production in the vicinity is likely to exacerbate existing water quality impacts in similar ways. Impacts of cumulative development on water quality are considered to be cumulatively significant.

Flood Hazards

Past and current cumulative urban development within the City has contributed to flood hazard conditions within the city and adjacent portions of the county by increasing the volume and rate of storm water runoff from developed sites relative to undeveloped land conditions. This development is considered to have cumulatively significant impacts on flood hazard conditions. As described in Section 13.3, the City’s Storm Water Development Standards (SWDS) have been in effect since 2010. Recent development within the city that
has been subject to SWDS requirements has substantially reduced potential to contribute to cumulative flood hazard conditions as under these regulations, storm water runoff from individual sites must not exceed pre-condition volumes or rates. These same projects also have a reduced potential to limit groundwater recharge, as storm water runoff is to be treated and retained on site through a range of best management practices (including LID features) that promote groundwater recharge. Nevertheless, in total, cumulative development, including the proposed project if approved, is considered to have had a significant cumulative flood hazard impact.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

The hydrology and water quality impacts of the proposed project are discussed in Section 13.0, Hydrology and Water Quality. The proposed project has potential to exacerbate cumulative water quality impacts. However, conformance with existing regulatory requirements included in the City’s NPDES permit as promulgated through the City’s SWMP and SWDS would ensure that the project contribution would be less than considerable. The NPDES includes quantitative limits on water quality pollutant loads that may be discharged from the City’s municipal storm water system. The purpose is to protect water quality and beneficial uses of receiving waters, including the Reclamation Ditch. The SWDS require that new development projects be designed to include best management practices for reducing pollutant loads discharged into the City’s municipal system, and in turn, reduce discharges from the City’s system to meet the NPDES permit pollutant limitations.

The project’s contribution to cumulative erosion and surface and groundwater quality impacts are reduced with required conformance to the City’s NPDES permit as implemented through its SWDS and through implementation of a SWPPP. Further, with conversion of agricultural land to urban use, use of agricultural chemicals associated with the historic and existing agricultural production activities within the project site would be eliminated. This is potentially a positive impact on water quality. Similarly, impacts from loss of groundwater recharge potential are reduced given storm water management requirements embedded in the SWDS that promote recharge and other site specific recharge opportunities. The project contribution to cumulative impacts from localized flooding will be less than cumulatively considerable with required conformance to general plan policies, municipal code standards, and SWDS requirements regarding provision of storm drainage infrastructure improvements.

**Noise**

**Geographic Scope**

The geographic scope for cumulative traffic noise impacts is the road network under the jurisdiction of the City of Salinas and regional roads onto which project-generated traffic
20.0 Cumulative Impacts

would be distributed. These circulation facilities are included in the AMBAG regional traffic model. The AMBAG regional traffic model has been refined for use to assess traffic impacts within the city. The model includes assumptions about cumulative development and increases in traffic volumes throughout the city and county as those changes affect circulation conditions within the city and on regional roadways that pass through the city.

Cumulative Impacts

Past and present development within Salinas, the county, and the region has contributed to increased ambient noise levels as a result of increases in traffic volumes on local city, county, and regional roadways such as U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 68. With increasing noise levels, past and existing noise sensitive land uses such as residences and schools within the city have been and will continue to be exposed to traffic noise that exceeds the City’s noise exposure standards as described in the general plan and the municipal code. Probable future development within the city, the county, and region, including the proposed project if approved, will exacerbate noise impacts over time, most commonly by contributing additional traffic to local and regional roadways. New development, including the proposed project if approved, could be exposed to existing or future noise levels that exceed noise exposure standards.

The general plan EIR concludes that impacts on noise-sensitive uses from traffic noise would be significant and unavoidable.

Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts

As discussed in Section 14.0, Noise, a noise assessment was prepared for the proposed project. It is included as Appendix F of this EIR. The noise assessment includes an analysis of 2035 cumulative traffic noise impacts by comparing cumulative background traffic noise volumes in that year with cumulative background plus project conditions.

The proposed project would have a cumulatively considerable traffic noise impact if both of two criteria are met: 1) if the cumulative background plus project traffic condition results in a noise level increase of more than 3 dBA L_{dn} compared to the cumulative background noise level when cumulative background noise levels exceed 60 dBA L_{dn} or results in a noise level increase of 5 dBA L_{dn} or more when cumulative background noise levels are at or below 60 dBA L_{dn}; and 2) the proposed project would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to the overall traffic noise increase. A cumulatively considerable contribution is defined as an increase of 1 dBA L_{dn} or more attributable solely to the proposed project. That is, the cumulative background plus project conditions would result in at least a 1 dBA L_{dn} increase over the cumulative background scenario.

The traffic noise increases calculated under both cumulative background and cumulative background plus project scenarios were 3 dBA L_{dn} or greater along the Terven Avenue and South Sanborn Road. However, since the difference between the cumulative background and cumulative background plus project scenarios was less than 1 dBA L_{dn}, the project
contribution to the impact is not cumulatively considerable for these road segments. Traffic noise increases were 2 dBA Ldn or less at all other roadway segments in the project vicinity; the cumulative traffic noise increase would be less than cumulatively considerable along all other roadways. Please refer to Section 14.0, Noise, and Appendix F for information about the noise assessment methodology and data inputs.

Public Services

Geographic Scope

The geographic scope of the cumulative impact assessment is development within the City of Salinas as guided by the general plan. If cumulative demand for police and/or fire services triggers the need to construct services support facilities, environmental impacts from such construction could occur. The City provides police and fire services within its boundaries based on growth within the city as directed by the general plan.

Cumulative Impacts

Past, present and probable future development, including the proposed project if approved, within the city has contributed, and will continue to contribute, to the need to construct new police and fire facilities. These construction activities typically have potential to trigger a range of potentially significant impacts, some of which are unique to the specific environmental setting locations where the facilities have been constructed and may be planned. The number of police and fire protection facilities supported by the City is listed in Section 15.2 of this EIR. While the cumulative development represented by these facilities is small relative to cumulative development within the City, it is assumed that they have combined to have cumulatively significant impacts, most likely with respect to specific issues such as loss of farmland.

Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project would result in an increase in demand for fire and police protection services. However, that demand would be minimal relative to existing and future projected demand within the city. Construction of new facilities would not be triggered solely by demand from the proposed project. As such, its contribution to the cumulative impacts resulting from such construction is considered to be less than cumulatively considerable.

Transportation

Geographic Scope and Road Network

The geographic scope for considering cumulative transportation impacts includes cumulative growth projected within the geographic boundary covered by AMBAG’s regional traffic model. The City of Salinas worked with AMBAG to refine the model to enable its specific use for assessing circulation impacts of new development in the city. The AMBAG model was used because it captures cumulative traffic conditions on the City’s road
network and on regional transportation facilities that pass through the city. The proposed project would affect both local and regional circulation networks. The regional model was used in preparing the cumulative impacts analysis for the proposed project contained in the TIA in Appendix G. The cumulative impacts analysis is based on year 2035 conditions. The summary of cumulative impacts which follows is taken from the TIA.

The analysis of cumulative impacts of the proposed project is based on comparing changes in operational conditions on City and Caltrans facilities evaluated in the TIA under 2035 background conditions with background plus project conditions in 2035.

With one exception, the cumulative analysis assumes the same road network conditions as for the background plus project condition. The change is an assumed interchange at U.S. Highway 101/Harris Road, which is planned for construction by 2035. This interchange improvement is included in the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy constrained project list. Revenue sources have been identified to fund all of the improvements on the constrained project list. Once a project is included in the region’s official MTP, it becomes eligible for inclusion in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). The interchange is included in the list of projects to be funded by the TAMC regional fee. The new interchange would alter traffic patterns in the project area, shifting some traffic from the Airport Boulevard and Sanborn Road interchanges and the Blanco Road/Sanborn Road corridor to the new interchange.

**Cumulative Impacts**

**Figure 20-1, Cumulative Plus Project Intersection Levels of Service**, shows levels of service study intersections under 2035 cumulative background conditions where traffic generated from regional growth is added to the 2035 circulation network, including to City- and Caltrans-controlled facilities in the project vicinity. Three intersections would operate below City or Caltrans thresholds of significance under cumulative background conditions:

- SR 68/Blanco Road (#1) – LOS F for both AM and PM peak hour (Caltrans intersection);
- Blanco Road/Sanborn Road/Abbott Street (#3) – LOS E for both AM and PM peak hours (City intersection); and
- Terven Avenue/U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps (#8) – LOS D for AM peak hour (Caltrans intersection).

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

The proposed project is projected to generate 4,965 daily vehicle trips that will be distributed onto the local City road network and onto the Caltrans regional transportation network. **Figure 20-1, Cumulative Plus Project Intersection Levels of Service** shows level of service conditions for the study intersections under cumulative background plus project conditions.
<table>
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<th>#</th>
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**Notes:** For two-way stop controlled intersections, the average delay and LOS is reported for the worst approach.

* Denotes Caltrans Intersection

† Analyzed based on HCM 2010 Roundabout

**BOLD** indicates unacceptable level of service

**BOLD** indicates a significant project impact

Source: Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. 2017

Figure 20-1

Cumulative/Project Intersection Levels of Service

Salinas Travel Center EIR
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With the addition of project traffic to cumulative background conditions, two City-controlled intersections and two Caltrans-controlled intersections would be significantly impacted based on the thresholds of significance described in Section 16.3:

- SR 68/Blanco Road (#1) – Addition of one trip to LOS D operations under cumulative background conditions during both AM and PM peak hours (Caltrans intersection);
- Blanco Road/Sanborn Road/Abbott Street (#3) – Addition of one trip to LOS E operations under cumulative background conditions during both the AM and PM peak hours (City intersection);
- Airport Boulevard/Hansen Street (#6) – LOS D under cumulative background conditions degrade to LOS E during the PM peak hour (City intersection); and
- Terven Avenue/U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps (#8) – LOS C under cumulative background conditions degrades to LOS E during the AM peak hour and addition of one trip to LOS D operations under cumulative background conditions during the PM peak hour (Caltrans intersection).

All the other study intersections would operate at an acceptable level of service.

**Mitigation Measures – Payment of City Traffic Impact Fee**

Improvements needed to the four significantly impacted intersections to improve operations to acceptable levels of service are included in the City of Salinas’ TIP. The improvements are included in TIP projects #59, #68, #69, and #38, respectively. The first three projects generally consist of a combination two or more of the following improvement types: new through lanes, new turn lanes, reconfiguration of existing lanes, traffic controls (e.g. traffic signals), striping, and sidewalks. TIP project #38 does not reference specific improvements at the Terven (Airport Road)/U.S. Highway 101 interchange, as those improvements are independently defined by Caltrans through a separate facility planning and design process. Most of the improvements at the interchange were implemented as part of the interchange improvement project that was completed several years ago. But like all other TIP projects, costs for the interchange improvements are included in the TIP.

The TIP is described in Section 16.3 of this EIR. Payment of the traffic impact fee at the time building permits are requested for individual projects within the project site will reduce impacts on these intersections to less than cumulatively considerable. Payment of the City’s traffic impact fee prior to issuance of building permits will be required by the City as a condition of approval for all individual projects. No mitigation for impacts on these intersections is required.
For informational purposes, the improvements identified in the TIP for the impacted intersections and the level of service/reduction in delay that would result from the improvements are as follows:

- **SR 68/Blanco Road (#1)** – the significant impact at this intersection would be satisfactorily mitigated by adding a second northbound left-turn lane on SR 68, an improvement included in TIP project #59. With the recommended mitigation measure, the intersection would continue to operate at an unacceptable LOS F. However, the average delay would be 152.6 and 129.1 seconds per vehicle during the AM and PM peak hours, respectively, which is better than under cumulative conditions without the project. This results from improved operations, even though the intersection would continue to operate at an unacceptable LOS F.

- **Blanco Road/Sanborn Road/Abbott Street (#3)** – the significant impact at this intersection could be satisfactorily mitigated by converting the shared through/left-turn lanes to through lanes and adding a second left-turn lane on the north and south Abbott Street approaches, an improvement included in TIP project #68. The proposed mitigation would restore the intersection to an acceptable LOS D during the AM and PM peak hours.

- **Airport Boulevard/Hansen Street (#6)** the significant impact at this intersection could be satisfactorily mitigated by adding a second northbound right-turn lane on Hansen Street, an improvement included in TIP project #69. This improvement would restore the intersection to an acceptable LOS B during the PM peak hour.

- **Terven Avenue/U.S. Highway 101 southbound ramps (#8)** - the significant impact at this intersection could be satisfactorily mitigated by reconstructing the southbound ramps as planned by the ultimate configuration of the Airport Boulevard interchange project. The improvements at the interchange are included in TIP project #38. The planned improvement would restore the intersection to an acceptable LOS C during the AM and PM peak hours.

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15130(a)(3), a project’s contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable when the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact. Salinas’ TIP is designed for this purpose and the payment of traffic impact fees by individual developers constitutes their fair share of improvements that mitigate cumulative impacts at intersections under the City’s control. Contributions to improvements on facilities that are under Caltrans’ control commonly supplement other funding programs (e.g. the TAMC Regional Fee) designed to make the improvements that mitigate cumulative impacts. Therefore, project impacts degrading the performance of the circulation network are less than cumulatively considerable.
Wastewater

Geographic Scope

The geographic scope for assessment of cumulative wastewater impacts is the area within the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA) service area. The MRWPCA serves the cumulative wastewater treatment needs of the approximately 250,000 customers within its service area, which includes Monterey County; the cities of Salinas, Del Rey Oaks, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Sand City, and Seaside; the Boronda County Sanitation District; the Castroville Community Services District; the Marina Coast Water District; and the Moss Landing County Sanitation District. The geographic scope was selected because MRWPCA is the regional wastewater treatment service provider, and significant environmental impacts could result from the construction of any new or expanded facilities that might needed to satisfy cumulative demands for wastewater treatment capacity, including demand from the proposed project.

Cumulative Impacts

Existing wastewater treatment demand from past and existing development within the MRWPCA service area, including the city, is discussed in Section 17.0, Wastewater. Section 17.0 also includes information on projected long-term demand for wastewater treatment capacity based on per capita changes in demand within the MRWPCA service area. That information is repeated here in the context of effects of past, present, and projected future demand for wastewater treatment capacity.

The regional plant has an average dry weather design capacity of 29.6 million gallons per day (mgd) and a peak wet weather design capacity of 75.6 mgd. It currently receives and treats approximately 16 to 17 mgd of wastewater, and therefore, has existing capacity to treat additional flows. A 40-year wastewater flow projection analysis was conducted as part of the planning process for the MRWPCA Groundwater Replenishment Project (GWR Project). The projections were based on review of historical population changes and historical wastewater flow data, which were used to calculate average flow generated per person in units of gallons per capita per day (gpcd) for the years 2000 through 2012. Trends in population in each community were projected forward to the year 2055, and wastewater flow projections were calculated from these trends. These projections anticipated growth associated with the project site.

The amount of wastewater that the plant receives and treats has been decreasing over time. It is projected that wastewater flows to the regional treatment plant will continue to decrease until approximately the year 2030, when per capita flows are projected to reach a minimum of between 17.1 and 19.2 mgd. Based on the “high” and “low” projections of population growth and assuming a minimum of 59.0 gallons per capita per day, flows are projected to increase after 2030 and may range between 22.7 and 24.3 mgd by the year 2055, or 77 percent...
to 82 percent of regional treatment plant design capacity (Brezack & Associates, Inc. 2014). The existing regional treatment plant, therefore, has capacity to treat projected future flows with additional capacity remaining. Projected flows from growth projected in the City of Salinas General Plan, including growth within the project site, are included in the flow projections. Because no new capacity improvements are required over the very long term, no need for construction activity to expand the treatment facility capacity to treat wastewater is required.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

As noted above, the MRWPCA’s projections for long-term treatment capacity needs to include projected flows from new development within the boundaries of its member agencies as reflected in growth projections in their respective long-range development plans (e.g. the general plans of member cities and the County). Consequently, future capacity demand from development of the project site has been included in those projections as its development is part of the City’s long-range growth projections. As no new treatment plant capacity construction is anticipated over the MRWPCA’s long term projection year of 2055, the proposed project’s contribution to potential environmental impacts that might otherwise result from new capacity construction would be less than cumulatively considerable.

**Water Supply**

**Geographic Scope**

The geographic scope for assessment of cumulative water supply impacts is past and present development within the boundary of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. The groundwater basin was selected as it represents a defined boundary for water supply management and has been recognized by state, regional, and local agencies over time as the boundary of a discrete groundwater resource. Please refer to Sections 18.2 and 18.3 of Section 18.0, Water Supply for reference to the boundaries of the groundwater basin and its associated subbasins.

**Cumulative Impacts**

As described in Section 18.0, Water Supply, past and present development within the boundary of the groundwater basin has contributed to groundwater overdraft conditions - a significant cumulative impact. Future development within the basin, including the continuing conversion of grazing lands to vineyards and other uses that increase water consumption, is likely to exacerbate overdraft conditions, including increasing demands for groundwater resulting from a trend towards rangeland being converted to agricultural use. As described in Section 18.2, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), signed into law in 2014, requires that coordinated groundwater supply stabilization programs be implemented for each groundwater basin in the state. The SGMA was amended in the later part of 2015 by Senate Bill 13, Senate Bill 226 and Assembly Bill 1390 to provide clarity to the
original law and guidance on groundwater adjudications. In short, SGMA is landmark legislation that, for the first time in the history of California, requires comprehensive groundwater management, with the mandatory goal of bringing all currently overdrafted basins into sustainable conditions by no later than 2040 or 2042, with five-year increments of progress starting in 2025 and 2027. A process is underway in Monterey County to implement the first component of the SGMA through forming a groundwater sustainability agency that would be responsible for preparing groundwater sustainability plans. Thus, although cumulative impacts related to water supply are cumulatively significant, SGMA holds out hope that groundwater conditions in the region will stabilize and improve in the foreseeable future.

**Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts**

The proposed project would convert vacant fallow land and actively cultivated agricultural land to urban use. The net result is a projected net increase of 29.71 AFY of groundwater in storage. That is, the proposed project would result in less demand for groundwater than the demand from the existing agricultural operations located within a portion of the site. Though the proposed project represents a long-term commitment to continued use of groundwater supply, it would have a net beneficial cumulative effect by reducing the magnitude of groundwater overdraft now occurring within the groundwater basin. Please refer to Section 18.4 for more information.
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21.0

Significant Unavoidable Impacts

This section of the EIR discusses significant and unavoidable impacts which would result from the proposed project.

21.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

A significant adverse unavoidable environmental impact is a significant adverse impact that cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures. CEQA Guidelines section 15093 requires that a lead agency decision-making body make findings of overriding considerations for unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts before approving a project.

CEQA Guidelines section 15093(a) requires the decision-making body to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the decision-making body concludes, based on substantial evidence, that specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a project outweigh the project’s significant unavoidable environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered “acceptable.” CEQA Guidelines section 15093(b) states that when the lead agency approves a project which will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency decision-maker shall state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.

21.2 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Based on the environmental analysis provided in this EIR, most of the significant impacts associated with the proposed project can be reduced to a level of insignificance through the implementation of mitigation measures presented in this EIR. However, the project would result in significant unavoidable impacts to agricultural resources as summarized below.
Agricultural Resources

The project site includes land that is classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland as mapped by the FMMP. The proposed project would convert these areas defined as “Farmland” to non-agricultural use. This is considered a significant adverse environmental impact. Mitigation has been identified within this EIR which requires developers of the project contribute to dedicate agricultural to preserve agricultural land. Implementation of this mitigation measure would partially mitigate the impact by requiring developers to permanently preserve other important farmland; however, the mitigation measure would not reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, even with implementation of this mitigation measure, the impact would be significant and unavoidable. A statement of overriding considerations would be required.

The proposed project contribution to cumulative impacts from conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use is considered to be cumulatively considerable and cumulatively significant and unavoidable. This conclusion is based on the high value of productive farmland to the City and to the County.
22.0

Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

22.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(c) requires that EIRs for certain kinds of projects must address any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed projects. Among these kinds of projects, according to Guidelines section 15127, are those involving a public agency’s adoption, amendment, or enactment of a plan, policy, or ordinance. Also included are projects involving “[t]he adoption by a Local Agency Formation Commission [LAFCO] of a resolution making determinations.” Because the proposed project includes a general plan amendment, and because the Monterey County LAFCO must approve the annexation of the project site into the city, this section of the EIR defines and discusses significant irreversible environmental changes associated with the proposed project.

The use of non-renewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible, since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse in the future unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as a highway improvement that provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

22.2 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The proposed project could result in construction of up to 461,230 square feet of commercial and industrial buildings, new circulation infrastructure, and utility infrastructure needed to support the new development.

Conversion of Agricultural Land

The proposed project would result in conversion of approximately 33.12 acres of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland to non-agricultural use. For all practical purposes, this conversion would be irreversible.
Change in Land Use Pattern

The proposed project would result in development of urban land uses and an expanded urban land use pattern that is not likely to be reversed in the foreseeable future. The arrangement of roads, infrastructure, and developed land uses would be irreversible changes.

Commitment of Natural Resources and Energy

Development of the project site would result in the irreversible commitment of construction materials and non-renewable energy resources. Non-renewable and slowly renewable construction materials may include, but are not limited to, the following: lumber and other forest products; sand and gravel; asphalt; petrochemical construction materials; steel; copper; lead and other metals; and water; etc. Energy, fossil fuels, oils, and natural gas would be irreversibly committed during construction. These same resources would be used for vehicles and heating/cooling equipment during operations. The continued use of these resources associated with project operations represents a potential long-term obligation. The energy consumed in developing and maintaining new development for urban use may be considered a permanent investment. The commitment of resources required for the construction and operation of new development would limit the availability of such resources for future generations or for other uses.

Commitment of Groundwater to Urban Uses

The proposed project would commit the water purveyor, Cal Water, to long-term delivery of groundwater to support urban uses. While the conversion of agricultural uses to urban use would have a net positive effect on groundwater in storage, the commitment of groundwater supply to an urban use generally is an irreversible change. Unlike agricultural water demand, which can be eliminated by fallowing the land, an urban use creates “hard” demand for water that cannot reasonably be reversed.
23.0 Growth Inducement

23.1 CEQA Requirements

Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(5) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) require a discussion in the EIR of the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed project. The EIR must discuss the ways in which the project may directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth or additional housing in the surrounding environment, remove obstacles to growth, tax existing community services facilities, or encourage or facilitate other activities that cause significant environmental effects, either individually or cumulatively. Direct growth-inducing impacts result when the development associated with a project directly induces population growth or the construction of other development within the same geographic area. The analysis of potential growth-inducing impacts includes a determination of whether a project would remove physical obstacles to population growth. This often occurs with the extension of infrastructure facilities that can provide services to new development. In addition to direct growth-inducing impacts, an EIR must also discuss growth-inducing effects that will result indirectly from the project, by serving as catalysts for future unrelated development in an area. Development of public institutions and the introduction of employment opportunities within the same geographic area are examples of projects that may result in growth-inducing impacts.

The discussion of growth-inducing effects should not assume that growth is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment. CEQA requires an EIR to include a discussion of the ways in which the proposed project could foster growth.

23.2 Growth Inducement Impact Analysis

The project site lies at the transition between developed areas within the city limits that border the site on three sides, and the broad expanse of agricultural lands south of the site. The project site contains actively farmed agricultural land and is located adjacent to actively farmed agricultural land to the south. The project site is also bordered by developed uses within the City that include hotels and commercial uses to the north, industrial uses to the west on the opposite side of U.S. Highway 101, and industrial and office uses located within the boundary of the Salinas Municipal Airport on the east. The active airport facilities themselves lay further east beyond the industrial and office uses.
Urban development of the project site has been envisioned by the City of Salinas at least since the 2002 City of Salinas General Plan was adopted. This is reflected in the fact that the project site is within a Future Growth Area and also within the sphere of influence as designated in the general plan. Similarly, land contiguous to the project site on the south is also within the Future Growth Area and the sphere of influence. Future Growth Areas represent locations to which the City intends to direct new urban development in a manner that balances urban infill with urban city expansion to meet housing and employment needs. The sphere of influence boundary includes lands outside of, but adjacent to, the current city limit into which the City anticipates it would grow over time.

The proposed project includes annexation of the approximately 64-acre project site, a portion of which would be developed with urban uses. The project site would be developed consistent with the land use designations defined in the general plan, with the exception that the applicant is requesting the General Industrial land use designation for a 2.19-acre portion of the project site be amended to Retail. This land use designation change is being requested to enable development of the hotel component of the proposed project. This requested change does not alter the City vision of urban growth already anticipated for the project site.

Development of the project site represents a logical expansion of City growth consistent with the general plan as indicated by its inclusion in a Future Growth Area and the sphere of influence. The proposed project would generate approximately 680 new jobs, which is an important function of development within the subject Future Growth Area. Employment growth resulting from its development has already been assumed as part of the general plan vision for generating jobs to meet the needs of the City’s existing and growing population. The proposed project would also extend utilities and a roadway (Roy Diaz Street) from their current termini within the city limits through the project site to the southern boundary of the project site. The utilities and roadway extensions could potentially be a catalyst for developing the balance of the Future Growth Area located to the south. Such growth has already been anticipated by the City of Salinas given the inclusion of this area in the Future Growth Area and the sphere of influence. The impacts of that growth have also already been considered in the City of Salinas General Plan EIR. The proposed project would not induce substantial population growth because it does not include new housing. The City expects that existing and planned residential development within the larger geographic region is more than sufficient to house the work force needed for the proposed project. No additional housing, beyond what is already being planned, would be needed.

The proposed project’s potential to be growth-inducing arises from its employment generation and proposed extension of infrastructure. The proposed project would not have substantial growth-inducing effects that have not already been contemplated by the City. The City has already planned for and evaluated the environmental effects of these changes in the general plan and general plan EIR, respectively.
24.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(a) requires a description of a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project, or to the location of the project, which could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. It also requires an evaluation of the comparative merits of the alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project, but must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision-making and public participation. Nor need an EIR include any action alternatives inconsistent with the lead agency’s fundamental underlying purpose in proposing a project. (In re Bay-Delta Programmatic Environmental Impact Report Coordinated Proceedings (2008) 43 Cal.4th 1143, 1166.)

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(b) further requires that the discussion of alternatives focus on those alternatives capable of eliminating any significant adverse environmental impacts or reducing them to a level of insignificance, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly. The EIR must present enough information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis and comparison with the proposed project. If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative shall be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(e) requires that a “no project” alternative be evaluated along with its impacts. “The ‘no project’ analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published, … as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.” Section 15126.6(e) also provides that, if the “no project” alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, then the EIR shall identify an environmentally superior alternative amongst the remaining alternatives.
Project Objectives

The project is being proposed to meet a range of City and applicant objectives. The underlying purpose of the project is to develop the project site consistent with goals, policies, and objectives as outlined in the general plan and municipal code, including the City’s Airport Overlay District Regulations, as a means to facilitate economic development.

The objectives have guided the land use plan, circulation plan, design principles, development regulations and development standards included in the specific plan. The objectives are as follows:

- Provide jobs to support the current and future population of the City of Salinas;
- Annex a portion of the Salinas Airport West Future Growth Area described in the general plan to provide a catalyst for new economic development;
- Generate tax revenues to the City from new retail and industrial development within the project site;
- Create a regional travel center by providing a truck and auto fuel dispensing area, mechanic’s building, convenience store, fast-food restaurant, and hotel;
- Provide trucks traveling on U.S. Highway 101 and within the local Salinas industrial area greater options for convenient refueling, light vehicle maintenance, resting, overnight accommodations, food services, and other related services;
- Provide for overflow overnight truck parking demand for adjacent existing motels;
- Reduce existing passenger, light truck and heavy truck trips on local streets by providing travel related services easily accessible to motorists on U.S. Highway 101 that divert trips from and improve circulation conditions on local roadways; and
- Consider the visual sensitivity of the site as viewed from U.S. Highway 101 as an interim southern gateway to the City by providing appropriate development design.

Proposed Project Significant Unavoidable Effects

With one exception, all of the significant environmental effects of the proposed project can be mitigated to a less than significant level with implementation of mitigation measures presented in this EIR or adherence to regulations discussed within this EIR that apply to the proposed project. The exception is loss of important farmland. Therefore, alternatives that avoid or substantially lessen this impact should be considered.

Important Farmland

The proposed project would have significant, adverse, and unavoidable impacts to 33.04 acres of on-site important farmland (24.67 acres of Prime Farmland, 5.73 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 2.64 acres of Unique Farmland). However, the Salinas City
Council acknowledged this loss of important farmland when it designated the project site for General Industrial uses in the 2002 City of Salinas General Plan and adopted a statement of overriding considerations, finding that the benefits of developing the site with General Industrial uses outweighed the significant and unavoidable loss of important farmland. Any developed, urban use of the project site would result in the loss of important farmland.

24.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED, BUT REJECTED

Alternative Locations

Alternative locations were considered, as the proposed project at an appropriate alternative location has potential to meet most, if not all, of the basic project objectives. However, for an alternative location to be appropriate, it must be highly visible and accessible from U.S. Highway 101. Undeveloped areas along the highway, both within and outside of the city limits were considered because they largely exhibit these characteristics. There are undeveloped parcels immediately adjacent to the highway in the Carr Lake area within the city limits. There are also undeveloped parcels in the Espinosa Road/Russell Road area that are outside of, but adjacent to, the Salinas sphere of influence. These areas are identified in Figure 24-1, Alternative Locations Considered but Rejected. Both areas are currently in agricultural production and are designated prime farmland on the Monterey County Important Farmland Map (California Department of Conservation 2014). Additionally, the Carr Lake area has a general plan land use designation of Park and the properties north of the city limits are shown as having a land use designation of Agricultural in the general plan. These alternative locations were not considered further for the following reasons:

- Both alternative locations would result in the loss of important farmland and therefore, would neither avoid, substantially lessen, nor lessen to any degree, the proposed project’s effect on the loss of important farmland.
- The project site has a general plan designation of General Industrial. It has already been considered appropriate for development by the City of Salinas. The Carr Lake location has a general plan land use designations of Park and the Espinosa Road/Russell Road locations are designated Agricultural and have not been considered for urban development. Further, the Espinosa Road/Russell Road sites are not within the Salinas sphere of influence. Consequently, the sphere of influence would need to be amended or development would need to occur under the jurisdiction of Monterey County. Therefore, the project site is the most appropriate location in the Salinas vicinity for the proposed project.
- The project site has the roadway infrastructure in place to serve the project. An aerial photographic review of the alternative locations indicates that the alternative locations would likely require significant new roadway infrastructure.
Alternative Land Uses

Alternative land uses such as residential, retail, office, general commercial/light industrial, and business park, and open space were considered. Residential uses were not considered further due to the sensitivity of residential uses to noise associated with airport operations and U.S. Highway 101, and the fact that residential use would not meet the basic project objectives. Locating residences near a major highway would also subject residents to ongoing air pollution from the vehicles using the highway. Similarly, an open space use was not considered further because it would not meet the basic project objectives.

Retail, office, general commercial/light industrial, and business park uses were not considered further because development consistent with these uses would also result in significant, adverse, and unavoidable impacts to important farmlands. Therefore, these alternative uses would neither avoid nor substantially lessen the proposed project’s impact from loss of important farmland.

Hotel Only Project

A 67-room, 50,371 square foot hotel on 2.19 acres was considered as an alternative. This alternative would substantially reduce most if not all of the proposed project’s environmental impacts. However, while a hotel only project would only minimally meet the basic project objectives by providing some jobs and tax generation, it would not meet most of the basic project objectives.

24.3 Alternatives Considered

The following alternatives to the project are considered:

1. Alternative 1: No Project Alternative;
2. Alternative 2: Other Project Consistent with City General Plan Land Use Designation;
3. Reduced Project (Parcel 1-Hotel and Parcel 2–Travel Center);
4. Reduced Project (Parcel 1-Hotel, Parcel 2–Travel Center, and Parcel 3–General Industrial); and
5. Reduced Project (Parcel 2 Only–Travel Center).

Each of these alternatives is described below, followed by an analysis of how each alternative may reduce impacts associated with the proposed project.
**Alternative Locations Considered but Rejected**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Land Use Designation</th>
<th>Important Farmland Designation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Site</td>
<td>General Industrial</td>
<td>Prime, Statewide Importance, Unique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carr Lake</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Prime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North of City</td>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>Prime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Google Earth, 2017

Figure 24-1

Salinas Travel Center EIR
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Alternative 1: No Project Alternative

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6 (e) requires the “no project” alternative be evaluated along with its impacts. The “no project” alternative analysis must discuss the existing conditions, as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.

For purposes of identifying the no project alternative here, “current plans” are Monterey County’s General Plan and zoning designations for the property, which is currently within the unincorporated County. The proposed project could only go forward if the Monterey County LAFCO approves its annexation to the City, at which time the City’s general plan and zoning will govern the property. The Monterey County 2010 General Plan designates the project site as Farmlands 40 acre minimum combined with an Urban Reserve designation. The zoning designations of the project site are Farmlands (F), 40 acre minimum (40) combined with Urban Reserve (UR).

The purpose of the Farmlands (F) zoning district is to “preserve and enhance the use of the prime, productive and unique farmlands in the County of Monterey while also providing opportunity to establish necessary support facilities for those agricultural uses” (as identified in Title 21: Chapter 21.20 of the County Municipal Code). The purpose of the Urban Reserve (UR) zoning district is to “identify those areas shown in the Monterey County General Plan and adopted area plans which should be annexed and developed in a phased manner as part of an incorporated city to ensure the effective provision of urban services” (as identified in Title 21: Chapter 21.50 of the County Municipal Code).

Because the County contemplates ongoing agricultural uses on the project site until such time as the property is annexed into the City, the “no project” alternative assumes no development would occur and the project site would remain in its existing conditions. The portion of the project site in agricultural production would remain in agricultural production, and the portion of the project that is vacant land, would remain vacant land, although there is nothing to preclude the property owners from returning the vacant land to its historic agricultural use.

Project Objectives

This alternative does not meet any of the basic project objectives.

Aesthetics

This alternative would not result in any visual impacts. Therefore, this alternative avoids the less than significant aesthetic or visual impacts associated with the proposed project. The alternative is superior to the proposed project from an aesthetic impact perspective.
Agricultural Resources
This alternative would not result in any impacts to agricultural resources. Therefore, this alternative avoids the proposed project’s agricultural resources impacts, including the significant, adverse, and unavoidable loss of important farmland associated with the proposed project. The alternative is superior to the proposed project from an agricultural resources impact perspective.

Air Quality
This alternative would not result in any impacts to air quality above those occurring with existing on-site farming operations. Therefore, this alternative avoids the air quality impacts of the proposed project, which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. The alternative is superior to the proposed project from an air quality impact perspective.

Biological Resources
This alternative would not result in any impacts to biological resources. Therefore, this alternative avoids the actual and potential biological resources impacts of the proposed project, which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a biological resources impact perspective.

Cultural Resources
This alternative would not result in any potential impacts to cultural resources. Therefore, this alternative avoids the potential cultural resources impacts of the proposed project, which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a cultural resources impact perspective.

Geology and Soils
As described in Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, the California Supreme Court held in the 2015 “California Building Industrial Association (CBIA)” case that agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental hazards or adverse conditions on a project’s future users or residents, except where a proposed project risks exacerbating those existing environmental hazards or conditions, in which case agencies should evaluate how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions. Regardless, this alternative would not result in a geology or soils impacts in addition to those currently occurring due to on-site farming operations. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a geology and soils impact perspective.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions
This alternative would not result in any GHG emissions impacts in addition to those currently occurring due to on-site farming operations. Therefore, this alternative avoids the project GHG emissions impacts. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a GHG emissions impact perspective.
Hazards and Hazardous Materials

This alternative would not result in any impacts associated with hazardous materials in addition to the potential for hazardous materials conditions associated with existing on-site farming operations. Therefore, this alternative avoids the potential hazards and hazardous material impacts of the proposed project, which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. The alternative is superior to the proposed project from a hazards and hazardous materials impact perspective.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Surface Water Quantity/Flooding and Exposure to Flood Hazards

This alternative would not result in any potential flooding impacts. Therefore, this alternative avoids the potential flooding impacts of the proposed project, which were determined to be less than significant. The alternative is superior to the proposed project from a flooding perspective.

Surface Water Quality (Soil Erosion and Pollutants)

This alternative would not result in any urban development impacts associated with storm water quality. Existing agricultural production would continue, with soil erosion/sediment and agricultural chemicals in agricultural run-off continuing to be a source of water quality degradation. This alternative avoids the surface water quantity and quality impacts of the proposed project, which were determined to be less than significant, but does not eliminate the existing agricultural source of water quality degradation. Therefore, this alternative is considered equal to the proposed project from a surface water quality impact perspective.

Noise

This alternative would not result in any noise impacts above those occurring with existing on-site farming operations. Therefore, this alternative avoids the noise impacts of the proposed project, which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a noise impact perspective.

Police and Fire Protection

This alternative would not result in any impacts associated with the provision of new or expanded public service facilities. However, although the proposed project would require public services, the project would not result in impacts to public services that would require new or expanded public services facilities. Therefore, neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in physical impacts from construction of public services facilities. The alternative is equal to the proposed project from a public services perspective.
Transportation
This alternative would not result in any transportation impacts above those occurring with existing on-site farming operations. Therefore, this alternative avoids the transportation impacts of the proposed project, which were determined to be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. The alternative is superior to the proposed project from a transportation impacts perspective.

Wastewater
This alternative would not result in any impacts associated with wastewater. Therefore, this alternative avoids the environmental impacts of constructing new wastewater treatment capacity, which were determined to be less than significant. The alternative is superior to the proposed project from a wastewater generation perspective.

Water Supply
This alternative would result in the continued pumping of groundwater for agricultural irrigation purposes. Relative to the agricultural baseline use, the proposed project would reduce groundwater pumping by approximately 29.71 AFY, thereby resulting in a beneficial impact to the groundwater basin. Therefore, this alternative would neither avoid nor substantially lessen the proposed project’s effect on water supply, and would actually result in a greater impact than would the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project is superior to this alternative from a water supply perspective.

Alternative 2: Other Project Consistent with City General Plan
This alternative investigates what could be reasonably expected to occur on the project site in the reasonably foreseeable future if the proposed project were not approved, but the property is annexed into the City and brought under City jurisdiction, as contemplated in both the City of Salinas General Plan and the Monterey County General Plan. The Monterey County General Plan places an Urban Reserve overly on top of a “Farmlands 40” designation. It must be noted, however, that with the exception of the proposed general plan amendment to change the General Industrial land use designation for 2.19 acres of the project site to Retail to accommodate the proposed highway oriented hotel, the proposed project is consistent with the general plan from a land use perspective.

This alternative assumes the project site would be developed with uses consistent with the Salinas General Plan land use designation of General Industrial. The general plan allows a maximum FAR/net acre of 0.5. According to the general plan (Cotton/Bridges/Associates 2002a, p. LU-35), the General Industrial land use designation provides for uses that often create nuisances that cannot readily be mitigated and which are desirably separated from other uses. Uses appropriate within this designation including food processing, packing,
truck, container manufacturing, and similar uses. Food processing is not considered for two reasons. First, significant existing development capacity for new agricultural product processing uses is already available and entitled via an approved specific plan within the Salinas-Ag Industrial Center site south of the project site and west of the highway. The specific plan for that project places significant emphasis to capacity to accommodate “Major Agricultural Processing” uses. Providing additional capacity for such uses at the project site may not be warranted at this time. Second, the project site is not likely of sufficient size or configuration to support major agricultural processing facilities.

Therefore, this alternative assumes agricultural industrial uses, which may include, but not be limited to packing, trucking, container manufacturing, and similar agricultural support uses. The project site includes 34 buildable acres. The uses may include, but not be limited to:

- Businesses engaged in all, or portions of, the steps required for the production, assembly and/or integration of commodities, supplies, tools, equipment, vehicles, etc. Such business may be focused on single or intermediate steps in a larger process such as cooling, packing, manufacturing, or part fabrication;

- Uses related to energy, pharmaceutical products, and industrial goods that support and/or sustain the agricultural industry; and

- Facilities that are engaged in providing direct support services to the agricultural industry, such as research, innovation, design, development, testing, management, and sales. Such businesses could also include printers, vehicle repair services, equipment sale/rental, laboratories, educational institutions, or research and development facilities.

With a FAR of 0.5, a maximum of 740,520 square feet of building development could be permitted on the site. However, for purposes of this analysis, 461,230 square feet is used, to be consistent with that proposed by the project, so the impacts of this alternative are not overstated. See Table 4-1, Proposed/Potential Building Capacity in this draft EIR.

**Project Objectives**

This alternative does not meet the following project objectives:

- Create a regional travel center by providing a truck and auto fuel dispensing area, mechanic’s building, convenience store, fast-food restaurant, and hotel;

- Provide trucks traveling on U.S. Highway 101 and within the local Salinas industrial area greater options for convenient refueling, light vehicle maintenance, resting, overnight accommodations, food services, and other related services;

- Provide for overflow overnight truck parking demand for adjacent existing motels; and

- Reduce existing passenger, light truck and heavy truck trips on local streets by providing travel related services easily accessible to motorists on U.S. Highway 101 that divert trips from and improve circulation conditions on local roadways.
Aesthetics
This alternative would result development of the project site under development standards that are the same as those for the proposed project, except where standards are modified by the proposed specific plan. Consequently, the scale, height, intensity, and lighting needs of development under this alternative would be similar to those of the proposed project. This alternative would have aesthetic impacts that are similar to the proposed project, which are less than significant. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from an aesthetics perspective.

Agricultural Resources
This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to the proposed project, which is the conversion of 24.89 acres of Prime Farmland, 5.73 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 2.50 acres of Unique Farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, this alternative would not avoid the significant, adverse, and unavoidable loss of important farmland associated with the proposed project. Potential for conflicts with on-going adjacent agricultural uses would be of similar character as for the proposed project. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from an agricultural resources perspective.

Air Quality
This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. The main sources of criteria pollutants for the proposed project include vehicles and construction (grading) activities. These would likely have the same primary sources of emissions for this alternative. As described in the Transportation section below for this alternative, it is assumed that this alternative and the proposed project would generate similar traffic volumes (which likely translates into similar vehicle miles traveled) such that the main sources of criteria air emissions would be similar. This alternative would also result in grading at the same scale and intensity as the proposed project such that criteria particulate emissions from construction activities would be similar. Therefore, criteria air emissions for this alternative are assumed to be similar to those of the proposed project, with both being less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from an air quality perspective.

Biological Resources
This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative would have potential biological resources impacts similar to those of the proposed project, which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from a biological resources impacts perspective.
Cultural Resources

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. Therefore, potential cultural resources impacts of this alternative would be similar to those of the proposed project, both of which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from a cultural resources perspective.

Geology and Soils

As described in Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, the California Supreme Court held in the 2015 “CBIA” case that agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental hazards or adverse conditions on a project’s future users or residents, except where a proposed project risks exacerbating those existing environmental hazards or conditions, in which case agencies should evaluate how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions. Prior to the CBIA case, CEQA analyses of potential geology and soils impacts of a project typically focused on existing geologic hazards that have potential to cause risk to public health and safety. While Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, includes these analyses, some of them are included only for informational purposes and the information in them is to be considered outside the purview of CEQA. Other parts of the analysis are required by CEQA and are included for that reason. The analysis below takes the same approach.

Like the proposed project, this alternative would have the potential to result in hazards from slope instability as it could exacerbate slope instability conditions along the southern boundary of parcel 4 if in fact such conditions exist. This would be determined through geotechnical analysis required as a condition of approval as part of any future development project proposed within parcel 4. This alternative would also have the same potential to cause soil erosion and related water quality impacts, but would be subject to the same regulations as the proposed project that reduce this impact to less than significant. Potential slope stability hazard and erosion impacts of this alternative would be similar to those of the proposed project, both of which are less than significant. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from a geology and soils perspective.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. The main sources of GHGs for the proposed project are vehicles (mobile sources) and energy consumption, with mobile sources constituting about two-thirds of total emissions. These would likely have the same primary sources of GHG emissions for this alternative. As described in the Transportation section below for this alternative, it is assumed that this
alternative and the proposed project would generate similar traffic volumes (and similar vehicle miles traveled) such that mobile source GHG emissions volumes would be similar. Energy demand from this alternative could be similar to that of the proposed project, though this comparison is considered somewhat speculative given the range of potential end uses for this alternative and for parcels 3 and 4 of the proposed project and their respective energy demand profiles. Nevertheless, GHG emissions for this alternative are assumed to be similar to those of the proposed project given the substantial influence of mobile source GHG emissions on the emissions profile of each. The impacts of each would be less than significant with mitigation requiring a GHG reduction plan and measures to reduce GHG emissions. This alternative is considered to be equal to the proposed project from a GHG perspective.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. This alternative includes development of industrial uses across the entire project site. These uses have potential to use, store, and dispose of hazardous materials in a manner similar to those of future industrial uses on parcels 3 and 4. Relative to the proposed hotel use on parcel 1, industrial uses may have a higher potential to use and handle hazardous materials. The proposed travel center on parcel 2 will require storage of a significant volume of hazardous materials (fuels), and it is possible that risks from this use could be higher than many types of other general industrial end uses. This alternative would have impacts similar to those of the proposed project regarding potential public safety risks from exposure to agricultural chemical residues and aerially-deposited lead.

Having designated the project site as General Industrial in the 2002 City of Salinas General Plan, the City considered the compatibility of industrial uses at the site with airport operations at that time. Development under this alternative must also be consistent with the City’s municipal code Airport Overlay District development regulations, and with other municipal code standards regarding airport/development land use compatibility. These include regulations related to lighting, glare, building and roof reflectivity, height limitations on obstructions (such as buildings), and noise. Therefore, future industrial development under this alternative would be subject to the same regulators requirements designed to minimize potential impacts regarding airport operations.

On balance, this alternative is assumed to have potential impacts similar to those of the proposed project, which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from a hazards and hazardous materials perspective.
Hydrology and Water Quality

Surface Water Quantity/Flooding and Exposure to Flood Hazards

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. As it would result in a similar character of development, surface water runoff volumes would be similar to those of the proposed project and would have to be managed subject to the same regulations (e.g. the City’s SWDS) as the proposed project, such that no increase in the rate or volume of storm water discharge from the site relative to pre-existing conditions is permitted. This alternative would also be subject to the same degree of risk from flood hazards in a small portion of parcel 4 as would the proposed project.

This alternative is assumed to have flood hazards impacts similar to those of the proposed project, which are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from a flood hazard perspective.

Surface Water Quality (Soil Erosion and Pollutants)

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. This alternative results in risks to surface water quality similar to those of the proposed project because the alternative would result in urban development of a character similar to that of the proposed project. Storm water runoff from the alternative must be managed subject to the same regulations and standards as would runoff from the proposed project, both during construction and during operations. Therefore, this alternative would have water quality impacts similar to those of the proposed project, which were determined to be less than significant. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from flood hazard and surface water quality perspectives.

Noise

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. As described in the Transportation section below for this alternative, it is assumed that this alternative and the proposed project would generate similar traffic volumes, such that traffic noise increases from traffic would be similar if it assumed that traffic distribution is also similar.

This alternative may have slightly greater potential to impact existing uses adjacent to the site on the north (e.g. the Motel 6) if alternative development adjacent to the hotel is a greater source of noise than the proposed on-site hotel use. This alternative has potential to substantially lessen a noise impact resulting from a land use incompatibility associated with the proposed project. The noise impact on travel center uses within parcel 2 from industrial operations on parcels 3 and 4 is a significant mitigatable impact associated with the proposed
project. With this alternative, an industrial use on parcel 2 would be more compatible with noise generated by industrial uses on parcel 3 and 4 such that the impact for the proposed project could be substantially lessened.

Given this alternative’s potential to substantially lessen a significant mitigatable impact of the proposed project, it is considered to be superior to the proposed project from a noise perspective.

**Police and Fire Protection**

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. The character of development for this alternative would be similar to that of the proposed project, except for the hotel included in the proposed project. Consequently, demand levels for police and fire service would be similar to those of the proposed project. Neither the proposed project nor this alternative would result in the need to construct new police or fire service facilities; neither would have environmental impacts from such construction. This alternative is equal to the proposed project from a police and fire protection services perspective.

**Transportation**

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. On balance, it is assumed that traffic volumes generated by this alternative would be lower than those for the hotel and travel center components of the proposed project. Figure 16.6, Traffic Generation, shows that when combined, the travel center, tire store, and hotel uses would generate approximately 5,739 daily trips (5,077 + 64 + 598) without deductions for internal trip capture and diverted link trips. The light industrial trip generation rate (7.21 trips/1,000 square feet) was used in the TIA to estimate trip volumes from parcels 3 and 4. If that rate is applied to the approximately 349,500 square feet of industrial development capacity within the 16.05 acres that comprise parcels 1 and 2, daily total trip volume from this alternative would be about 2,520 trips per day, less than half of the proposed project volume for parcels 1 and 2. However, internal trip capture and diverted link trips that apply to the hotel and travel center components of the proposed project would be substantially lower for this alternative. The reductions for the proposed project total about 3,392 trips per day (406 + 221 + 2,765) as shown in Figure 16-6. However, this alternative would not benefit from the internal trip reductions (406 + 221) or the same volume of diverted linked trips (2,765), as does the proposed project. Therefore, the total traffic volumes for this alternative could be roughly equivalent to or greater than those of the proposed project.

Based on a trip volume comparison, this alternative and the proposed project would likely have similar impacts on the affected road network. Impacts related to alternative transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, and transit) would also be similar and less than
significant or less than significant with mitigation measures. This alternative is considered to be equal to or possibly worse than the proposed project from a transportation impacts perspective.

**Wastewater**

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. Wastewater generation for non-residential uses in the city is assumed to be equivalent to 90 percent of the water demand for these types of uses. Based on the discussion of water supply below, this alternative would result in less wastewater generation relative to the proposed project. However, neither this alternative, nor the proposed project would result in the need to construct wastewater treatment capacity and neither would have significant impacts related to such construction. This alternative would not substantially lessen or avoid a significant impact and is equal to the proposed project from a wastewater perspective.

**Water Supply**

This alternative would result in development of the project site at an intensity of development and land coverage that is similar to that of the proposed project. The proposed project gross water demand for developed uses (demand based on square footage of buildings) is projected at 62.79 AFY. Gross water demand for this alternative would be approximately 47.43 AFY. This estimate is based on application of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District water demand factor for industrial uses (refer back to Table 18-2 for more information) applied to the 461,230 square feet of industrial building capacity for this alternative. Landscape demand is assumed to be the same for both the proposed project and this alternative. The proposed project has a beneficial impact on water supply. Therefore, this alternative is has a greater beneficial effect from a water supply perspective as it would retain more groundwater in storage than would the proposed project, thereby reducing groundwater overdraft conditions in the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin to a greater degree than the proposed project.

**Alternative 3: Reduced Project Size (Parcel 1–Hotel and Parcel 2–Travel Center Only)**

**Alternative Description**

This alternative reduces the size of the project site and the building capacity associated with the proposed project by eliminating parcels 3 and 4 and the development capacity of 390,510 square feet of building capacity for General Industrial end uses assumed for these parcels. It would include a specific plan, and annexation and prezoning of parcels 1 and 2 only, which consist of 16.05 acres; development on the remaining 17.93 acres would be eliminated. This alternative would include the 70,720 square feet of building included for the proposed hotel (50,371 square feet) and the proposed travel center (20,349 square feet). See the project description for parcels 1 and 2 in Section 4.0, Project Description. Additionally, this
alternative would include some action on the City’s part to ensure parcels 3 and 4 are not developed. Actions could include a general plan amendment to remove the parcels from the city’s sphere of influence and redesignate the parcels Agriculture or placing the two parcels into a conservation easement.

**Project Objectives**

This alternative would achieve the following objectives of the proposed project, but to a lesser degree than the proposed project:

- Provide jobs to support the current and future population of the City of Salinas;
- Annex a portion of the Salinas Airport West Future Growth Area described in the general plan to provide a catalyst for new economic development; and
- Generate tax revenues to the City from new retail and industrial development within the project site.

This objective would meet the remaining objectives of the proposed project.

**Aesthetics**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 390,510 square feet of industrial use, this alternative significantly reduces the physical footprint of development and reduces the change in visual conditions that would result from the proposed project. Approximately 18 acres of existing agricultural land, which is considered a valuable visual resource, would be retained. The need for lighting which would contribute to sky glow would be reduced. The potential for lighting and glare from this alternative to adversely affect airport operations would be lessened. Even so, both the proposed project and this alternative would have less-than-significant aesthetic impacts. With reduced aesthetics effects, this alternative is superior to the proposed project.

**Agricultural Resources**

This alternative would avoid conversion of approximately 18 acres of important farmland located within parcels 3 and 4. This alternative would substantially lessen the significant and unavoidable impact of the proposed project wherein a total of 33.12 acres of important farmland would be converted to urban use. This alternative would not substantially lessen potential land use conflicts with on-going agricultural operations to the south of parcels 3 and 4, as the same types of conflicts would be possible between developments on parcels 1 and 2 and on-going agricultural operations on parcels 3 and 4. While both the proposed project and this alternative would result in significant unavoidable impacts from conversion of important farmland, by substantially lessening conversion of important farmland to non-agricultural use, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from an agricultural resources perspective.
Air Quality
This alternative results in a significant reduction in vehicle trip numbers and vehicle miles traveled as described in the Transportation discussion for this alternative. This alternative also requires grading of approximately 18 fewer acres of land. Transportation is a substantial source of criteria air emissions. This alternative reduces vehicle trip volume by about 52 percent relative to the proposed project as described in the Transportation section below. By substantially reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, this alternative would substantially reduce the volume of criteria air emissions relative to the proposed project. By substantially reducing grading and earth movement, this alternative substantially lessens potential for particulate emissions relative to the proposed project. While the impacts of both the proposed project and this alternative would be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from an air quality perspective.

Biological Resources
This alternative results in approximately 18 acres of agricultural land being retained rather than converted to urban use. The habitat value of agricultural land for most wildlife species is generally low, but better than urban uses. Nevertheless, similar to the proposed project, impacts of this alternative would be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation owing to impacts associated with conversion of the balance of the project site to urban use. Because this alternative avoids the potential to affect biological resources within the nearly 18 acres that would remain undeveloped, this alternative substantially lessens the significant, but mitigatable impacts associated with special-status plants and wildlife and is superior to the proposed project from a biological resources perspective.

Cultural Resources
This alternative results in approximately 18 acres of agricultural land being retained rather than converted to urban use. Construction activities associated with urban development are considered to have higher potential to significantly impact subsurface historical resources and unique archaeological resources, if either are present, than are agricultural production activities. The cultural resources impacts of the proposed project and this alternative would be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation measures. Because this alternative avoids the potential to affect historical resources and unique archaeological resources if either are present within the 18 acres that would remain undeveloped, this alternative substantially lessens the significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project and is superior to the proposed project from a cultural resources perspective.

Geology and Soils
As described in Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, the California Supreme Court held in the 2015 “CBIA” case that agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the
impact of existing environmental hazards or adverse conditions on a project’s future users or residents, except where a proposed project risks exacerbating those existing environmental hazards or conditions, in which case agencies should evaluate how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions. Prior to the CBIA case, CEQA analyses of potential geology and soils impacts of a project typically focused on existing geologic hazards that have potential to cause risk to public health and safety. While Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, includes these analyses, some of them are included only for informational purposes and the information in them is to be considered outside the purview of CEQA. Other parts of the analysis are required by CEQA and are included for that reason. The analysis below takes the same approach.

This alternative would avoid the less-than-significant impact of the proposed project from potential slope stability hazard conditions along the southern boundary of parcel 4.

This alternative would have the same less-than-significant impacts regarding soil erosion as would the proposed project, as both must conform to uniform regulations designed to reduce soil erosion.

Overall, this project is superior to the proposed project from a geology and soils perspective.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

This alternative results in a significant reduction in vehicle trip numbers and vehicle miles traveled as described in the Transportation discussion for this alternative. This alternative also reduces building development capacity by 390,510 square feet of industrial use, with a corresponding significant reduction in direct and indirect demand for energy. Mitigation measure GHG-1 in Section 11.0, Greenhouse Gasses, requires applicants for individual development projects to prepare GHG reduction plans. The purpose is to reduce project GHG emissions of 8.52 MT CO\textsubscript{2}e per service population to below the threshold of significance of 3.51 MT CO\textsubscript{2}e. The mitigation measure would reduce this impact to less than significant.

This alternative results in a substantial reduction in GHG emissions volume relative to the proposed project. Mobile source emissions from transportation are the major GHG component of the proposed project’s GHG emissions profile (about 66 percent of total). Traffic volumes from the hotel and travel center project components comprise a majority of the total trip volumes from the proposed project. Therefore, it is estimated that this alternative would result in a GHG emissions volume of less than half of the total proposed project volume of 8.52 metric tons CO\textsubscript{2}e per service population. The GHG emissions from the alternative would remain above the threshold of significance, but would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure GHG-1. This alternative substantially lessens the GHG impacts of the proposed project and is superior to the proposed project from a GHG perspective.
Hazards and Hazardous Materials

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 390,510 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project. It also avoids disturbance of 18 acres of land with the potential to contain high concentrations of agricultural chemicals in soils, and reduces soil disturbance along U.S. Highway 101 where potential exists for high concentrations of aerially-deposited lead in soils. The proposed project’s potential to result in public hazards associated with these potential hazardous materials conditions is less than significant with mitigation. This is also true for this alternative. However, by avoiding development on 18 acres within which these hazards could exist, this alternative substantially lessens these significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project.

The City considered the compatibility of non-residential development on land within parcels 1 and 2 with airport operations as part of the 2002 City of Salinas General Plan. The City determined that such development would be compatible with airport operations provided it is constructed consistent with the City’s Airport Overlay District development regulations, and with other municipal code standards regarding airport/development land use compatibility. These include regulations related to lighting, glare, building and roof reflectivity, height limitations on obstructions (such as buildings), and noise. Therefore, future development under this alternative would be subject to the same regulatory requirements designed to minimize potential impacts regarding airport operations as is the proposed project; neither would result in significant impacts.

Because this alternative reduces the potential to result in public safety impacts from the noted hazardous materials, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a hazardous materials perspective.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Surface Water Quantity/Flooding and Exposure to Flood Hazards

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 390,510 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project. It also eliminates development on nearly 18 acres of land, a portion of which is within a 100-year flood hazard zone (portion of parcel 4). The potential for new development to cause localized flooding from increases in storm water runoff volumes is minimized through required compliance with Salinas’ Storm Water Development Standards (SWDS). Potential localized flooding impacts of the proposed project and this alternative would be less than significant as a result.

Potential flood hazard impacts to new development within parcel 4 would be eliminated with this alternative. This impact from flood hazards associated with the proposed project is less than significant through compliance with the City’s flood management regulations.

Because this alternative avoids potential flood hazards to new development, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a flood hazard perspective.
Surface Water Quality (Soil Erosion and Pollutants)

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 390,510 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project. It also eliminates development on 18 acres of land. Surface water quality impacts of the proposed project are less than significant due to required conformance with the SWDS and Salinas’ National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements. Development under this alternative would also be required to conform with these requirements such that impacts on surface water quality would also be less than significant. However, this alternative allows continued agricultural use on 18 acres. Agricultural row crop production is a known source of surface water quality degradation through contamination of surface water runoff with pesticides and fertilizers. Because agricultural crop production is a known significant cause of water quality degradation in the Salinas Valley and that source would continue on parcels 3 and 4, this alternative is considered to be inferior to the proposed project from a surface water quality perspective.

Noise

As described in the Transportation section of this alternative below, this alternative reduces the daily traffic volume from the project site by about 52 percent. This will reduce traffic noise generation and reduce traffic noise increases on roads onto which traffic is distributed. By eliminating a substantial percentage of the development capacity included in the proposed project, this alternative also reduces potential for land use compatibility conflicts from noise generated by individual projects within the project site, as well as noise impacts on the project from the Salinas airport operations. The proposed project would result in both less-than-significant impacts and less-than-significant impacts with mitigation. This alternative would substantially lessen significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project related to development within parcels 3 and 4. The reduction in traffic noise volume is also considered to be a benefit relative to the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a noise perspective.

Police and Fire Protection Services

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 390,510 square feet of industrial use, this alternative reduces demand for police and fire protection services. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in the need to construct fire or police protection facility capacity. However, the reduction in services demand under the alternative is considered to have less effect on this potential long-term future need as the city continues to grow over the long term. Therefore, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a police and fire protection services perspective.

Transportation

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 390,510 square feet of industrial use, this alternative significantly reduces traffic generation from the project.
Impacts of the proposed project are less significant or less than significant with mitigation. Based on data in Figure 16-6, traffic generation would be reduced by approximately 2,618 trips per day or approximately 52 percent of the 4,965 net new trips generated by the proposed project. This alternative would substantially lessen the significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project on City and Caltrans road networks. To be conservative, it is not assumed that this alternative would have no impacts on these networks, but it is likely that the reduction of traffic volumes could avoid significant impacts at one or more of the impacted facilities.

This alternative would avoid the potential impact of conflict with policies for provision of transit facilities that would occur for the proposed project with the buildout of parcels 3 and 4. This significant, mitigatable impact of the proposed project is reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a transportation perspective.

**Wastewater**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 390,510 square feet of industrial use, this alternative significantly reduces wastewater generation relative to the proposed project. Based on data in Table 17-1, Projected Wastewater Generation, wastewater would be reduced by approximately 22,000 gallons per day or approximately 4,840,000 gallons per year (assuming operations at 220 days per year) relative to the proposed project. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in the need to construct wastewater treatment capacity and as a result, the effects of each are less than significant. However, the reduction in wastewater generation for this alternative is considered to have less effect on wastewater conveyance and treatment infrastructure such that the need to expand such infrastructure in the long-term future could be incrementally reduced. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a wastewater perspective.

**Water Supply**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 390,510 square feet of industrial use, this alternative would reduce the benefits of converting agricultural uses to urban uses resulting from reduced demand on groundwater. The baseline groundwater demand for the existing agricultural uses on parcels 3 and 4 is estimated at 75.30 AFY as summarized in Table 18-1 in Section 18.0, Water Supply. As is demonstrated in the discussion of net change in water use summarized in Table 18-3 in the same section, development of parcels 3 and 4 has a net positive impact on groundwater overdraft by increasing groundwater in storage relative to the agricultural use of these parcels. By eliminating parcels 3 and 4 from the proposed project, the net benefit of converting the site from agricultural use to urban use would be eliminated. Development of parcels 1 and 2
would increase gross demand for groundwater by approximately 24.28 AFY. This alternative would have a significant unavoidable impact on groundwater supply by worsening groundwater overdraft conditions.

This alternative is inferior to the proposed project due to its significant impact on groundwater conditions.

**Alternative 4: Reduced Project Size (Parcel 1–Hotel, Parcel 2–Travel Center, and Parcel 3–General Industrial Only)**

**Alternative Description**

This alternative reduces the size of the project site and the building capacity associated with the proposed project by eliminating parcel 4 and the development capacity of 324,522 square feet of building capacity for General Industrial end uses assumed for parcel 4. This alternative would include development on parcels 1 and 2 consistent with the proposed site plans for both the hotel (50,371 square feet) and the travel center (20,349 square feet), and would retain the 65,990 square feet of building capacity for parcel 3, for a total of 136,713 square feet. This is a reduction of about 70 percent relative to the proposed project building capacity of 461,230 square feet. It would include a specific plan, and annexation and prezoning of parcels 1, 2, and 3 only, which consist of 19.08 acres, with 14.90 acres (44 percent) of the project site being eliminated. See the project description for parcels 1, 2, and 3 in Section 4.0, Project Description. Additionally, this alternative would include action on the City’s part to ensure parcel 4 is not developed. Actions could include a general plan amendment to remove the parcel from the City's sphere of influence and redesignate the parcel Agriculture or placing the parcel into a conservation easement.

**Project Objectives**

This alternative would achieve the following objectives of the proposed project, but to a lesser degree than the proposed project:

- Provide jobs to support the current and future population of the City of Salinas;
- Annex a portion of the Salinas Airport West Future Growth Area described in the general plan to provide a catalyst for new economic development; and
- Generate tax revenues to the City from new retail and industrial development within the project site.

This objective would meet the remaining objectives of the proposed project.

**Aesthetics**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 324,520 square feet of industrial use, this alternative significantly reduces the physical footprint of development and reduces the change in visual conditions that would result from the proposed project. Approximately 14.90 acres of existing agricultural land, which is
considered a valuable visual resource, would be retained. The need for lighting, which would contribute to sky glow, would be reduced. As with the proposed project, the lighting and glare from this alternative would be reduced and would not conflict with Salinas Municipal Airport operations. Neither the proposed project nor this alternative would have significant aesthetic impacts. Nevertheless, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from an aesthetics impacts perspective.

**Agricultural Resources**

This alternative would avoid conversion of approximately 14.90 acres of important farmland located within parcel 4, or about 44 percent of the approximately 33 acres of important farmland that would be converted with the proposed project. This alternative would thus substantially lessen the significant and unavoidable impact of the proposed project wherein a total of 19.08 acres of important farmland would be converted to urban use. The impact would remain significant and unavoidable, however, even with mitigation.

This alternative would not substantially lessen potential land use conflicts with on-going agricultural operations to the south of parcels 3 and 4, as the same types of conflicts would be possible between developments on parcels 1, 2, and 3 and on-going agricultural operations on parcel 4. While both the proposed project and this alternative would result in significant unavoidable impacts from conversion of important farmland, by substantially lessening conversion of important farmland to non-agricultural use, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from an agricultural resources perspective.

**Air Quality**

This alternative results in an approximately 44 percent reduction in daily vehicle trips relative to the proposed project as described below in the Transportation discussion for this alternative. This alternative also requires grading of approximately 14.90 fewer acres of land. Transportation is a substantial source of criteria air emissions. By reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, this alternative would substantially reduce the volume of operational criteria air emissions relative to the proposed project. This impact of the proposed project is less than significant. By substantially reducing grading and earth movement, this alternative substantially lessens the significant, mitigatable construction phase air emissions impact of the proposed project. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from an air quality perspective.

**Biological Resources**

This alternative results in approximately 14.90 acres of agricultural land being retained rather than converted to urban use. The habitat value of agricultural land for most special-status species plants and wildlife species is generally low, but better than urban uses. Nevertheless, similar to the proposed project, impacts of this alternative on special-status species would be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation owing to
impacts associated with conversion of the balance of the project site to urban use. Because this alternative avoids the potential to affect biological resources within the nearly 14.90 acres that would remain undeveloped, this alternative would substantially lessen significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project on special-status species and is superior to the proposed project from a biological resources perspective.

**Cultural Resources**

This alternative results in approximately 14.90 acres of agricultural land being retained rather than converted to urban use. Construction activities associated with urban development are considered to have higher potential to significantly impact subsurface historical resources and unique archaeological resources, if either are present, than are agricultural production activities. The cultural resources impacts of the proposed project and this alternative would be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation measures. Because this alternative avoids the potential to affect historical resources, unique archaeological resources, and paleontological resources if any are present within the 14.90 acres that would remain undeveloped, this alternative substantially lessens the significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project, and is superior to the proposed project from a cultural resources perspective.

**Geology and Soils**

As described in Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, the California Supreme Court held in the 2015 “CBIA” case that agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental hazards or adverse conditions on a project’s future users or residents, except where a proposed project risks exacerbating those existing environmental hazards or conditions, in which case agencies should evaluate how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions. Prior to the CBIA case, CEQA analyses of potential geology and soils impacts of a project typically focused on existing geologic hazards that have potential to cause risk to public health and safety. While Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, includes these analyses, some of them are included only for informational purposes and the information in them is to be considered outside the purview of CEQA. Other parts of the analysis are required by CEQA and are included for that reason. The analysis below takes the same approach.

This alternative would avoid the potential impact from potential slope stability hazard conditions along the southern boundary of parcel 4 if in fact such conditions exist. This would be determined through geotechnical analysis required as a condition of approval as part of any future development project proposed within parcel 4 and any hazard would be avoided based on development conformance with avoidance measures included in the geotechnical analysis.
This alternative would also have the potential to cause soil erosion and related water quality impacts, but would be subject to the same regulations as the proposed project that reduce this impact to less than significant.

Because of its avoidance of potential slope stability hazards, this alternative is considered to be superior to the proposed project from a geology and soils perspective.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

This alternative results in a significant reduction in vehicle trip numbers and vehicle miles traveled as described in the Transportation discussion for this alternative. This alternative also reduces building development capacity by 324,522 square feet of industrial use, with a corresponding significant reduction in direct and indirect demand for energy. Mitigation measure GHG-1 in Section 11.0, Greenhouse Gasses, requires applicants for individual development projects to prepare GHG reduction plans. The purpose is to reduce project GHG emissions of 8.52 metric tons CO2e per service population to below the threshold of significance of 3.51 metric tons CO2e. Implementation of the mitigation measure would reduce the proposed project’s impact to less than significant.

This alternative results in a substantial reduction in GHG emissions volume relative to the proposed project. Mobile source emissions from transportation are the major GHG component of the proposed project’s GHG emissions profile (about 66 percent of total). Traffic volumes from the hotel and travel center project components plus future development within parcel 3 comprise a majority of the total trip volumes from the proposed project. Therefore, it is estimated that this alternative would result in a GHG emissions volume of less than half of the total proposed project volume of 8.52 metric tons CO2e per service population. The GHG emissions from the alternative would likely remain above the threshold of significance, but would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure GHG-1. This alternative substantially lessens the significant, mitigatable GHG impacts of the proposed project and is superior to the proposed project from a GHG perspective.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 324,522 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project. It also avoids disturbance of approximately 14.90 acres of land with the potential to contain high concentrations of agricultural chemicals in soils, and reduces soil disturbance along U.S. Highway 101 where potential exists for high concentrations of aerially-deposited lead in soils. The proposed project’s potential to result in public hazards associated with these potential hazardous materials conditions is less than significant with mitigation. This is also true for this alternative.

The City considered the compatibility of non-residential development on land within parcels 1, 2, and 3 with airport operations as part of the 2002 City of Salinas General Plan. The City
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determined that such development would be compatible with airport operations provided it is constructed consistent with the City’s municipal code Airport Overlay District development regulations, and with other municipal code standards regarding airport/development land use compatibility. These include regulations related to lighting, glare, building and roof reflectivity, height limitations on obstructions (such as buildings), and noise. Therefore, future development under this alternative would be subject to the same regulatory requirements designed to minimize potential impacts regarding airport operations as is the proposed project; neither would result in significant impacts.

Because this alternative substantially lessens the significant, mitigatable public safety impacts from the noted hazardous materials conditions by avoiding development on 14.90 acres, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a hazardous materials perspective.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Surface Water Quantity/Flooding and Exposure to Flood Hazards

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 324,522 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project. It also eliminates development on approximately 14.90 acres of land, a portion of which is within a 100-year flood hazard zone. The potential for new development to cause localized flooding from increases in storm water runoff volumes is minimized through required compliance with Salinas’ Storm Water Development Standards (SWDS). Potential localized flooding impacts of the proposed project and this alternative would be less than significant.

Potential flood hazards to new development within parcel 4 would be eliminated with this alternative; it would have no impact related to this hazard.

Because this alternative avoids potential flood hazards to new development, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a flood hazard perspective.

Surface Water Quality (Soil Erosion and Pollutants)

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 324,522 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project and eliminates development on approximately 14.90 acres of land. Surface water quality impacts of the proposed project are less than significant due to required conformance with the SWDS and Salinas’ National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements. Development under this alternative would also be required to conform with these requirements such that impacts on surface water quality would also be less than significant.

This alternative allows continued agricultural use on approximately 14.90 acres. Agricultural crop production is a significant cause of water quality degradation in the Salinas Valley and that source of water quality degradation would continue on parcel 4. The proposed project
would result in reduced surface water quality impacts from converting this agricultural land to urban use given regulatory requirements to minimize water quality degradation from urban use-generated storm water runoff. The significant contribution of agricultural uses to water quality degradation would remain. On balance, this alternative is considered to be inferior to the proposed project from a surface water quality perspective.

**Noise**

As described in the Transportation section of this alternative below, this alternative reduces the daily traffic volume from the project site by about 44 percent. This will reduce traffic noise generation and reduce traffic noise increases on roads onto which traffic is distributed.

By eliminating a substantial percentage of the development capacity included in the proposed project, this alternative also reduces potential for land use compatibility conflicts from noise generated by future development within parcel 4, as well as noise impacts on the project from the Salinas Municipal Airport operations. Noise impacts associated with generation of noise from parcel 4 and exposure of future development within parcel 4 to noise are less than significant with mitigation. This alternative would substantially lessen these significant mitigatable impacts. With the reduction in traffic noise volume, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a noise perspective.

**Police and Fire Protection Services**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 324,522 square feet of industrial use, this alternative reduces demand for police and fire protection services. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in the need to construct fire or police protection facility capacity. However, the reduction in services demand under the alternative is considered to have less effect on this potential long-term future need as the city continues to grow over the long term. Therefore, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a police and fire protection services perspective.

**Transportation**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 324,522 square feet of industrial use, this alternative significantly reduces traffic generation from the project site. Impacts of the proposed project are less significant or less than significant with mitigation. Based on data in Figure 16-6, traffic generation would be reduced by approximately 2,173 trips per day or approximately 44 percent of the 4,965 net new trips generated by the proposed project. This alternative would substantially lessen the significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project on City and Caltrans road networks.

This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a transportation perspective.
Wastewater

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 324,520 square feet of industrial use, this alternative significantly reduces wastewater generation relative to the proposed project. Based on data in Table 17-1, Projected Wastewater Generation, which identifies wastewater expected to be generated from each parcel under the proposed project, wastewater would be reduced by 18,245 gallons per day or approximately 4,016,540 gallons per year (assuming operations at 220 days per year) relative to the proposed project. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in the need to construct wastewater treatment capacity and, therefore, would have less than significant impacts. However, the reduction in wastewater generation for this alternative is considered to have less effect on wastewater conveyance and treatment infrastructure such that the need to expand such infrastructure in the long-term future could be incrementally reduced. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a wastewater perspective.

Water Supply

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 324,520 square feet of industrial use proposed for parcel 4, this alternative would substantially reduce the beneficial effect of the proposed project on groundwater that results from converting existing agricultural uses to urban uses. The gross baseline groundwater demand for the existing agricultural use on parcel 3 is about 18 AFY based on water demand factors included in Table 18-1 in Section 18.0, Water Supply. The gross groundwater demand from development on parcels 1, 2, and 3 would be approximately 34 AFY (based on data contained in Table 18-2). The 18 AFY benefit of converting parcel 3 to agricultural use would be outweighed by the total increase in urban demand of about 34 AFY. This alternative would have a significant unavoidable impact on water supply by increasing demand for groundwater from a groundwater basin in overdraft. This is contrasted with the proposed project’s beneficial impact on groundwater.

Alternative 5: Reduced Project Size
(Parcel 2–Travel Center Only)

Alternative Description

This alternative includes only the travel center on parcel 2. It reduces the building capacity associated with the proposed project from 461,235 square feet to 20,349 square feet, a total reduction of 440,881 square feet, or 95 percent. This alternative would include parcel 1 to avoid creating an island of unincorporated land, such that the project site would be 16.05 acres. However, development would occur only on the 13.86 acres within parcel 2, a reduction of 60 percent of the developable acreage relative to the proposed project. See the project description for the travel center parcel 2 in Section 4.0, Project Description. Additionally, this alternative would include action on the City’s part to ensure parcels 1, 3,
and 4 are not developed. Actions could include a general plan amendment to remove parcels 3 and 4 from the City’s sphere of influence, a general plan amendment to change the land use designation of all three of the parcels to Agriculture, or placing the three parcels into a conservation easement.

**Project Objectives**

This alternative would achieve the following objectives of the proposed project, but to a lesser degree than the proposed project:

- Provide jobs to support the current and future population of the City of Salinas;
- Annex a portion of the Salinas Airport West Future Growth Area described in the general plan to provide a catalyst for new economic development; and
- Generate tax revenues to the City from new retail and industrial development within the project site.

This objective would meet the remaining objectives of the proposed project.

**Aesthetics**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 440,886 square feet of industrial use, this alternative significantly reduces the physical footprint of development and reduces the change in visual conditions that would result from the proposed project. Approximately 18 acres of existing agricultural land, which is considered a valuable visual resource, would be retained (the 2.19 acres in parcel 1 could not be put back into agricultural production because of its size and location between parcel 2 and existing development). The need for lighting, which would contribute to sky glow, would be reduced. The potential for lighting and glare impacts that might otherwise affect airport operations would also be reduced. Neither the proposed project nor this alternative would have significant aesthetic impacts. Nevertheless, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from an aesthetics impacts perspective.

**Agricultural Resources**

This alternative would avoid conversion of approximately 19 acres of important farmland located within parcels 1, 3, and 4.

This alternative would not substantially lessen potential land use conflicts with on-going agricultural operations to the south of parcels 3 and 4, as the same types of conflicts would be possible between development on parcel 2 and on-going agricultural operations on parcels 3 and 4. The area of potential conflict would just be shifted northward.

While both the proposed project and this alternative would result in significant unavoidable impacts from conversion of important farmland, by substantially lessening conversion of important farmland to non-agricultural use, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from an agricultural resources perspective.
Air Quality
This alternative results in a significant reduction in vehicle trip numbers and vehicle miles traveled as described in the Transportation discussion for this alternative. This alternative also requires grading of approximately 19 fewer acres of land. Transportation is a substantial source of criteria air emissions. This alternative would reduce daily vehicle trips by about 60 percent relative to the proposed project. By substantially reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, this alternative would reduce the volume of operational criteria air emissions relative to the proposed project. The operational criteria air emissions impacts of the proposed project are less than significant.

By avoiding development on approximately 56 percent of the project site, grading and earth moving activities would be dramatically reduced, thereby reducing generation of fugitive dust during construction. This alternative substantially lessens this significant, mitigatable impact of the proposed project. For this reason, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from an air quality perspective.

Biological Resources
This alternative results in approximately 19 acres of undeveloped land being retained rather than converted to urban use. The habitat value of agricultural land within parcels 1, 3 and 4 for most special-status plant and wildlife species is generally low, but better than urban uses. Nevertheless, similar to the proposed project, impacts of this alternative on special-status species would be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation owing to impacts associated with conversion of the balance of the project site to urban use. Because this alternative avoids the potential to affect biological resources within the 19 acres that would remain undeveloped, this alternative substantially lessens the significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project on special-status species and is superior to the proposed project from a biological resources perspective.

Cultural Resources
This alternative results in approximately 19 acres of undeveloped land being retained rather than converted to urban use. Construction activities associated with urban development are considered to have higher potential to significantly impact subsurface historical resources and unique archaeological resources, if either are present, than are agricultural production activities. The cultural resources impacts of the proposed project and this alternative would be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation measures. Because this alternative avoids the potential to affect historical resources and unique archaeological resources if either are present within the 19 acres that would remain undeveloped, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a cultural resources perspective, and would substantially lessen the significant, mitigatable impacts of the proposed project.
Geology and Soils

As described in Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, the California Supreme Court recently held in the 2015 “CBIA” case that agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental hazards or adverse conditions on a project’s future users or residents, except where a proposed project risks exacerbating those existing environmental hazards or conditions, in which case agencies should evaluate how future residents or users could be affected by exacerbated conditions. Prior to the CBIA case, CEQA analyses of potential geology and soils impacts of a project typically focused on existing geologic hazards that have potential to cause risk to public health and safety. While Section 10.0, Geology and Soils, includes these analyses, some of them are included only for informational purposes and the information in them is to be considered outside the purview of CEQA. Other parts of the analysis are required by CEQA and are included for that reason. The analysis below takes the same approach.

Neither the proposed project nor this alternative would result in significant geology and soils impacts. All impacts of the proposed project are reduced to less than significant through conformance with uniform regulations. The same would be true of this alternative.

This alternative would avoid the less-than-significant impact regarding slope stability hazard conditions along the southern boundary of parcel 4 if in fact such conditions exist.

Because of its avoidance of potential slope stability hazards associated with parcels or portions of parcels that would not be developed, this alternative is considered to be superior to the proposed project from a geology and soils perspective.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This alternative results in a substantial reduction in vehicle trip numbers and vehicle miles traveled as described in the Transportation discussion for this alternative. This alternative also reduces building development capacity from 461,235 square feet to 20,349 square feet, a total reduction of 440,881 square feet, or 95 percent, with a corresponding substantial reduction in direct and indirect demand for energy. Mitigation measure GHG-1 in Section 11.0, Greenhouse Gases, requires applicants for individual development projects to prepare GHG reduction plans. The purpose is to reduce proposed project GHG emissions of 8.52 MT CO₂e per service population to below the threshold of significance of 3.51 MT CO₂e. The mitigation measure would reduce this impact to less than significant.

This alternative results in a substantial reduction in GHG emissions volume relative to the proposed project. Mobile source emissions from transportation are the major GHG component of the proposed project’s GHG emissions profile (about 66 percent of total). This alternative reduces traffic volume by about 60 percent such that GHG emissions from mobile sources would be substantially reduced. With a substantial corresponding reduction in building energy use, this alternative would substantially lessen the volume of GHG
emissions from development relative to the proposed project. If the emissions volume were to exceed the threshold of significance of 3.51 MT CO2e per service population, the impact would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure GHG-1. This alternative substantially lessens the GHG impacts of the proposed project and is superior to the proposed project from a GHG perspective.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 440,886 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project. It also avoids disturbance of approximately 19 acres of land with the potential to contain high concentrations of agricultural chemicals in soils, and reduces soil disturbance along U.S. Highway 101 where potential exists for high concentrations of aerially-deposited lead in soils. The proposed project’s potential to result in public hazards associated with these potential hazardous materials conditions is less than significant with mitigation. This alternative would substantially lessen this significant, mitigable impact of the proposed project.

As with the proposed project, this alternative would not subject people to safety hazards associated with the Salinas Municipal Airport operations, as it would also be required to comply with municipal code regulations regarding development within the airport overlay zone.

Because this alternative substantially lessens significant impacts regarding potential exposure to hazardous materials, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a hazardous materials perspective.

**Hydrology and Water Quality**

*Surface Water Quantity/Flooding and Exposure to Flood Hazards*

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 440,886 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project. It also eliminates development on approximately 19 acres of land, a portion of which is within a 100-year flood hazard zone. The potential for new development to cause localized flooding from increases in storm water runoff volumes is minimized through required compliance with Salinas’ Storm Water Development Standards (SWDS). Potential localized flooding impacts of the proposed project and this alternative would be less than significant as a result.

Potential flood hazard impacts to new development within parcel 4 would be eliminated with this alternative. This impact from flood hazards associated with the proposed project is less than significant through compliance with the City’s flood management regulations.

Because this alternative avoids potential flood hazards to new development, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a flood hazard perspective.
Surface Water Quality (Soil Erosion and Pollutants)

This alternative reduces building development capacity by 440,886 square feet of industrial use relative to the proposed project. It also eliminates development on approximately 19 acres of land. Surface water quality impacts of the proposed project are less than significant due to required conformance with the SWDS and Salinas’ National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements. Development under this alternative would also be required to conform with these requirements such that impacts on surface water quality would also be less than significant. However, this alternative allows continued agricultural use on approximately 18 acres (it is assumed that the 2.19 acres in parcel 1 would not revert back to agricultural use in the future). Agricultural row crop production is a known source of surface water quality degradation through contamination of surface water runoff with pesticides and fertilizers.

The proposed project would result in reduced surface water quality impacts by converting agricultural land to urban use given regulatory requirements to minimize water quality degradation from urban storm water runoff. With this alternative, the significant contribution of agricultural uses to water quality degradation would remain. Therefore, on balance, this alternative is considered to be inferior to the proposed project from a surface water quality perspective.

Noise

As described below in the Transportation section for this alternative, this alternative reduces the daily traffic volume from the project site by about 60 percent. This will reduce traffic noise generation and reduce traffic noise increases on roads onto which traffic is distributed. Neither the proposed project, nor this alternative would have significant impacts from traffic noise.

Land use compatibility noise impacts for the proposed project are less than significant and less than significant with mitigation. By eliminating a substantial percentage of the development capacity included in the proposed project, this alternative avoids the significant, mitigatable noise/land use incompatibility impacts of the proposed project. Therefore, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a noise perspective.

Police and Fire Protection Services

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 440,886 square feet of industrial use, this alternative reduces demand for police and fire protection services. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in the need to construct fire or police protection facility capacity. However, the reduction in services demand under the alternative is considered to have less effect on this potential long-term future need as the city continues to grow over the long term. Therefore, this alternative is superior to the proposed project from a police and fire protection services perspective.
**Transportation**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 440,886 square feet of industrial use, this alternative reduces traffic generation from the proposed project by about 60 percent. Traffic impacts of the proposed project are less significant or less than significant with mitigation. It is assumed that through a substantial reduction in traffic generation, this alternative would substantially lessen one or more significant, mitigatable impacts on City and/or Caltrans road networks.

This alternative would avoid the significant, mitigatable impact of conflict with policies for provision of transit facilities that would occur for the proposed project with the buildout of parcels 3 and 4.

This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a transportation perspective.

**Wastewater**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 440,886 square feet of industrial use, this alternative significantly reduces wastewater generation relative to the proposed project. Based on data in Table 17-1, Projected Wastewater Generation, wastewater would be reduced by 26,613 gallons per day or approximately 5,854,860 gallons per year (assuming operations at 220 days per year) relative to the proposed project. Neither this alternative nor the proposed project would result in the need to construct wastewater treatment capacity. However, the reduction in wastewater generation for this alternative is considered to have less effect on wastewater conveyance and treatment infrastructure such that the need to expand such infrastructure in the long-term future could be incrementally reduced. This alternative is superior to the proposed project from a wastewater perspective.

**Water Supply**

By reducing the building development capacity of the proposed project by 440,886 square feet of industrial use within parcels 3 and 4, this alternative would greatly reduce the conversion of existing agricultural uses to urban uses in comparison to the proposed project. Therefore, the beneficial impact of the proposed project on groundwater resulting from this conversion would not occur. The baseline groundwater demand for the existing agricultural uses on parcels 3 and 4 is estimated at 75.30 AFY as summarized in Table 18-1 in Section 18.0, Water Supply. As is demonstrated in the discussion of net change in water use summarized in Table 18-3 in the same section, urban development of the site, including parcels 3 and 4, has a net positive impact on groundwater overdraft by increasing groundwater in storage relative to the agricultural use of these parcels. By eliminating parcels 3 and 4 from the proposed project, the net benefit of converting the site from agricultural use to urban use is eliminated and this alternative results in an increase in demand for groundwater from a groundwater basin in overdraft. This is a significant unavoidable impact.

This alternative has a negative impact on groundwater resources/water supply relative to the proposed project.
24.4 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(a), an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. The significance of effects of the alternatives relative to the proposed project are summarized in Table 24-1, Summary of Alternatives Impacts Relative to the Proposed Project.

As CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(a) requires investigation of alternatives that avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts of the proposed project, Table 24-1 focuses on whether an alternative has potential to reduce the severity of any of the significant mitigatable impacts and the significant and unavoidable impacts of the proposed project.

Where the proposed project has no impact relative to a particular environmental topic, that effect is not included in the table. However, for informational purposes, less than significant impacts of the proposed project are included in the table, as in some cases, project alternatives have potential to reduce even less than significant environmental effects; this information is considered to be worth noting.

24.5 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Section 15126.6 (e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines provides that if the environmentally superior alternative is the ‘no project’ alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.”

Environmentally Superior Alternative

The no project alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. It is superior because it would avoid all impacts of the proposed project, though ongoing agricultural activities would continue to consume more water than would occur under the project.

Of the remaining alternatives, Alternative 4, Reduced Project Size (Parcel 1–Hotel, Parcel 2–Travel Center, and Parcel 3–General Industrial Only) is the environmentally superior alternative. It would result in substantially fewer impacts than would the proposed project because it eliminates 390,510 square feet building, or 85 percent of the building square footage of 461,230 square feet included in the proposed project. It also eliminates urban development on nearly 18 acres, or 53 percent of the total of 34 acres of land included in the project site. This change substantially lessens the significant unavoidable impact of the proposed project from conversion of important farmland to non-agricultural use. However, it also creates a significant unavoidable impact on groundwater by increasing demand for groundwater pumping.
Table 24-1  Summary of Alternative Impacts Relative to the Proposed Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Impact</th>
<th>Proposed Project Level of Impact</th>
<th>No Project</th>
<th>Other Project Consistent with Salinas General Plan</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1 and 2 Only)</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1, 2, and 3 Only)</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2 Only)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aesthetics</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in Visual Character</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase in Glare and Sky Glow</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lighting Affecting Airport Operations</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Agricultural Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion of On-site Important Farmland</td>
<td>Significant and Unavoidable with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Significant and Unavoidable</td>
<td>Substantially Lessen – Significant and Unavoidable</td>
<td>Substantially Lessen – Significant and Unavoidable</td>
<td>Substantially Lessen – Significant and Unavoidable</td>
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<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitate Conversion of Off-site Important Farmland</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Air Quality</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fugitive Dust Emissions from Construction Activities</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce - Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria Air Pollution Emissions from Construction Activities</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions from Project Operations</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carbon Monoxide Concentrations</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(above baseline conditions)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Impact</td>
<td>Proposed Project Level of Impact</td>
<td>No Project</td>
<td>Other Project Consistent with Salinas General Plan</td>
<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1 and 2 Only)</td>
<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1, 2, and 3 Only)</td>
<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2 Only)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biological Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of Congdon’s Tarplant Population</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Loss of Burrowing Owl</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Loss of Nesting Birds</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Water of the State and U.S.</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impede Movement of Common, Urban-Adapted Wildlife</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resources</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for Construction Activities to Adversely Affect Historical Resources and/or Unique Archaeological Resources</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for Construction Activities to Adversely Disturb Unknown Native American Human Remains</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Environmental Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential for Construction Activities to Adversely Affect Unique Paleontological Resources</th>
<th>Proposed Project Level of Impact</th>
<th>No Project</th>
<th>Other Project Consistent with Salinas General Plan</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1 and 2 Only)</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1, 2, and 3 Only)</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2 Only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Geology & Soils

#### Increase Risk to Public Safety and Structures from Seismic Shaking

- Less than Significant
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- Less than Significant
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant

#### Increase Risk to Public Safety and Structures from Seismically Induced Liquefaction

- Less than Significant
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- Less than Significant
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant

#### Increased Risk to Public Safety and Structures from Unstable Slopes/Landslides within Parcel 4

- Less than Significant
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- Less than Significant
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)

#### Soil Erosion during Construction and Operations

- Less than Significant
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- Less than Significant
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)

#### Potential Impacts to Structures and Infrastructures from Expansive Soils

- Less than Significant
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- Less than Significant
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)

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*Impacts on future project users is beyond the scope of CEQA*

### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

#### Impede Attainment of State GHG Emissions Reduction Goals

- Less than Significant with Mitigation
- No Impact (above baseline conditions)
- Less than Significant with Mitigation
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation
- Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Impact</th>
<th>Proposed Project Level of Impact</th>
<th>No Project</th>
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<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1 and 2 Only)</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1, 2, and 3 Only)</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2 Only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict with the State of California’s Plans to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

| Pose Hazards to the Public or Environment from Routine Transport, Use, Disposal and/or Accidental Release of Hazardous Materials during Construction or Operations | Less than Significant | No Impact (above baseline conditions) | Less than Significant | Less than Significant | Less than Significant | Less than Significant |
| Pose Hazards to Public Health or the Environment from Exposure to Agricultural Chemical Residues in Site Soils during Construction | Less than Significant with Mitigation | No Impact (above baseline conditions) | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation | Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation | Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation |
| Pose Hazards to Public Health or the Environment from Exposure to Agricultural Chemical Residues in Site Soils during Construction | Less than Significant with Mitigation | No Impact (above baseline conditions) | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation | Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation | Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation |
| Hazards to the Project from Airport Operations | Less than Significant | No Impact (above baseline conditions) | Less than Significant | Less than Significant | Less than Significant | Less than Significant |
## Environmental Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Impact</th>
<th>Proposed Project Level of Impact</th>
<th>No Project</th>
<th>Other Project Consistent with Salinas General Plan</th>
<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1 and 2 Only)</th>
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<th>Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2 Only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hydrology and Water Quality</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to Drainage Patterns Causing Erosion, Degrading Surface Water Quality and Violating Water Quality Standards</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potential for Localized Flooding from Increased Storm Water Runoff</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exposure of Development within Parcel 4 to Flooding</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk of Dam Failure Leading to Risks to Property and Public Safety</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expose Proposed Project to Exterior Noise</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expose Proposed Project Hotel Room Interiors to Noise</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expose Travel Center Buildings to Interior Noise</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expose Interiors within Future Buildings within Parcel 3 to Noise</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Impact</td>
<td>Proposed Project Level of Impact</td>
<td>No Project</td>
<td>Other Project Consistent with Salinas General Plan</td>
<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1 and 2 Only)</td>
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<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2 Only)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expose Interiors within Future Buildings within Parcel 4 to Noise</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise Generated from Mechanical Equipment and/or Loading Dock Operations Associated with Future Development</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise Generation from Future Operations within Parcels 3 and 4 that Affects the Adjacent Proposed Travel Center Uses and Existing Industrial Uses to the East</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in Traffic Noise from Traffic Generated by the Proposed Project</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hotel Construction Noise Impact on Adjacent Motel 6</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exposure of Airport Noise on the Project</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police and Fire Protection</td>
<td>Environmental Impacts from Construction of New Facilities</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Impact</td>
<td>Proposed Project Level of Impact</td>
<td>No Project</td>
<td>Other Project Consistent with Salinas General Plan</td>
<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1 and 2 Only)</td>
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<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2 Only)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degraded Performance of City-Controlled Intersections due to Proposed Project Traffic</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degraded Performance of Caltrans-Controlled Intersections due to Proposed Project Traffic</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degraded Performance of Caltrans-Controlled Freeway Segments due to Proposed Project Traffic</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>Substantially Reduce – Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict with Pedestrian or Bicycle Facilities Plans</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient Provision of Transit Facilities</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant with Mitigation</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation Hazards Resulting from Design of Project Improvements</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wastewater</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wastewater Treatment Capacity and Environmental Effects from Construction of New Wastewater Treatment Facilities</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Impact</td>
<td>Proposed Project Level of Impact</td>
<td>No Project</td>
<td>Other Project Consistent with Salinas General Plan</td>
<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1 and 2 Only)</td>
<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcels 1, 2, and 3 Only)</td>
<td>Reduced Project Size (Parcel 2 Only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Groundwater Storage within a Groundwater Basin in Overdraft Condition</td>
<td>Beneficial</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Beneficial</td>
<td>Significant and Unavoidable</td>
<td>Significant and Unavoidable</td>
<td>Significant and Unavoidable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for Reduced Groundwater Recharge from Increase in Impervious Surface Area</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>No Impact (above baseline conditions)</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
<td>Less than Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017
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25.0
Energy Conservation

25.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

Public Resources Code section 21100 (b)(3) requires that an environmental impact report include a detailed statement setting forth mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects on the environment, including, but not limited to, measures to reduce the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy. This formulation is echoed in CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4 (a)(1), which states that “[a] EIR shall describe feasible measures which could minimize significant adverse impacts, including where relevant, inefficient and unnecessary consumption of energy.” This section adds that “Energy conservation measures, as well as other appropriate mitigation measures, shall be discussed when relevant. Examples of energy conservation measures are provided in Appendix F.”

Appendix F to the CEQA Guidelines is entitled, “Energy Conservation.” As amended in early 2010, it begins by stating that “[t]he goal of conserving energy implies the wise and efficient use of energy. The means of achieving this goal include:

(1) decreasing overall per capita energy consumption;

(2) decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas and oil; and

(3) increasing reliance on renewable energy sources.”

Appendix F goes on to provide a “list of energy impact possibilities and potential conservation measures is designed to assist in the preparation of an EIR. In many instances specific items may not apply or additional items may be needed. Where items listed below are applicable or relevant to the project, they should be considered in the EIR.” Most of the items on the lists apply to specific projects and should be considered in regards to specific plans and individual development projects, both of which are components of the proposed project.

Development of the project site will result in increased demand for energy during construction and operations of future projects. Similarly, City of Salinas operations needed to serve new development will result in increased energy demand. Primary sources of energy use will be transportation fuels, electricity, and natural gas.
For purposes of this analysis, the proposed project would be considered to result in wasteful or inefficient consumption of energy if it failed to comply with related City of Salinas General Plan policies and failed to implement energy demand reduction/efficiency measures. A multitude of state regulations and legislative acts are aimed at improving vehicle fuel efficiency, energy efficiency, and energy conservation. Several of these are described below. Many others are described in Section 11 (Greenhouse Gases). Through the CEQA and development review processes, Salinas will implement these state regulations and guide development of new development to reduce energy consumption.

25.2 ENERGY SETTING

Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), one of the five largest utilities in the state, is the primary purveyor of electricity and natural gas in the County and the City. PG&E operates a major network of electricity and natural gas transmission lines within its service area, including Monterey County.

For more than a decade, federal, state and regional energy agencies and energy providers have been focused on reducing growth in fossil-fuel based energy demand, especially in the form of transportation fuels and electricity. Key environmental goals have been established to reduce air pollutants and GHGs. As a result, investments in a range of energy efficiency and conservation programs and technologies to improve transportation fuel efficiency have been increasing, as has the focus on land use planning as a tool to reduce vehicle trips/lengths and transportation related energy use.

A traffic impact analysis recently prepared for the City of Salinas Economic Development Element, for which a Final EIR was certified by the City Council in early December 2017, estimated that vehicle trips originating in the city in 2016 generated a total of 481,843,640 vehicle miles traveled (Fehr & Peers 2017). VMT serves as a general proxy for the magnitude of transportation fuel consumption. As described in Section 11, Climate Change, AMBAG produced the City of Salinas Draft Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory 2005 Baseline Report. Appendices B and C of the inventory show that total electricity consumption from residential, commercial, and industrial uses in Salinas was approximately 626,379,248 kilowatt hours (kWh). Natural gas consumption from these uses was approximately 28,978,829 therms. The energy content of natural gas is measured in British Thermal Units (BTU). A BTU is the amount of energy required to raise the temperature of one pound of water by one degree Fahrenheit. A therm is equal to 100,000 BTU. Though the inventory is now over 10 years old, given the economic downturn that occurred from 2007 into 2011, and the fact that new residential, commercial, or industrial development in the city has been limited since that time, the 2005 information is still considered to be representative of current conditions.
25.3 ENERGY REGULATORY SETTING

The need for energy conservation and transportation fuel efficiency (through vehicle trip reduction and improved mileage) is embodied in many federal, state, and local statutes and policies. At the federal level, energy standards apply to numerous products (e.g., the EnergyStar™ program) and transportation (e.g., vehicle fuel efficiency standards). At the state level, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations sets energy standards for buildings, rebates/tax credits are provided for installation of renewable energy systems, and the Flex Your Power program promotes conservation in multiple areas. Important, representative energy conservation guidance, regulations, and legislation are summarized below.

California Energy Commission

The California Energy Commission is California’s primary energy policy and energy planning agency. Created by the California Legislature in 1974, the California Energy Commission has five major responsibilities: 1) forecasting future energy needs and keeping historical energy data; 2) licensing thermal power plants 50 megawatts or larger; 3) promoting energy efficiency through appliance and building standards; 4) developing energy technologies and supporting renewable energy; and 5) planning for and directing state response to energy emergencies. Under the requirements of the California Public Resources Code, the California Energy Commission, in conjunction with the Department of Conservation’s Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources, is required to assess electricity and natural gas resources on an annual basis or as necessary. The Systems Assessment and Facilities Siting Division of the California Energy Commission provides coordination to ensure that needed energy facilities are authorized in an expeditious, safe, and environmentally acceptable manner.

California 2008 Energy Action Plan Update

The state adopted the Energy Action Plan in 2003, followed by the Energy Action Plan II in 2005. The current plan, the California 2008 Energy Action Plan Update, is California’s principal energy planning and policy document. The updated document examines the state’s ongoing actions in the context of global climate change, describes a coordinated implementation plan for state energy policies, and identifies specific action areas to ensure that California’s energy resources are adequate, affordable, technologically advanced, and environmentally sound. The California 2008 Energy Action Plan Update establishes energy efficiency and demand response (i.e., reduction of customer energy usage during peak periods) as the first-priority actions to address California’s increasing energy demands. Additional priorities include the use of renewable sources of power and distributed generation (e.g., the use of relatively small power plants near or at centers of high demand). To the extent that these actions are unable to satisfy the increasing energy demand and transmission capacity needs, clean and efficient fossil-fired generation is supported. The
California 2008 Energy Action Plan Update examines policy changes in the areas of energy efficiency, demand response, renewable energy, electricity reliability and infrastructure, electricity market structure, natural gas supply and infrastructure, research and development, and climate change (California Energy Commission 2008).

**California Building Codes**

California’s Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6) were first established in 1978 to reduce California’s energy consumption. The standards were most recently updated in 2016. Energy efficient buildings require less electricity, natural gas, and other fuels.

The Green Building Standards Code (also known as CALGreen), which requires all new buildings in the state to be more energy efficient and environmentally responsible, took effect in January 2011 and was most recently updated in January 2016. These comprehensive regulations are intended to achieve major reductions in interior and exterior building energy consumption.

**Energy Efficiency Act of 2006 (AB 2021)**

This bill encourages all investor-owned and municipal utilities to aggressively invest in achievable, cost-effective, energy efficiency programs in their service territories.

**California Assembly Bill No. 1493 (“Pavley I Rule”)**

AB 1493 was enacted on July 22, 2002. It requires CARB to develop and adopt regulations that improve fuel efficiency of vehicles and light-duty trucks. Pavley I requirements apply to these vehicles in the model years 2009 to 2016.

**Advanced Clean Cars**

In January 2012, CARB adopted an Advanced Clean Cars program, which is aimed at increasing the number of plug-in hybrid cars and zero-emission vehicles in the vehicle fleet and on making fuels such as electricity and hydrogen readily available for these vehicle technologies.

**Renewable Energy Legislation/Orders**

The California Renewable Portfolio Standard Program, which requires electric utilities and other entities under the jurisdiction of the California Public Utilities Commission to meet 20 percent of their retail sales with renewable power by 2017, was established by SB 1078 in 2002. The renewable portfolio standard was accelerated to 20 percent by 2010 by SB 107 in 2006. The program was subsequently expanded by the renewable electricity standard approved by CARB in September 2010, requiring all utilities to meet a 33 percent target by 2020. The Legislature then codified this mandate in 2011 with the enactment of
senate Bill X1-2. SB 350, adopted in September 2015, increases the standard to 50 percent by 2030. This same legislation includes statutes directing the California Energy Commission and Public Utilities Commission to regulate utilities producing electricity so that they will create electricity-generation capacity sufficient for the widespread electrification of California’s vehicle fleet, as a means of reducing GHG emissions associated with the combustion of gasoline and other fossil fuels. The Legislature envisions a dramatic increase in the sales and use of electric cars, which will be recharged with electricity produced with increasingly cleaner power sources.

### 25.4 PROJECTED ENERGY CONSUMPTION

The three primary sources of long-term energy consumption from new development and operations within the city will be fuel use in vehicles traveling within, and to and from the city, use of natural gas, and use of electricity. Each of these energy consumption sources is described below.

#### Transportation Fuel Use

The draft City of Salinas Economic Development Element traffic impact analysis referenced above includes analysis of VMT by vehicle trips originating within and traveling to Salinas in specific target years. Under 2016 conditions, daily VMT was estimated at 481,843,640 miles. Under 2045 cumulative development conditions, VMT is projected to 620,149,727 miles (Fehr & Peers 2017). The traffic model used to estimate these VMT volumes assumes linear growth over time based on the general plan. As VMT increases, consumption of vehicle fuels increases, though the rate of increase will be significantly reduced by continuing improvements in vehicle fuel efficiency, increases in the percentage of the vehicle fleet comprised of zero emissions vehicles, and technological advances in the formulation and deployment of alternative fuels.

Development of the project site will generate new traffic trips that increase VMT by approximately 8,023,039 miles per year. This data is taken from the CalEEMod results included in Appendix C. With increased VMT from the project will come an increase in consumption of transportation fuel from vehicles in all classes of the vehicle fleet. Land development projects of the type proposed are a common source of increases in transportation fuel demand. Fuel demand was projected using the EMission FACtors (EMFAC) model. The EMFAC model uses annual VMT as an input to calculate emissions volumes for a range of criteria emissions and GHGs, and also calculates fuel consumption volume. The projected increase in fuel consumption is 353,558 gallons per year (diesel and gas).

The proposed project would not result in changes in fuel demand that are excessive given the currently proposed hotel and travel stop end uses, or the future end uses that will located...
within parcels 3 and 4. The hotel and travel center projects are highly accessible, highway-oriented uses. As such, relative to non-highway oriented uses, these two projects (and possibly future projects constructed within parcel 3 and 4) will capture a relatively high volume of pass-by trips on U.S. Highway 101; daily trip volumes, increases in VMT, and demand for transportation fuel from these uses are likely to be lower than for similar end uses that are not similarly situated.

**Electricity**

The 2011 GHG inventory prepared by AMBAG indicates that in 2005, electricity consumption from residential, commercial, and industrial development was estimated at about 626,379,248 kWh. According to Energy Consumption Data Management System information maintained by the California Energy Commission, in 2005, total electricity consumption in Monterey County was 2,553,000,000 kWh (www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx). City demand represented approximately 25 percent of total county demand. Section 5.3, Energy by Land Use, Unmitigated - Electricity, in the CalEEMod (Appendix C) results show that without additional energy efficiency/conservation measures in place to further conserve electricity demand from new development within the project site, electricity demand associated with their buildout would equal about 3,994,403 kWh. This is less than a one percent increase relative to the 2005 baseline demand in Salinas.

**Natural Gas Use**

The 2005 AMBAG emissions inventory indicates that in 2005, natural gas consumption from residential, commercial, and industrial uses in Salinas was estimated at about 28,929,000 therms. According to Energy Consumption Data Management System information maintained by the California Energy Commission, in 2005, total natural gas consumption in the county was 91,500,000 therms (www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx). In 2005, city demand represented approximately 32 percent of total county demand. Table 5.2 Energy by Land Use, Unmitigated – Natural Gas, in the CalEEMod results (Appendix C) shows that at buildout of the project site, without specific energy conservation/reduction measures to conserve natural gas use, natural gas demand would be about 10,078,115,000 BTU (100,781 therms). This is a less than one percent increase relative to Salinas’ 2005 baseline demand.

**25.5 GUIDANCE FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION**

**Reduction of Energy Use - Regulatory Requirements**

As described in the Regulatory Setting above, a number of federal and particularly state regulatory programs are being implemented to improve the efficiency of transportation fuel,
natural gas, and electricity use. New development within Salinas must comply with the regulations, many of which are beyond the implementation control of City government and project developers. For example, in the transportation sector, the Pavley I and II standards and the Advanced Clean Car standards will result in improved transportation fuel efficiency. The gradual increased usage of electric cars powered with cleaner electricity will also reduce fossil fuel usage associated with transportation. In the building energy use sector, implementation of CALGreen and Title 24 building standards will reduce natural gas and electricity consumption.

City of Salinas General Plan

The City of Salinas General Plan includes a multitude of policies and programs which will directly and indirectly result in reduced energy consumption. Please refer to the Regulatory Setting section of Section 11, Greenhouse Gasses, under the discussion of the City of Salinas General Plan policies and implementation programs that would result in reduced GHG emissions and through so doing, reduce VMT/fuel consumption, electricity demand, and natural gas demand.

Energy Based GHG Mitigation Measure

To reduce the volume of GHG emissions from development within the project site, mitigation measure GHG-1 in this EIR requires that developers of all individual projects prepare GHG reduction plans for their individual projects. The plans must satisfy a performance standard intended to avoid significant effects and must include a range of reduction measures that focus on site based energy reduction. Implementation of the mitigation measure will result in reduced electricity and natural gas consumption, and potentially a minor reduction in vehicle fuel energy consumption. Please refer to Section 11, Greenhouse Gasses, for more information.

25.6 CONCLUSION

Future individual development projects within the project site will be required to comply with City of Salinas and state regulatory requirements for energy conservation and efficiency. If the City adopts a qualified GHG reduction plan at some point in the future (e.g., after completing an upcoming General Plan update), any new project proposed within the project site after the plan adoption date must also comply with energy consumption reduction measures included the plan. If a City-adopted GHG plan is not in place in time for development of the project site (which appears to be likely), the applicant would be required to comply with measures included in individual project GHG reduction plans per mitigation measure GHG-1. These requirements would assure that development of the project site would not directly or indirectly result in inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.
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26.0

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26.1 DOCUMENTS AND WEB SOURCES

This section provides the document and web sources referenced in the EIR. Sources are provided by section.

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Summary Sources


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Significant Adverse and Unavoidable Impacts


Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes


Growth Inducing Impacts


Alternatives


Energy


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