

# **McCann Operations Center Improvements Project**

## **Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration**



**Purissima Hills Water District**

**26375 Fremont Road  
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022**

**May 2025**



## Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration

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**Project:** McCann Operations Center Improvements Project

**Lead Agency/ Project Proponent:** Purissima Hills Water District

**Availability of Documents:** The Initial Study for this Mitigated Negative Declaration is available for review at:

Purissima Hills Water District  
26375 Fremont Road  
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

**Contact:** Tammy Rudock, Interim General Manager  
Purissima Hills Water District  
26375 Fremont Road,  
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022  
Phone: 650-387-6599

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Purissima Hills Water District (District) is implementing improvements to the McCann Operations Center, which houses the District's maintenance staff, parts inventory, and vehicles. Improvements include replacing the existing building with a new 2-story structure in approximately the same location as the existing operations center. The footprint of the new building extends into the hillside, which will require grading of the slope and the installation of a retaining wall. Improvements also include a new emergency generator (30kW), new 2,000-gallon above ground fuel tank that will have two separate internal fuel tanks, and covered storage area along the southern developed area of the site. Additionally, the project includes encroachment into an existing conservation easement.

The purpose of the project is to erect a facility that could withstand and remain operational after a seismic event, as the existing building was built in 1970, and a recent seismic evaluation determined that the building would not meet full compliance for ASCE 31 Tier 1 Life Safety Performance Criteria.

The District is the Lead Agency for the project.

### PROPOSED FINDINGS

The District has reviewed the attached Initial Study and determined that the Initial Study identifies potentially significant project effects, and that:

1. Revisions to the project plans incorporated herein as mitigation would avoid or mitigate the effects to a point where no significant effects would occur; and
2. There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15064(f)(3) and 15070(b), a Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for consideration as the appropriate CEQA document for the project.



## BASIS OF FINDINGS

Based on the environmental evaluation presented in the attached Initial Study, the project would not cause significant adverse effects related to air quality, aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, energy, geology/soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards/hazardous materials, land use/planning, mineral resources, noise, population/housing, public services, recreation, transportation, utilities/service systems, and wildfire. The project does not have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.

The environmental evaluation has determined that the project would have potentially significant impacts on biological, cultural, and tribal cultural resources as described below.

## MITIGATION MEASURES

The project could result in significant adverse effects to biological resources, cultural resources, and tribal cultural resources. However, the project has been revised to include the mitigation measures listed below, which reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level. With implementation of these mitigation measures, the project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment, reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. Nor would the project cause substantial adverse effects on humans, either directly or indirectly.

### Mitigation Measures Incorporated into the Project:

#### Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Pre-Construction Survey for White-Tailed Kites and Other Nesting Birds.

**Avoidance.** To the extent feasible, construction activities shall be scheduled between November and January to avoid the white-tailed kite nesting season (February-October) and general nesting bird season (February 1-September 15). If construction activities are scheduled to take place outside the white-tailed kite and general nesting bird season, all impacts to white-tailed kites and nesting birds protected under the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code would be avoided.

**Pre-Construction Surveys.** If it is not possible to schedule construction activities between November 1 and January 31, then a preconstruction survey for white-tailed kite and other nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests would be disturbed during project implementation. The survey shall be conducted no more than five days prior to the initiation of construction (including but not limited to mobilization and staging, clearing, grubbing, tree removal, vegetation removal, fence installation, demolition, and grading). If project activities are delayed by more than five days, an additional nesting bird survey shall be performed. During this survey, the biologist shall inspect all trees and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., trees, shrubs, buildings and other structures) in the impact area plus a 250-foot buffer for nests. Active nesting is present if a bird is building a nest, sitting in a nest, a nest has eggs or chicks in it, or adults are observed carrying food to the nest. The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If an active nest is found during the survey, the biologist shall determine the extent of a construction-free buffer zone to be established around the nest (typically up to 0.25 miles for white-tailed kites, 1,000 feet for other raptors, and 250 feet for other species), to ensure that no nests of species protected by the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code will be disturbed during project implementation. Within the buffer zone, no site disturbance and mobilization of heavy equipment, including but not limited to equipment staging, fence installation, clearing,



grubbing, vegetation removal, demolition, and grading shall be permitted until the chicks have fledged. Monitoring shall be required to ensure compliance with MBTA and relevant California Fish and Game Code requirements. Monitoring dates and findings shall be documented.

A qualified biologist is defined as a biologist that has a degree in biological sciences, or similar degree; a minimum of two years of experience in white-tailed kite and other nesting bird surveys with positive results; and must be able to identify the species and be familiar with nesting behavior of common and special-status bird species found in the project area.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Roosting Bat Protection.** Within 30 days before the start of construction at the project site (including but not limited to mobilization and staging, clearing, grubbing, tree removal, vegetation removal, fence installation, demolition, and grading), a qualified biologist shall survey the site and a 50-foot buffer for bat roosting habitat (large trees with cavities or exfoliating bark, structures with crevices, etc.). The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If bat roosting habitat and/or signs of bats (e.g., guano pellets or urine staining) are identified in the survey, a follow-up dusk emergence survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to the start of construction activities. A dusk survey will determine the number of bats present and shall also include the use of acoustic equipment to determine species of bats present. The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If roosting bats are detected, they shall be avoided with roost avoidance buffers, seasonal activity restrictions, or monitoring of roost locations. If an occupied maternity or colony roost is detected, CDFW shall be consulted to determine appropriate measures, such as the establishment of a no-disturbance buffer. Within the buffer zone, no site disturbance and mobilization of heavy equipment, including but not limited to equipment staging, fence installation, clearing, grubbing, vegetation removal, demolition, and grading shall be permitted. Monitoring shall be required to ensure compliance with relevant California Fish and Game Code requirements. Monitoring dates and findings shall be documented.

A qualified biologist is defined as a biologist that has a degree in biological sciences, or similar degree; has at least two years of experience conducting bat surveys that resulted in detections of species present in the project area; and is familiar with the types of equipment used to conduct surveys.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Protection of Heritage Oaks and Other Retained Trees.** The proposed project shall adhere to all recommendations in the Preliminary Arborist's Report prepared for the project (HortScience | Bartlett Consulting, 2023). These include a Tree Protection Zone enclosed by fencing and signs for each tree to be preserved, design recommendations to preserve the health of trees during and following construction, pre-demolition and pre-construction treatments and recommendations such as pruning dead branches, recommendations for tree protection during construction, and recommendations for maintenance of impacted trees following construction such as pruning and fertilization. Implementation of the recommendations shall be overseen by a certified arborist and shall be documented by the District or its contractor.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Resources.** The District should retain a Professional Archaeologist on an "on-call" basis during ground disturbing construction to review, identify and evaluate any potential cultural resources that may be inadvertently exposed during construction. The archaeologist shall review and evaluate any discoveries to determine if they are historical resource(s) and/or unique archaeological



resources under CEQA.

If the Professional Archaeologist determines that any cultural resources exposed during construction constitute a historical resource and/or unique archaeological resource under CEQA, he/she shall notify the District and other appropriate parties of the evaluation and recommend mitigation measures to mitigate to a less than significant impact in accordance with California Public Resources Code Section 15064.5. Mitigation measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, recordation, additional archaeological testing and data recovery among other options. The completion of a formal Archaeological Monitoring Plan (AMP) and/or Archaeological Treatment Plan (ATP) that may include data recovery may be recommended by the Professional Archaeologist if significant archaeological deposits are exposed during ground disturbing construction. Development and implementation of the AMP and ATP and treatment of significant cultural resources will be determined by the District in consultation with any regulatory agencies.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-2a: Construction Plans.** The Purissima Hills Water District (District) shall note the project plans that require ground disturbing excavation that there is a potential for exposing buried cultural resources including prehistoric Native American burials.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-2b: Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains.** In accordance with Section 7050.5, Chapter 1492 of the California Health and Safety Code and Sections 5097.94, 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code, if potential human remains are found, the lead agency (Purissima Hills Water District) staff and the Santa Clara County Coroner shall be immediately notified of the discovery. The coroner would provide a determination regarding the nature of the remains within 48 hours of notification. No further excavation or disturbance of the identified material, or any area reasonably suspected to overlie additional remains, can occur until a determination has been made. If the County Coroner determines that the remains are, or are believed to be, of Native American ancestry, the coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. In accordance with California Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98, the Native American Heritage Commission must immediately notify those persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant from the deceased Native American. Within 48 hours of this notification, the Most Likely Descendant would recommend to the lead agency their preferred treatment of the remains and associated grave goods. State law shall be followed in regard to Native American burials (Chapter 1492, Section 7050.5 to the Health and Safety Code, Sections 5097.94, 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code). This shall include immediate notification of the appropriate county Coroner/Medical Examiner and the District.



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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Photo Summary

Appendix B: CNDDB Special-Status Animal and Plant Species Table

Appendix C: Geotechnical Design Recommendations Memorandum



## Chapter 1. Project Information

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### 1.1 PROJECT TITLE

McCann Operations Center Improvements Project

### 1.2 LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS

Purissima Hills Water District  
26375 Fremont Road  
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

### 1.3 LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Tammy Rudock, Interim General Manager  
Purissima Hills Water District  
26375 Fremont Road  
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022  
[trudock@purissimawater.org](mailto:trudock@purissimawater.org)

### 1.4 PROJECT LOCATION

26451 Ascension Drive  
Los Altos Hills, California

### 1.5 PROJECT SPONSOR NAME AND ADDRESS

Same as Lead Agency

### 1.6 GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Residential

### 1.7 ZONING

R-A

### 1.8 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The McCann Operations Center, located at 26451 Ascension Drive in Los Altos Hills, Santa Clara County, houses the District's maintenance staff offices, parts inventory, and vehicles (see Figures 1 through 7). Due to the building's importance in day-to-day operations, the District designated it as an essential facility and as such is required to remain operational after a major seismic event. The existing 1-story 2,500-square foot McCann Operations Center was built in 1970. A recent seismic evaluation found the building would not meet full compliance for ASCE 31 Tier 1 Life Safety Performance Criteria. As an essential facility, the building needs to remain operational following a seismic event, therefore the project proposes replacing the existing building with a new 2-story structure in approximately the same location as the existing



operations center. The footprint of the new building extends into the hillside, which will require grading of the slope and the installation of a retaining wall (see Figures 8, 9, and 10). Encroachment into the slope requires utilizing land that is currently within a conservation easement. The District would adjust the limits of the easement to allow the new building construction. The current conservation easement is approximately 27,180 square feet. Temporary encroachment into the conservation easement during construction would cover approximately 2,500 square feet. The amended permanent conservation easement would be approximately 22,690 square feet.

The site plan also shows a new 30-kilowatt (kW) emergency generator, new 2,000-gallon above ground fuel tank, and covered storage area along the southern developed area of the site. The new fuel tank will have two separate internal fuel tanks, one for gasoline (500 gallons) and the other for diesel (1,500 gallons). Both fuel tanks are surrounded by an internal secondary containment system, which would then be encased with 8 inches of concrete. The tank would be placed on an external containment slab which is another safety measure in case of spillage while fueling vehicles.

A six-foot high solid wooden fence would be installed along the west and north property lines and replacement tree plantings would be provided in the northwest corner of the site (see Figure 11).

Project demolition plans show the following:

- Grading, clearing and grubbing along the southwest slope on the property.
- Removal of 32 trees including 17 coast redwoods, 14 coast live oaks, and 1 valley oak tree.
- Removal of an existing wireless telecommunications antenna (by a separate entity) and associated equipment.
- Grading and removal of some fencing along Ascension Drive to allow for a future second driveway.
- Removal of an existing equipment shed and abandonment of an existing below ground fuel tank.

Project plans show the project would require approximately 2,700 cubic yards of cut and off-haul.

Construction hours are proposed as 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Construction is not planned for the weekends. Construction is anticipated to begin in March 2026 and end in April 2027.

### Site Location and Features

The project site is located at 26451 Ascension Drive in Los Altos Hills, Santa Clara County, in an area of large-lot single-family homes. The property (APN 175-53-030) is 64,758 square feet (sf) or approximately 1.5 acres in size. The site is predominantly flat, with a steep brush covered slope rising from the southern property boundary. The adjacent property to the south sits at approximately 40 feet above the elevation of the project site.



Existing site features include:

- An entrance driveway with screened and gated entrance off Ascension Drive,
- Pump house,
- 0.1 million- gallon (MG) tank,
- Telecommunications equipment and antenna,
- Storage shed,
- Fueling pump,
- 1.0 MG water tank,
- 2,500 square foot single story operations center building,
- Materials storage bays, and
- Conservation easement along portions of the eastern and western and entirety of the southern property boundary.

## **1.9 SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING**

Properties surrounding the project site consist of large-lot single-family home developments. The property to the south of the site is situated on a vegetated slope above the project site. The single-family parcels to the west, east, and north of the project site are at generally the same elevation as the developed flat portion of the project site.

## **1.10 OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL IS REQUIRED**

Pursuant to the County Water District Law (Cal. Water Code §30000 et seq.), the Purissima Hills Water District is empowered to "hold, use, enjoy, lease or dispose of property within or without the district necessary to the full exercise of its powers" (Section 31041). In addition, the law allows water districts to "construct, purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire works, water rights, land, and privileges useful or necessary to convey, supply, store, or otherwise make use of water for any purposes authorized by this division." (Section 31042) and may perform "construction or other work performed by contract or under its own superintendence" (Section 31005), among other powers. However, the District is engaging in the Conditional Use Permit process with the Town of Los Altos for the proposed development.

## **1.11 TRIBAL CONSULTATION**

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

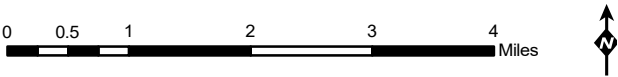
No Native American Tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area have requested consultation with the Purissima Hills Water District or the Town of Los Altos Hills.





Source: Esri 2024

★ Project Location



**Figure 1 Regional Location**  
McCann Operations Center Improvements Project





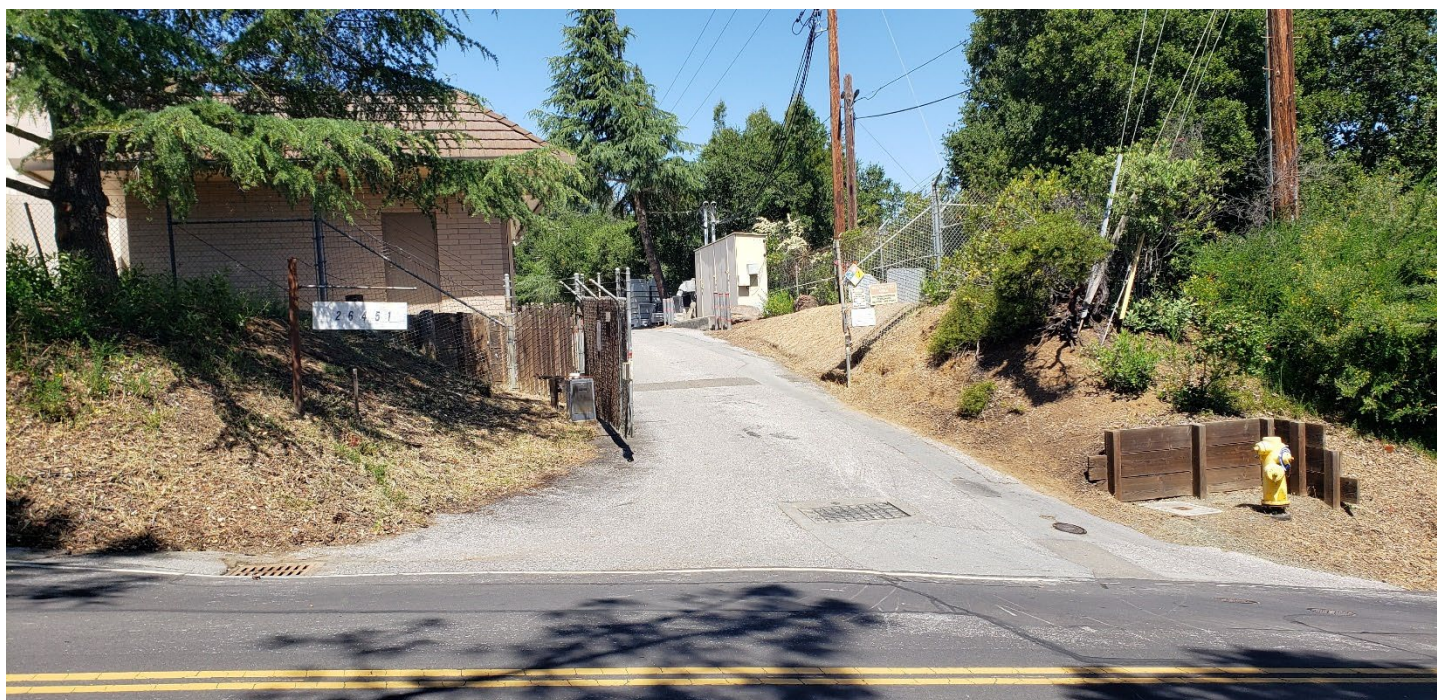
Source: Google Earth 2024

 Project Boundary

**Figure 2 Project Site**

*McCann Operations Center Improvements Project*





**Photograph 1:** View of the site driveway looking west.



**Photograph 2:** View of the slope behind the existing operations center looking southwest.

**Figure 3** Photographs of Site  
*McCann Operations Center Improvements Project*





**Photograph 3:** View of the existing operations center looking southwest.



**Photograph 4:** View of the western property boundary looking south (behind the western portion of the existing operations center)





**Photograph 5:** Area to the west of material bins, looking north.



**Photograph 6:** View of existing telecommunications tower and equipment looking southeast.





**Photograph 7:** View of area south of existing 1MG tank and existing operations center looking west.



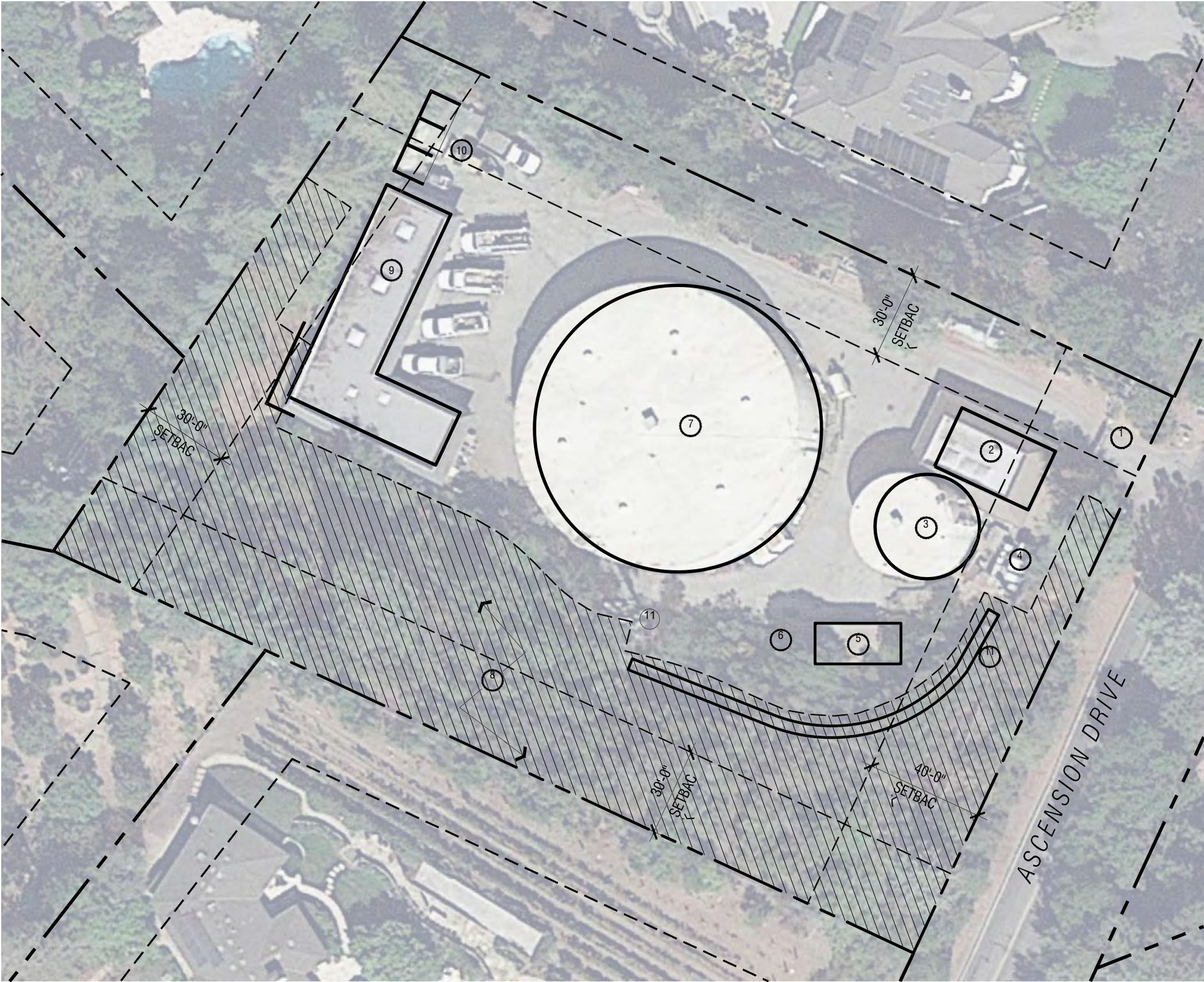
**Photograph 8:** View of the area of the proposed new driveway from Ascension Drive looking west.





**Photograph 9:** Aerial drone view of the site looking west.





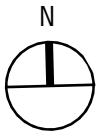
Source: Ten Over Studio Inc. 2021

ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN LEGEND

- PROPERTY LINE
- SETBACK
- (E) CONSERVATION EASEMENT BOUNDARY

KEYNOTES

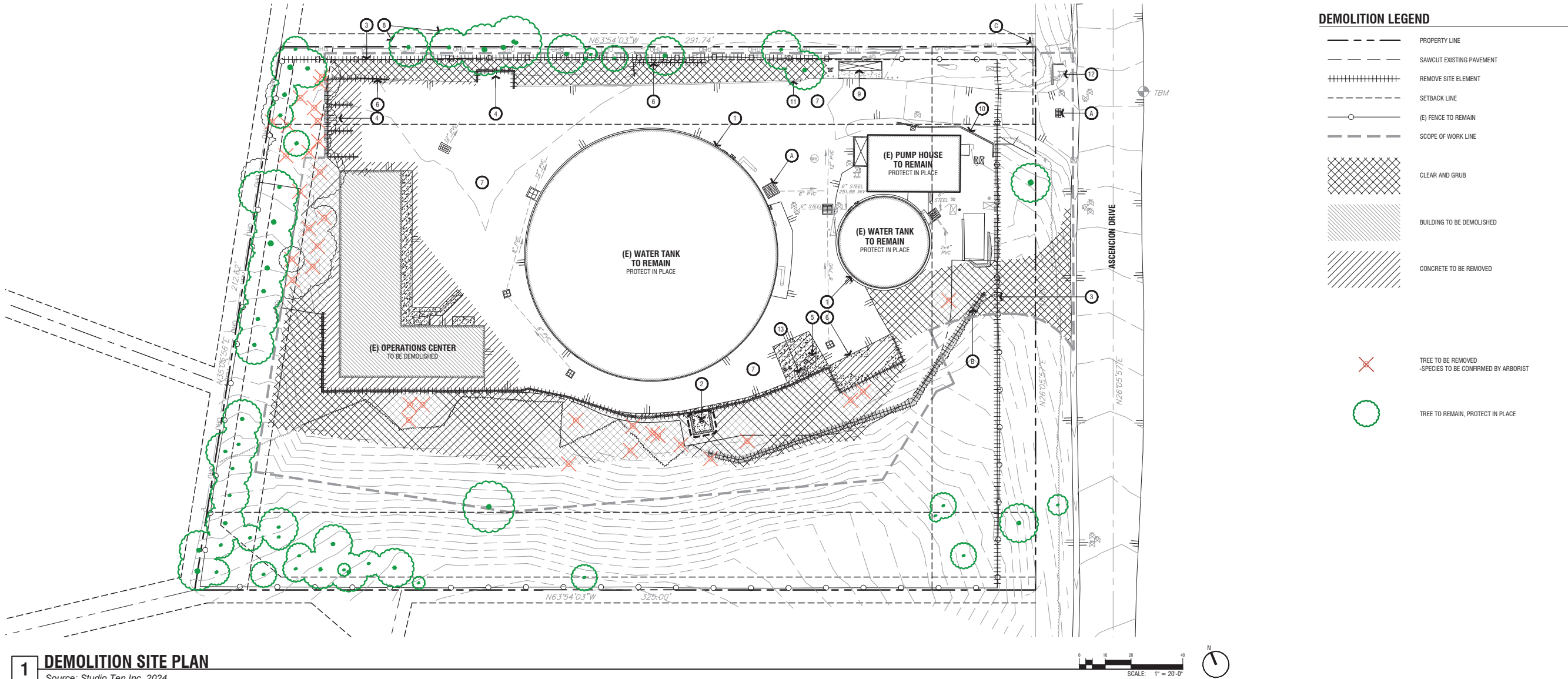
- (E) SITE ENTRANCE AND EXIT TO REMAIN
- (E) PUMP HOUSE TO REMAIN
- (E) 0.1 MG TANK TO REMAIN
- (E) AT&T EQUIPMENT TO REMAIN
- (E) STORAGE SHED TO BE DEMOLISHED
- (E) FUEL PUMP TO REMAIN
- (E) 1.0 MG TANK TO REMAIN
- (E) CONSERVATION EASEMENT AREA TO BE ALTERED
- (E) MAINTENANCE BUILDING TO BE DEMOLISHED
- (E) MATERIALS STORAGE BINS TO REMAIN
- (E) COMMUNICATION TOWER TO REMAIN



SCALE: 1" = 40'-0"

Figure 8 Existing Site Plan  
McCann Operations Center Improvements Project





TREES TO BE REMOVED

TREE ASSESSMENT NOTES FROM ARBORIST, REFER TO ARBORIST REPORT FOR MORE INFORMATION

NO.	SPECIES	TRUNK DIA. (IN.)	HERITAGE OAK?	CONDITION 0=DEAD 5=EXCELLENT	NOTES
19	COAST REDWOOD	6	NO	0	TREE IS DEAD
21	COAST REDWOOD	7	NO	0	TREE IS DEAD
22	COAST REDWOOD	8	NO	0	TREE IS DEAD
23	COAST REDWOOD	17	NO	2	OUTSIDE OF GRADING
24	COAST REDWOOD	11	NO	1	OUTSIDE OF GRADING
26	COAST REDWOOD	8	NO	3	WITHIN BIORETENTION BASIN FOOTPRINT
27	COAST REDWOOD	8	NO	3	WITHIN BIORETENTION BASIN FOOTPRINT
28	COAST REDWOOD	9	NO	0	TREE IS DEAD
30	COAST REDWOOD	26	NO	3	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
31	COAST REDWOOD	22	NO	4	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
35	COAST REDWOOD	7	NO	2	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
36	COAST REDWOOD	10	NO	2	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
37	COAST REDWOOD	14	NO	3	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
38	COAST REDWOOD	13	NO	2	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
39	COAST REDWOOD	15	NO	2	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
40	COAST REDWOOD	11	NO	4	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING

Removing:  
17 redwoods (4 are dead, 1 is rated a 1)  
15 oaks (none are heritage oaks)

Trees that have been marked to remain since the study session:  
4 redwoods  
2 oaks  
8 cedars  
14 TOTAL

TREE ASSESSMENT NOTES FROM ARBORIST (CONTINUED)

NO.	SPECIES	TRUNK DIA. (IN.)	HERITAGE OAK?	CONDITION 0=DEAD 5=EXCELLENT	NOTES
43	COAST REDWOOD	18	NO	2	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
75	COAST LIVE OAK	8, 6	NO	3	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
76	COAST LIVE OAK	8	NO	3	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
77	COAST LIVE OAK	8	NO	2	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
78	VALLEY OAK	6	NO	2	ADJACENT TO DEMOLITION, GRADING
79	COAST LIVE OAK	6	NO	3	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
80	COAST LIVE OAK	6	NO	3	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
81	COAST LIVE OAK	8,7,4	NO	3	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
82	COAST LIVE OAK	6	NO	3	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
83	COAST LIVE OAK	9,6,4	NO	3	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
84	COAST LIVE OAK	8	NO	3	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
85	COAST LIVE OAK	6	NO	2	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
86	COAST LIVE OAK	8	NO	3	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
87	COAST LIVE OAK	8	NO	2	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
88	COAST LIVE OAK	7	NO	2	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT
89	COAST LIVE OAK	6	NO	2	WITHIN BUILDING FOOTPRINT

DEMOLITION LEGEND

- PROPERTY LINE
- SAWCUT EXISTING PAVEMENT
- REMOVE SITE ELEMENT
- SETBACK LINE
- (E) FENCE TO REMAIN
- SCOPE OF WORK LINE
- CLEAR AND GRUB
- BUILDING TO BE DEMOLISHED
- CONCRETE TO BE REMOVED
- TREE TO BE REMOVED  
-SPECIES TO BE CONFIRMED BY ARBORIST
- TREE TO REMAIN, PROTECT IN PLACE

DEMOLITION KEYNOTES

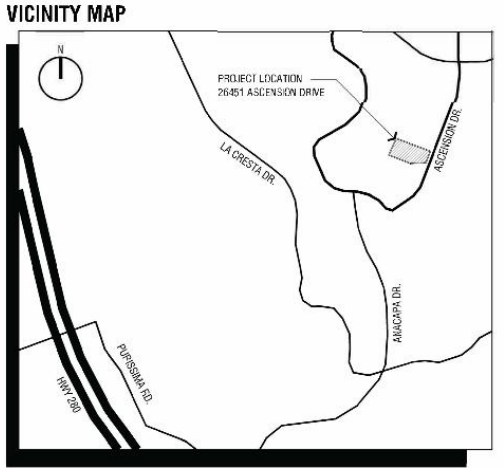
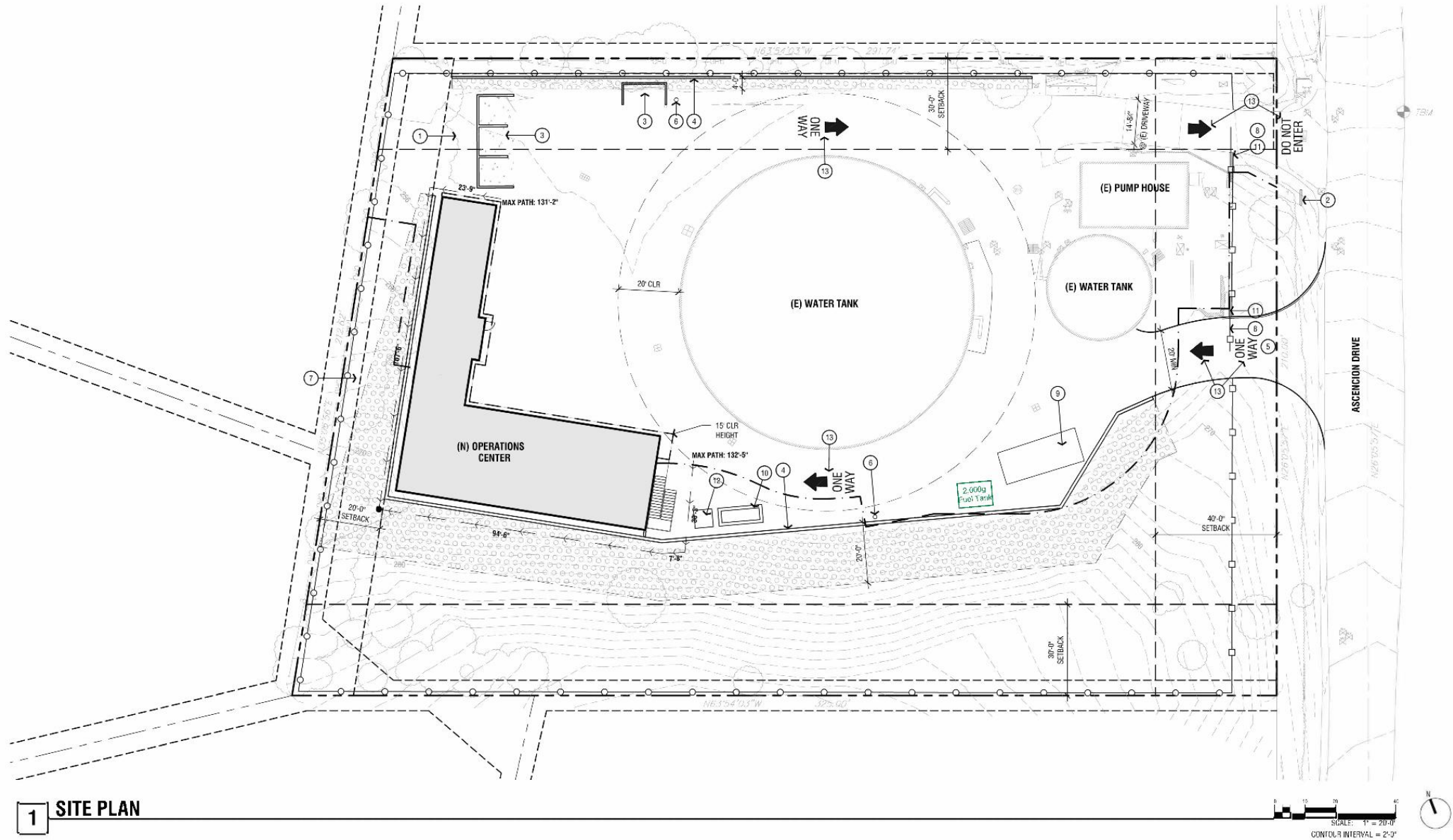
- EXISTING WATER TANK CONCRETE FOOTING & CURB TO REMAIN, PROTECT IN PLACE
- EXISTING RADIO ANTENNAE DEMOLITION, SALVAGE, AND RELOCATION WORK TO BE COMPLETED BY AT&T. LOCATION TO BE DETERMINED.
- REMOVE EXISTING PORTION OF FENCE
- EXISTING MATERIAL STORAGE BAYS STRUCTURE, FOOTINGS, AND PAVEMENT TO BE REMOVED
- EXISTING UNDERGROUND FUEL TANK TO BE EMPTIED, ABANDONED IN PLACE AND FILLED WITH GRAVEL
- EXISTING SHED STRUCTURE, FOOTINGS, AND PAVEMENT TO BE REMOVED
- EXISTING CONCRETE TO REMAIN, PROTECT IN PLACE
- EXISTING HERITAGE TREES, PROTECT IN PLACE. NO WORK SHALL OCCUR WITH CANOPY DRIPLINES UNLESS APPROVED BY PROJECT ARBORIST
- EXISTING MAIN SWITCHGEAR TO REMAIN, PROTECT IN PLACE
- EXISTING RETAINING WALL TO REMAIN, PROTECT IN PLACE
- EXISTING CONCRETE CURB TO BE REMOVED
- EXISTING FIRE HYDRANT TO REMAIN, PROTECT IN PLACE
- EXISTING FUELING STATION TO BE REMOVED

UTILITY DEMOLITION KEYNOTES

- PROTECT IN PLACE EXISTING SDDs & UNDERGROUND PIPING, TYP. U.I.N.O. ON THE CIVIL PLANS. REFER TO CIVIL PLANS FOR MORE INFORMATION, SALVAGE AND RESET AS NEEDED
- AT&T CONDUITS TO BE REMOVED, WORK TO BE COMPLETED BY AT&T
- EXISTING OVERHEAD POWER LINES TO REMAIN AND BE PROTECTED IN PLACE

Figure 9 Site and Demolition Plan  
McCann Operations Center Improvements Project





ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN LEGEND	
	PROPERTY LINE
	CONSERVATION EASEMENT BOUNDARY
	SETBACK LINE
	(E) FENCE
	(N) FENCE - PAINTED TO MEET TOWN CODE
	(N) CONCRETE W/ PERMEABLE BASE
	(N) SOIL NAIL ZONE OF INFLUENCE
	(N) ASPHALT
	(N) LANDSCAPED AREA
	(N) CONCRETE
	(N) BUILDING
	TREE TO REMAIN, PROTECT IN PLACE

### GENERAL NOTES

1. REFER TO CIVIL PLANS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.
2. REFER TO LANDSCAPE PLANS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.
3. REFER TO ELECTRICAL PLANS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.
4. REFER TO MECHANICAL PLANS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.
5. REFER TO PLUMBING PLANS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.
6. CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROTECTION OF ALL UTILITY SERVICES DURING CONSTRUCTION.
7. CONTRACTOR IS TO CONFIRM (E) GRADES WHERE THE ACCESSIBLE PATH OF TRAVEL IS PROPOSED.
8. CONTRACTOR SHALL REPAIR OR REPLACE ALL ITEMS DAMAGED DURING CONSTRUCTION TO THEIR ORIGINAL CONDITION OR TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE OWNER.
9. BIDDERS ARE REQUIRED TO VISIT THE SITE AND VERIFY CONDITIONS PRIOR TO SUBMITTING BID.
10. THE SITE WORK ITEMS SHOWN MAY NOT REPRESENT ALL ITEMS WHICH MAY REQUIRE CONSTRUCTION. IT SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CONTRACTOR TO CAREFULLY EXAMINE THE SITE AND UNDERSTAND WHAT MAY BE REQUIRED FOR THE PROPER EXECUTION AND COMPLETION OF THE WORK.
11. ALL PROPERTY LINES, EASEMENTS, AND BUILDINGS, EXISTING AND PROPOSED, ARE SHOWN ON THIS SITE PLAN AND THE CIVIL DRAWINGS.
12. ALL CONSTRUCTION SITES MUST COMPLY WITH APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE CFC CHAPTER 33 AND STANDARD DETAIL AND SPECIFICATION S1-7, CFC CH.F. 33.
13. ADDRESS NUMBERS TO COMPLY WITH CFC SEC. 505.1
14. PLANTS SELECTED FOR THE BIORETENTION AREA SHALL COMPLY WITH THE "PLANT LIST AND PLANTING GUIDANCE FOR LANDSCAPE BASED STORMWATER MEASURES (APPENDIX D)" OF THE SCDWRPPP C-3 HANDBOOK.
15. ALL CURBS TO BE PAINTED RED.
16. THE ALL-WEATHER FIRE ACCESS ROAD TO BE A MINIMUM OF 20' IN WIDTH. THE BOUNDARY FOR ALL WEATHER FIRE ACCESS ROAD TO BE A PAINTED RED STRIP ON THE PAVEMENT TO IDENTIFY THE CLEAR AREA.

### SITE INFO

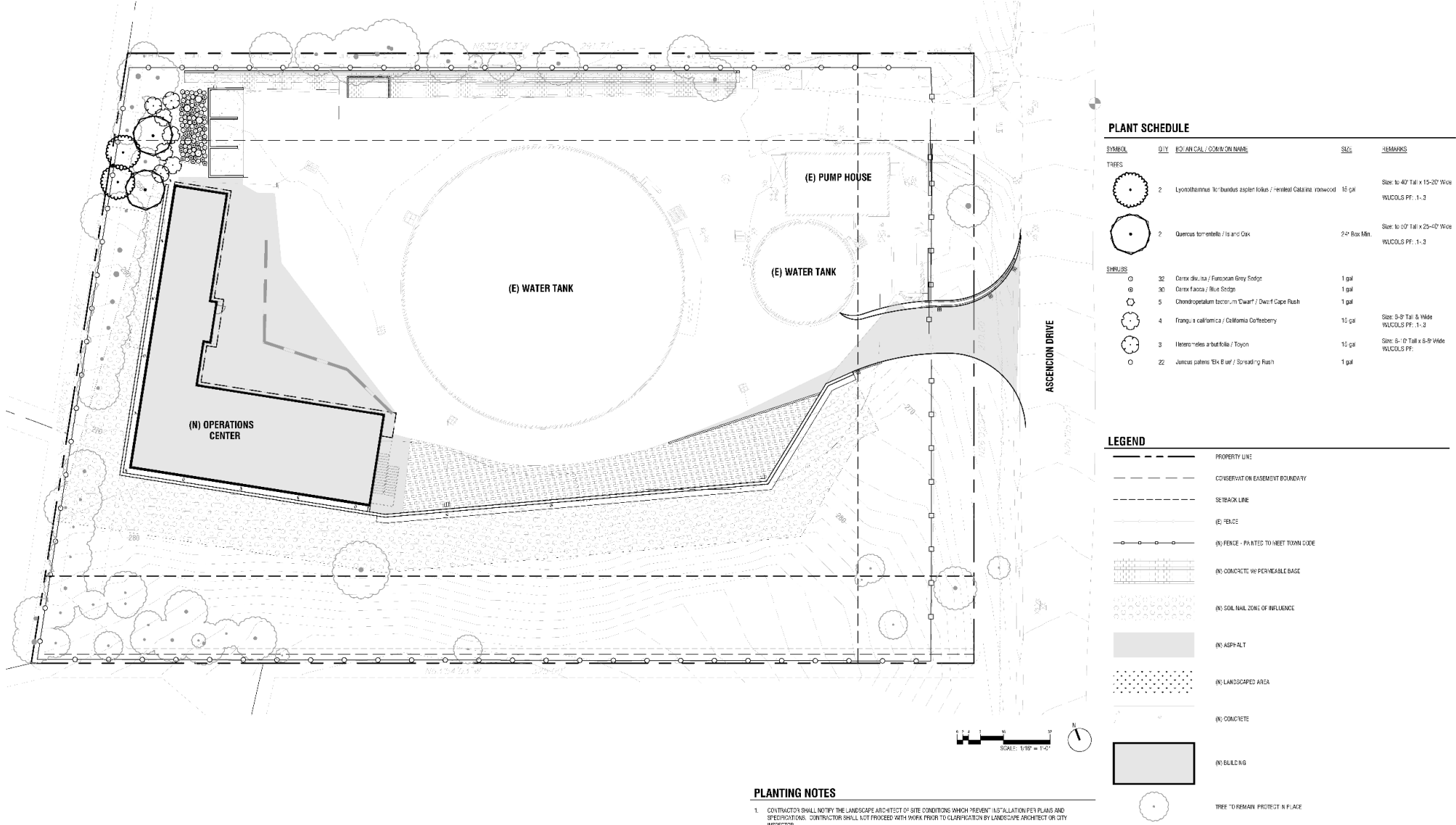
#### KEYNOTES

1. (N) BIORETENTION PLANTER
2. (N) ADDRESS SIGN
3. (N) MATERIAL STORAGE BAYS
4. (N) RETAINING WALL
5. (N) DRIVEWAY APRON
6. (N) POLE MOUNTED SITE LIGHTING
7. (E) SEWER LINE LOCATION TO BE IDENTIFIED AND COORDINATED
8. (N) AUTOMATIC SLIDING GATE AND OPERATOR
9. (N) COVERED STORAGE
10. (N) GENERATOR LOCATION
11. KNOX BOX
12. CONDENSING UNIT
13. PAINTED TRAFFIC DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE ON PAVEMENT

Figure 10 Proposed Site Plan

McCann Operations Center Improvements Project





**Figure 11 Landscape Plan**  
McCann Operations Center Improvements Project



## Chapter 2. Standard Measures and Summary of Findings

### 2.1 STANDARD DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION MEASURES

The proposed project would be implemented consistent with all relevant federal, state, regional, and local regulations aimed at preventing or reducing environmental impacts. Table 2-1 lists the Standard Designs and Construction Measures that have been incorporated into the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed project to minimize the potential adverse effects of the project on the surrounding community and the environment. These Standard Design and Construction Measures will be included in project construction drawings and/or specifications and as such are considered a part of the project and are not considered mitigation measures.

Table 2.1-1: Standard Design and Construction Measures	
Resource Area	Standard Design and Construction Measure
Air Quality	<p><b>Fugitive Dust</b> – To reduce potential fugitive dust that may be generated by project construction activities, the District or its contractor shall implement the following BAAQMD basic construction measures when they are appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All active construction areas will be watered twice daily or more often if necessary. Increased watering frequency will be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 miles-per-hour.</li> <li>• Cover stockpiles of debris, soil, sand, and any other materials that can be windblown. Trucks transporting these materials will be covered.</li> <li>• All visible mud or dirt track-out onto adjacent public roads will be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day or as often as necessary to keep them free of dust and debris associated with site construction. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited. Subsequent to clearing, grading, or excavating, exposed portions of the site will be watered, landscaped, treated with soil stabilizers, or covered as soon as possible. Hydroseed or apply (nontoxic) soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas and previously graded areas inactive for 10 days or more.</li> <li>• Installation of sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways.</li> <li>• Replanting of vegetation in disturbed areas as soon as possible after completion of construction.</li> </ul>



<b>Table 2.1-1: Standard Design and Construction Measures</b>	
<b>Resource Area</b>	<b>Standard Design and Construction Measure</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idling times will be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to five minutes. Clear signage will be provided for construction workers at all access points.</li> <li>• All construction equipment will be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. All equipment will be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.</li> <li>• Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact at the District regarding dust complaints. This person will respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The BAAQMD's phone number will also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>Geology/Paleontological Resources</b>	<p><b>Paleontological Resources:</b> The following measures shall be applied to development of the project site to reduce and/or avoid impacts to paleontological resources:</p> <p>If vertebrate fossils or other paleontological resources are discovered during construction, all work on the site shall stop immediately until a qualified professional paleontologist can assess the nature and importance of the find and recommend appropriate treatment. Treatment may include preparation and recovery of fossil materials so that they can be housed in an appropriate museum or university collection and may also include preparation of a report for publication describing the finds. The District's Project Manager or other suitable representative shall be responsible for submitting the paleontologist's report to the General Manager and implementing the recommendations of the qualified professional paleontologist. The representative shall submit a report to the General Manager indicating how the paleontologist's recommendations were complied with as soon as all measures have been incorporated into the project.</p>
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality</b>	Standard construction BMPs to be implemented include hazardous and non-hazardous materials management and spill prevention and control measures, vehicle and equipment maintenance and cleaning, earthwork and contaminated soil



<b>Table 2.1-1: Standard Design and Construction Measures</b>	
<b>Resource Area</b>	<b>Standard Design and Construction Measure</b>
	management measures (use of inlet protection, erosion and sediment controls), use of on-site truck wash out areas, and good housekeeping measures (pavement sweeping, catch basin cleaning). Post-construction or operational BMPs include bioretention areas and the use of concrete with permeable base rock material.
<b>Noise</b>	<p><b>Construction Noise</b> – Town of Los Altos Hills Municipal Code Section 5-6.02 limits allowable construction work periods to the hours of 8:00 am to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, unless a permit has been issued for work on Saturday.</p> <p>Construction hours are proposed as 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Construction is not planned on the weekends.</p>
<b>Transportation</b>	<p><b>Purissima Hills Water District Standard Specifications (March 2024)</b></p> <p><b>1.07 TRAFFIC CONTROL PLAN</b></p> <p>A. The Contractor shall notify the Town of Los Altos Hills, the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District, the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department, and the County of Santa Clara Roads and Airports (if applicable) at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance whenever lane closures are planned. Such notification shall include the details and location of such closure, its anticipated duration, and traffic control and signing to be used during such closure.</p>

## 2.2 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### Aesthetics

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

### Agricultural and Forestry Resources

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

### Air Quality

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

### Biological Resources



Implementation of the following mitigation measures would ensure impacts are less than significant.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Pre-Construction Survey for White-Tailed Kites and Other Nesting Birds.**

*Avoidance.* To the extent feasible, construction activities shall be scheduled between November and January to avoid the white-tailed kite nesting season (February-October) and general nesting bird season (February 1-September 15). If construction activities are scheduled to take place outside the white-tailed kite and general nesting bird season, all impacts to white-tailed kites and nesting birds protected under the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code would be avoided.

*Pre-Construction Surveys.* If it is not possible to schedule construction activities between November 1 and January 31, then a preconstruction survey for white-tailed kite and other nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests would be disturbed during project implementation. The survey shall be conducted no more than five days prior to the initiation of construction (including but not limited to mobilization and staging, clearing, grubbing, tree removal, vegetation removal, fence installation, demolition, and grading). If project activities are delayed by more than five days, an additional nesting bird survey shall be performed. During this survey, the biologist shall inspect all trees and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., trees, shrubs, buildings and other structures) in the impact area plus a 250-foot buffer for nests. Active nesting is present if a bird is building a nest, sitting in a nest, a nest has eggs or chicks in it, or adults are observed carrying food to the nest. The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If an active nest is found during the survey, the biologist shall determine the extent of a construction-free buffer zone to be established around the nest (typically up to 0.25 mile for white-tailed kites, 1,000 feet for other raptors, and 250 feet for other species), to ensure that no nests of species protected by the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code will be disturbed during project implementation. Within the buffer zone, no site disturbance and mobilization of heavy equipment, including but not limited to equipment staging, fence installation, clearing, grubbing, vegetation removal, demolition, and grading shall be permitted until the chicks have fledged. Monitoring shall be required to ensure compliance with MBTA and relevant California Fish and Game Code requirements. Monitoring dates and findings shall be documented.

A qualified biologist is defined as a biologist that has a degree in biological sciences, or similar degree; a minimum of two years of experience in white-tailed kite and other nesting bird surveys with positive results; and must be able to identify the species and be familiar with nesting behavior of common and special-status bird species found in the project area.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Roosting Bat Protection.** Within 30 days before the start of construction at the project site (including but not limited to mobilization and staging, clearing, grubbing, tree removal, vegetation removal, fence installation, demolition, and grading), a qualified biologist shall survey the site and a 50-foot buffer for bat roosting



habitat (large trees with cavities or exfoliating bark, structures with crevices, etc.). The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If bat roosting habitat and/or signs of bats (e.g., guano pellets or urine staining) are identified in the survey, a follow-up dusk emergence survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to the start of construction activities. A dusk survey will determine the number of bats present and shall also include the use of acoustic equipment to determine species of bats present. The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If roosting bats are detected, they shall be avoided with roost avoidance buffers, seasonal activity restrictions, or monitoring of roost locations. If an occupied maternity or colony roost is detected, CDFW shall be consulted to determine appropriate measures, such as the establishment of a no-disturbance buffer. Within the buffer zone, no site disturbance and mobilization of heavy equipment, including but not limited to equipment staging, fence installation, clearing, grubbing, vegetation removal, demolition, and grading shall be permitted. Monitoring shall be required to ensure compliance with relevant California Fish and Game Code requirements. Monitoring dates and findings shall be documented.

A qualified biologist is defined as a biologist that has a degree in biological sciences, or similar degree; has at least two years of experience conducting bat surveys that resulted in detections of species present in the project area; and is familiar with the types of equipment used to conduct surveys.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Protection of Heritage Oaks and Other Retained Trees.**

The proposed project shall adhere to all recommendations in the Preliminary Arborist's Report prepared for the project (HortScience | Bartlett Consulting, 2023). These include a Tree Protection Zone enclosed by fencing and signs for each tree to be preserved, design recommendations to preserve the health of trees during and following construction, pre-demolition and pre-construction treatments and recommendations such as pruning dead branches, recommendations for tree protection during construction, and recommendations for maintenance of impacted trees following construction such as pruning and fertilization. Implementation of the recommendations shall be overseen by a certified arborist and shall be documented by the District or its contractor.

Cultural Resources

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would ensure impacts are less than significant.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Resources.** The District should retain a Professional Archaeologist on an "on-call" basis during ground disturbing construction to review, identify and evaluate any potential cultural resources that may be inadvertently exposed during construction. The archaeologist shall review and evaluate any discoveries to determine if they are historical resource(s) and/or unique archaeological resources under CEQA.



If the Professional Archaeologist determines that any cultural resources exposed during construction constitute a historical resource and/or unique archaeological resource under CEQA, he/she shall notify the District and other appropriate parties of the evaluation and recommend mitigation measures to mitigate to a less than significant impact in accordance with California Public Resources Code Section 15064.5. Mitigation measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, recordation, additional archaeological testing and data recovery among other options. The completion of a formal Archaeological Monitoring Plan (AMP) and/or Archaeological Treatment Plan (ATP) that may include data recovery may be recommended by the Professional Archaeologist if significant archaeological deposits are exposed during ground disturbing construction. Development and implementation of the AMP and ATP and treatment of significant cultural resources will be determined by the District in consultation with any regulatory agencies.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-2a: Construction Plans.** The Purissima Hills Water District (District) shall note the project plans that require ground disturbing excavation that there is a potential for exposing buried cultural resources<sup>1</sup> including prehistoric Native American burials.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-2b: Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains.** In accordance with Section 7050.5, Chapter 1492 of the California Health and Safety Code and Sections 5097.94, 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code, if potential human remains are found, the lead agency (Purissima Hills Water District) staff and the Santa Clara County Coroner shall be immediately notified of the discovery. The coroner would provide a determination regarding the nature of the remains within 48 hours of notification. No further excavation or disturbance of the identified material, or any area reasonably suspected to overlie additional remains, can occur until a determination has been made. If the County

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<sup>1</sup> Significant prehistoric cultural resources are defined as human burials, features or other clusterings of finds made, modified or used by Native American peoples in the past. The prehistoric and protohistoric indicators of prior cultural occupation by Native Americans include artifacts and human bone, as well as soil discoloration, shell, animal bone, sandstone cobbles, ashy areas, and baked or vitrified clays. Prehistoric materials may include:

- a. Human bone - either isolated or intact burials.
- b. Habitation (occupation or ceremonial structures as interpreted from rock rings/features, distinct ground depressions, differences in compaction (e.g., house floors).
- c. Artifacts including chipped stone objects such as projectile points and bifaces; groundstone artifacts such as manos, metates, mortars, pestles, grinding stones, pitted hammerstones; and, shell and bone artifacts including ornaments and beads.
- d. Various features and samples including hearths (fire-cracked rock; baked and vitrified clay), artifact caches, faunal and shellfish remains (which permit dietary reconstruction), distinctive changes in soil stratigraphy indicative of prehistoric activities.
- e. Isolated artifacts

Historic cultural materials may include finds from the late 19th through early 20th centuries. Objects and features associated with the Historic Period can include.

- a. Structural remains or portions of foundations (bricks, cobbles/boulders, stacked field stone, postholes, etc.).
- b. Trash pits, privies, wells and associated artifacts.
- c. Isolated artifacts or isolated clusters of manufactured artifacts (e.g., glass bottles, metal cans, manufactured wood items, etc.).
- d. Human remains.

In addition, cultural materials including both artifacts and structures that can be attributed to Hispanic, Asian and other ethnic or racial groups are potentially significant. Such features or clusters of artifacts and samples include remains of structures, trash pits, and privies.



Coroner determines that the remains are, or are believed to be, of Native American ancestry, the coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. In accordance with California Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98, the Native American Heritage Commission must immediately notify those persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant from the deceased Native American. Within 48 hours of this notification, the Most Likely Descendant would recommend to the lead agency their preferred treatment of the remains and associated grave goods.

State law shall be followed in regard to Native American burials (Chapter 1492, Section 7050.5 to the Health and Safety Code, Sections 5097.94, 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code). This shall include immediate notification of the appropriate county Coroner/Medical Examiner and the District.

#### Energy

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Geology and Soils

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Hazards and Hazardous Materials

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Hydrology and Water Quality

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Land Use and Planning

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Mineral Resources

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Noise

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Population and Housing

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Public Services

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

#### Recreation

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.



*Standard Measures and Summary of Findings*

*Page 22*

Transportation

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2a and CUL-2b listed above would ensure impacts are less than significant.

Utilities and Service Systems

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.

Wildfire

No significant impacts have been identified; no mitigation is necessary.



**2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALY AFFECTED**

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

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



## 2.4 DETERMINATION: (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LEAD AGENCY)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

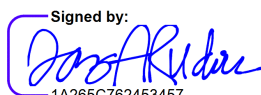
- ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Tammy Rudock

Interim General Manager

Printed Name

Title

Signed by:  
  
1A265C76245345Z

5/7/2025

Signature

Date



## Chapter 3. Environmental Checklist and Responses

### 3.1 Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:*</i>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
*Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099				

#### 3.1.1 Environmental Setting

The project is located in the Town of Los Altos Hills. Typical development in the areas near the proposed improvements include single-family residences on large lots. Views are generally scenic in the area owing to the sparse development and abundant vegetation (landscaping and natural), and nearby hills. Views of the site from Ascension Drive include the screened chain-link driveway fence, equipment building and intermittent views of the existing 1 MG water tank behind roadway vegetation (See Figures 3 through 7 for relevant site photos).

##### Scenic Highway Corridors

The California Scenic Highway Program (Streets and Highway Code, Sections 260 through 263) is managed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The program is intended to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment.



There are no state-designated Scenic Highways within the Town. The nearest official state-designated Scenic Highway is State Route 35, located approximately 5.2 miles southwest of the project site. Interstate 280 (I-280), located approximately 0.5 miles west of the project site, is eligible for Scenic Highway Status, but does not have an official state designation.

### 3.1.2 Regulatory Setting

#### Town of Los Altos Hills

Article 10 of Title 10 Chapter 2 of the Site Development Ordinance outlines criteria for outdoor lighting. In particular, Section 10-2.1005 indicates that outdoor lighting should use “the minimum wattage lights which would safely illuminate the area” and that outdoor light sources “shall be shielded so as not to be directly visible from off-site.” Goal IV (C3) of the Fast-Track Guide for New Residences suggests that exterior lights be carefully placed to prevent light from shining onto neighboring houses. The Zoning and Site Development Ordinances limit lighting within the property line setbacks to “driveway light fixtures, limited to one fixture on each side of a driveway, for a maximum of two (2) fixtures per lot,” but additional fixtures may be approved if necessary for safety.

### 3.1.3 Impact Discussion

*Would the project:*

#### **a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** For purposes of determining significance under CEQA, a scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the public. Many of the roadway alignments in the project area contain scenic vistas of rolling grassy hillsides and oak woodlands.

The project proposes vegetation removal along Ascension Drive to accommodate a new driveway to the site, however the new driveway would not be a significant impact to views from the roadway as driveways are common in this urban area. The new fencing would be similar to the existing site driveway fencing and would be screened to limit views into the site.

The District placed story poles on the existing Operations Center and took photos from off-site viewpoints which show existing topography, vegetation, and development blocking views of the proposed new operations center (see Appendix A). The proposed operations building would be located along the interior of the site on the western and southern property boundaries that abut adjacent residential properties and away from the public views from Ascension Drive. Views of the new operations building from Ascension Drive would be blocked by the District’s existing equipment building and 0.1 MG and 1 MG water tanks and existing and proposed driveway screened fencing.

Additional tree removal is proposed along the western and southern property boundaries, however existing vegetation on the District’s and adjoining properties would remain to block views of the project site and facilities from off-site locations.



Construction activities would be short-term and temporary, and all construction equipment and signage would be removed from the project site following the end of construction.

As described above, many roadway alignments in the project area contain scenic vistas of rolling grassy hillsides and oak woodlands. The proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on such scenic vistas because 1) the project site is already developed with buildings, water tanks and parking areas and is surrounding by residential development, and 2) there are no rolling grassy hillsides or undisturbed oak woodlands in the immediate vicinity of the site. Perimeter vegetation that currently provides screening to the site from off-site locations would be preserved along the southern, northern, and most of the western property boundaries. The project includes replacement landscaping where tree removal would create gaps in the existing screening on the western property boundary, thereby reducing visual impacts of the proposed new building on the site from off-site locations. This impact is considered less than significant.

**b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

**No Impact.** The project alignment is not visible from an officially designated state scenic highway. The nearest official state-designated scenic highway is State Route 35, located approximately 5.2 miles southwest of the project site (Caltrans 2022). Therefore, the project would not damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway. The segment of I-280 extending west from Interstate 880 to the Santa Clara/San Mateo County line, is eligible for designation as a state scenic highway; however, it does not yet have official designated status and the project site is not visible from the highway. Because the project does not affect scenic resources within a state scenic highway, there would be no impact.

**c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project consists of replacing an existing single story operations center building with a new two-story building in approximately the same location. The project will require cutting into the hillside in order to site the new building and provide the required fire department setback from the existing water tank. The proposed new two-story building would largely remain hidden from the nearest public roadway as the proposed building is located on the interior of the site, behind existing screened fences, buildings, and water storage tanks. The height and mass of the proposed building is similar to the existing single-family homes that surround the proposed project site.

The demolition plan shows the removal of trees along the northwest property boundary to the west of the materials bin and just west of the existing operations center building including 17 coast redwoods (of these four are dead) and 15 oaks. None of the trees proposed for removal are heritage trees. The row of existing trees along the western property boundary are proposed to remain. Replacement trees are planned for the area in the northwest corner of the site to



provide continuous screening along that portion of the site. Tree removals on the southern hillside are located at the base of the slope and would not result in substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site, either from surrounding properties or other off-site locations. This portion of the site is currently obscured from view by other intervening vegetation and topography. Similarly, existing trees proposed for removal near the proposed new building and along Ascension Drive, south of the existing driveway would not result in significant degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site due to limited views caused by intervening vegetation and structures. Additionally, the installation of a 6-foot-high solid wooden fence along the west and north property lines as well as replacement trees in the northwest corner of the site would restore the visual character of the site. Therefore, the impact is considered less than significant.

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** The project does not propose the installation of lighting fixtures along the western and southern elevations of the new proposed operations building. Exterior and sconce lighting are proposed for the northern and eastern facing elevations of the proposed building. The proposed outdoor lighting would comply with the Town's Outdoor Lighting policy. Nighttime construction activities would require lighting in order to ensure safe and effective working conditions, however nighttime construction is not anticipated for completion of the project. This impact would be less than significant.



### 3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

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

#### 3.2.1 Environmental Setting

The project site is located in the Town of Los Altos Hills and all proposed project improvements would occur within an existing, urban area. The California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program identifies the area as Urban and Built-up Land (California Department of Conservation 2022).



### 3.2.2 Regulatory Setting

#### Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) assesses the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural land and conversion of these lands over time. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status. The best quality land is called Prime Farmland. In CEQA analyses, the FMMP classifications and published county maps are used, in part, to identify whether agricultural resources that could be affected are present on-site or in the project area.

#### California Land Conservation Act

The California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners to restrict parcels of land to agricultural or related open space uses. In return, landowners receive lower property tax assessments. In CEQA analyses, identification of properties that are under a Williamson Act contract is used to also identify sites that may contain agricultural resources or are zoned for agricultural uses

### 3.2.3 Impact Discussion

*Would the project:*

- a) **Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?**
- b) **Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?**
- c) **Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?**
- d) **Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**
- e) **Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

**No Impact.** (Responses a – e). The proposed project would not impact Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, forest land, or land under a Williamson Act contract as none are present on site (California Department of Conservation 2022). All construction activities are confined to the project site at 26451 Ascension Drive. The project would not convert or cause the conversion of any farmland or forest land to a non-



agricultural/non-forest use because the project site is within urban and built-up land surrounded by urban uses. Thus, the project would not result in impacts to any agricultural or forestry resources.



### 3.3 AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project*:</i>				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
*Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.				

#### 3.3.1 Environmental Setting

Air quality is a function of pollutant emissions and topographic and meteorological influences. Physical atmospheric conditions such as air temperature, wind speed and topography influence air quality.

##### Criteria Air Pollutants

Federal, state, and local governments control air quality through the implementation of laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards. The federal and state governments have established ambient air quality standards for “criteria” pollutants considered harmful to the environment and public health. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have been established for carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), fine particulate matter (particles 2.5 microns in diameter and smaller, or PM<sub>2.5</sub>), inhalable coarse particulate matter (particles 10 microns in diameter and smaller, or PM<sub>10</sub>), and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) have also been adopted for the following additional pollutants: hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), sulfates (SO<sub>x</sub>), and vinyl chloride. In addition to these criteria pollutants, the federal and state governments have classified certain pollutants as hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) or toxic air contaminants (TACs), such as asbestos and diesel particulate matter (DPM).



San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and California Air Resources Board (CARB) are the federal and State agencies charged with maintaining air quality in the nation and California, respectively. The U.S. EPA delegates much of its authority over air quality to CARB which has geographically divided the State into 15 air basins for the purposes of managing air quality on a regional basis. An air basin is a CARB-designated management unit with similar meteorological and geographic conditions.

The proposed project is located in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin (SFBAAB), an area of non-attainment for both the 1-hour and 8-hour state ozone standards, both the annual and 24-hour state PM<sub>10</sub> standards, and the national 24-hour and state annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard (BAAQMD 2023a, Table 5-1).<sup>2</sup> The SFBAAB is comprised of nine counties: all of Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Francisco, San Mateo, Marin, Napa, and the southern portions of Solano and Sonoma. In Santa Clara County, PM<sub>2.5</sub> does not exceed the national standard (BAAQMD 2019).

The San Francisco Bay Area is generally characterized by a Mediterranean climate with warm, dry summers and cool, damp winters. During the summer daytime high temperatures near the coast are primarily in the mid-60s, whereas areas farther inland are typically in the high-80s to low-90s. Nighttime low temperatures on average are in the mid-40s along the coast and low to mid-30s inland.

The Mediterranean climate is seen along most of the West Coast of North America and is primarily due to a (typically dominating) high-pressure system, located off the west coast of North America, over the Pacific Ocean. During the summer and fall months the high-pressure ridge is at its strongest and therefore provides a more stable atmosphere. Warm temperatures and a stable atmosphere associated with the high-pressure ridge provide favorable conditions for the formation of photochemical pollutants (e.g., O<sub>3</sub>) and secondary particulates (e.g., nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and SO<sub>2</sub>).

Varying topography and limited atmospheric mixing throughout the SFBAAB restrict air movement resulting in reduced dispersion and higher concentrations of air pollutants. The SFBAAB is most susceptible to air pollution during the summer when cool marine air flowing through the Golden Gate can become trapped under a layer of warmer air (a phenomenon known as an inversion) and is prevented from escaping the valleys and bays created by the Coast Ranges.

Sensitive Receptors

A sensitive receptor is defined by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) as a facility or land use that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollution, such as children, senior citizens, or people with illnesses (BAAQMD 2023a, Appendix F) These typically include residences, hospitals, and schools. Sensitive air

<sup>2</sup> On February 7, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) lowered the primary annual average health-based standard for PM<sub>2.5</sub> from 12 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m<sup>3</sup>) to 9 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The U.S. EPA generally makes initial attainment/nonattainment designations within 2 years of the issuance of a new standard.



quality receptors within 1,000 feet of the project site include the single-family residential land uses that generally surround the site, including residences on Ascension Drive and to the south and west along Anacapa Drive.

3.3.2 Regulatory Setting

CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation

CARB’s In-Use Off-Road Diesel Equipment regulation is intended to reduce emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and PM from off-road diesel vehicles, including construction equipment, operating within California. The regulation imposes limits on idling; requires reporting equipment and engine information and labeling all vehicles reported; restricts adding older vehicles to fleets; and requires fleets to reduce their emissions by retiring, replacing, or repowering older engines or installing exhaust retrofits for PM. The requirements and compliance dates of the off-road regulation vary by fleet size, and large fleets (fleets with more than 5,000 horsepower) must meet average targets or comply with Best Available Control Technology requirements beginning in 2014. CARB has off-road anti-idling regulations affecting self-propelled diesel-fueled vehicles 25 horsepower and up. The off-road anti-idling regulations limit idling on applicable equipment to no more than five minutes, unless exempted due to safety, operation, or maintenance requirements. In 2022, CARB approved amendments requiring the use of renewable diesel fuel starting January 1, 2024. Fleets comprised of Tier 4 final or zero emission equipment are exempt from this requirement.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District

The BAAQMD is the agency primarily responsible for maintaining air quality and regulating emissions of criteria and toxic air pollutants within the SFBAAB. The BAAQMD carries out this responsibility by preparing, adopting, and implementing plans, regulations, and rules that are designed to achieve attainment of state and national air quality standards. The BAAQMD currently has 14 regulations containing more than 100 rules that control and limit emissions from sources of pollutants. Table 3-1 summarizes the major BAAQMD rules and regulations that may apply to the proposed project.

Table 3.3-1: Potentially Applicable BAAQMD Rules and Regulations		
Regulation	Rule	Description
1- General Provisions and Definitions	1- General Provisions and Definitions	301 – Public Nuisance: Establishes that no person shall discharge quantities of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number or person or the public; or which endangers the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such person or the public.
6 – Particulate Matter	1 – General Requirements	Limits visible particulate matter emissions.



<b>Table 3.3-1: Potentially Applicable BAAQMD Rules and Regulations</b>		
<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Rule</b>	<b>Description</b>
6 – Particulate Matter	6 – Prohibition of Trackout	Limits the quantity of particulate matter through control of trackout of solid materials on paved public roads from construction sites that are greater than one acre in size.
8 – Organic Compounds	3 – Architectural Coatings	Sets forth VOC limitations and requirements for architectural coatings.
11- Hazardous Pollutants	2 – Asbestos Demolition, Renovation and Manufacturing	Control emissions of asbestos to the atmosphere during demolition, renovation, milling and manufacturing and establish appropriate waste disposal procedures.
Source: BAAQMD, 2023b		

On April 29, 2017, the BAAQMD adopted its Spare the Air-Cool the Climate 2017 Clean Air Plan (Clean Air Plan). The 2017 Clean Air Plan updates the most recent Bay Area ozone plan, the 2010 Clean Air Plan, in fulfillment of state ozone planning requirements. The Plan focuses on attaining all state and national air quality standards, eliminating disparities among Bay Area communities in cancer health risk from toxic air contaminants; and reducing Bay Area GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The plan includes 85 distinct control measures to help the region reduce air pollutants and has a long-term strategic vision which forecasts what a clean air Bay Area will look like in the year 2050. The control measures aggressively target the largest source of GHG, ozone pollutants, and particulate matter emissions – transportation – in the Bay Area (BAAQMD 2017).

### 3.3.3 Impact Discussion

*Would the proposed project:*

- a) **Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?**
- b) **Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?**
- c) **Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?**
- d) **Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?**

**Less Than Significant Impact** (Responses a-d). The proposed project would not conflict with nor obstruct implementation of any applicable air quality plan, including the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) 2017 Clean Air Plan. The proposed project would not result in a change in land use, population, or vehicle miles traveled. The 2017 Clean Air Plan's focus on



long-term air quality improvement would account for the proposed project's short-term construction emissions. Thus, the proposed project would not conflict with the 2017 Clean Air Plan. The proposed project involves replacing the existing operations building with a new two story approximately 7,000 square foot structure in approximately the same location as the existing building. Construction activities would include demolition of the existing approximately 2,500-square foot building, grading and clearing along the southwest gradient on the property, removal of trees and vegetation, and removal of an existing wireless antenna. The proposed project is relatively small and is not anticipated to generate substantial construction or operational emissions and would not result in construction or operational emissions that exceed BAAQMD thresholds of significance. As such, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to regional air quality impacts.

The pollutant of greatest concern during construction would be fugitive dust. The PHWD requires implementation of the following Basic Construction Measures identified by the BAAQMD as part of its standard project specifications, to control fugitive dust emissions. As stated in the Standard Design and Construction Measures in Table 2.1-1, the project includes the following:

- 1) All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day, or as needed.
- 2) All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site shall be covered.
- 3) All visible mud or dirt track-out onto adjacent public roads shall be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day, or as needed. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited.
- 4) All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 miles per hour.
- 5) All roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible.
- 6) Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to five minutes (as required by the California Airborne Toxics Control Measure, Title 13 § 2485 of California Code of Regulations [CCR]). Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points.
- 7) All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specification. All equipment shall be checked by a certified visible emissions evaluator at the beginning of construction.
- 8) Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. The designated contact shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours of being notified. The publicly visible sign shall also include the contact phone number for the BAAQMD to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.



In addition, the PHWD would construct the project in accordance with all applicable BAAQMD rules and regulations that govern potential emissions of asbestos during building demolition activities (see Table 3-1). Although the proposed project may generate odors from evaporation of volatile compounds in products such as fuels, asphalt and volatile building products, such odors are already associated with PHWD operations at the site and would not be unusual, atypical, or excessive, nor would they affect a substantial number of people. Once constructed, the project would not change the nature or magnitude of the operations at the McCann Operations Center, nor would it result in a change in land use, population, or vehicle miles travelled. Thus, the project would not have the potential to change operational emissions levels at the site. For the reasons described above, the proposed project would result in a less than significant air quality impact.



### 3.4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.4.1 Environmental Setting

The project site is in a low-density residential area with single-family houses and roads interspersed with small areas of oak woodland and annual grassland. The Coast Ranges open space is located about 1.5 miles west of the site, and the San Francisco Bay is about 4.8 miles to the east. A review of applicable databases and other resources and a site visit (on May 15, 2024) were conducted to 1) assess existing biotic habitats and plant and animal communities in



the project site, 2) assess the project area for its potential to support special-status species and their habitats, and 3) identify sensitive habitats or jurisdictional waters (e.g., waters of the U.S./states) at the site. Existing biological resources at the project site are described below.

### Existing Land Uses and Vegetation Communities, and Habitats

Land uses and vegetation communities present on the project site include the existing McCann Operations Center occupying much of the site (developed), and two vegetation communities occupying the perimeter of the site: coast live oak woodland and forest; and coast redwood-Deodar cedar grove. The coast live oak woodland and forest corresponds to the *Quercus agrifolia* Alliance in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program (VegCAMP), the standard for classification and mapping of natural vegetation communities in California (CDFW, 2024a). The coast redwood-Deodar cedar grove does not correspond to a VegCAMP alliance because it is not a natural vegetation community but instead was planted. These existing land uses and vegetation communities are described below.

#### *Developed*

Most of the project site is developed with the existing McCann Operations Center. The developed portion of the site is paved and occupied by an access road and structures including the existing maintenance building, storage shed, pump house, water tanks, fuel tank, AT&T equipment, and communication tower (see Figure 3). The developed portion of the site is unvegetated.

#### *Coast Live Oak Woodland and Forest (Quercus agrifolia Alliance)*

There is a remnant area of Coast Live Oak Woodland and Forest on the hillside on the southwest side of the site, bordering the water tanks and the shorter part of the L-shaped existing maintenance building. Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) is the dominant species in this vegetation community. According to the Arborist's Report prepared for the project (HortScience | Bartlett Consulting, 2023), coast live oak is the most abundant tree species on the site, with 31 trees. The report indicated that none of the oaks are in good condition (all were rated as fair or poor), and the trees are young to semi-mature in development, having diameters ranging from 6 to 16 inches with an average of approximately 8 inches. Other trees in this area include one valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), one Aleppo pine (*Pinus halepensis*), one olive tree (*Olea europaea*), and one Chinese pistache (*Pistacia chinensis*). Understory species include French broom (*Genista monspessulana*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* sp.), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), California manroot (*Marah fabacea*), and nonnative annual grasses and forbs such as Italian wildrye (*Festuca perennis*), foxtail grass (*Hordeum murinum*), wild oats (*Avena* sp.), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), cutleaf geranium (*Geranium dissectum*), and bur clover (*Medicago polymorpha*). French broom, an invasive species, is the most abundant understory species.

Coast live oak is also present on the southeast side of the site along Ascension Drive, although here it is mixed with Deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodara*), one Aleppo pine, and one valley oak.



*Coast Redwood - Deodar Cedar Grove*

There is a grove of trees dominated by coast redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) and Deodar cedars on the northwest side of the site bordering the existing maintenance building. Although coast redwoods are native to California, the site is outside of the natural range for this species and thus these trees were likely planted. Deodar cedars are native to the Himalayas and are a common ornamental tree. According to the Arborist's Report, coast redwoods and Deodar cedars are the second most common tree species on the site (after coast live oaks), with 24 trees each. The report found that ten redwoods were in poor condition, seven were fair, and three were good, and three were dead; several had also been topped for utility clearance. Among the cedars, 12 were in poor condition, nine were fair, two were good, and one was dead. Diameters of the cedars were 6 to 22 inches, with an average between 12 and 13 inches. Many cedars had been topped or side pruned for utility line clearance along the north side. Other tree species in this area include a few coast live oaks, and two California pepper trees (*Schinus molle*). The understory is sparse to unvegetated, particularly towards the northern side of the grove where most of the redwood trees are concentrated.

Only four trees are present on the northeast side of the site, including one Deodar cedar, one valley oak, one coast live oak, and one Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparuss macrocarpa*).

Habitats and Wildlife

Woodlands dominated by oaks typically support diverse animal communities in California and can contribute disproportionately to landscape-level species diversity. Coast live oaks provide substantial shelter for animals in the form of cavities, crevices in bark, and complex branching growth. However, the oak woodland in the project area is limited in extent, has mostly small or immature trees, and is surrounded by urban development, and therefore is not expected to support large numbers of woodland-associated species. Nevertheless, a variety of common wildlife species may occur here, including a wide variety of terrestrial vertebrates (e.g., amphibians, reptiles, and mammals), as well as several guilds of birds, including insectivores (e.g., warblers, flycatchers), seedeaters (e.g., finches), and raptors. Ornamental and landscaped vegetation such as the coast redwood – Deodar cedar grove on the site can also support a variety of native wildlife. Developed areas provide less habitat for wildlife, but some bird species do nest in buildings and other manmade structures and some bats roost in manmade structures.

Birds observed in the project area during the May 2024 site visit included American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypste anna*), California scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), chestnut-backed chickadee (*Poecile rufescens*), dark-eyed junco (*Junco hyemalis*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), Nuttall's woodpecker (*Dryobates nuttallii*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), spotted towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), and turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*). Other species observed included a carpenter bee (*Xylocopa* sp.) and a western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*); gopher holes were also observed. Other wildlife common in suburban areas are also likely present in the area, such as California slender salamander (*Batrachoseps attenuatus*), Northern alligator lizard (*Elgaria coerulea*), northern raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), eastern fox squirrel



(*Sciurus niger*), and a variety of bird species. Additionally, oak trees and buildings may support roost habitat for crevice-roosting bats, including Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*), California myotis (*Myotis californicus*) and Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*).

### Special-Status Species

Special-status species are defined as those plant and animals listed, proposed for listing or candidates for listing as threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA); those listed or proposed for listing as rare, threatened or endangered by the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA); animals designated as California Fully Protected (CFP) or California Species of Special Concern (CSSC) by CDFW; and plants listed as Rank 1A, 1B, 2, 3, or 4 in the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (Rare Plant Inventory).

#### *Special-Status Plants*

According to the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) (USFWS, 2024a), the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB, 2024) and the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory (CNPS, 2024), 71 special-status plant species occur in the nine 7.5-minute quadrangles containing and/or surrounding the project site. Fifty-nine of these special-status plant species are absent from the project site and surrounding area for at least one of the following reasons: 1) a lack of specific habitat (e.g., vernal pools, salt marsh, etc.) and/or edaphic requirements (e.g., serpentine soils) (NRCS, 2024) for the species in question; 2) the geographic range and/or elevation range of the species does not overlap the project site; 3) the species is known to be extirpated from the site vicinity; and/or 4) records of the species are far from the project site and/or old (i.e., from 50 years ago or more). There is some suitable (woodland) habitat at the project site and/or nearby records for the other 12 of these special-status plant species, but they are not expected to occur in or near the site due to surrounding development, small habitat patch size, and disturbance from invasive plants. Some of these species also sometimes or usually occur on serpentine, mesic sites, or gravelly soils not found in or near the project site. There are also no CalFlora records of special-status plants in or near the project site (CalFlora, 2024). All special-status plants evaluated for potential to occur at the project site are included in Appendix B; plant species with CNDDDB records within five miles of the site and/or some suitable habitat at the site were included in the special-status plant table, and those with no CNDDDB records within five miles of the site and no suitable habitat on the site are listed below the table.

#### *Special-Status Animals*

According to the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) (USFWS, 2024a) and the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB, 2024), 41 special-status animal species occur in the nine 7.5-minute quadrangles containing and/or surrounding the project site. Thirty-five of these special-status animal species are absent from the project site and surrounding area for at least one of the following reasons: 1) a lack of specific habitat (e.g., vernal pools, salt marsh, etc.) for the species in question; 2) the geographic range of the species does not overlap the project site; 3) the species is known to be extirpated from the site vicinity; and/or 4) records of the species are far from the project site and/or old (i.e., from 50 years ago or more). There is some suitable (woodland) habitat at the project site and/or nearby records for five of these



special-status animal species, but they are not expected to occur in or near the site due to the reasons listed below, which vary by species.

- Crotch bumblebee (*Bombus crotchii*), Candidate for listing as Endangered under CESA (SCE): According to Bumblebee Watch, a Crotch bumblebee was observed at Moffett Field in 2023, about 5 miles southeast of the site. Nectar sources are limited in the project area due to development and suitable habitat patches are small.
- Monarch-California overwintering population (*Danaus plexippus plexippus* pop. 1), Candidate for listing under FESA (FC): There are no wind-protected tree groves in the project area and no milkweed was observed during the May 2024 site visit; nectar sources are limited due to development and habitat patches are small.
- Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), CSSC: There are two CNDDDB records of pallid bat within 5 miles of the project site, in Mountain View and at Stanford University from 1987 and 1951. However, the site is in a developed area with limited roosting habitats and this species is very sensitive to disturbance.
- Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), CSSC: There are four CNDDDB records of Townsend's big-eared bat within 5 miles of the project site, most recently in 2017. However, the site is in a developed area with limited roosting habitats and this species is extremely sensitive to disturbance.
- San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*), CSSC: There is one CNDDDB record of San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat within 5 miles of the project site from 1992. Nest building materials are very limited at the project site and no woodrat houses were observed during the May 2024 site visit.

There is one special-status animal that may be present at the project site; this species is described below. All special-status animals evaluated for potential to occur at the project site are included in Appendix B; special-status animal species that meet the definition of special-status species are included in the special-status animal table, and those listed in the CNDDDB that don't meet the definition of a special-status animal are listed below the table.

**White-tailed Kite.** Federal Listing Status: None; State Listing Status: CFP

The white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) is found in lowland areas of California west of the Sierra Nevada from the head of the Sacramento Valley south, including coastal valleys and foothills to western San Diego County at the Mexico border. They are residents of the Central Coast of California. White-tailed kites are residents in a variety of open habitats, including agricultural areas, grasslands, scrub and open chaparral habitats, meadows, and emergent wetlands throughout the lower elevations of California. Nests are constructed mostly of twigs and placed in small to large trees, often at habitat edges or in isolated groves. This species preys upon a variety of small mammals and other vertebrates.

A white-tailed kite was observed at Esther Clark Nature Preserve in July 2023 according to eBird (Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 2024); the Preserve is about 0.5 mile east of the project site. This species has been known to nest in urban areas and the larger trees at the site such as the Deodar cedars could provide nesting habitat. However, human disturbance in the project area



makes nesting at the site somewhat less likely, and foraging habitat is limited in the project area due to development.

### *Nesting Birds*

All native birds and their nests are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game code. Nesting birds may occur in trees and other vegetation, shallow scrapes on bare ground, and buildings and other built structures in and around the project site. Twelve species of birds were observed in or near the project site during the May 2024 site visit, all of them native, and many more species of birds occur in the area according to recent eBird observations (Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 2024).

### *Bat Colonies*

Cavities within trees, trees with exfoliating bark, or structures in the project site or nearby may provide suitable day and maternity roost habitat for many species of bats. Roost sites play a critical role in mating, hibernation, rearing young, conserving energy, and protection from adverse weather and predators. Selection of roost sites is influenced by the distribution and abundance of food resources, risks of predation, as well as the physical attributes of the roost itself. Roost selection is paramount to the success of a species and the removal of roost habitat could adversely impact the survivorship of a species (Kunz, 1982).

Depending upon species, maternity roosts can host from a few to thousands of reproductive female bats that congregate during spring and summer months to give birth and nurse their young. In California, maternity roosts may remain active from April through August. As a potentially uncommon and limited resource, maternity roosts may be the limiting resource for a local population of bats, and thus may be essential to the survival of a local bat population. Maternity roosts tend to have sensitivity to disturbance, with documented instances of abandonment even during the presence of flightless young. As bats have a low reproductive rate of typically one pup per year, negative impacts to maternity roosts can have profound impacts on a local population of bats (Szewczak, 2013).

Roosting bats are protected by the California Fish and Game Code as nongame mammals.

### Sensitive and Regulated Plant Communities and Habitats

#### *Natural Communities of Special Concern*

Natural communities have been considered part of the Natural Heritage Conservation triad, along with plants and animals of conservation significance since the state inception of the Natural Heritage Program in 1979. CDFW determines the level of rarity and imperilment of vegetation types; and tracks sensitive communities in its Rarefind database (CNDDB, 2024). Global rankings (G) of natural communities reflect the overall condition (rarity and endangerment) of a habitat throughout its range, whereas state (S) rankings reflect the condition of a habitat within California. Natural communities are defined using NatureServe's standard heritage program methodology as follows (CDFG, 2007):

- G1/S1: Less than 6 viable occurrences or less than 2,000 acres.
- G2/S2: Between 6 and 20 occurrences or 2,000 to 10,000 acres.
- G3/S3: Between 21 and 100 occurrences or 10,000 to 50,000 acres.



- G4/S4: The community is apparently secure, but factors and threats exist to cause some concern.
- G5/S4: The community is demonstrably secure to ineradicable due to being common throughout the world (for global rank) or the state of California (for state rank).

State rankings are further described by the following threat code extensions:

- S1.1: Very threatened.
- S1.2: Threatened.
- S1.3: No current threats known.

There are no CDFW classified sensitive natural communities in or near the project site.

#### *Sensitive Vegetation Alliances*

In addition to tracking sensitive natural communities, CDFW also ranks vegetation alliances, defined by repeating patterns of plants across a landscape that reflect climate, soil, water, disturbance, and other environmental factors (Sawyer et al., 2009). If an alliance is marked G1-G3, all the vegetation associations within it will also be of high priority (CDFG, 2007). CDFW provides the Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program's (VegCAMP) currently accepted list of vegetation alliances and associations (CDFW, 2024a).

There are no CDFW classified sensitive plant communities in or near the project site.

#### *Critical Habitat*

Critical habitat is habitat needed to support recovery of listed species. When a species is listed under the FESA, USFWS or NOAA Fisheries (depending on the species) is required to determine whether there are areas that meet the definition of critical habitat. Critical habitat is defined as specific areas within the geographical area occupied by the species at the time of listing that contain physical or biological features essential to conservation of the species and that may require special management considerations or protection; and specific areas outside the geographical area occupied by the species if the agency determines that the area itself is essential for conservation (USFWS, 2017).

There is no designated critical habitat in or near the project site.

#### *Essential Fish Habitat*

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) was defined by the U.S. Congress in the 1996 amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, or Magnuson-Stevens Act, as "those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding or growth to maturity" (16 U.S.C. §§ 1801-1884). EFH includes all types of aquatic habitat, such as wetlands, coral reefs, sand, seagrasses, and rivers (NOAA Fisheries, 2022).

There is no essential fish habitat in or near the project site.



### Jurisdictional Waters

Navigable waters including oceans, bays, rivers, streams, and associated wetlands are waters of the U.S./State under the jurisdiction of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or Corps) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB or Water Board) under Section 401 of the CWA. Waters of the state are also subject to waste discharge requirements (WDRs) under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act). Freshwater streams and channels and associated riparian habitat are under the jurisdiction of CDFW under the California Fish and Game Code. See Section 3.4.2 Regulatory Setting below for more information.

According to the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI, 2024), there is a riverine feature parallel to and south of Ascension Drive, across the street from the project site (about 60 feet south of the southern border of the site). The feature is classified as R4SBA, defined as follows.

- System **Riverine(R)**: The Riverine System includes all wetlands and deepwater habitats contained within a channel, with two exceptions: (1) wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent mosses, or lichens, and (2) habitats with water containing ocean-derived salts of 0.5 ppt or greater. A channel is an open conduit either naturally or artificially created which periodically or continuously contains moving water, or which forms a connecting link between two bodies of standing water.
- Subsystem **Intermittent (4)**: This Subsystem includes channels that contain flowing water only part of the year. When the water is not flowing, it may remain in isolated pools or surface water may be absent.
- Class **Streambed (SB)**: Includes all wetlands contained within the Intermittent Subsystem of the Riverine System and all channels of the Estuarine System or of the Tidal Subsystem of the Riverine System that are completely dewatered at low tide.
- Water Regime **Temporary Flooded (A)**: Surface water is present for brief periods (from a few days to a few weeks) during the growing season, but the water table usually lies well below the ground surface for most of the season.

This feature appears to be isolated on the NWI map (not connected to any other stream or river), and no wetland vegetation was noted along the drainage during the May 2024 site visit or on aerial photographs. It appears that water may only flow in this drainage for brief periods after storms.

Barron Creek is located about 940 feet east of the project site. Within the project area, Barron Creek is classified by the NWI as R4SBCx; the abbreviations not already defined above are defined below.

- Water Regime **Seasonally Flooded (C)**: Surface water is present for extended periods especially early in the growing season, but is absent by the end of the growing season in most years. The water table after flooding ceases is variable, extending from saturated to the surface to a water table well below the ground surface.



- Special Modifier **Excavated (x)**: This Modifier is used to identify wetland basins or channels that were excavated by humans.

The x modifier indicates that Barron Creek is channelized in the project area. There is also a small tributary to Barron Creek located about 650 feet north of the northern border of the project site, classified by the NWI as R4SBA.

There are no streams, wetlands, riparian habitat, or other jurisdictional waters or habitats on the project site itself.

#### Wildlife Movement and Nursery Sites

Wildlife corridors are segments of land that provide a link between these different habitats while also providing cover. Development that fragments natural habitats (i.e., breaks them into smaller, disjunct pieces) can have a twofold impact on wildlife: first, as habitat patches become smaller, they are unable to support as many individuals (patch size); and second, the area between habitat patches may be unsuitable for wildlife species to traverse (connectivity).

Wildlife corridors are not present in the project area and habitat patch size is small due to development. Wildlife movement is limited by existing roads and buildings in the project area. I-280, located about 0.5 west of the site, is likely a major barrier between the site and closest open space in the Coast Ranges about 1.5 miles west of the site. Birds and bats may move more freely in the project area because they can fly, and small wildlife species may still move locally in the project area using vegetated patches of the landscape.

There are no known wildlife nursery sites in or near the project site. There is no aquatic habitat for fish spawning or amphibian breeding. There are no known nesting bird colonies such as heron rookeries or blackbird colonies in or near the project site, and no known bat maternity roosts or mammal denning sites in the area.

### **3.4.2 Regulatory Setting**

#### Federal Regulations

##### *Federal Endangered Species Act*

The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) of 1973, as amended, provides the regulatory framework for the protection of plant and animal species (and their associated critical habitats), which are formally listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as endangered or threatened under FESA. FESA has the following four major components: (1) provisions for listing species, (2) requirements for consultation with the USFWS and the NOAA Fisheries, (3) prohibitions against “taking” (i.e., harassing, harming, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, or collecting, or attempting to engage in any such conduct) of listed species, and (4) provisions for permits that allow incidental “take”. Recovery plans and the designation of critical habitat for listed species are defined in FESA.



Under Section 7 of FESA, any federal agency that is authorizing, funding, or carrying out an action that may jeopardize the continued existence of federally listed threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat for these species must consult with the federal agency that oversees the protection of that species, typically the USFWS and/or NOAA Fisheries, depending on the species that may be affected. Non-federal agencies and private entities can seek authorization for take of federally listed species under Section 10 of FESA, which requires the preparation of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

#### *U.S. Migratory Bird Treaty Act*

The U.S. Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA; 16 USC §§ 703 et seq., Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 10) states it is “unlawful at any time, by any means or in any manner, to pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill; attempt to take, capture or kill; possess, offer for sale, sell, offer to barter, barter, offer to purchase, purchase, deliver for shipment, ship, export, import, cause to be shipped, exported, or imported, deliver for transportation, transport or cause to be transported, carry or cause to be carried, or receive for shipment, transportation, carriage, or export any migratory bird, any part, nest, or egg of any such bird, or any product, whether or not manufactured, which consists, or is composed in whole or in part, of any such bird or any part, nest or egg thereof...” In short, under MBTA it is illegal to disturb a nest that is in active use, since this could result in killing a bird, destroying a nest, or destroying an egg. The USFWS enforces MBTA. MBTA does not protect some birds that are non-native or human-introduced or that belong to families that are not covered by any of the conventions implemented by MBTA.

#### *Federal Clean Water Act*

The Clean Water Act (CWA) is the primary federal law regulating water quality. The implementation of the CWA is the responsibility of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). However, the EPA depends on other agencies, such as the individual states and the USACE, to assist in implementing the CWA. The objective of the CWA is to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters.” Section 404 and 401 of the CWA apply to activities that would impact waters of the U.S. The USACE enforces Section 404 of the CWA, and the California State Water Resources Control Board enforces Section 401, as well as state water laws.

**Section 404.** As part of its mandate under Section 404 of the CWA, the EPA regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into “waters of the U.S.”. “Waters of the U.S.” include territorial seas, tidal waters, and non-tidal waters in addition to wetlands and drainages that support wetland vegetation, exhibit ponding or scouring, show obvious signs of channeling, or have discernible banks and high-water marks. Wetlands are defined as those areas “that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions” (33 CFR 328.3(b)). Wetlands that were converted to cropland before 1985, ditches carved wholly in dry land that don’t carry relatively permanent flow, and artificial lakes and ponds are excluded as waters of the U.S. The discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. is prohibited under the CWA except when it is in compliance with Section 404 of the CWA. Enforcement authority for Section 404 was given to the USACE, which it accomplishes under its regulatory branch. The EPA has veto authority over



the USACE's administration of the Section 404 program. and may override a USACE decision with respect to permitting.

**Section 401.** Any applicant for a federal permit to impact waters of the U.S. under Section 404 of the CWA, including Nationwide Permits where pre-construction notification is required, must also provide to the USACE a certification or waiver from the State of California. The "401 Certification" is provided by the State Water Resources Control Board through the local RWQCB.

### State Regulations

#### *California Environmental Quality Act*

CEQA Guidelines Section 15380 defines endangered, threatened, and rare species for purposes of CEQA and clarifies that CEQA review extends to other species that are not formally listed under the state or federal Endangered Species acts but that meet specified criteria. The state maintains a list of sensitive, or "special-status", biological resources, including those listed by the state or federal government or the CNPS as endangered, threatened, rare or of special concern due to declining populations. During CEQA analysis for a proposed project, the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) is usually consulted. CNDDB relies on information provided by the CDFW, USFWS, and CNPS, among others. Under CEQA, the lists kept by these and any other widely recognized organizations are considered when determining the impact of a project.

#### *California Endangered Species Act*

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA; Fish and Game Code 2050 et seq.) generally parallels FESA. It establishes the policy of the State to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance threatened or endangered species and their habitats. Section 2080 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibits the take, possession, purchase, sale, and import or export of endangered, threatened, or candidate species, unless otherwise authorized by permit or by the regulations. "Take" is defined in Section 86 of the California Fish and Game Code as to "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill." This definition differs from the definition of "take" under FESA. CESA is administered by CDFW. CESA allows for take incidental to otherwise lawful projects but mandates that State lead agencies consult with the CDFW to ensure that a project would not jeopardize the continued existence of threatened or endangered species.

#### *Native Plant Protection Act*

The Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) was created in 1977 with the intent to preserve, protect, and enhance rare and endangered plants in California (California Fish and Game Code sections 1900 to 1913). The NPPA is administered by CDFW, which has the authority to designate native plants as endangered or rare and to protect them from "take." CDFW maintains a list of plant species that have been officially classified as endangered, threatened, or rare. These special-



status plants have special protection under California law and projects that directly impact them may not qualify for a categorical exemption under CEQA guidelines.

### *Fully Protected Species and Species of Special Concern*

The classification of California fully protected (CFP) species was the CDFW's initial effort to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction. Lists were created for fish, amphibians and reptiles, birds, and mammals. Most of the species on these lists have subsequently been listed under CESA and/or FESA. The Fish and Game Code sections (§5515 for fish, §5050 for amphibian and reptiles, §3511 for birds, §4700 for mammals) deal with CFP species and state that these species "...may not be taken or possessed at any time and no provision of this code or any other law shall be construed to authorize the issuance of permits or licenses to take any fully protected species" (CDFW Fish and Game Commission 1998). "Take" of these species may be authorized for necessary scientific research. This language makes the CFP designation the strongest and most restrictive regarding the "take" of these species. In 2003, the code sections dealing with CFP species were amended to allow the CDFW to authorize take resulting from recovery activities for state-listed species. In 2023, California Senate Bill 147 (SB 147) amended CFP statutes to allow the CDFW to issue take permits for certain renewable energy and infrastructure projects.

California species of special concern (CSSC) are broadly defined as animals not listed under FESA or CESA, but which are nonetheless of concern to CDFW because they are declining at a rate that could result in listing, or historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist. This designation is intended to result in special consideration for these animals by CDFW, land managers, consulting biologists, and others, and is intended to focus attention on the species to help avert the need for costly listing under FESA and CESA, and cumbersome recovery efforts that might ultimately be required. This designation also is intended to stimulate collection of additional information on the biology, distribution, and status of poorly known at-risk species, and focus research and management attention on them. Although these species generally have no special legal status, they are given special consideration under CEQA during project review.

### *Nesting Birds*

Nesting birds, including raptors, are protected under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503, which reads, "It is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto." In addition, under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5, "it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto". Passerines and non-passerine land birds are further protected under California Fish and Game Code 3513. As such, CDFW typically recommends surveys for nesting birds that could potentially be directly (e.g., actual removal of trees/vegetation) or indirectly (e.g., noise disturbance) impacted by project-related activities. Disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered "take" by CDFW.



*Non-Game Mammals*

Sections 4150-4155 of the California Fish and Game Code protects non-game mammals, including bats. Section 4150 states “A mammal occurring naturally in California that is not a game mammal, fully protected mammal, or fur-bearing mammal is a nongame mammal. A non-game mammal may not be taken or possessed except as provided in this code or in accordance with regulations adopted by the commission”. The non-game mammals that may be taken or possessed are primarily those that cause crop or property damage. Bats are classified as a non-game mammal and are protected under California Fish and Game Code, in addition to being protected if they are a listed species (e.g., CSSC, CFP, or listed under FESA and/or CESA).

*Sensitive Vegetation Communities*

Sensitive vegetation communities are natural communities and habitats that are either unique in constituent components, of relatively limited distribution in the region, or are of particularly high wildlife value. These communities may or may not necessarily contain special-status species. Sensitive natural communities are usually identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW (i.e., CNDDDB) or the USFWS. The CNDDDB identifies a number of natural communities as rare, which are given the highest inventory priority (Holland, 1986; CDFW, 2024a). Impacts to sensitive natural communities and habitats must be considered and evaluated under CEQA (CCR: Title 14, Div. 6, Chap. 3, Appendix G).

*California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600-1607*

Sections 1600-1607 of the California Fish and Game Code require that a Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration application be submitted to CDFW for “any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake.” CDFW reviews the proposed actions in the application and, if necessary, prepares a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA or SAA), that includes measures to protect affected fish and wildlife resources.

*Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act*

The intent of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne) is to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water, and it applies to both surface and ground water. Under this law, the State Water Resources Control Board develops statewide water quality plans, and the RWQCBs develop basin plans, which identify beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and implementation plans. The RWQCBs have the primary responsibility to implement the provisions of both statewide and basin plans. Waters regulated under Porter-Cologne, referred to as “waters of the State,” include isolated waters that are not regulated by the USACE. Projects that require a USACE permit, or fall under other federal jurisdiction, and have the potential to impact waters of the State are required to comply with the terms of the Water Quality Certification Program. If a proposed project does not require a federal license or permit, any person discharging, or proposing to discharge, waste (e.g., soil) to waters of the State must file a Notice of Intent (NOI) or a Report of Waste Discharge and receive either waste discharge requirements (WDRs) or a waiver to WDRs before beginning the discharge.



### Local Regulations

The Purissima Hills Water District is its own lead agency under CEQA and thus is not subject to local regulations. However, relevant portions of the Town's Trees, Shrubs, and Plants Ordinance are summarized below for information purposes.

#### *Town of Los Altos Hills Trees, Shrubs, and Plants Ordinance*

The Town of Los Altos Hills (Municipal Code Title 12, Chapter 2) defines a Heritage Oak as any tree of the genus *Quercus* that has a trunk or multiple trunks 36 inches in circumference (or approximately 12 inches in diameter) at a point four feet above the root crown. Heritage trees are those designated by the Town for special consideration for preservation and protection. Based on this criterion, three coast live oaks on the project site are considered Heritage Oaks.

### **3.4.3 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

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

#### Special-Status Plant Species

**No Impact.** All of the 71 special-status plants in the project region are either absent from the project site or not expected to occur in or near the site (see Section 3.4.1 Existing Setting above, under Special-Status Species). Therefore, the proposed project would not impact special-status plants and no mitigation is required.

#### Special-Status Animals and Nesting Birds

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Of the 41 special-status animal species that occur in the project region, 40 of the species are absent or not expected to occur in or near the project site (see Section 3.4.1 Existing Setting above, under Special-Status Species). One special-status species, white-tailed kite, may nest or forage at the site though this is somewhat unlikely due to the development and human disturbance in the project area. If white-tailed kite did nest at the site during project construction, it could be directly impacted if the nesting tree is removed or indirectly impacted by construction noise and disturbance, potentially causing nest failure. White-tailed kite nesting season is from February to October (CWHR, 2005).

Similar potential impacts could result to common species of birds that nest in the project area. Construction disturbance during the avian breeding season (February 1 through September 15, for most species) could result in the incidental loss of eggs or nestlings, either directly through the destruction or disturbance of active nests or indirectly by causing the abandonment of nests. In addition, noise and increased construction activity could temporarily alter foraging behavior, potentially resulting in the abandonment of nest sites. All migratory bird species and their nests are protected under the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code.



Mitigation Measure BIO-1, listed below, would avoid or minimize impacts to white-tailed kite and nesting birds.

**Impact BIO-1:** Project construction could impact white-tailed kites if they are nesting in or near the project site, either directly through removing the nesting tree or indirectly through construction noise and disturbance. Project construction could also impact common nesting bird species protected by the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code, if it occurs during the avian breeding season (February 1 through September 15 for most species).

**Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Pre-Construction Survey for White-Tailed Kites and Other Nesting Birds.** *Avoidance.* To the extent feasible, construction activities shall be scheduled between November and January to avoid the white-tailed kite nesting season (February-October) and general nesting bird season (February 1-September 15). If construction activities are scheduled to take place outside the white-tailed kite and general nesting bird season, all impacts to white-tailed kites and nesting birds protected under the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code would be avoided.

*Pre-Construction Surveys.* If it is not possible to schedule construction activities between November 1 and January 31, then a preconstruction survey for white-tailed kite and other nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests would be disturbed during project implementation. The survey shall be conducted no more than five days prior to the initiation of construction (including but not limited to mobilization and staging, clearing, grubbing, tree removal, vegetation removal, fence installation, demolition, and grading). If project activities are delayed by more than five days, an additional nesting bird survey shall be performed. During this survey, the biologist shall inspect all trees and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., trees, shrubs, buildings and other structures) in the impact area plus a 250-foot buffer for nests. Active nesting is present if a bird is building a nest, sitting in a nest, a nest has eggs or chicks in it, or adults are observed carrying food to the nest. The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If an active nest is found during the survey, the biologist shall determine the extent of a construction-free buffer zone to be established around the nest (typically up to 0.25 mile for white-tailed kites, 1,000 feet for other raptors, and 250 feet for other species), to ensure that no nests of species protected by the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code will be disturbed during project implementation. Within the buffer zone, no site disturbance and mobilization of heavy equipment, including but not limited to equipment staging, fence installation, clearing, grubbing, vegetation removal, demolition, and grading shall be permitted until the chicks have fledged. Monitoring shall be required to ensure compliance with MBTA and relevant California Fish and Game Code requirements. Monitoring dates and findings shall be documented.

A qualified biologist is defined as a biologist that has a degree in biological sciences, or similar degree; a minimum of two years of experience in white-tailed kite and other nesting bird surveys with positive results; and must be able to identify the species and



be familiar with nesting behavior of common and special-status bird species found in the project area.

The implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 will reduce impacts to white-tailed kites and other nesting birds to a less than significant level.

### Roosting Bats

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Tree removal and demolition of structures could directly impact roosting bats if any are present in the trees or structures, causing mortality, injury, and/or the loss of roost sites. Construction activities could also result in the disturbance of nearby active maternity or day roosts. Therefore, project-related impacts to roosting habitat for bats would be considered significant under CEQA.

**Impact BIO-2:** Project construction could directly impact or disturb roosting bats if they are present in or near the project site, particularly in the trees and structures to be removed.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Roosting Bat Protection.** Within 30 days before the start of construction at the project site (including but not limited to mobilization and staging, clearing, grubbing, tree removal, vegetation removal, fence installation, demolition, and grading), a qualified biologist shall survey the site and a 50-foot buffer for bat roosting habitat (large trees with cavities or exfoliating bark, structures with crevices, etc.). The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If bat roosting habitat and/or signs of bats (e.g., guano pellets or urine staining) are identified in the survey, a follow-up dusk emergence survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to the start of construction activities. A dusk survey will determine the number of bats present and shall also include the use of acoustic equipment to determine the species of bats present. The results of the surveys shall be documented.

If roosting bats are detected, they shall be avoided with roost avoidance buffers, seasonal activity restrictions, or monitoring of roost locations. If an occupied maternity or colony roost is detected, CDFW shall be consulted to determine appropriate measures, such as the establishment of a no-disturbance buffer. Within the buffer zone, no site disturbance and mobilization of heavy equipment, including but not limited to equipment staging, fence installation, clearing, grubbing, vegetation removal, demolition, and grading shall be permitted. Monitoring shall be required to ensure compliance with relevant California Fish and Game Code requirements. Monitoring dates and findings shall be documented.

A qualified biologist is defined as a biologist that has a degree in biological sciences, or similar degree; has at least two years of experience conducting bat surveys that resulted in detections of species present in the project area; and is familiar with the types of equipment used to conduct surveys.



The implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-2 would reduce impacts to roosting bats to a less than significant level.

**b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?**

**No Impact.** There are no CDFW classified sensitive natural or sensitive plant communities within the project area, and no designated critical habitat or essential fish habitat (see Section 3.4.1 Existing Setting above, under Sensitive and Regulated Plant Communities and Habitats). There is also no riparian habitat in or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not affect riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities.

**c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** There are no state or federally protected wetlands or other waters of the U.S./State in or adjacent to the project site. There is an unnamed drainage parallel to and south of Ascension Drive, across the street from the project site (about 60 feet south of the southern border of the site). This feature appears to be isolated on the NWI map (not connected to any other stream or river), and no wetland vegetation was noted along the drainage during the May 2024 site visit or on aerial photographs. It appears that water may only flow in this drainage for brief periods after storms. Barron Creek is located about 940 feet east of the project site, and there is also a small tributary to Barron Creek located about 650 feet north of the northern border of the project site. See Section 3.4.1 Existing Setting above for more information, under Jurisdictional Waters.

The proposed project could impact the unnamed drainage across the street if construction fuels and fluids or sediment enter runoff water from the site, or if similar pollutants enter runoff water during operation of the upgraded emergency operations center. With compliance with applicable water quality regulations such as site design, source control, and best management practices (BMPs) to protect water quality during construction and operation, the project is not expected to significantly impact the unnamed drainage across the street from the site. Standard construction BMPs to be implemented include hazardous and non-hazardous materials management and spill prevention and control measures, vehicle and equipment maintenance and cleaning, earthwork and contaminated soil management measures (use of inlet protection, erosion and sediment controls), use of on-site truck wash out areas, and good housekeeping measures (pavement sweeping, catch basin cleaning). Post-construction or operational BMPs include bioretention areas and the use of concrete with permeable base rock material. Barron Creek and its tributary are probably too far from the project site to be impacted by the project, but if runoff from the site could impact them, significant impacts would be similarly prevented by adherence to applicable water quality regulations. See Chapter 3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality for more information.



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

**Less than Significant Impact.** Most of the project site is already developed with the existing McCann Operations Center. The proposed project would replace the existing building with a new 2-story structure in approximately the same location as the existing operations center. Wildlife movement is already limited in the project area due to existing roads and buildings (see Section 3.4.1 Existing Setting, under Wildlife Movement and Nursery Sites). Once construction activities are complete, wildlife movement conditions would be similar to pre-project conditions.

Construction activities could temporarily restrict some wildlife species from moving between suitable habitat patches during project implementation. In addition, noise and disturbance associated with construction activities could cause a temporary reduction in habitat connectivity through the site for species that commonly use habitats in the project area. However, there is already some human disturbance at the site from maintenance and operation of the McCann Operations Center, and construction activities would be short-term. Furthermore, because project construction would not occur at night, when many mammals, reptiles, and amphibians are active, use of the project area by dispersing nocturnal animals would not be diminished during construction. Therefore, impacts to wildlife movement from construction activities are expected to be less than significant.

Although common bird and other wildlife species likely breed within and around the project area, no particularly important wildlife nursery areas are known from the project area (see Section 3.4.1 Existing Setting, under Wildlife Movement and Nursery Sites). Therefore, the project is not expected to impact native wildlife nursery sites.

- e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance (including the County Heritage and Significant Tree Ordinances)? fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?**

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The proposed project includes the removal of 32 trees including 17 coast redwoods, 14 coast live oaks, and 1 valley oak tree. None of the trees to be removed are Heritage Trees under the Town of Los Altos Hills Trees, Shrubs, and Plants Ordinance (see Section 3.4.2 Regulatory Setting, under Local Regulations), although there are three Heritage Oaks on the project site. The Arborist's Report prepared for the project contains recommendations to protect retained trees during construction, including Heritage Trees. Mitigation Measure BIO-3 would ensure compliance with recommendations in the Preliminary Arborist's Report and would ensure that the project would not conflict with a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 would further protect biological resources and ensure that the project is consistent with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources. In addition, the Purissima Hills Water District is its own lead agency under CEQA and thus is not subject to local regulations.

**Impact BIO-3:** Project construction could impact the three Heritage Oaks and/or other retained trees on the project site.



**Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Protection of Heritage Oaks and Other Retained Trees.**

The proposed project shall adhere to all recommendations in the Preliminary Arborist's Report prepared for the project (HortScience | Bartlett Consulting, 2023). These include a Tree Protection Zone enclosed by fencing and signs for each tree to be preserved, design recommendations to preserve the health of trees during and following construction, pre-demolition and pre-construction treatments and recommendations such as pruning dead branches, recommendations for tree protection during construction, and recommendations for maintenance of impacted trees following construction such as pruning and fertilization. Implementation of the recommendations shall be overseen by a certified arborist and shall be documented by the District or its contractor.

The implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-3 would prevent significant impacts to Heritage Trees and other retained trees in the project site.

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

**No Impact.** There is no adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan that applies to the project site (CDFW, 2024b). Thus, the proposed project would not conflict with such a plan.



### 3.5 Cultural Resources

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

The following discussion is based on an Archaeological Review in Support of Environmental Clearance prepared for the project by Basin Research Associates (February 2, 2024). Due to the sensitive nature of the information contained in the report, it is kept confidentially at the District. Inquiries regarding the report should be directed to the District.

#### 3.5.1 Environmental Setting

The Basin report provides the results of: 1) a records search of a 0.25 miles radius of the project site completed by the California Historical Resources File System, Northwest Information Center (CHRIS/NWIC); 2) a review of the Sacred Lands File (SLF) by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC); 3) the results of Native American outreach to Tribes and Native American individuals recommended by the NAHC; 4) a review of various published compendiums including the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR); 5) a review of archival literature and records on file with Basin Research Associates; 6) findings; and 7) an opinion of the project's effect on cultural properties and recommendations. A field review was not conducted due to past on-site development impacts and probable lack of visible native sediments.

##### Hispanic Period

The Spanish philosophy of government in northwestern New Spain was directed at the founding of presidios, missions, and secular towns with the land held by the Crown (1769-1821), while the later Mexican Period policy (1822-1848) stressed individual ownership of the land (Hart 1987). None of the known routes of Spanish expeditions proceed through or near the project. The project is located in the Rancho La Purisima Concepción, a 4,439-acre Mexican land grant, which was granted in June 1840 to former Santa Clara Mission Indian, José Gorgonio. He and another Native American, José Ramón [alternatively also a grantee] occupied the grant until it was sold in 1844 to Juana Briones de Miranda. No adobe dwellings or other structures and/or



features (corrals, roads, etc.) have been identified in or adjacent to the project site. Additionally, no known potential Hispanic Period archaeological resources (e.g., adobe dwellings or other structures, features, etc.) have been reported within or adjacent to the project site.

### American Period

The District was incorporated April 20, 1955, and the Town of Los Altos Hills was incorporated shortly thereafter, in January 1956. As of the 2020 census, the town of 8.8 square miles had 8,489 residents. Since 1970 the District has provided service to about 6,400 connections relying on 11 tanks.

The 1953 Palo Alto USGS topographic quadrangle shows the project site on the edge of an orchard accessed via an unpaved road from the south. The 1961 USGS topographic quadrangle shows three paved roads on the periphery of the project site enclosing a single building in the northwest corner and a tank in the southeast near one of the paved roads. The next available topographic quadrangle, photo revised in 1968 shows the project site within “urbanized” Los Altos Hills.

No known significant or listed American Era cultural resources have been identified in and/or adjacent to the project.

### Native American Resources

The project area is within the territory of the Ohlone or Ohlone/Costanoan Native Americans. The project may have been in the upper reaches of Puichon territory, a tribal group that held the west shore of San Francisco Bay within parts of Menlo Park, Palo Alto, and Mountain View or the Olpen, also known as the Guemelentos, who held the interior hill and valley lands of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

No known prehistoric, ethnographic and/or mission era settlements or contemporary Native American resources, including sacred places and/or traditional use areas, have been identified in or adjacent to the project.

### Native American Outreach

Thirteen locally knowledgeable Native American individuals/organizations identified by the NAHC were contacted to determine if “tribal cultural resources” are/were present. Individuals contacted include:

- Ed Ketchum, Vice-Chairperson, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band;
- Valentin Lopez, Chairperson, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band;
- Irene Zwierlein, Chairperson, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista;
- Kanyon Sayers-Roods, MLD [Most Likely Descendant] Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan;
- Ann Marie Sayers, Chairperson, Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan;



- Monica Arellano, Vice-Chairwoman, Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area;
- Quirina Luna Geary, Chairperson, Tamien Nation, San Jose;
- Johnathan Wasaka Costillas, THPO [Tribal Historic Preservation Officer], Tamien Nation;
- Lillian Camarena, Secretary, Tamien Nation;
- Desiree Vigil, THPO [Tribal Historic Preservation Officer], The Ohlone Tribe;
- Vincent Medina, Cultural Leader, The Ohlone Tribe;
- Andrew Galvan, Chairperson, The Ohlone Indian Tribe; and,
- Kenneth Woodrow, Chairperson, Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band.

No responses regarding tribal cultural resources were received.

### Records Search

A prehistoric and historic site record and literature search was completed by the California Historical Resources Information System, Northwest Information Center, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park (CHRIS/NWIC File No. 23-0598 dated 11/29/2023 by Neal). Reference material from the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley and Basin Research Associates, San Leandro was also consulted. Specialized listings for cultural resources include:

- *California History Plan* (CAL/OHP 1973);
- *California Inventory of Historic Resources* (CAL/OHP 1976);
- *Five Views: An Ethnic Sites Survey for California* (CAL/OHP 1988);
- *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP) listings (USNPS 2023a-c);
- OHP [Office of Historic Preservation] *Built Environment Resources Directory* (BERD) (CAL/OHP 2023a);
- *California Historical Resources* (CAL/OHP 2023b);
- *Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility* [ADOE] (CAL/OHP 2023c); and,
- Other relevant sources (see References Cited).

The CHRIS/NWIC records search was negative for reports, recorded and/or reported archaeological sites, built environment resources, in, adjacent or within a 0.25-mile radius of the McCann Operations Center project site. Additionally, no listed or known NRHP and/or CRHR have been identified in or adjacent to the project site.

No other agencies, departments or local historical societies were contacted regarding landmarks, potential historical sites or structures.

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted for a review of the Sacred Lands File. The results were negative.



### 3.5.2 Regulatory Setting

#### Federal

##### *National Historic Preservation Act*

Federal protection is legislated by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and the Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979. These laws maintain processes for determination of the effects on historical properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Section 106 of the NHPA and related regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 800) constitute the primary federal regulatory framework guiding cultural resources investigations and require consideration of effects on properties that are listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP. Impacts to properties listed in the NRHP must be evaluated under CEQA.

#### State

##### *California Environmental Quality Act*

Pursuant to CEQA, a historical resource is a resource listed in, or eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). In addition, resources included in a local register of historic resources or identified as significant in a local survey conducted in accordance with state guidelines are also considered historic resources under CEQA, unless a preponderance of the facts demonstrates otherwise. Per CEQA, the fact that a resource is not listed in or determined eligible for listing in the CRHR or is not included in a local register or survey shall not preclude a Lead Agency from determining that the resource may be a historic resource as defined in California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5024.1. CEQA applies to archaeological resources when (1) the archaeological resource satisfies the definition of a historical resource or (2) the archaeological resource satisfies the definition of a “unique archaeological resource.” A unique archaeological resource is an archaeological artifact, object, or site that has a high probability of meeting any of the following criteria:

1. The archaeological resource contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
2. The archaeological resource has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
3. The archaeological resource is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

##### *California Register of Historical Resources*

The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) is administered by the State Office of Historic Preservation and encourages protection of resources of architectural, historical, archeological, and cultural significance. The CRHR identifies historic resources for state and local planning purposes and affords protections under CEQA. Under Public Resources Code



Section 5024.1(c), a resource may be eligible for listing in the CRHR if it meets any of the NRHP criteria.<sup>12</sup>

Historical resources eligible for listing in the CRHR must meet the significance criteria described previously and retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. A resource that has lost its historic character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the CRHR if it maintains the potential to yield significant scientific or historical information or specific data.

The concept of integrity is essential to identifying the important physical characteristics of historical resources and, therefore, in evaluating adverse changes to them. Integrity is defined as “the authenticity of a historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance.” The processes of determining integrity are similar for both the CRHR and NRHP and use the same seven variables or aspects to define integrity that are used to evaluate a resource’s eligibility for listing. These seven characteristics include 1) location, 2) design, 3) setting, 4) materials, 5) workmanship, 6) feeling, and 7) association.

#### *California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act*

The California Native American Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Sites Act applies to both state and private lands. The act requires that upon discovery of human remains, construction or excavation activity must cease and the county coroner be notified.

#### *Public Resources Code Sections 5097 and 5097.98*

Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines specifies procedures to be used in the event of an unexpected discovery of Native American human remains on non-federal land. These procedures are outlined in Public Resources Code Sections 5097 and 5097.98. These codes protect such remains from disturbance, vandalism, and inadvertent destruction, establish procedures to be implemented if Native American skeletal remains are discovered during construction of a project, and establish the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as the authority to resolve disputes regarding disposition of such remains.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, in the event of human remains discovery, no further disturbance is allowed until the county coroner has made the necessary findings regarding the origin and disposition of the remains. If the remains are of a Native American, the county coroner must notify the NAHC. The NAHC then notifies those persons most likely to be related to the Native American remains. The code section also stipulates the procedures that the descendants may follow for treating or disposing of the remains and associated grave goods.

#### *Health and Safety Code, Sections 7050 and 7052*

Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 declares that, in the event of the discovery of human remains outside a dedicated cemetery, all ground disturbances must cease, and the county



coroner must be notified. Section 7052 establishes a felony penalty for mutilating, disinterring, or otherwise disturbing human remains, except by relatives.

#### *California Penal Code Section 622.5*

California Penal Code Section 622.5 provides misdemeanor penalties for injuring or destroying objects of historic or archaeological interest located on public or private lands but specifically excludes the landowner.

#### *Government Code Section 6254(r)*

Government Code explicitly authorizes public agencies to withhold information from the public relating to Native American graves, cemeteries, and sacred places maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission.

### **3.5.3 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

#### **a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?**

**No Impact.** There are no historical resources located on or within the immediate vicinity of the project. The Basin report (February 2024) concluded that no historic properties listed, determined eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) have been identified in or adjacent to the project site.

#### **b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?**

**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Research conducted for the proposed project suggests a very low potential for exposing subsurface archaeological materials within or adjacent to the project site due to previous disturbance at the site and the lack of known resources within the area. As stated, the CHRIS/NWIC records search was negative for reports, recorded and/or reported archaeological sites, adjacent or within a 0.25-mile radius of the McCann Operations Center project site. Additionally, no listed or known NRHP and/or CRHR have been identified in or adjacent to the project site.

The Basin report stated that construction of the project could proceed as planned as it would not affect any recorded historic properties or unique archaeological resources, and subsurface testing for buried archaeological resources was not recommended due to previous disturbance. In addition, archaeological and/or Native American monitoring was not recommended due to the lack of known resources within the trail alignment. However, the following mitigation measures, based on the recommendations of the Basin report, will be implemented to reduce potential impacts to unknown archaeological resources to a less than significant level.



**Impact CUL-1:** Construction of the project could potentially result in disturbance to unknown archaeological resources.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Resources.** The District should retain a Professional Archaeologist on an “on-call” basis during ground disturbing construction to review, identify and evaluate any potential cultural resources that may be inadvertently exposed during construction. The archaeologist shall review and evaluate any discoveries to determine if they are historical resource(s) and/or unique archaeological resources under CEQA.

If the Professional Archaeologist determines that any cultural resources exposed during construction constitute a historical resource and/or unique archaeological resource under CEQA, he/she shall notify the District and other appropriate parties of the evaluation and recommend mitigation measures to mitigate to a less than significant impact in accordance with California Public Resources Code Section 15064.5. Mitigation measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, recordation, additional archaeological testing and data recovery among other options. The completion of a formal Archaeological Monitoring Plan (AMP) and/or Archaeological Treatment Plan (ATP) that may include data recovery may be recommended by the Professional Archaeologist if significant archaeological deposits are exposed during ground disturbing construction. Development and implementation of the AMP and ATP and treatment of significant cultural resources will be determined by the District in consultation with any regulatory agencies.

Implementation of mitigation measures MM CUL-1 would ensure that the project would not have a significant impact on buried archaeological resources.

**c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?**

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The project can proceed as planned as it will not affect any recorded historic properties or potentially unique archaeological resources. Subsurface testing for buried archaeological resources is not recommended due to perceived low sensitivity of the project site and prior subsurface disturbance associated with construction of the existing operations center. Archaeological monitoring during ground disturbing construction is not recommended. However, the following protection measures are recommended in the event that project excavation inadvertently discovers any human remains or archaeological resources.

**Impact CUL-2:** Project excavation could disturb previously unknown buried archaeological resources and/or human remains.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-2a: Construction Plans.** The Purissima Hills Water District (District) shall note on any plans that require ground disturbing excavation that there is a



potential for exposing buried cultural resources<sup>33</sup> including prehistoric Native American burials.

**Mitigation Measure CUL-2b: Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains.** In accordance with Section 7050.5, Chapter 1492 of the California Health and Safety Code and Sections 5097.94, 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code, if potential human remains are found, the lead agency (Purissima Hills Water District) staff and the Santa Clara County Coroner shall be immediately notified of the discovery. The coroner will provide a determination regarding the nature of the remains within 48 hours of notification. No further excavation or disturbance of the identified material, or any area reasonably suspected to overlie additional remains, can occur until a determination has been made. If the County Coroner determines that the remains are, or are believed to be, of Native American ancestry, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. In accordance with California Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98, the Native American Heritage Commission must immediately notify those persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant from the deceased Native American. Within 48 hours of this notification, the Most Likely Descendant would recommend to the lead agency their preferred treatment of the remains and associated grave goods.

State law shall be followed in regard to Native American burials (Chapter 1492, Section 7050.5 to the Health and Safety Code, Sections 5097.94, 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code). This shall include immediate notification of the appropriate county Coroner/Medical Examiner and the District.

Implementation of mitigation measures MM CUL-2a and MM CUL-2b would ensure that the project would not have a significant impact on human remains.

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<sup>33</sup> Significant prehistoric cultural resources are defined as human burials, features or other clusterings of finds made, modified or used by Native American peoples in the past. The prehistoric and protohistoric indicators of prior cultural occupation by Native Americans include artifacts and human bone, as well as soil discoloration, shell, animal bone, sandstone cobbles, ashy areas, and baked or vitrified clays. Prehistoric materials may include:

- a. Human bone - either isolated or intact burials.
- b. Habitation (occupation or ceremonial structures as interpreted from rock rings/features, distinct ground depressions, differences in compaction (e.g., house floors).
- c. Artifacts including chipped stone objects such as projectile points and bifaces; groundstone artifacts such as manos, metates, mortars, pestles, grinding stones, pitted hammerstones; and, shell and bone artifacts including ornaments and beads.
- d. Various features and samples including hearths (fire-cracked rock; baked and vitrified clay), artifact caches, faunal and shellfish remains (which permit dietary reconstruction), distinctive changes in soil stratigraphy indicative of prehistoric activities.

e. Isolated artifacts

Historic cultural materials may include finds from the late 19th through early 20th centuries. Objects and features associated with the Historic Period can include.

- a. Structural remains or portions of foundations (bricks, cobbles/boulders, stacked field stone, postholes, etc.).
- b. Trash pits, privies, wells and associated artifacts.
- c. Isolated artifacts or isolated clusters of manufactured artifacts (e.g., glass bottles, metal cans, manufactured wood items, etc.).
- d. Human remains.

In addition, cultural materials including both artifacts and structures that can be attributed to Hispanic, Asian and other ethnic or racial groups are potentially significant. Such features or clusters of artifacts and samples include remains of structures, trash pits, and privies.



3.6 Energy

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

3.6.1 Environmental Setting

Energy consumption is closely tied to the issues of air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as the burning of fossil fuels and natural gas for energy has a negative impact on both, and petroleum and natural gas currently supply most of the energy consumed in California.

In general, California’s per capita energy consumption is relatively low, in part due to mild weather that reduces energy demand for heating and cooling, and in part due to the government’s proactive energy-efficiency programs and standards. According to the California Energy Commission (CEC), Californians consumed about 287,826 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity and 11,711 million therms of natural gas in 2022 (CEC 2024a and CEC 2024b).

In 2022, total electricity use in Santa Clara County was 17,102 million kilowatt hours (kWh), including 12,852 million kWh of consumption for non-residential land uses (CEC 2024a). Natural gas consumption was 424 million therms in 2022, including 190 million therms from non-residential uses (CEC 2024b).

Energy conservation refers to efforts made to reduce energy consumption to preserve resources for the future and reduce pollution. It may involve diversifying energy sources to include renewable energy, such as solar power, wind power, wave power, geothermal power, and tidal power, as well as the adoption of technologies that improve energy efficiency and adoption of green building practices. Energy conservation can be achieved through increases in efficiency in conjunction with decreased energy consumption and/or reduced consumption from conventional energy sources.

3.6.2 Regulatory Setting

Since increased energy efficiency is so closely tied to the State’s efforts to reduce GHG emissions and address global climate change, the regulations, policies, and action plans aimed at reducing GHG emissions also promote increased energy efficiency and the transition to



renewable energy sources. The U.S. EPA and the State address climate change through numerous pieces of legislation, regulations, planning, policy-making, education, and implementation programs aimed at reducing energy consumption and the production of GHG.

The proposed project would not involve the development of facilities that include energy intensive equipment or operations. While there are numerous regulations that govern GHG emissions reductions through increased energy efficiency, the following regulatory setting description focuses only on regulations that: 1) provide the appropriate context for the proposed project's potential energy usage; and 2) may directly or indirectly govern or influence the amount of energy used to develop and operate the proposed improvements. See the Environmental and Regulatory Setting discussion in Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, for a description of the key regulations related to global climate change, energy efficiency, and GHG emission reductions.

#### California Building Energy Efficiency Standards

The CEC first adopted Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce energy consumption in the State. Although not originally intended to reduce GHG emissions, increased energy efficiency, and reduced consumption of electricity, natural gas, and other fuels would result in fewer GHG emissions from residential and nonresidential buildings subject to the standard. The standards are updated periodically to allow for the consideration and inclusion of new energy efficiency technologies and methods.

Part 11 of the Title 24 Building Standards Code is referred to as the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code). The purpose of the CALGreen Code is to "improve public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a 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 air quality" (CALGreen 2024). The CALGreen Code is not intended to substitute or be identified as meeting the certification requirements of any green building program that is not established and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC).

CalGreen contains both mandatory and voluntary measures. For non-residential land uses there are 39 mandatory measures including, but not limited to, exterior light pollution reduction, wastewater reduction by 20 percent, and commissioning of projects over 10,000 square feet. Two tiers of voluntary measures apply to nonresidential land uses, for a total of 36 additional elective measures.

California's Building Energy Efficiency Standards are updated on an approximately three-year cycle. The 2019 standards, which became effective on January 1, 2020, focus on three key areas: proposing new requirements for installation of solar photovoltaics for newly constructed low-rise residential buildings; updating current ventilation and Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) requirements, and extending Title 24 Part 6 to apply to healthcare facilities. The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards were approximately 53 percent more than the 2016 Title 24 Energy



Standards for residential development and approximately 30 percent more efficient for non-residential development. The 2022 standards, which were adopted in August 2021, went into effect January 1, 2023. The 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards focus on establishing or expanding standards for electric heat pumps, for single-family homes to be electric-ready, for solar photovoltaic system and battery storage, and for ventilation systems (CEC 2021).

#### CARB Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) Regulation

CARB initially approved the LCFS regulation in 2009, identifying it as one of the nine discrete early action measures in the 2008 Scoping Plan to reduce California's GHG emissions. The LCFS regulation is designed to encourage the use of cleaner low-carbon transportation fuels in California, encourage the production of those fuels, and therefore, reduce GHG emissions and decrease petroleum dependence in the transportation sector. The LCFS regulation defines a Carbon Intensity, or "CI," reduction target (or standard) for each year, which the rule refers to as the "compliance schedule."

The LCFS regulation initially required a reduction of at least 10 percent in the CI of California's transportation fuels by 2020. CARB approved some amendments to the LCFS in December 2011, which were implemented on January 1, 2013. In September 2015, the Board approved the re-adoption of the LCFS, which became effective on January 1, 2016, to address procedural deficiencies in the way the original regulation was adopted. The 2015 rulemaking included many amendments, updates, and improvements to the program, including a compliance schedule that maintained the 2009 LCFS regulation's target of a 10 percent reduction in average carbon intensity by 2020 from a 2010 baseline. In 2018, the Board approved amendments to the regulation, which included strengthening and smoothing the carbon intensity benchmarks through 2030 in-line with California's 2030 GHG emission reduction target enacted through SB 32, adding new crediting opportunities to promote zero emission vehicle adoption, alternative jet fuel, carbon capture and sequestration, and advanced technologies to achieve deep decarbonization in the transportation sector (CARB, 2020).

### **3.6.3 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

- a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?**
- b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?**

**Less Than Significant Impact** (Responses a-b). The proposed project consists of the demolition of the existing operations building and the construction of a new two-story operations building. Construction activities would require the use of heavy-duty off-road construction equipment and on-road vehicles (e.g., passenger vehicles truck trips for deliveries and hauling) that would combust fuel, primarily diesel and gasoline. The use of this fuel energy would be necessary to construct the project and meet Tier 1 Life Safety Performance Criteria for essential



facilities. Once constructed, the proposed project would not change the nature and magnitude of the existing activities at the McCann Operations Center site. It would result in a change in land use, increases in population, or increases in vehicle miles travelled. Furthermore, the new building would be subject to more stringent energy efficiency requirements that would be more energy efficient than the existing building. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of resources during operation or construction and would not conflict with any plan or policy for renewable energy or energy efficiency.



### 3.7 Geology And Soils

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



### 3.7.1 Environmental Setting

The following discussion is based on a Design Recommendations Memorandum from Haley and Aldrich, inc. dated May 12, 2023, and is included here as Appendix C.

#### Regional Geologic Setting

The site is located within the Coast Ranges Geomorphic Province of California. Throughout the Cenozoic Era, the western part of California has been affected by tectonic forces associated with lateral or transform plate motion between the North American and Pacific crustal plates, which has produced a complex system of northwest-trending faults - the San Andreas, Hayward, and Calaveras Fault systems being the most prominent within the Bay Area. Uplift, erosion and subsequent re-deposition of sedimentary rocks within this province have been driven primarily by the northwest-southeast directed strike-slip movement of the tectonic plates and the associated northeast oriented compressional stress.

The northwest-trending coastal mountain ranges are the result of an orogeny believed to have been occurring since the Pleistocene epoch (approximately 2-3 million years before present). The site falls within the bounds of the Palo Alto 30 x 60-minute quadrangle mapped by the U.S. Geological Survey. The terrain within the quadrangle has been divided into ten individual stratigraphic assemblages that lie within a series of fault-bounded bedrock structural blocks. The Woodside Assemblage, bound to the west by the San Andreas fault, dominates the general area of the site and includes a sequence of middle and lower Eocene and Miocene rocks. These Miocene rocks overlie a Mesozoic basement consisting of Franciscan Complex, Coast Range Ophiolite, and Great Valley Sequence. Franciscan Complex rocks are exposed in the east and southeast parts of the quadrangle along the northeast side of the San Andreas Fault.

The most detailed published mapping of the area is that by Cotton Shires and Associates compiled for the Town of Los Altos Hills. The Geologic Map of Los Altos Hills indicates that the site overlies sediments of the Plio-Pleistocene age Santa Clara Formation. The map describes the Santa Clara Formation as "semi-consolidated to consolidated...conglomerate interbedded with poorly sorted sandstone, siltstone, and claystone". The formation locally dips moderately to the east-northeast. The geologic map indicates that while no landslides have been mapped onsite, several small landslides have been mapped upslope of the site. The toe of each landslide extends to the eastern side of Anacapa Drive.

#### Subsurface Conditions

##### *Soil and Bedrock Conditions*

Based on the results of our geotechnical exploration and geologic mapping of the site, Haley and Uldrich, inc. concludes that the inboard, southern portion of the site, consists of shallow fill supporting the pavement, water tanks, maintenance building and utility infrastructure. This thin, approximately 12-inch-thick fill overlies Plio-Pleistocene deposits of the Santa Clara Formation. The outboard, northern, portion of the site consists of a thicker section of fill up to about 4 to 6 feet, overlying residual and highly weathered soil derived from the Santa Clara Formation. The undocumented fill that was encountered in the borings consists of stiff to very stiff sandy clay of



low plasticity. The residual soil, where encountered in our borings, consists of medium stiff to stiff, moist silty clay of moderate plasticity. Santa Clara Formation material consists of dense to very dense sand with clay and clayey sand, and hard, low plasticity sandy clay.

### *Groundwater Conditions*

Groundwater was not encountered in our exploratory borings during our field investigation of the Site. The subsurface consists of a thin mantle of undocumented fill and residual soil across the site, and a shallow depth to well-consolidated formation material. Given the sloping nature of the native terrain, it should be anticipated that shallow zones of perched water could be encountered either above the bedrock boundary or at the interface between the soil and bedrock. Groundwater commonly travels between the soil and rock interface and should be anticipated. Groundwater table elevations can vary highly, and can be sensitive to seasonality, geologic and hydrologic conditions, nearby construction activities, and natural and artificially constructed drainage paths.

### **3.7.2 Regulatory Setting**

#### Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act regulates development in California near known active faults due to hazards associated with surface fault ruptures. There are no Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zones on the project site (California Geological Survey, 1974).

#### Seismic Hazard Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazard Mapping Act was passed in 1990 following the Loma Prieta earthquake to reduce threats to public health and safety and to minimize property damage caused by earthquakes. The act directs the U.S. Department of Conservation to identify and map areas prone to the earthquake hazards of liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and amplified ground shaking. The act requires site-specific geotechnical investigations to identify potential seismic hazards and formulate mitigation measures prior to permitting most developments designed for human occupancy within the Zones of Required Investigation.

#### California Building Code

The 2019 California Building Codes (CBC) covers grading and other geotechnical issues, building specifications, and non-building structures.

#### California Public Resources Code

Section 5097 of the Public Resources Code specifies the procedures to be followed in the event of the unexpected discovery of historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources, including human remains, historic or prehistoric resources, paleontological resources on nonfederal land. The disposition of Native American burial falls within the jurisdiction of the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). Section 5097.5 of the Code states the following:



*No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, 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. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.*

### 3.7.3 Impact Discussion

*Would the project:*

- a) **Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**
  - i) **Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other significant evidence of a known fault?**
  - ii) **Strong seismic ground shaking?**
  - iii) **Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**
  - iv) **Landslides?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is not located within an earthquake fault zone, liquefaction zone, or landslide zone (California Geological Survey 2024). In the event of a major earthquake on one of the region's active faults, strong ground shaking at the project site would likely occur, however, the project's design includes site specific geotechnical design recommendations from the Haley Aldrich (2023) memo to address this hazard. Therefore, there would be no substantial risk of loss of life or property expected from seismic ground shaking at the site nor would the project exacerbate any existing hazardous seismic conditions.

- b) **Result in significant soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Construction of the project would disturb the ground and expose soils, thereby increasing the potential for wind- and water-related erosion and sedimentation at the site until the completion of construction and ground disturbance is stabilized. As discussed in Section 3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality of this Initial Study, the proposed project would implement erosion control measures during and after construction consistent with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and Municipal Regional Permit. Compliance with these requirements would ensure the project would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

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



**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed under Response a) above, the proposed project site is not located within an earthquake fault zone, liquefaction zone, or landslide zone (California Geological Survey 2024). The project includes incorporating the design recommendations of the site-specific geotechnical memo prepared for the project to prevent soil instability. Therefore, the project would not result in on- or off-site landslide, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

**d) Be located on expansive soil, as noted in the 2010 California Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Expansive soils are clay rich soils that have the ability to undergo large volume changes with changes in moisture content. The large fluctuations in volume, often referred to as shrink/swell potential, can adversely impact building and structure foundations. The site-specific Geotechnical Design Recommendations Memorandum (Haley Aldrich 2023) found that on site soils varied from moderate to low plasticity (i.e. expansive potential). Project adherence to the site-specific geotechnical design recommendations contained in the Haley Aldrich memo would ensure that substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property would be avoided by the project.

**e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?**

**No Impact.** The project site is served by the Town's municipal sewer system. No septic systems or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be constructed or used; therefore, no impacts related to septic systems or alternative wastewater disposal systems would occur.

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** Most of the project site is already disturbed by existing development. However, the new Operations Center building would be sited further into the hillside to allow for Fire Department mandated access around the site as well as the District's desired size and functions for the proposed building. The Design recommendation Memorandum prepared by Haley Aldrich describes the site as overlying sediments of the Plio-Pleistocene age Santa Clara Formation which has the potential to contain fossil resources. However, the Town of Los Altos Hills has not identified significant paleontological resources in their General Plan (Town of Los Altos Hills 2007).

Although the likelihood of encountering paleontological resources during project construction activities is low, they could be encountered. The project would implement a Standard Design and Construction measure protecting such resources in the event they are encountered. See Table 2-2. Implementation of the Standard Design and Construction measure would ensure that the proposed project would not significantly impact paleontological resources.



3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

3.8.1 Environmental Setting

Gases that absorb and emit infrared thermal radiation (heat) in the atmosphere and affect regulation of the Earth’s temperature are known as greenhouse gases (GHGs). There are many compounds present in the Earth’s atmosphere which are GHGs, including but not limited to water vapor (H<sub>2</sub>O), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). GHGs allow solar radiation (sunlight) to enter the atmosphere freely. When solar radiation strikes the earth’s surface, it is either absorbed by the atmosphere, land, and ocean surface, or reflected back toward space. The land and ocean surface that has absorbed solar radiation warms up and emits infrared radiation toward space. GHGs absorb some of this infrared radiation and “trap” the energy in the earth’s atmosphere. Entrapment of too much infrared radiation produces an effect commonly referred to as the “Greenhouse effect.” Human activities since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (approximately 1750) have increased atmospheric GHG concentrations. Average global surface temperatures have risen as a result of GHG emissions. This increase in globally averaged surface temperatures is commonly referred to as “Global Warming,” although the term “Global Climate Change” is preferred because effects associated with increased GHG concentrations are not just limited to higher global temperatures (NOAA, 2023).

GHGs that contribute to climate regulation are a different type of pollutant than criteria or hazardous air pollutants because climate regulation is global in scale, both in terms of causes and effects. Some GHGs are emitted to the atmosphere naturally by biological and geological processes such as evaporation (water vapor), aerobic respiration (carbon dioxide), and off-gassing from low oxygen environments such as swamps or exposed permafrost (methane); however, GHG emissions from human activities such as fuel combustion (e.g., carbon dioxide) and refrigerants use (e.g., hydrofluorocarbons) significantly contribute to overall GHG concentrations in the atmosphere, climate regulation, and global climate change.

Human production of GHG has increased steadily since pre-industrial times (approximately pre-1880), and atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations have increased from a pre-industrial value of 280 parts per million (ppm) in the early 1800s to approximately 423 ppm in August 2024 (NOAA,



2024). The effects of increased GHG concentrations in the atmosphere include climate change (increasing temperature and shifts in precipitation patterns and amounts), reduced ice and snow cover, sea level rise, and acidification of oceans. These effects in turn will impact food and water supplies, infrastructure, ecosystems, and overall public health and welfare.

The potential for a GHG to absorb and trap heat in the atmosphere is considered its global warming potential (GWP). The reference gas for measuring GWP is CO<sub>2</sub>, which has a GWP of one. By comparison, CH<sub>4</sub> has a GWP of 25, which means that one molecule of CH<sub>4</sub> has 25 times the effect on global warming as one molecule of CO<sub>2</sub>. Multiplying the estimated emissions for non-CO<sub>2</sub> GHGs by their GWP determines their carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e), which enables a project's combined global warming potential to be expressed in terms of mass CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. GHG emissions are often discussed in terms of Metric Tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e, or MTCO<sub>2</sub>e.

### 3.8.2 Regulatory Setting

CARB is the lead agency for implementing Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act adopted by the Legislature in 2006. AB 32 requires the CARB to prepare a Scoping Plan containing the main strategies that will be used to achieve reductions in GHG emissions in California.

Executive Order B-30-15, 2030 Carbon Target and Adaptation, issued by Governor Brown in April 2015, sets a target of reducing GHG emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels in 2030. By directing state agencies to take measures consistent with their existing authority to reduce GHG emissions, this order establishes coherence between the 2020 and 2050 GHG reduction goals set by AB 32 and seeks to align California with the scientifically established GHG emissions levels needed to limit global warming below two degrees Celsius.

To reinforce the goals established through Executive Order B-30-15, Governor Brown went on to sign SB 32 and AB 197 on September 8, 2016. Senate Bill 32 made the GHG reduction target to reduce GHG emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 a requirement as opposed to a goal. Assembly Bill 197 gives the Legislature additional authority over CARB to ensure the most successful strategies for lowering emissions are implemented, and requires CARB to, "protect the state's most impacted and disadvantaged communities ...[and] consider the social costs of the emissions of greenhouse gases."

On September 16, 2022, Governor Newsom signed into law AB 1279, the California Climate Crisis Act, that codified California's 2045 carbon neutrality goal and established a GHG emission reduction target of 85% below 1990 levels.

#### CARB Scoping Plan

On December 14, 2017, CARB adopted the second update to the Scoping Plan, the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update (2017 Scoping Plan Update; CARB 2017). The primary objective for the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan is to identify the measures required to achieve the mid-term GHG reduction target for 2030 (i.e., reduce emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030) established under EO B-30-15 and SB 32. The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan identifies an increased need for coordination among State, regional, and



local governments to realize the potential for GHG emissions reductions that can be gained from local land use decisions. The third update to the scoping plan, the 2022 Scoping Plan, was released in May 2022 and adopted by CARB in December 2022 (CARB 2022). The plan presents a scenario for California to meet the State goal of reducing GHG emissions 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 (CARB 2022).

### 3.8.3 Impact Discussion

- a) **Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?**
- b) **Conflict with an applicable, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

**Less Than Significant Impact** (Responses a-b). As described in Section 3.3.3, the proposed project would involve minor construction activities that would generate pollutant emissions, including GHG emissions from the use of equipment and vehicles that would be used to construct the project. The GHG emissions that would occur during construction of the McCann Operations Center would cease to be emitted upon completion of the project and once constructed, the project would not result in new or additional GHG emissions since it would not change the nature or the magnitude of the activities and operations at the site. For these reasons, the proposed project would not generate GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.



**3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**3.9.1 Environmental Setting**

The project site is located in a residential neighborhood. The project site has been used for utility uses since 1970. Prior to development and use as a utility, the site was an orchard.

The State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker database identifies the project site has having previously contained a leaking underground storage tank (LUST). The California



Regional Water Quality Control Board issued a Remedial Action Completion on December 11, 1995, which noted the completion of the site investigation and remedial action for the underground storage tank formerly located at the site. The letter stated that no further action related to the underground storage tank release was required. The case is now considered, “Completed – Case Closed” status. The letter does note that the owner must notify the RWQCB if a change in land use is proposed. There are no active Cortese List sites within 1,000 feet of the proposed project site (DTSC 2024).

### **3.9.2 Regulatory Setting**

#### Federal

##### *United States Environmental Protection Agency*

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created in 1970 to serve as a single source collection of all federal research, monitoring, standard-setting, and enforcement activities to make sure there is appropriate protection of the environment. The EPA’s duty is to create and enforce regulations that protect the natural environment and apply the laws passed by Congress. The EPA is also accountable for establishing national criteria for various environmental programs and enforcing compliance.

##### *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act*

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) provides a Federal “Superfund” to clean up uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous-waste sites as well as accidents, spills, and other emergency releases of pollutants and contaminants into the environment. Through CERCLA, the EPA was given power to seek out those parties responsible for any release and assure their cooperation in the cleanup.

##### *Resource Conservation and Recovery Act*

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) enacted in 1976 governs the disposal of solid waste and hazardous materials. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act gives the EPA the power to control the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances that cannot be disposed of in ordinary landfills. It also allows each state to apply their own hazardous waste programs instead of implementing the federal program on the condition that the state’s program is just as strict in its requirements. This state program must be permitted by the EPA to be used.

#### State

##### *California Environmental Protection Agency*

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) was established in 1991 and is comprised of: the California Air Resources Board, the State Water Resources Control Board, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, CalRecycle, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and the Department of



Pesticide Regulation. This integrated group amalgamates all of California's environmental authority agencies into one and has led the state of California in developing and applying numerous progressive environmental policies in America. The primary goal of the Cal/EPA is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment.

#### *Regional Water Quality Control Board*

The RWQCB oversees cases involving groundwater contamination within the San Francisco Bay Area from Spills, Leaks, Incidents and Clean-up (SLIC) cases while the County of Santa Clara's Department of Environmental Health would oversee most leaking underground storage tank (LUST) cases. In the incidence of a spill at a project site, the applicant would notify the County of Santa Clara and a lead regulator (County, RWQCB or DTSC) would be determined.

#### *Cortese List*

The Cortese list was authorized by the state legislature in 1985. A list of several types of hazardous materials is gathered by a few agencies as directed by the statute.

Government Code Section 65962.5. (a) The Department of Toxic Substances Control shall compile and update as appropriate, but at least annually, and shall submit to the Secretary for Environmental Protection, a list of all of the following:

1. All hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
2. All land designated as hazardous waste property or border zone property pursuant to Article 11 (commencing with Section 25220) of Chapter 6.5 of Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code.
3. All information received by the Department of Toxic Substances Control pursuant to Section 25242 of the Health and Safety Code on hazardous waste disposals on public land.
4. All sites listed pursuant to Section 25356 of the Health and Safety Code.

All sites included in the Abandoned Site Assessment Program. Government Code Section 65962.5. (c) The State Water Resources Control Board shall compile and update as appropriate, but at least annually, and shall submit to the Secretary for Environmental Protection, a list of all of the following:

1. All underground storage tanks for which an unauthorized release report is filed pursuant to Section 25295 of the Health and Safety Code.
2. All solid waste disposal facilities from which there is a migration of hazardous waste and for which a California regional water quality control board has notified the Department of Toxic Substances Control pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 13273 of the Water Code.
3. All cease and desist orders issued after January 1, 1986, pursuant to Section 13301 of the Water Code, and all cleanup or abatement orders issued after January 1, 1986,



pursuant to Section 13304 of the Water Code, that concern the discharge of wastes that are hazardous materials.

The proposed project site is on the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List.

#### *California Department of Toxic Control*

The California Department of Toxic Control, a department of the 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 California 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.

#### Local

#### *Los Altos Hills Municipal Code*

The Contractor shall comply with Section 4-8.401 of the Los Altos Hills Municipal Code, which requires the contractor to prepare a hazardous materials management plan (HMMP) which demonstrates the safe storage and handling of hazardous materials (Los Altos Hills, 2024). Additionally, The project's construction General Provisions contains guidance in the event hazardous materials are encountered during construction, and the necessary steps to be taken to address the hazard.

### **3.9.3 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project is the replacement of an existing operations center. The project would not involve new routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials. Operations at the site would remain unchanged with the new proposed operations center building. Use of hazardous materials would be limited to small quantities of construction fuels and fluids during the short-term construction period as well as small quantities of chemicals for tank operations, landscaping, and maintenance of District equipment (same as existing conditions) including but not limited to chlorine, air sols, hydraulic oil, engine oil, cleaning supplies, diesel and gasoline fuel, lubricants, carbon dioxide gas, acetylene gas, propane, and map gas. These materials would be stored and used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Compliance with existing hazardous materials regulations would reduce any chance of upset conditions to less than significant levels.



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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project is the demolition of an existing operations center, construction of a new operations center which requires grading into the hillside and a retaining wall, removal of existing telecommunications equipment and grading and construction of a new driveway. The use of hazardous materials after project completion for project operations would be the same as existing conditions for maintenance activities occurring within the operations center.

Small quantities of hazardous materials, including fuels, oils, solvents, paints, and other building materials could be accidentally released into the environment during construction. Waste management and materials pollution control BMPs include designated areas for material delivery and storage, materials use, stockpile management, spill prevention and control, solid and hazardous waste management, contaminated soil, concrete waste, and liquid waste management. With the compliance of applicable regulations and the implementation of standard construction hazardous materials BMPs, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving hazardous materials.

**c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or hazardous waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The nearest schools to the project site Pinewood School Upper Campus, located 0.25 mile north of the project site and Gardner Bullis Elementary School, located 0.6- mile east of the project site. The proposed operations center would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. The potential to expose sensitive receptors to airborne pollutants during construction is addressed in Section 3.4 Air Quality, and also found less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to schools in the vicinity.

**d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (otherwise known as the Cortese List) (CalEPA 2022, DTSC 2022, SWRCB 2022) as the project site formerly contained an underground fuel tank that leaked. That tank was removed in 1995, and the case was closed (Regional Water Quality Control Board case number 43-1083). Proposed project activities include draining and abandoning the existing underground fuel tank and removal of an existing equipment building. The fuel tank would be abandoned according to relevant laws and regulations regarding abandonment of tank facilities. Abandonment of the existing tank and removal of the equipment building would not involve disturbance at depths near the location of the former tank that was removed in 1995. The impact is considered less than significant.



- e) **For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?**

**No Impact.** The project site is not within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public or public use airport. The closest airports to the project site are Moffett Federal Airfield and Palo Alto Airport, located approximately five miles northeast and north, respectively of the project site.

- f) **Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Roadways adjacent to the project would be utilized during construction for the delivery of materials to the construction site. Road and lane closures are not anticipated to be required during construction. However, should the need arise, the contractor would be required to maintain access for emergency vehicles for the duration of construction and therefore would not significantly impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency evacuation plan. Fire access plans have been reviewed and approved by local authorities. Project activities improve emergency access at the project site by providing required setbacks for vehicular access around the site's features. After project construction is completed, there would be no impediment to vehicular or emergency vehicle access. Thus, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact to emergency plans.

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

**No Impact.** the project site is not located in a very high fire hazard severity zone. The nearest such zone is located approximately two miles to the south of the project site. As stated above in Response (f), the contractor would maintain access to emergency vehicles for the duration of construction and therefore would not significantly impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency evacuation plan. Contractors shall comply with all Town or local fire authority requirements for evacuation in the event of an emergency.

The project would not exacerbate wildfire risks as it consists of the replacement of an existing building within an already developed site. Minor grading is involved to site the building to adequately provide sufficient emergency access around the site and proposed features. Vegetation removal (trees and shrubs) is anticipated as part of the project. Replacement landscaping would be provided and would be designed to current setback and defensible space requirements and designed with fire safety in mind. The impacts are considered less than significant.



**3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**3.10.1 Environmental Setting**

The project site is located within the Lower Peninsula Watershed, defined by Valley Water as a 98-square mile area whose many small creek watersheds feed the tidal wetlands along the San



San Francisco Bay's southwest shoreline. Cities within the watershed area include Los Altos Hills, Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos Cupertino and Sunnyvale (Valley Water 2024). There are no creeks or waterways on the site, which is surrounded by large-lot single-family residential development. The developed area of the property is a relatively flat graded pad covered mostly by impervious surfaces – asphalt concrete paving, building roofs, metal water tanks and equipment cabinets. The perimeter areas are sloped and covered with trees and vegetation. The site drains from west to east, with the existing storm drainage system consisting of a network of drop inlets and below-ground PVC pipes that convey runoff to the Town storm drains in Ascension Drive.

### Groundwater

The project site is located within the Santa Clara Subbasin, which is one of two major groundwater basins underlying the Santa Clara Valley and South Santa Clara County. (Llagas Subbasin is the other) The Santa Clara Subbasin extends from the southern edge of San Francisco Bay through the Coyote Valley to approximately Cochrane Road in Morgan Hill. Groundwater movement generally follows the surface water patterns flowing from the interior of the subbasin northerly toward San Francisco Bay. Valley Water oversees the groundwater management plan prepared for the Santa Clara And Llagas Subbasins (Valley Water 2024).

Groundwater in the Los Altos Hills planning area is contained in both shallow and deep aquifers formed in the alluvial deposits of streams running from the foothills to the San Francisco Bay. Groundwater recharge occurs mostly naturally, through rainfall. Some areas have higher recharge rates than others, depending on factors like soil porosity, clay content, and depth to bedrock. In the Santa Clara Valley, the areas with the highest recharge rates tend to be along the creeks and on the western edge of the valley floor, just below the toe of the foothills. In the past, wells have supplied water to Town residents during times of drought. (Los Altos Hills General Plan 2024)

### Water Quality

Surface water quality is affected by point source and non-point source (NPS) pollutants. Point source pollutants are emitted at a specific point, such as a pipe, while NPS pollutants are generated by surface runoff from diffuse sources such as streets, paved areas, and landscape areas. Point source pollutants are mainly controlled with pollutant discharge regulations established by the San Francisco Bay RWQCB through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, or waste discharge requirements (see Regulatory section, below).

NPS pollutants are more difficult to monitor and control and are important contributors to reductions in surface water quality in urban areas. Typical stormwater runoff pollutants include oil, grease, and metals accumulated in streets, driveways, parking lots, and rooftops, as well as pesticides, herbicides, particulate matter, nutrients, animal waste, and other substances from landscaped areas. In general, pollutant concentrations in stormwater runoff do not vary significantly within an urbanized watershed. However, pollutant concentrations do increase when impervious cover is more than 40 to 50 percent of the drainage area. Runoff volume is the most important variable in predicting pollutant loads. Surface runoff from the project site drains ultimately to Barron Creek.



### Flooding

According to flood mapping prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the project site is located outside the limits of the 100-year flood plain. The site is designated as being within Zone X (0.2 percent Annual Chance of Flood Hazard or Areas of 1 percent annual chance of flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile).

The project site is not located within a designated dam failure inundation area, which is an area that may be flooded in the event of a complete dam failure. Additionally, due to the project's inland location and distance from the nearest body of water (i.e., San Francisco Bay), it is not subject to seiche or tsunami hazards, or sea level rise.

### **3.10.2 Regulatory Setting**

#### Federal

##### *Clean Water Act*

Under the Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1977, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) seeks to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The statute employs a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory tools to reduce direct pollutant discharges into waterways, finance municipal wastewater treatment facilities, and manage polluted runoff. The CWA authorizes the USEPA to implement water quality regulations. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program under Section 402(p) of the CWA controls water pollution by regulating storm water discharges into the waters of the United States (US). California has an approved state NPDES program. The USEPA has delegated authority for water permitting to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), which has divided the state into nine regional basins, each under the jurisdiction of a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Section 401 requires an applicant for any Federal permit that proposes an activity that may result in a discharge to "waters of the U.S." to obtain certification from the State that the discharge will comply with other provisions of the CWA. In California, a Water Quality Certification is provided by the State Water Resources Control Board and/or RWQCB.

Section 404 authorizes the USACE to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material to waters of the U. S., including wetlands. The USACE issues individual site-specific or general (Nationwide) permits for such discharges.

##### *Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)*

FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which provides subsidized flood insurance to communities that comply with FEMA regulations, which limit development in flood plains. FEMA also issues Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identify which land areas are subject to flooding. These maps provide flood information and identify flood hazard zones in the community. The design standard for flood protection is established by FEMA, with



the minimum level of flood protection for new development set as the 100-year flood event, also described as a flood that has a 1-in-100 chance of occurring in any given year.

#### *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System*

As previously discussed, the NPDES permit program was established by the CWA to regulate municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters of the U.S. from their municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). Under the NPDES Program, all facilities which discharge pollutants from any point source into waters of the U.S. are required to obtain an NPDES permit. Point source discharges include discharges from publicly owned treatment works (POTWs), discharges from industrial facilities, and discharges associated with urban runoff, such as storm water. The NPDES permit programs in California are administered by the SWRCB and the nine RWQCBs.

#### State

##### *Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act*

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Water Code Sections 1300 et seq.) is the basic water quality control law in California. The Act established the SWRCB, (see also below) and divided the state into nine regional basins, each under the jurisdiction of a RWQCB. The Act authorizes the SWRCB and RWQCBs to issue and enforce Waste Discharge Requirements, NPDES permits, Section 401 water quality certifications, or other approvals.

##### *State Water Resources Control Board*

The SWRCB is the primary State agency responsible for the protection of the state's water quality and groundwater supplies. Construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land must comply with the requirements of the SWRCB Construction General Permit (2009-0009-DWQ) as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ. Under the terms of the permit, applicants must file permit registration documents with the SWRCB prior to the start of construction. The registration documents include a Notice of Intent (NOI), risk assessment, site map, Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), annual fee, and a signed certification statement.

##### *San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board*

The San Francisco Bay RWQCB is the regional authority responsible for planning, permitting and enforcement of the CWA. Los Altos Hills is within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay RWQCB (Region 2), which covers most of the Bay Area region, including Santa Clara County. The San Francisco Bay RWQCB addresses region-wide water quality issues through the Water Quality Control Plan for San Francisco Bay Region (Basin Plan), which is updated every 3 years. The Basin Plan was adopted in 1993 and updated most recently in May 2017. The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses of the State waters within Region 2, describes the water quality that must be maintained to support such uses, and provides programs, projects, and other actions necessary to achieve the standards established in the Basin Plan.



The SWRCB issued county-wide municipal stormwater permits in the early 1990s to operators of MS4s serving populations over 100,000 (Phase 1). In 2022, the San Francisco Bay RWQCB re-issued a single regional municipal stormwater discharge permit known as the Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit (MRP) to regulate stormwater discharges from municipalities and local agencies in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties, and the cities of Fairfield, Suisun City, and Vallejo.

Provision C.3 of the MRP (New Development and Redevelopment) allows the co-permittees to require the implementation of appropriate source control, site design, and stormwater treatment measures in new development and redevelopment projects to address stormwater runoff pollutant discharges and prevent increases in runoff flows to local waterways.

### Regional

#### *Valley Water*

Valley Water, previously known and referred to herein as Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD), is a water resources agency responsible for balancing flood protection needs with the protection of natural watercourses and habitat in the Santa Clara Valley. Valley Water serves 16 cities and 1.8 million residents, provides wholesale water supply, operates three water treatment plants, and provides flood protection along the creeks and rivers within the county. Valley Water implements the Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection (CSC) Plan that created a countywide special parcel tax for flood protection, improved water quality and safety, healthy creek and bay ecosystems and trails, parks, and open space along waterways.

Valley Water reviews plans for development projects near streams to ensure that the proposed storm drain systems and wastewater disposal systems will not adversely impact water quality in the streams. In addition, Valley Water reviews projects for conformance to Valley Water flood control design criteria, stream maintenance and protection plans, and groundwater protection programs.

#### *Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP)*

The SCVURPPP is an association of 13 cities and towns in the Santa Clara Valley, together with the County of Santa Clara and Valley Water. The RWQCB has conveyed responsibility for implementation of storm water regulations to the member agencies of SCVURPPP. The SCVURPPP incorporates regulatory, monitoring, and outreach measures aimed at improving the water quality of South San Francisco Bay and the streams of the Santa Clara Valley to reduce pollution in urban runoff to the “maximum extent practicable.” The SCVURPPP maintains compliance with the MRP and promotes stormwater pollution prevention within that context. Participating agencies (including the Town of Los Altos Hills) must meet the provisions of the MRP by ensuring that new development and redevelopment mitigate water quality impacts to stormwater runoff both during the construction and operation of projects. See discussion of MRP above.



Local Regulations*General Plan*

The following are relevant goals and policies from the Conservation Element of the Los Altos Hills General Plan that are related to hydrology and water quality.

*Goal 5: Protect and conserve water resources.*

Policy 5.5: Reduce non-point source pollution in urban runoff.

Municipal Code

The Town's Municipal Code is another primary tool that guides development in the Town. It identifies land use categories, site development regulations, and other general provisions that ensure consistency between the General Plan and proposed development projects. The Municipal Code contains all ordinances for the Town. The following chapters contain directives pertaining to hydrology and water quality issues:

§ 10-2.1403 Permanent stormwater pollution prevention measures required.

- (a) All development projects shall include permanent stormwater pollution measures in order to reduce water quality impacts of stormwater runoff from the entire site for the life of the project.
- (b) All plans and construction are subject to the inspection and approval by the City Engineer.
- (c) No final building or occupancy permit shall be issued without the written certification of the City Engineer that the requirements of this article have been satisfied. Such certification shall be in the form prescribed by the City Engineer and shall not be issued without payment of all applicable fees, which may be imposed for administration of this article.

§ 10-2.409 Erosion control.

All cut and fill surfaces created by grading and subject to erosion shall be planted with a ground cover compatible with the natural ground covers in the Town and which will thrive with little or no maintenance once established. Topsoil shall be stockpiled during rough grading and used on cut and fill slopes. On slopes likely to be extensively disturbed by later construction, an interim ground cover shall be planted or other acceptable erosion control device shall be used.

§ 10-2.404 Restrictions during wet season.

The City Engineer shall restrict grading operations during the wet season. The wet season is defined as the period between October 1st and April 30th. The City Engineer may allow grading to proceed during the wet season if precipitation has been minimal; if the grading technique to be used will minimize the risk of



landslides, erosion, or damage to adjacent properties or environmentally sensitive areas from soil movement; or if it is in the interest of public health and safety to permit grading. Following any 24-hour period during the year in which one-half inch or more of rain has fallen the City Engineer may prohibit grading.

#### § 10-2.405 Dust and dirt control.

All graded surfaces shall be wetted or suitably contained to prevent nuisances from dust or spillage on Town streets or adjacent properties. Equipment, materials, and roadways on the site shall be used or treated in a manner so as to prevent excessive dust conditions.

### 3.10.3 Impact Discussion

*Would the project:*

- a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project could potentially impact water quality during the short-term construction period through the accidental release of construction fuels or fluids or through an increase in sedimentation or erosion due to ground disturbance. However, conformance with the Town's Municipal Code requirements for erosion control, restrictions during the wet season, and dust and dirt control, would reduce construction-related impacts to surface or groundwater quality to a less than significant level. Construction phase BMPs implemented with the project to protect surface water quality, included in the project plan set, would include hazardous and non-hazardous materials management and spill prevention and control measures, vehicle and equipment maintenance and cleaning, earthwork and contaminated soil management measures (use of inlet protection, erosion and sediment controls), use of on-site truck wash out areas, and good housekeeping measures (pavement sweeping, catch basin cleaning).

Conformance with the Municipal Code provisions for permanent stormwater pollution prevention measures would reduce potential post-construction project impacts to surface or groundwater quality to a less than significant level. Post-construction or operational BMPs would include bioretention areas and the use of concrete with permeable base rock material.

- b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** Construction of the proposed new operations center building and landscaping installation would not result in an increase in the demand for water such that a substantial decrease in groundwater supplies would be created. The new building would represent an increase of 5,100 square feet of floor area over the existing building, with approximately half of that amount dedicated to garage, maintenance and storage uses. Native



and drought resistant species are planned for the new landscape installations to minimize irrigation water demand.

The project site is not located on any designated groundwater recharge areas and although the proposed project would increase the overall impervious surface area on the site, the project also includes site design measures such as minimization of land disturbed, installation of landscaping and preservation of open space areas, as well as on-site treatment measures such as bioretention areas and pervious subgrade materials that would help offset any reduction in the site's infiltration capacity for stormwater caused by increases in impervious surface area. The project would not result in any significant reduction in infiltration of runoff over existing conditions. Therefore, the project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

**c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:**

**i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed construction of a new operations building, expansion of a drive aisle and addition of a new driveway would not require grading that would substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area. The project would result in a net increase in total imperviousness of the site; however it includes the installation of new on-site drainage facilities and runoff controls that would improve the drainage of the site and reduce runoff rates and volumes and therefore not alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area. Conformance with the Town's Municipal Code requirements for erosion control, restrictions during the wet season, and dust and dirt control, would reduce potential erosion and siltation impacts to a less than significant level. Construction phase BMPs implemented with the project to reduce erosion and siltation, identified in the project plan set, would include earthwork and contaminated soil management measures (use of inlet protection, erosion and sediment controls), use of on-site truck wash out areas, and good housekeeping measures (pavement sweeping, catch basin cleaning).

**ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed new operations building, expanded drive aisle and new driveway would add impervious surface area, resulting in a net increase in total imperviousness of the site. This could potentially cause an increase in runoff rates and volumes from the site, however, the increase in runoff rates and volumes would be at least partially offset by the on-site stormwater control measures installed with the project. These include bioretention areas, vegetated swales and vehicular concrete with permeable base sections. These measures would reduce the runoff rates and provide on-site storage of runoff volumes, reducing the potential flooding impacts to off-site areas.



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

**Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed new operations building, expanded drive aisle and new driveway would add impervious surface area, resulting in a net increase in total imperviousness of the site. This could potentially cause an increase in runoff rates and volumes from the site, which could impact the capacity of the Town's storm drainage systems. However, the project includes the installation of bioretention areas, drainage swales and vehicular concrete pavement with permeable base sections that would provide pollutant removal, reduction in rates and volumes, and on-site storage of stormwater flows. Because there are no existing stormwater controls for pollutant removal or runoff rate or volume reduction currently existing on the site, these proposed measures would reduce impacts to the Town's storm drainage systems from the additional runoff to less than significant levels.

**iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is not located within a flood hazard zone, therefore the likelihood of impedance or redirection of flood flows is low.

**d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?**

**No Impact.** The terms tsunami or seiche are described as ocean waves or similar waves in large water bodies, usually created by undersea fault movement or by a coastal or submerged landslide. The project site is approximately 4.5 miles southwest of the San Francisco Bay shoreline tsunami zone and is also at approximately 250 feet above mean sea level. Therefore, the project is not at risk to release pollutants in the event of a seiche or tsunami since there is no nearby waterbody. Additionally, the project is not located in a flood hazard zone, therefore there is no risk that work, storage or other areas that are potential sources for polluted water would be released in the event of a flood.

**e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?**

**No Impact.** By conforming to the Town's Municipal Code requirements for erosion control, restrictions during the wet season, and dust and dirt control, and with Provision C.3 of the MRP, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.



**3.11 Land Use and Planning**

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

**3.11.1 Environmental Setting**

The project site is located in the Town of Los Altos Hills on a parcel that is designated as "Residential" according to the Town's General Plan Land Use Diagram and zoned Residential – Agriculture (R-A). The site is currently used for Utility purposes, which is a use that is conditionally allowed within the Residential land use.

A conservation easement occupies a portion of the property along the southern portions of the western and eastern property line and the southern property line (see Figure 5). The conservation easement was placed upon the property to "minimize the adverse visual impact of the telecommunications antenna and related equipment and to reduce potential adverse impacts on the Property including grading, vegetation removal, and erosion."

**3.11.2 Regulatory Setting**State*County Water District Law*

Pursuant to the County Water District Law (Cal. Water Code §30000 et seq.), the Purissima Hills Water District is empowered to "hold, use, enjoy, lease or dispose of property within or without the district necessary to the full exercise of its powers" (Section 31041). In addition, the law allows water districts to "construct, purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire works, water rights, land, and privileges useful or necessary to convey, supply, store, or otherwise make use of water for any purposes authorized by this division." (Section 31042) and may perform "construction or other work performed by contract or under its own superintendence" (Section 31005), among other powers.



### 3.11.3 Discussion

*Would the project:*

**a) Physically divide an established community?**

**No Impact.** The project site is located on a residentially zoned parcel within a residential neighborhood. The project entails replacing the District's existing operations center building with a new building and adding a driveway to the site. Fire District requirements necessitate the removal of an existing mobile communications tower from the site to accommodate fire access at the site. The project also requires encroachment into and reconfiguration of an existing conservation easement within the site. The project does not include any physical barriers such as new roads or fences such that existing land use patterns would change resulting in a division of an established community.

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** The construction of the proposed new operations center and provision of a fire truck-accessible drive aisle around the existing large water tank would necessitate an encroachment into the existing conservation easement along the southern boundary of the site. The project includes an amendment to the conservation easement agreement to allow proposed project activities including grading on the hillside to accommodate placement of the new operations center and drive aisle.

The future use of the portion of the property subject to the easement agreement amendment would be limited to District operations and would be within the District's powers as defined in the County Water District Law. The easement agreement allows improvements on the property for public and private utilities and notes that the District "may use the Property for any Water District purpose specifically provided in California Water Code Sections 30000 et.seq., provided that such uses do not require the permanent removal of vegetation that screens the surrounding homes from the aesthetic impact of the telecommunications antennae and related equipment."

The project includes the removal of the existing telecommunications equipment that created the need to establish the conservation easement originally. An analysis of the proposed easement amendment, prepared by the District's attorneys, found the project to have minimal impacts to the easement area and that amending the easement agreement would not impair the overall purpose for which the easement was created, which was to maintain the natural character of the land and provide visual screening from the communications equipment. In addition, as described in the Aesthetics section 3.1.1, the proposed new operations building would not be visible from public viewpoints and the project includes replacement landscaping where proposed tree removals would create gaps within visual screening. Therefore, the impact is considered less than significant.



**3.12 Mineral Resources**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local -general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**3.12.1 Environmental Setting**

Mineral resources that have been found and extracted in the Los Altos Hills area are primarily construction aggregate deposits. Neary Quarry, which supplied base rock for the construction of Moffett Federal Airfield and crushed rock for US 101 and I-280, is no longer in operation. The nearest quarry currently in operation is Permanente Quarry owned by Hanson Cement and Gypsum Company, located on unincorporated lands in Santa Clara County, within the Sphere of Influence of the City of Cupertino (Los Altos Hills 2007).

**3.12.2 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

- a) **Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?**
- b) **Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?**

**No Impact** (Responses a – b). There are no known mineral resources of regional value or local importance on or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources.



**3.13 NOISE**

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

**3.13.1 Environmental Setting**

Noise may be defined as loud, unpleasant, or unwanted sound. The frequency (pitch), amplitude (intensity or loudness), and duration of noise all contribute to the effect on a listener, or receptor, and whether the receptor perceives the noise as objectionable, disturbing, or annoying.

The Decibel Scale (dB)

The decibel scale (dB) is a unit of measurement that indicates the relative amplitude of a sound. Sound levels in dB are calculated on a logarithmic basis. An increase of 10 dB represents a tenfold increase in acoustic energy, while 20 dBs is 100 times more intense, 30 dBs is 1,000 more intense, and so on. In general, there is a relationship between the subjective noisiness, or loudness of a sound, and its amplitude, or intensity, with each 10 dB increase in sound level perceived as approximately a doubling of loudness.

Sound Characterization

There are several methods of characterizing sound. The most common method is the “A-weighted sound level,” or dBA. This scale gives greater weight to the frequencies of sound to which the human ear is typically most sensitive. Thus, most environmental measurements are reported in dBA, meaning decibels on the A-scale. Human hearing matches the logarithmic A-



weighted scale, so that a sound of 60 dBA is perceived as twice as loud as a sound of 50 dBA. In a quiet environment, an increase of 3 dB is usually perceptible, however, in a complex noise environment such as along a busy street, a noise increase of less than 3 dB is usually not perceptible, and an increase of 5 dB is usually perceptible. Normal human speech is in the range from 50 to 65 dBA. Generally, as environmental noise exceeds 50 dBA, it becomes intrusive and above 65 dBA noise becomes excessive. Nighttime activities, including sleep, are more sensitive to noise and are considered affected over a range of 40 to 55 dBA.

Sound levels are typically not steady and can vary over a short time period. The equivalent noise level (Leq) is used to represent the average character of the sound over a period of time. The Leq represents the level of steady noise that would have the same acoustical energy as the sum of the time-varying noise measured over a given time period. Leq is useful for evaluating shorter time periods over the course of a day. The most common Leq averaging period is hourly, but Leq can describe any series of noise events over a given time period.

Variable noise levels are values that are exceeded for a portion of the measured time period. Thus, L01 is the level exceeded one percent of the time and L90 is the level exceeded 90 percent of the time. The L90 value usually corresponds to the background sound level at the measurement location.

Noise exposure over the course of an entire day is described by the day/night average sound level, or Ldn, and the community noise equivalent level, or CNEL. Both descriptors represent the 24-hour noise impact on a community. For Ldn, the 24-hour day is divided into a 15-hour daytime period (7:00 AM to 10:00 PM) and a nine-hour nighttime period (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM) and a 10 dB “penalty” is added to measure nighttime noise levels when calculating the 24-hour average noise level. For example, a 45 dBA nighttime sound level would contribute as much to the overall day-night average as a 55 dBA daytime sound level. The CNEL descriptor is similar to Ldn, except that it includes an additional 5 dBA penalty beyond the 10 dBA for sound events that occur during the evening time period (7:00 PM to 10:00 PM). The artificial penalties imposed during Ldn and CNEL calculations are intended to account for a receptor’s increased sensitivity to sound levels during quieter nighttime periods.

### Sound Propagation

The energy contained in a sound pressure wave dissipates and is absorbed by the surrounding environment as the sound wave spreads out and travels away from the noise generating source. Theoretically, the sound level of a point source attenuates, or decreases, by 6 dB with each doubling of distance from a point source. Sound levels are also affected by certain environmental factors, such as ground cover (asphalt vs. grass or trees), atmospheric absorption, and attenuation by barriers. Outdoor noise is also attenuated by the building envelope so that sound levels inside a residence are from 10 to 20 dB less than outside, depending mainly on whether windows are open for ventilation or not.

When more than one point source contributes to the sound pressure level at a receiver point, the overall sound level is determined by combining the contributions of each source. Decibels, however, are logarithmic units and cannot be directly added or subtracted together. Under the dB scale, a doubling of sound energy corresponds to a 3 dB increase in noise levels. For



example, if one noise source produces a sound power level of 70 dB, two of the same sources would not produce 140 dB – rather, they would combine to produce 73 dB.

### Noise Effects

Noise effects on human beings are generally categorized as:

- Subjective effects of annoyance, nuisance, and/or dissatisfaction
- Interference with activities such as speech, sleep, learning, or relaxing
- Physiological effects such as startling and hearing loss

Most environmental noise levels produce subjective or interference effects; physiological effects are usually limited to high noise environments such as industrial manufacturing facilities or airports. Predicting the subjective and interference effects of noise is difficult due to the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance and past experiences with noise; however, an accepted method to determine a person's subjective reaction to a new noise source is to compare it to the existing environment without the noise source, or the "ambient" noise environment. In general, the more a new noise source exceeds the ambient noise level, the more likely it is to be considered annoying and to disturb normal activities.

Under controlled conditions in an acoustical laboratory, the trained, healthy human ear is able to discern 1-dB changes in sound levels when exposed to steady, single-frequency ("pure-tone") signals in the mid-frequency (1,000–8,000 Hz) range. In typical noisy environments, changes in noise of 1 to 2 dB are generally not perceptible. However, it is widely accepted that people are able to begin to detect sound level increases of 3 dB in typical noisy environments. Further, a 5 dB increase is generally perceived as a distinctly noticeable increase, and a 10 dB increase is generally perceived as a doubling of loudness that would almost certainly cause an adverse response from community noise receptors.

### Groundborne Vibration

Vibration is the movement of particles within a medium or object such as the ground or a building. As is the case with airborne sound, groundborne vibrations may be described by amplitude and frequency. Vibration amplitudes are usually expressed in peak particle velocity (PPV) or root mean squared, in inches per second (in/sec). PPV represents the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of a vibration signal and is most appropriate for evaluating the potential for building damage. Human response to groundborne vibration is subjective and varies from person to person.

### Existing Noise Environment

The Los Altos Hills General Plan Noise Element describes that residents of the town enjoy a relatively quiet noise environment. The town contains no major industrial or commercial areas, with traffic, conditional uses (e.g., public and private recreation facilities, schools, etc.) and construction as predominant noise sources in the Town. Although the McCann Operations Center site is not located within a 55 CNEL noise contour associated with any major road in the



town (e.g., Fremont Road) or the I-280 freeway, it includes material storage bays and equipment operations (e.g., a dozer, a tractor), employee and maintenance vehicle parking areas, and two operational water tanks with a pumphouse. These active operations contribute to local noise levels (e.g. at adjacent residential backyard areas) that are estimated to be up to between 65 dBA and 85 dBA on a short-term basis (e.g., when equipment is in use) and between 55 CNEL to 65 CNEL on a daily basis.

### Sensitive Receptors

Noise sensitive receptors are areas where unwanted sound or increases in sound may have an adverse effect on people or land uses. Residential areas, hospitals, schools, and parks are examples of noise receptors that could be sensitive to changes in existing environmental noise levels. The McCann Operations Center is surrounded by sensitive single-family residential noise receptors. The residences immediately surrounding the site are situated at elevations that are lower or higher than the proposed site, which limits the direct transmission of construction noise from the site to adjacent properties.

## **3.13.2 Regulatory Setting**

### Local Regulations

#### *General Plan*

The General Plan Noise Element defines 60 CNEL and 75 CNEL as the normally acceptable and conditionally acceptable noise limit, respectively, for single-family residential land uses.

#### *Municipal Code*

The Town's Municipal Code sets forth the following requirements that may be relevant to the proposed project:

- Title 5, Public Welfare, Morals, and Conduct, Chapter 2, Noise, Section 5-2.02, Standards, limits fixed noise sources to a noise level of 50 dBA during the daytime and 40 dBA during the nighttime. The code defines daytime to be the period from 8:00 a.m. on weekdays, and 9:00 a.m. on weekends and Town Holidays, to 7:00 p.m., and nighttime to be the period from 7:00 p.m. to the beginning of the daytime period.
- Title 5, Public Welfare, Morals, and Conduct, Chapter 2, Noise, Section 5-2.05, Emergency exemption, states the provisions of this chapter shall not apply to:
  - The emission of sound for the purpose of alerting persons to the existence of an emergency; or
  - The emission of sound in the performance of emergency work.
  - Noise from equipment used during emergencies.
- Title 5, Public Welfare, Morals, and Conduct, Chapter 6, Construction of Buildings and Structures, Section 5-6.02 (Outside Construction or Repair Work – When Prohibited-



Emergency Work Exception), establishes that is unlawful for any person within a residential zone, or within a radius of 500 feet therefrom to do any of the following:

- Operate equipment or perform any outside construction or repair work on any building, structure, project, or to use any pneumatic hammer, steam or electric hoist, backhoe, bulldozer or dump truck or other construction type device, between the hours of 5:30 p.m. of one day and 8:00 a.m. of the next succeeding day on any Monday through Saturday, or at any time on any Sunday, or at any time on any public holiday; or
- Use any pneumatic hammer, steam or electric hoist, backhoe, bulldozer or dump truck or other construction type device, at any time on any Saturday, unless beforehand a permit therefore has been obtained in accordance with the provisions of the Town's code.
- Title 10, Zoning and Development, Chapter 10, Site Development, Article 4, Grading, Section 10-2.403 (Hours of Operation), requires all grading operations to be carried out between the hours 8:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, unless the City Engineer finds evidence that an emergency exists that imperils public safety.

### 3.13.3 Impact Discussion

*Would the project result in:*

- a) **Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project involves the replacement of the existing, one-story 2,500-square-foot operations center with a new, two-story, 7,000-square-foot operations center. As described in more detail below, the project would not generate substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels that would be in excess of applicable standards. This impact would be less than significant.

#### Temporary Construction Noise

The proposed project would involve temporary construction activities, including tree and vegetation removal, demolition and removal of the existing operations center building, grading, clearing, and grubbing in the southwest corner of the property, construction of the new operations center building, and installation of new driveway. These activities would generate noise from heavy-duty off-road construction equipment (e.g., bulldozers, backhoes, etc.) and on-road construction vehicles (e.g., haul trucks other vendor deliveries). Construction activities, therefore, would temporarily increase noise levels at properties adjacent to the site. The temporary increase in noise levels would vary according to the type and amount of equipment in use at any particular time. Typical construction equipment noise levels that could be generated by equipment at the site are presented below in Table 3.13-1.



**Table 3.13-1: Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels**

Equipment	Noise Level at 50 feet ( $L_{max}$ ) <sup>(A)</sup>	Percent Usage Factor <sup>(B)</sup>	Predicted Equipment Noise Levels ( $L_{eq}$ ) <sup>(C)</sup>					
			50 Feet	100 Feet	150 Feet	200 Feet	250 Feet	300 Feet
Backhoe	80	40	76	70	66	64	62	60
Bulldozer	85	40	81	75	71	69	67	65
Crane	85	16	77	71	67	65	63	61
Delivery Truck	85	40	81	75	71	69	67	65
Pneumatic tools	85	50	82	76	72	70	68	66
Roller	80	20	73	67	63	61	59	57

Sources: Caltrans, 2013; FHWA, 2010

(A)  $L_{max}$  noise levels based on manufacturer's specifications.

(B) Usage factor refers to the amount (percent) of time the equipment produces noise over the time period

(C) Estimate does not account for any atmospheric or ground attenuation factors. Predicted equipment noise levels calculated as:  $L_{eq}$  (hourly) =  $L_{max}$  at 50 feet –  $20\log(D/50) + 10\log(UF)$ , where:  $L_{max}$  = reference  $L_{max}$  from manufacturer or other source; D = distance of interest; UF = usage fraction or fraction of time period of interest equipment is in use.

The Town's Municipal Code does not establish a numeric noise standard for construction equipment (e.g., 90 dBA  $L_{eq}$ ), but Section 5-6.02 does limit allowable construction work periods to the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, unless a permit has been issued for work on Saturday. As shown in Table 2-1, the PHWD has incorporated this requirement into the project. Construction activities, therefore, would comply with the Town's Municipal Code standards for construction noise. It is also noted that the operations center currently includes the use of equipment such as a bulldozer and loader to store and load materials at the site. The construction noise levels shown in Table 3-10 would be similar to the noise levels generated by this equipment. For these reasons, the proposed project's construction activities would comply with the Town's Municipal Code and would not otherwise result in a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project site. This impact would be less than significant.

### Operational Noise

During construction, the PHWD may relocate certain storage and material operations to an existing yard located at the corner of Elena Road/El Monte Road and Moody Road. The relocation of certain storage and equipment operations to an existing PHWD yard would not substantially change ambient noise levels at this location.

Following construction, the proposed project would not substantially change the nature or magnitude of the existing PHWD operations at the site. The new operations center building would be setback 30 feet from the western property line (farther than the existing building) and continue to operate according to its current schedule, which is generally 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday, excepting emergency situations. New heating, ventilation, and air



conditioning equipment associated with the larger operations center building would be located in the center of the building's rooftop, at least 35 feet from any property line, and would comply with the Town's Municipal Code requirements for fixed noise sources. The proposed project would also include a new 30kW emergency generator located on the southern portion of the site. Once operational, this emergency generator would be tested monthly for approximately one hour. The emergency generator would produce noise while in operation, however noise associated with the generator would be intermittent in nature and would not substantially change the ambient noise environment. As described in section 3.13.2, the Town's Municipal Code section 5-2.05 exempts noise from emergency equipment.

For the reasons described above, the proposed project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in short-term or daily ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of Town standards. This impact would be less than significant.

**b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The potential for groundborne vibration is typically greatest when vibratory or large equipment such as rollers, impact drivers, or bulldozers are in operation in close proximity (within 50 feet) of occupied structures. For the proposed project, the largest equipment is anticipated to operate primarily in the southwest part of the site during the demolition and grading phases. These operations would be at least 120 feet away from any residential structures. In addition, differences in topography between the site and surrounding properties would limit the potential for groundborne vibrations to be perceptible at adjacent residences. For these reasons, potential groundborne vibrations generated by the project would not be substantial or excessive. This impact would be less than significant.

**c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

**No Impact.** The McCann Operations Center site is not located near an airport facility. The nearest airport, San José Mineta International Airport, is located more than five (5) miles east-northeast of the project site. The project would not expose people working at the site to excessive aircraft noise levels. No impact would occur.



3.14 Population and Housing

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

3.14.1 Environmental Setting

Based on information from the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2023 the Town of Los Altos Hills population is 8,189, a 3.8 percent decrease from the 2020 population estimate of 8,513. 95.9 percent of homes in the Town of Los Altos Hills are owner-occupied, and the average number of persons per household as of 2022 is 2.70 (U.S. Census Bureau 2023).

3.14.2 Impact Discussion

Would the project:

- a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?
- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

**No Impact.** (Responses a – b). The project proposes to replace an existing operations and maintenance building on a property with an existing water tank. The project would not result in an increase of employees and would not directly or indirectly induce population growth. Additionally, the project would not displace housing or would result in the need for replacement housing. No impact would occur.



**3.15 Public Services**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
v) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**3.15.1 Environmental Setting**Fire Protection

Fire protection services for the project area are provided by the Los Altos Hills County Fire District (LAHCFD). The LAHCFD contracts its firefighting personnel, apparatus, and equipment from the Santa Clara County Fire Department. In addition to contracting with the County Fire Department for fire suppression and emergency medical services, LAHCFD owns, manages and maintains a system of 552 fire hydrants in the Purissima Hills Water District. The hydrant infrastructure provides adequate and reliable supply of water for use in fire emergencies. LAHCFD manages these functions, while contracting with specialized engineering consultants and contractors to perform the physical installation and maintenance of the hydrant system. LAHCFD also promotes and manages other activities aimed at fire prevention, such as an extensive Fuel Management program that includes Weed & Brush Abatement, Brush Chipping, and Dead Tree Removal and provide regular classes in Disaster Preparedness, including a leading Community Emergency Response Team program (LAHCFD 2024).



Police Protection

The Town of Los Altos Hills contracts with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services. The West Valley Division, which serves Los Altos Hills, Saratoga, Cupertino, and the unincorporated areas of the County has 77 sworn positions and 8 professional support staff. Deputies provide a full range of law enforcement responsibilities to include Patrol, Traffic, Detectives, School Resource Officers, and Special Enforcement details. The West Valley Division employs strategies such as community-oriented policing and also stays current on law enforcement practices such as predictive policing (Town of Los Altos Hills 2024).

Schools

The project site is within the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) which serves 12 elementary schools, three middle schools, and three high schools (PAUSD 2024). The closest school to the project is Pinewood School (Private High School), located approximately 1,100 feet north of the project site at 26800 Fremont Road.

Parks

The Byrne Preserve, Rhus Ridge Preserve, and the Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve are located in or adjacent to the Town. The Town owns and manages the Byrne and Rhus Ridge Preserves, while the San Antonio Open Space Preserve is a Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District park. Numerous pedestrian pathways are found within the Town.

**3.15.2 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

- a) **Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:**
  - i) **Fire protection?**
  - ii) **Police Protection?**
  - iii) **Schools?**
  - iv) **Parks?**
  - v) **Other public facilities?**

**No Impact.** The project proposes to replace an existing operations and maintenance building on a property with an existing water tank and other related facilities and equipment for the provision of potable water to the District's service area. The project is the replacement of an existing



facility. Therefore, the project would not increase the demand for fire protection, police, or emergency services, and would not affect service ratios or response times, or require the provision of new or physically altered stations. The project would improve fire department access at the site by providing additional setback around the existing 1.0 MG water tank.

The proposed project does not include new housing and would not induce population growth (see Response 3.14a); therefore, it would not increase enrollment at local schools, require the provision of new or physically altered schools, nor increase the use of local and regional parks or require the provision of new or physically altered parks or other governmental facilities. No impact would occur.



**3.16 Recreation**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**3.16.1 Environmental Setting**

Town-owned parks and recreation facilities include Byrne Preserve and six other open space preserves; Westwind Community Barn; Purissima Playing Fields (Little League Fields); the Riding Arena; and Edith Park. In addition, the community's extensive system of roadside and off-road paths provides recreational opportunities. Recreation programs sponsored by the Town include youth camps, fitness programs and the annual Pathways Run.

**3.16.2 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

- a) **Increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that significant physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?**
- b) **Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?**

**No Impact.** (Responses a – b). The project proposes to replace an existing operations and maintenance building on a property with an existing water tank. The proposed project would not induce population growth (see Response 3.14a); therefore, it would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. The project does not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. No impact would occur.



### 3.17 Transportation

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

#### 3.17.1 Environmental Setting

Regional access to the project site is provided via I-280, and local access from I-280 is provided via Page Mill Road and Deer Creek Road. The project site can be accessed directly from Ascension Drive. There is no local transit service, pedestrian sidewalks, or marked bike lanes along Ascension Drive.

#### 3.17.2 Impact Discussion

*Would the project:*

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project proposes to replace an existing operations and maintenance building on the property, however there would be no increase in the number of employees at the new facility. As such, the proposed project would not generate a permanent increase in traffic on the local or regional road network and would therefore not conflict with any plan, ordinance, or policy establishing performance standards for transportation and circulation system.

Project construction would add temporary vehicle trips from construction crews, and delivery of equipment and materials. Anticipated heavy equipment includes two loaders (duals as an excavator), one paver, one roller, four pickup trucks and three end dump trucks. Project



construction-related vehicle trips would be temporary and intermittent, occurring throughout the day, but also during the a.m. (7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.) and p.m. (4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.) peak hour time periods. These impacts are temporary and therefore considered a less than significant impact.

**b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b), which pertains to vehicle miles travelled?**

**No Impact.** The project would not result in additional employees at the site and would therefore not generate additional vehicle miles travelled. This would not be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b). There would be no impact.

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

**Less Than Significant.** The footprint of the new operations building would be in the same location as the existing building, with no additional or incompatible uses proposed. The construction contractor would be required by the PHWD to prepare a Traffic Control Plan to manage traffic during construction and maintain access to emergency vehicles and residents' access to their homes during construction. Therefore, the impact is considered less than significant.

**d) Result in inadequate emergency access?**

**No Impact.** As stated above, the Traffic Control Plan would allow emergency vehicles passage during construction. Although traffic could increase temporarily during construction, the project would not cause an increase in traffic that could delay emergency vehicles as emergency vehicles would be waived through the work area during construction. As described in Section 4.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, the proposed project would not interfere with emergency response access in the project area. No impact would occur.



### 3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

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

The following discussion is based on an Archaeological Review in Support of Environmental Clearance prepared for the project by Basin Research Associates (February 2, 2024). Due to the sensitive nature of the information contained in the report, it is kept confidentially at the District. Inquiries regarding the report should be directed to the District.

#### 3.18.1 Regulatory Setting

##### Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990 sets provisions for the intentional removal and inadvertent discovery of human remains and other cultural items from federal and tribal lands. It clarifies the ownership of human remains and sets forth a process for repatriation of human remains and associated funerary objects and sacred religious objects to the Native American groups claiming to be lineal descendants or culturally affiliated with the remains or objects. It requires any federally funded institution housing Native American remains or artifacts to compile an inventory of all cultural items within the museum or with its agency and to provide a summary to any Native American tribe claiming affiliation.



Native American Heritage Commission, Public Resources Code Sections 5097.9 – 5097.991

Section 5097.91 of the Public Resources Code (PRC) established the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), whose duties include the inventory of places of religious or social significance to Native Americans and the identification of known graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private lands. Under Section 5097.9 of the PRC, a state policy of noninterference with the free expression or exercise of Native American religion was articulated along with a prohibition of severe or irreparable damage to Native American sanctified cemeteries, places of worship, religious or ceremonial sites or sacred shrines located on public property. Section 5097.98 of the PRC specifies a protocol to be followed when the NAHC receives notification of a discovery of Native American human remains from a county coroner. Section 5097.5 defines as a misdemeanor the unauthorized disturbance or removal of archaeological, historic, or paleontological resources located on public lands.

California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 2001

Codified in the California Health and Safety Code Sections 8010–8030, the California Native American Graves Protection Act (NAGPRA) is consistent with the federal NAGPRA. Intended to “provide a seamless and consistent state policy to ensure that all California Indian human remains and cultural items be treated with dignity and respect,” the California NAGPRA also encourages and provides a mechanism for the return of remains and cultural items to lineal descendants. Section 8025 established a Repatriation Oversight Commission to oversee this process. The act also provides a process for non–federally recognized tribes to file claims with agencies and museums for repatriation of human remains and cultural items.

Assembly Bill 52

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 specifies that a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined, is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. AB 52 requires a lead agency to begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project, if the tribe requests in writing to the lead agency, to be informed by the lead agency of proposed projects in that geographic area and the tribe requests consultation, prior to determining whether a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report is required for a project.

**3.18.2 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resources, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:**



- i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?**
- ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe?**

**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Under CEQA, a significant resource is one that is listed in a California or local historic register or is eligible to be listed. As such, lead agencies have a responsibility to evaluate such resources against the California Register criteria prior to making a finding as to a proposed project's impacts to historical resources (PRC § 21084.1, 20174, 14 CCR § 15064.5(3)). It is possible for a lead agency to determine that an artifact, site, or feature is considered significant to a local tribe, without necessarily being eligible for the CRHR. A determination of such by a lead agency would make an artifact a significant resource under CEQA.

As discussed in Section 3.5, Cultural Resources, the NAHC was contacted for a review of the SLF, which was negative for registered tribal resources. Letters and/or emails were sent to the 13 knowledgeable Native American individuals/organizations identified by the NAHC; however no responses were received. Archaeological and/or Native American monitoring was not recommended by the Basin, due to the lack of known resources on or near the project site. However, Mitigation Measures CUL-1 (see Section 3.5, Cultural Resources) requires the District to retain a professional archaeologist on an on-call basis during ground disturbing construction activities to review, identify and evaluate any potential cultural resources that may be inadvertently exposed during construction. Mitigation Measure CUL-2a requires the District to note on any plans that require ground disturbing excavation that there is a potential for exposing buried cultural resources including prehistoric Native American burials. Mitigation Measure CUL-2b requires the District staff and County Coroner to be immediately notified in the event of inadvertent discovery of human remains and to determine if those remains are of Native American ancestry and notify the MLD.

The implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2a, and CUL-2b would reduce potential impacts to TCRs to a less than significant level.



**3.19 Utilities And Service Systems**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<i>Would the project:</i>				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**3.19.1 Environmental Setting**Water Service

Water service to Los Altos Hills is provided by two water suppliers: Purissima Hills Water District and the California Water Service Company (Cal Water). Purissima Hills presently obtains all of its water from San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy system and currently is exceeding its supply assurance by 25-35 percent. Capacity limitations in the Hetch Hetchy system may be reached in six to eight years, or sooner in times of drought. Cal Water obtains the water supplied to Los Altos Hills from the Santa Clara Valley Water District via pipelines from Valley Water's Rincoñada treatment plant and from company-owned wells. During the dry season, the plant and pipelines are at capacity. According to Purissima Hills Water District, over two-thirds of the water used each year is for the irrigation of landscaping (Town of Los Altos Hills, 2008).



### Storm Drainage

The Town's storm drainage system consists of a combination of roadside drainage ways, cross culverts, and underground pipes. Stormwater in Los Altos Hills initially flows over land, following the natural contours of the terrain to roadside flow routes. Some of these are paved with asphalt concrete, but most roadside flow routes are dirt ditches, which help preserve the natural, semi-rural feel of the community. Stormwater in the roadside flow routes travels downhill to culverts, pipes or creeks that eventually carry the runoff to the San Francisco Bay.

### Wastewater/Sanitary Sewer Service

The Town straddles two drainage basins, including the Palo Alto Basin to the north and the Los Altos Basin to the south. Sewage collected by the Town's existing system is conveyed to sewer trunk lines owned by the cities of Los Altos or Palo Alto. The wastewater from all three communities eventually drains into the Palo Alto wastewater treatment plant for treatment and disposal. There is an existing sanitary sewer easement outside the northwest corner of the building.

### Solid Waste

The Town currently contracts with GreenWaste Recovery provides residential and commercial garbage and curbside recycling services to the residents of Los Altos Hills.

## **3.19.2 Regulatory Setting**

### State

#### *State Water Code*

Pursuant to the State Water Code, water suppliers providing water for municipal purposes to more than 3,000 customers or supplying more than 3,000 acre-feet (approximately 980 million gallons) of water annually must prepare and adopt an urban water management plan (UWMP) and update it every five years. As part of a UWMP, water agencies are required to evaluate and describe their water resource supplies and projected needs over a 20-year planning horizon, water conservation, water service reliability, water recycling, opportunities for water transfers, and contingency plans for drought events.

#### *Assembly Bill 939*

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, or AB 939, established the Integrated Waste Management Board, required the implementation of integrated waste management plans, and mandated that local jurisdictions divert at least 50 percent of solid waste generated (from 1990 levels), beginning January 1, 2000, and divert at least 75 percent by 2010. Projects that would have an adverse effect on waste diversion goals are required to include waste diversion mitigation measures.

#### *Assembly Bill 341*



AB 341 sets forth the requirements of the statewide mandatory commercial recycling program. Businesses that generate four or more cubic yards of garbage per week and multi-family dwellings with five or more units in California are required to recycle. AB 341 sets a statewide goal for 75 percent disposal reduction by the year 2020.

#### *Senate Bill 1383*

SB 1383 establishes targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. The bill grants CalRecycle the regulatory authority required to achieve the organic waste disposal reduction targets and establishes an additional target that at least 20 percent of currently disposed edible food is recovered for human consumption by 2025.

#### Local

Various policies in the Los Altos Hills General Plan have been adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating impacts to utilities and service systems resulting from planned development within the Town, including the following:

*Policy LU-2.9:* The Town shall encourage the installation of drought-tolerant landscaping and other methods of reducing water use for landscaping.

*Policy CSR-11.2:* Concrete channels and other drainage facilities that accelerate runoff shall be discouraged.

*Program CON-5.9:* Continue to limit the amount of impervious surface in new development to reduce urban runoff into storm drains, creeks and the San Francisco Bay.

*Policy CON-11.5:* Ensure that development projects are designed to conserve the natural slope, preserve existing native vegetation, limit invasive species, and conserve natural drainage channels and swales.

*Policy HE-1F:* Require storm water drainage and erosion control systems to be designed to maintain, to the greatest extent possible, existing water drainage patterns, containment of storm water run-off and protection of existing downstream lands from flooding and flooding related hazards.

*Program SAF-3.2:* Continue to limit the amount of runoff in site development projects.

### **3.19.3 Impact Discussion**

*Would the project:*

- a) **Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?**



**Less than Significant Impact.** The project would use water temporarily in the short-term for construction and in the longer term for irrigation of new landscape plantings. The proposed new building would also result in water demand for kitchen facilities, bathrooms and sinks. However, because no additional employees would be added to the facility, the overall water use at the project site is not expected to increase such that construction of new or expanded water or wastewater infrastructure would be required. The project includes new stormwater treatment controls (bioretention areas and associated trench drain), however they would connect to the existing underground storm drain lines on-site to convey treated stormwater to the Town's off-site storm drain system. As discussed in Section 3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality, these flows would not significantly impact the capacity of the Town's storm drain system. Likewise, new sanitary sewer laterals will be installed with the proposed new building, but they will connect to existing off-site sanitary sewer lines in the Town's system. No new storm or sanitary facilities are proposed. With the exception of a new on-site water line to supply fire flow to the building, there are no new or expanded water, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities included as part of the project. The new fire flow line would connect to the existing water line and facilities in Ascencion Drive. This impact would be less than significant.

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** As discussed under criterion 3.19.3 a), the project would use water temporarily for construction. The project would require continued use of water for landscaping irrigation which would be similar to existing usage. Operation of the project would not result in a permanent increase in water demand.

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

**No Impact.** The new building would include two additional restrooms on the second floor. However, the project would not result in an increased number of employees. Therefore, the amount of wastewater generated by the project would be similar to existing conditions. This impact would be less than significant.

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** The project would generate construction debris during the construction period. Solid waste generated by the project during the construction period and operations would be disposed of in accordance with Town requirements. The project does not propose any new land uses or an increase in the number of employees. Therefore, the project would not generate solid waste in excess of local infrastructure nor would it impair attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

**e) Comply with Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**



**No Impact.** The project would not conflict with any federal, state, or local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.



### 3.20 Wildfire

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Is the project located near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<i>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:</i>				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.20.1 Environmental Setting

The project site is situated within the Town of Los Altos Hills, adjacent to the City of Los Altos, Cupertino, Palo Alto and unincorporated Santa Clara County. The Town of Los Altos Hills is within the urban-wildland interface (Town of Los Altos Hills 2015). The Town and project features are located in an incorporated city and therefore in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) and within an area mapped as a “Non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone” by CalFire (CalFire 2024). The closest designated fire hazard severity zones are located in the following areas:

- Approximately three miles northwest of the project site is designated as a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Safety Zone and,
- Approximately two miles south of the project site is a “Very High Fire Hazard Severity zone.



### 3.20.2 Impact Discussion

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

- a) **Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**
- b) **Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?**
- c) **Require the installation of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?**
- d) **Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?**

**Less than Significant Impact** (Responses a through d). As discussed in the Environmental Setting section provided above, the project site is not located in a very high fire hazard severity zone. The nearest such zone is located approximately two miles to the south of the project site. As stated above in Response 3.9(f), the contractor would maintain access to emergency vehicles for the duration of construction and therefore would not significantly impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency evacuation plan. Contractors shall comply with all Town or local fire authority requirements for evacuation in the event of an emergency.

The project would not exacerbate wildfire risks as it consists of the replacement of an existing building within an already developed site. Minor grading is involved to site the building to adequately provide sufficient emergency access around the site and proposed and existing structures. Vegetation removal (trees and shrubs) is anticipated as part of the project. Replacement landscaping would be provided and would be designed to conform to current setback and defensible space requirements and designed with fire safety in mind. The project does not include housing or structures for habitation that would be at risk due to downstream flooding or landslides as a result of post-fire slope instability. The adjacent slope to the south of the project site is not comprised of loose soil susceptible to significant erosion. No other significant slopes are present on or adjacent to the site. All areas disturbed by the project would be slope protected and revegetated following building construction. The impacts are considered less than significant.



### 3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

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

#### 3.21.1 Discussion

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

**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** As discussed in the previous sections of this Initial Study, the proposed project would not degrade the quality of the environment with the implementation of the identified mitigation measures and Standard Design and Construction Measures. As discussed in Section 3.4 Biological Resources, with implementation of the identified mitigation measures (MM BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-3) and Standard Permit Conditions, the project would not significantly impact sensitive habitats or species. As discussed in Section 3.5 Cultural Resources with implementation of the identified mitigation measures (MM CUL-1, CUL-2a and CUL-2b) the project would result in a less than significant impact on archaeological, historic and cultural and tribal cultural resources.



- b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the efforts of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Under Section 15065(a)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency shall find that a project may have a significant effect on the environment where there is substantial evidence that the project has potential environmental effects “that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.” As defined in Section 15065(a)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, 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.” Using this definition, a project that has no impact in a given impact category cannot have a cumulatively considerable contribution because its contribution is zero.

The project evaluated in this Initial Study is limited to the replacement of an existing operations center with a new facility and various other site improvements to accommodate the proposed project. As described in Section 3 of this Initial Study, construction and operation of the proposed project would have no adverse impacts on agriculture and forestry resources, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and wildfire.

There are no other projects proposed or that would be under construction in the same general area as the proposed project. Therefore, short-term, construction related impacts of the project (e.g., dust, potential soil contamination, noise and vibration, nesting bird disturbance, and water quality) would not combine with the impacts of other projects and would not be cumulatively considerable. Furthermore, mitigation measures and/or Standard Design and Construction Measures are included in the project to reduce construction-related impacts to a less than significant level.

As described in Section 3.13 Noise, noise impacts would be temporary for the duration of construction. Operational noise would be the same as existing conditions because operations at the site are not anticipated to change as a result of the project. The new operations center would not involve new uses or employees at the site. Because construction noise would be localized, intermittent, and at low levels that would not significantly affect many nearby residences, they would not be cumulatively considerable.

As described in Section 3.4 Biological Resources, the project could affect sensitive biological resources in both the short- and long-term. These impacts, however, would not result in a cumulatively significant loss of such resources, because there are no other proposed projects or projects that would be under construction in the same general area as the proposed project. In addition, the project would implement a number of measures to reduce impacts on both common and special-status species, as described in Section 3.4. Therefore, the project would not contribute to cumulative impacts on biological resources.

There are no planned or proposed developments in the project area that could contribute to cumulative aesthetic, air quality, energy, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials,



hydrology and water quality, public services, recreation, or utilities and service systems impacts. The project's potential archaeological, tribal cultural, and biological resources impacts are specific to the project and would not contribute to cumulative impacts elsewhere with the implementation of mitigation measures.

The project's impacts regarding GHG emissions are discussed in Section 3.8, and it was concluded that the project would have a less than significant impact on GHG emissions.

Based on the discussion above, the project would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts.

**c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**

**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Consistent with Section 15065(a)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency shall find that a project may have a significant effect on the environment where there is substantial evidence that the project has the potential to cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Under this standard, a change to the physical environment that might otherwise be minor must be treated as significant if people were significantly affected. This factor relates to adverse changes to the environment of human beings generally, and not to effects on particular individuals. While changes to the environment that could indirectly affect human beings would be represented by all of the designated CEQA issue areas, those that could directly affect human beings include construction- related air quality, hazardous materials, and noise. Implementation of mitigation measures identified in Section 3, however, would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level. No other direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings have been identified.



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