MONTECITO RANCH

APPENDIX H

VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

for the

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

SP01-001; TM 5250RPL[6]; P04-045;
LOG NO. 01-09-013; SCH NO. 2002021132

MAY 2008

Information for the Reader

This technical report analyzes aesthetics-related elements associated with construction and operation of the Montecito Ranch Project. The reader should note that refinement of the location of a Circulation Element roadway (SA 330) between Montecito Road and SR 67 is included as a Circulation Element change in the project description provided in the Montecito Ranch Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Because construction of this segment of the roadway is not anticipated as this time (buildout of the roadway segment will be completed by another entity in the future), and does not comprise part of the Montecito Ranch Project, this report does not contain analysis regarding the segment of SA 330 south of Montecito Road. For readers interested in potential effects (all assessed as less than significant) associated with the relocated road segment; please refer to Subchapter 3.5, Aesthetics, and Section 5.8.6, Extension of SA 330 Design Scenario Alternative, of the EIR. When construction is contemplated, impacts will be confirmed. Construction of this roadway would be implemented by others.

MONTECITO RANCH PROJECT

VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

SP01-001; TM 5250RPL[6]; P04-045; LOG NO. 01-09-013; SCH NO. 2002021132

APRIL 2008

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MONTECITO RANCH PROJECT
VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Montecito Ranch Project (hereinafter referred to as "Proposed Project" or "Project") proposes development of a rural residential community consisting of 417 single-family residential units on lots ranging in size from approximately 0.5 acre (20,000 square feet minimum) to 1.8 acres. The Project would dedicate land for various public improvements including an historic park site, local park site (fully developed), and charter high school site. The Proposed Project includes two wastewater management options, only one of which would be implemented. Option 1 is the extension of a sewer main off-site to tie into an existing main (just south of Kalbaugh Street) that flows to the Santa Maria Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP). Option 2 is an on-site wastewater reclamation facility (WRF) to treat all on-site wastewater and utilize the reclaimed water to irrigate on-site public landscaped areas, as well as the private Homeowners' Association (HOA) areas. Since a final determination as to the most appropriate approach to treatment of Project wastewater has not yet been made, Wastewater Management Option 1, Off-site Sewer Connection, is addressed equally with Wastewater Management Option 2, WRF, within this report. The Project also includes the dedication of open space. Under Wastewater Management Option 1, the Project would dedicate a total of 573.8 acres of open space. Under Option 2, the Project would dedicate 549.1 acres of open space since an on-site WRF would be required. Proposed off-site water facility improvements include pipelines within Montecito Way between the Project site and Montecito Road and within Ash Street from the Project site to Pine Street (SR 78), a water storage tank and associated pipeline, and a water booster pump station. The Project also includes off-site roadway improvements to support the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area (SPA) development.

The Project site is located in the rural community of Ramona in an unincorporated area of San Diego County within the County's Ramona Community Planning Area. The Project site includes the SPA, two areas adjacent to the SPA boundary (one northwest, the other northeast) and associated off-site roadway and utility improvements. The SPA is approximately one mile northwest of the Ramona Town Center. SR 78 borders the northern SPA boundary, while Montecito Way extends southerly from the southern-most SPA boundary. Cedar Street, Summer Glen Road and Alice Street are adjacent to the southeastern SPA boundary, and Ash Street is adjacent to the eastern SPA boundary.

The immediate setting of the Project site generally transitions from a rural and open space environment to one of estate/rural residential interspersed with agriculture and open space preservation. Where native vegetation prevails, it consists primarily of Diegan coastal sage scrub, southern mixed chaparral and oak woodlands. Non-native grassland, eucalyptus woodland and extensive agriculture are also present in the Project site vicinity. Landscaped yards provide more verdant settings, including (primarily non-native) trees such as California pepper (*Schinus molle*) and eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.).

The topographic environment surrounding the Project site is varied. A series of small to medium localized peaks surrounded by hillsides sloping into relatively narrow ravines are located to the north and northwest. Areas to the south and east are generally level, interspersed with small knolls and developed with rural residential uses. On-site visual elements include unimproved dirt roads, an historic residence and associated outbuildings, knolls, steep sloping canyons, ridgelines, rock outcroppings and native vegetation.

Visual effects were determined via analysis of Project impacts upon views from public roadways, private residences and planned public facilities, other planned facilities, as well as grading and landform alteration, cumulative and short-term effects. In addition, this study evaluates consistency with aesthetics-related policies within the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area section and other applicable sections of the Ramona Community Plan (RCP), the County of San Diego (County) General Plan, the County Zoning Ordinance, the County Dark Sky Ordinance (Light Pollution Code) and the Resource Protection Ordinance.

Prior to mitigation, the Proposed Project would result in significant visual impacts related to the visual character of the Montecito Way viewshed, the off-site water tank and access road, as well as landform alteration due to Project grading. Specifically, proposed off-site road improvements to Montecito Way would increase the pavement width from 24 to 40 feet and remove existing mature trees and other landscaping along the roadway. Views in the short-term would be substantially different compared to the current condition, resulting in an adverse and significant short-term impact. Mitigation to reduce these impacts to below a level of significance would include planting replacement trees and scrubs to offset the loss of existing landscaping. No significant long-term impacts would occur, as the planted landscaping would ultimately reach maturity.

Significant impacts also are assessed for the proposed off-site water tank and access road. The water tank would be constructed atop a hill in an undeveloped area, which would substantially disrupt the existing visual continuity. The associated access road would traverse steep hillsides and would require substantial cut slopes at steep gradients. Initial impacts would be adverse and significant. Mitigation to reduce these impacts to below a level of significance would include implementation of special landscape treatments around the tank and on cut slopes.

Additionally, the Proposed Project would be inconsistent with Conditions 8, 16 and 33 of the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area section of the RCP. These policies address hillside/ridgeline development and landform modification. Development of the proposed off-site water storage tank and associated access road would be inconsistent with these three policies in the RCP. Mitigation identified above for the water tank and access road would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.

In addition to the Proposed Project, this report evaluates four project alternatives, including the Reduced Development Footprint Alternative, the Reduced Density Alternative, the No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative and the Closed Water System Alternative. Detailed descriptions and associated impact analysis of each alternative is provided in Section 8.0 of this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Visual Impact Analysis consists of a discussion of the existing setting and visual conditions in the Project site area; a summary of the Proposed Project description; an assessment of public and private viewsheds into the Project site; a discussion of grading and landform alteration effects; an assessment of Project consistency with relevant County policies, conditions and guidelines; an evaluation of short-term visual and cumulative effects, a summary of potentially significant visual impacts; and recommendations that would avoid or reduce potentially significant visual impacts to below a level of significance. In addition, four project alternatives are evaluated.

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 VISUAL SETTING

2.1.1 Project Vicinity

The 935.2-acre Project site includes the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area (SPA), two areas adjacent to the SPA boundary (one northwest, the other northeast) and associated off-site roadway and utility improvements. The Project site is located in the rural community of Ramona in an unincorporated area of San Diego County within the County's Ramona Community Planning Area (Figure 1). The Project site is approximately one mile northwest of the Ramona Town Center. SR 78 borders the northern SPA boundary, while Montecito Way extends southerly from the southern-most SPA boundary. Cedar Street, Summer Glen Road and Alice Street are adjacent to the southeastern SPA boundary, and Ash Street is adjacent to the eastern SPA boundary (Figures 2a through c). Regional topography is varied, as the Project site is located within the Santa Maria Valley, which is characterized by level and gently sloping terrain interspersed with knolls, hillsides, steep slopes and ridgelines.

The immediate setting of the Project site generally transitions from a rural and open space environment to one of estate/rural residential interspersed with agriculture and open space preservation. Where native vegetation prevails, it consists primarily of Diegan coastal sage scrub, southern mixed chaparral and oak woodlands. Non-native grassland, eucalyptus woodland and extensive agriculture are also present in the Project site vicinity. Landscaped yards provide more verdant settings, including (primarily non-native) trees such as California pepper (*Schinus molle*) and eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.).

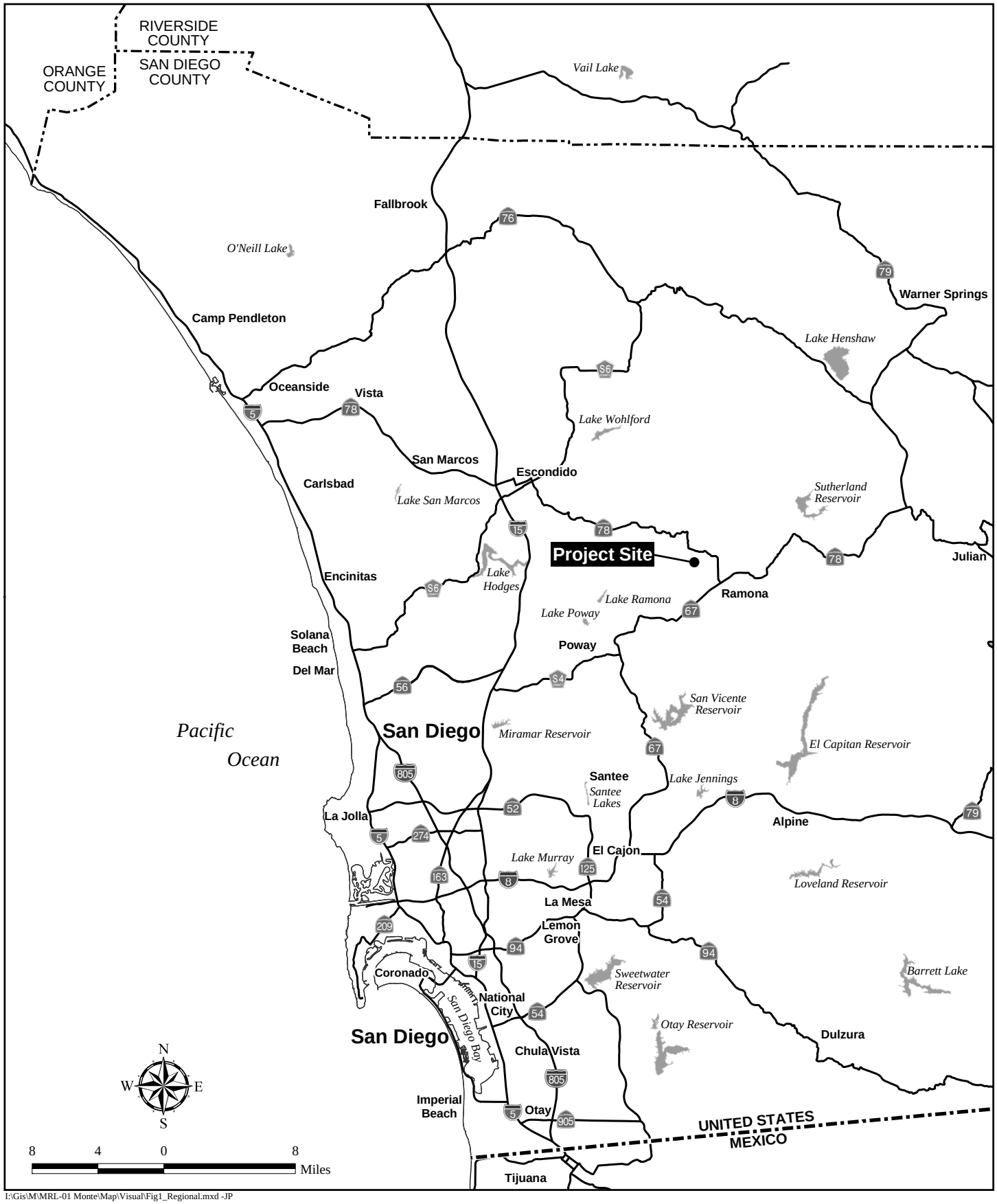
Immediately surrounding land uses consist of semi-rural and estate residential development to the north, east and south. The Lemurian Fellowship is a residential/religious use with various facilities to the northwest. The 1,027-acre Davis SPA adjoins the Montecito Ranch SPA site on the south and west, and consists of undeveloped land and pasturelands (Figure 3). The Nature Conservancy purchased the Davis SPA for preservation in December 2005. The Ramona Airport lies approximately 0.5 mile south of the Project site.

2.1.2 Project Site

The Montecito Ranch SPA is generally characterized by a broad valley in the central portion of the site with gently sloping terrain to the north (Figure 4). In addition, three distinct knolls are located on site: one in the northwestern-most portion of the site; one adjacent to the central northern SPA boundary; and one adjacent to the central southern SPA boundary. The gently sloping landform transitions to steeper topography associated with Clevenger Canyon, which is located immediately adjacent to the SPA to the northeast. The SPA site is situated on a drainage divide, with the northward drainages emptying into Clevenger Canyon, and the gentle southwest draining canyons and valley draining into the Santa Maria Valley. Elevations on site vary from a high of approximately 1,750 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) atop the knoll located along the central southern property boundary to a low of approximately 1,420 feet AMSL in the southwestern portion of the SPA site.

The SPA site contains several native plant communities, including southern coast live oak riparian forest, open Engelmann oak woodland, dense Engelmann oak woodland, southern riparian scrub, disturbed wetlands (agricultural ponds), Diegan coastal sage scrub, southern mixed chaparral and chamise chaparral. Additionally, non-native habitats found on site include non-native grassland and eucalyptus woodland. Non-native grasslands occur within the flatter portions of the property where cattle grazing or oat hay farming have altered the natural vegetation. Many of the steeper areas support native vegetation, with the highest quality and least disturbance occurring in the northern portion of the SPA site. In these areas, Diegan coastal sage scrub and southern mixed chaparral are the dominant vegetation communities. Open and dense Engelmann oak woodlands occur in the northeastern portion of the SPA site.

On-site visual elements include unimproved dirt roads, an historic residence and associated outbuildings, knolls, steep slopes, canyons, ridgelines, rock outcroppings and native vegetation. The location and view orientation of each photograph used in this analysis are shown on the Photograph Key Map (Figure 5). Photographs 1 through 6 (Figures 6, 7 and 8) illustrate the existing visual environment of the SPA site. Photograph 1 (Figure 6) is a view from the interior of the SPA site, looking southeast toward the SPA boundary and beyond. On-site vegetation and rock outcroppings appear in the foreground, and the historic Montecito Ranch House is positioned to the left in the mid-ground. The flat, low-lying valley characteristic of this portion of the SPA site surrounds the Ranch House. Unimproved dirt roads also are visible. Off-site areas include scattered rural residential homes and varied topography. Photograph 2 (Figure 6) is a view from the center of the SPA site, looking northwest toward Clevenger Canyon. Views from this vantage point consist of rolling topography, native vegetation and farmed land. Photograph 3 (Figure 7) shows a view from the central portion of the SPA site, looking south toward the sloping hillsides along the southern Project site boundary. Native vegetation, dirt roads, gently sloping hillsides and off-site rural residences are visible from this view. Photograph 4 (Figure 7) depicts a northeasterly view of the northern-most portion of the SPA site and the off-site properties beyond. On-site topography in this location consists of gently to steeply sloping hillsides. Native vegetation, rock outcroppings, unimproved dirt roads and off-site rural residences are visible from this view. Photograph 5 (Figure 8) depicts a view from the west central portion of the SPA site, looking west toward the SPA boundary. An unimproved dirt road is located in the foreground with an on-site sloping hillside in the mid-ground in the left portion of the photograph. Off-site views of distant ridgelines and a telecommunications tower associated with the Lemurian Fellowship property are visible in the background. Photograph 6 (Figure 8) consists of a view from the central portion of the SPA site in the low-lying valley, looking north toward the SPA



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Regional Location Map

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 1

LEGEND

- Proposed Off-site Ash Street Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Montecito Way Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Montecito Road Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Intersection Improvements

Project Site

Proposed
Montecito Ranch Road

Ash Street

Pine Street

Montecito Way

Montecito Road

RAMONA AIRPORT

RAMONA

Main Street

0.5 0.25 0 0.5 Miles

Job No: MRL-02 Date: 01/24/08

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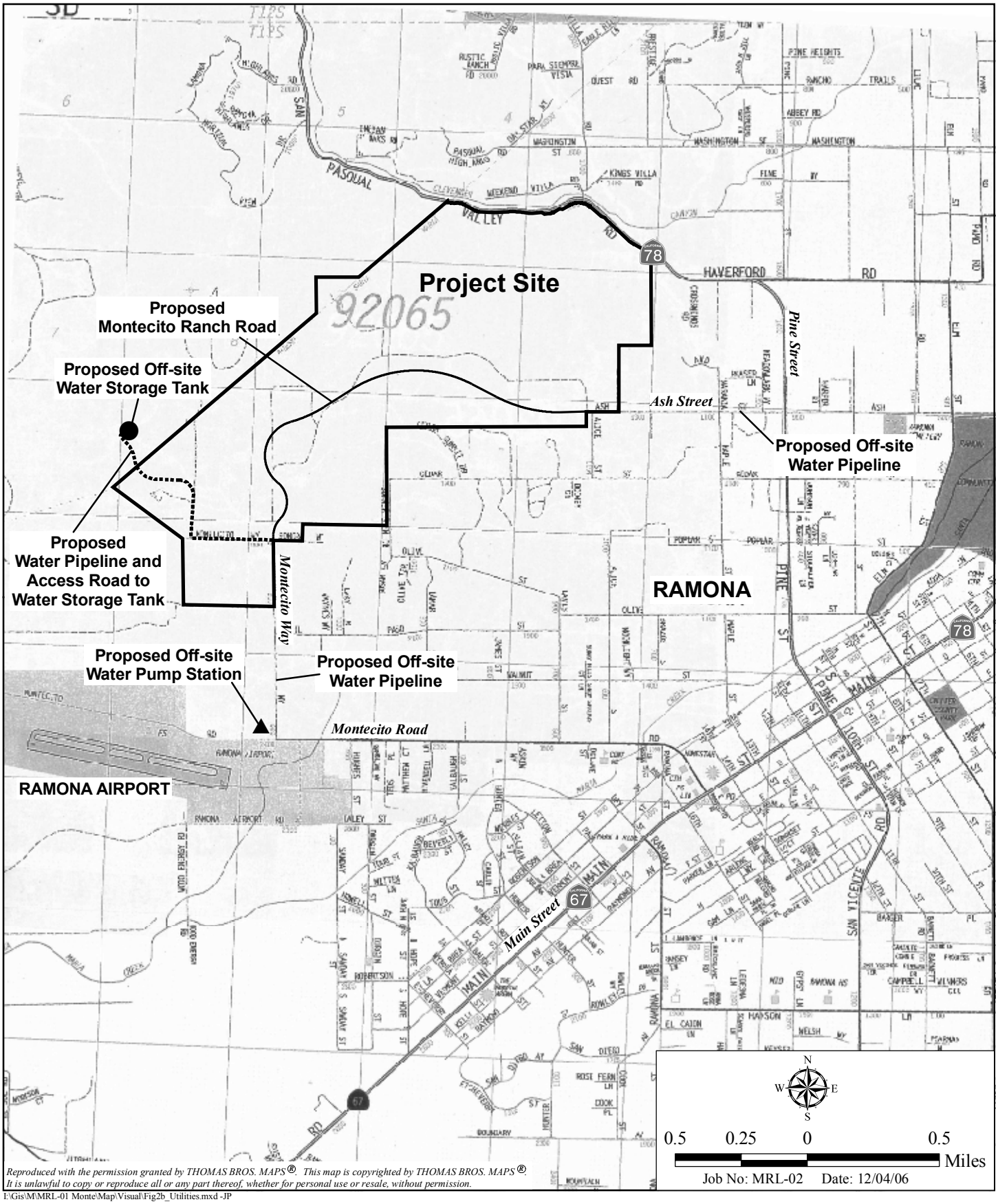
Project Vicinity Map with Proposed Off-site Roadway Improvements

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Figure 2a

HELIX



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Project Vicinity Map with Proposed Off-site Water Facilities Improvements

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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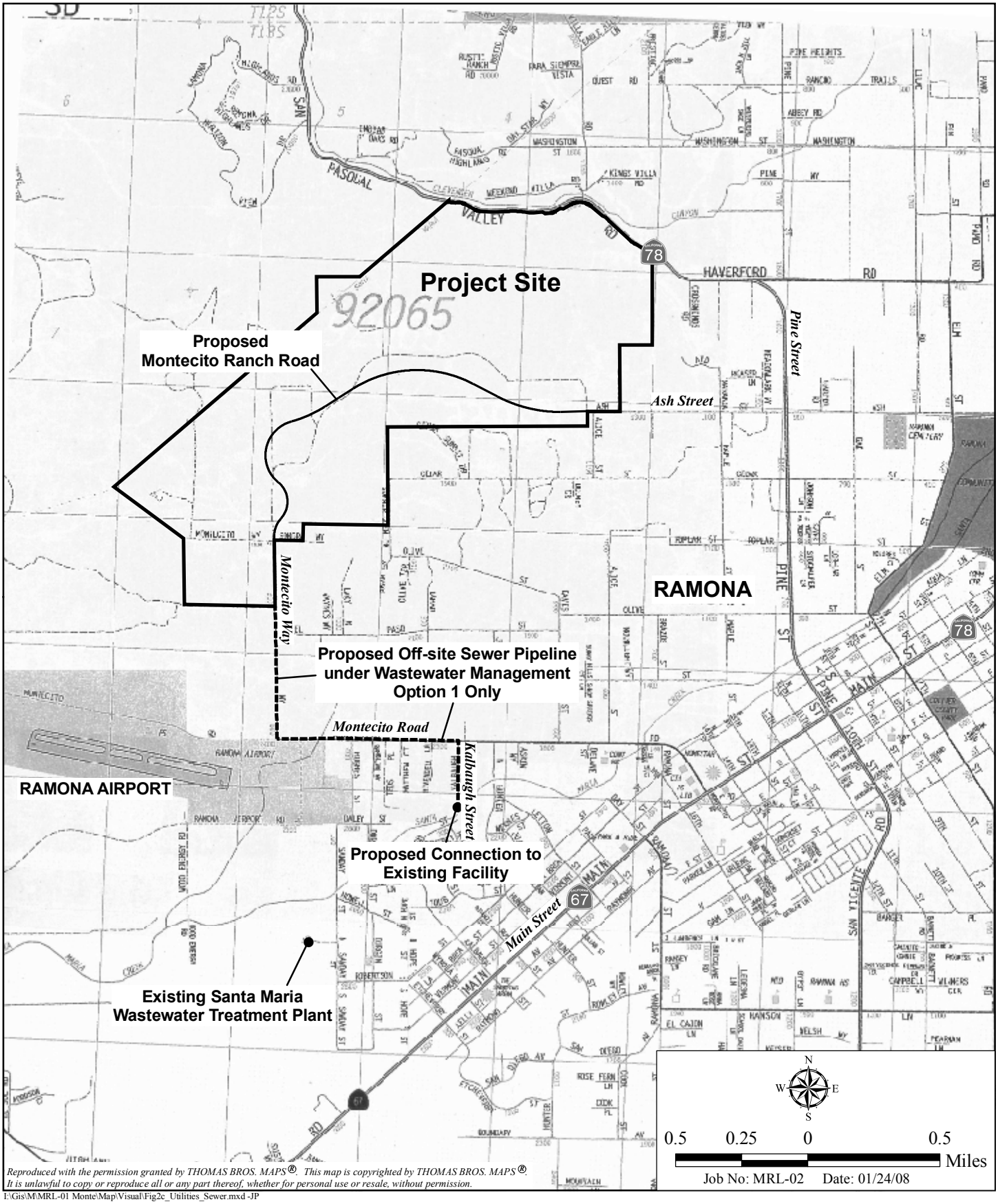
Figure 2b



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Project Vicinity Map with Proposed Off-site Wastewater Facilities Improvements

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Figure 2c

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LEGEND

- Montecito Ranch Site
- SPA
- Proposed Off-site Water Pipeline Alignments
- Proposed Off-site Sewer Pipeline Alignment Under Wastewater Management Option 1 Only
- Proposed Off-site Road Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Intersection Improvements
- Proposed Off-site Water Pump Station
- Proposed Water Storage Tank

Undeveloped
Rural Residential/ Horizon View Farms
Residential
Agriculture (oat hay)
Haverford Road
Religious (Lemurian Fellowship)
Montecito Ranch Site
Undeveloped
Rural Residential
Undeveloped
Davis SPA
Ash Street
Historic Ranch House
Summer Glen Road
Cedar Street
Alice Street
Pine Street / SR 78
Agriculture
Rural Residential
RMWD Spray Fields/Grazing
Undeveloped
Olive Street
Santa Maria Creek
Montecito Way
Equestrian Facilities
Agriculture (oat hay)
Ramona Airport
Agriculture (oat hay)
Montecito Road
Main Street
Rangeland Road
Undeveloped
Kalbaugh Street
Downtown Ramona
Ramona Airport Road
Santa Maria Wastewater Treatment Plant
Sunday Street
Residential
Santa Maria Creek
Agriculture (oat hay)
Etcheverry Creek
Cumming Ranch SPA

N
W E
S
2500 0 2500 Feet

Air Photo Source: Eagle Aerial, 2003
Job No: MRL-02 Date: 01/25/08

Detail of SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road Intersection

Highland Valley Road
Cumming Ranch SPA
Agriculture
Rural Residential
Dye Road
Fire Station
Scale: 1 inch = 1000 feet

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On-site and Surrounding Land Uses

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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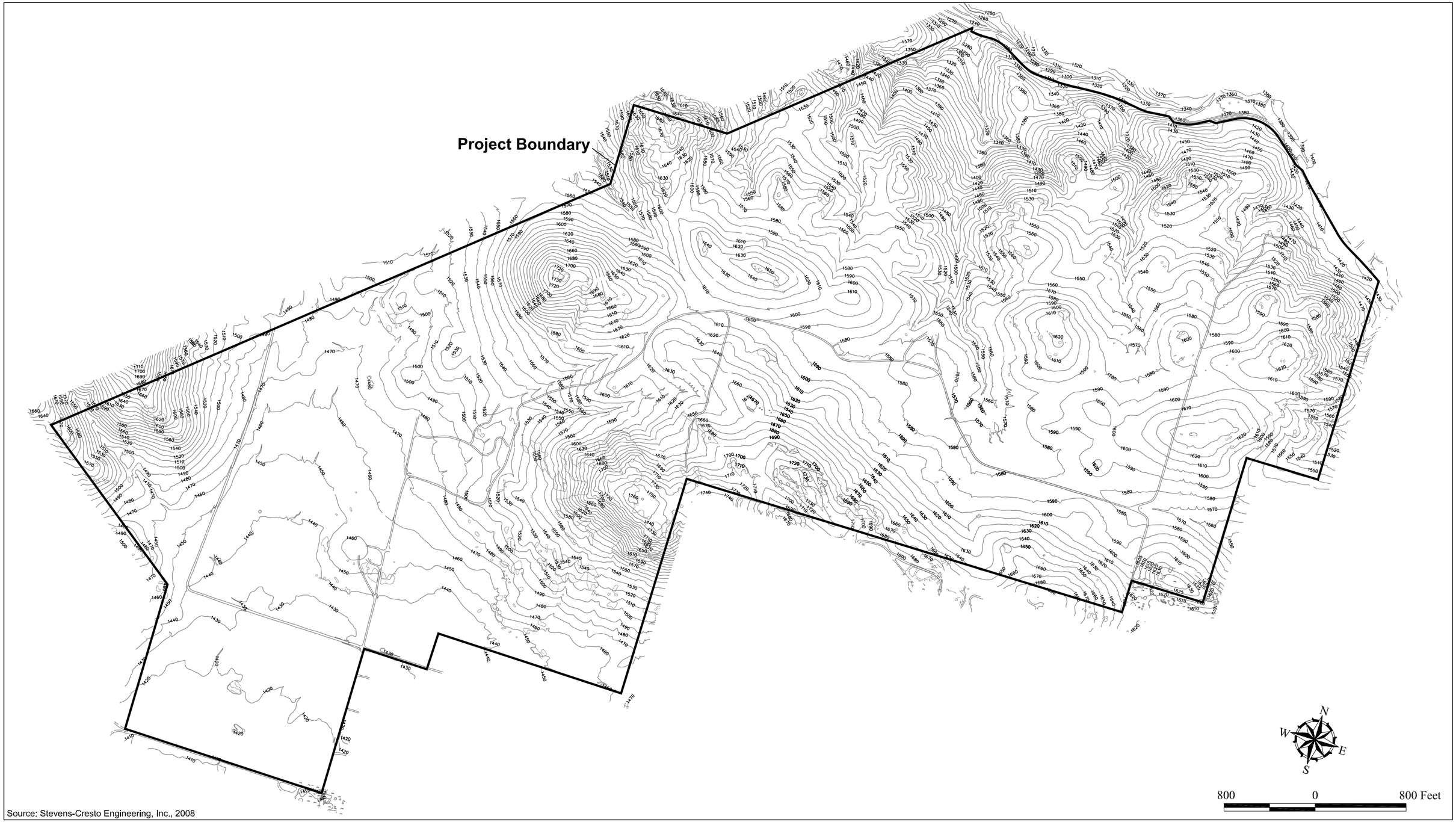
Figure 3



Source: Stevens-Cresto Engineering, Inc., 2008

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Project Site Topography Map

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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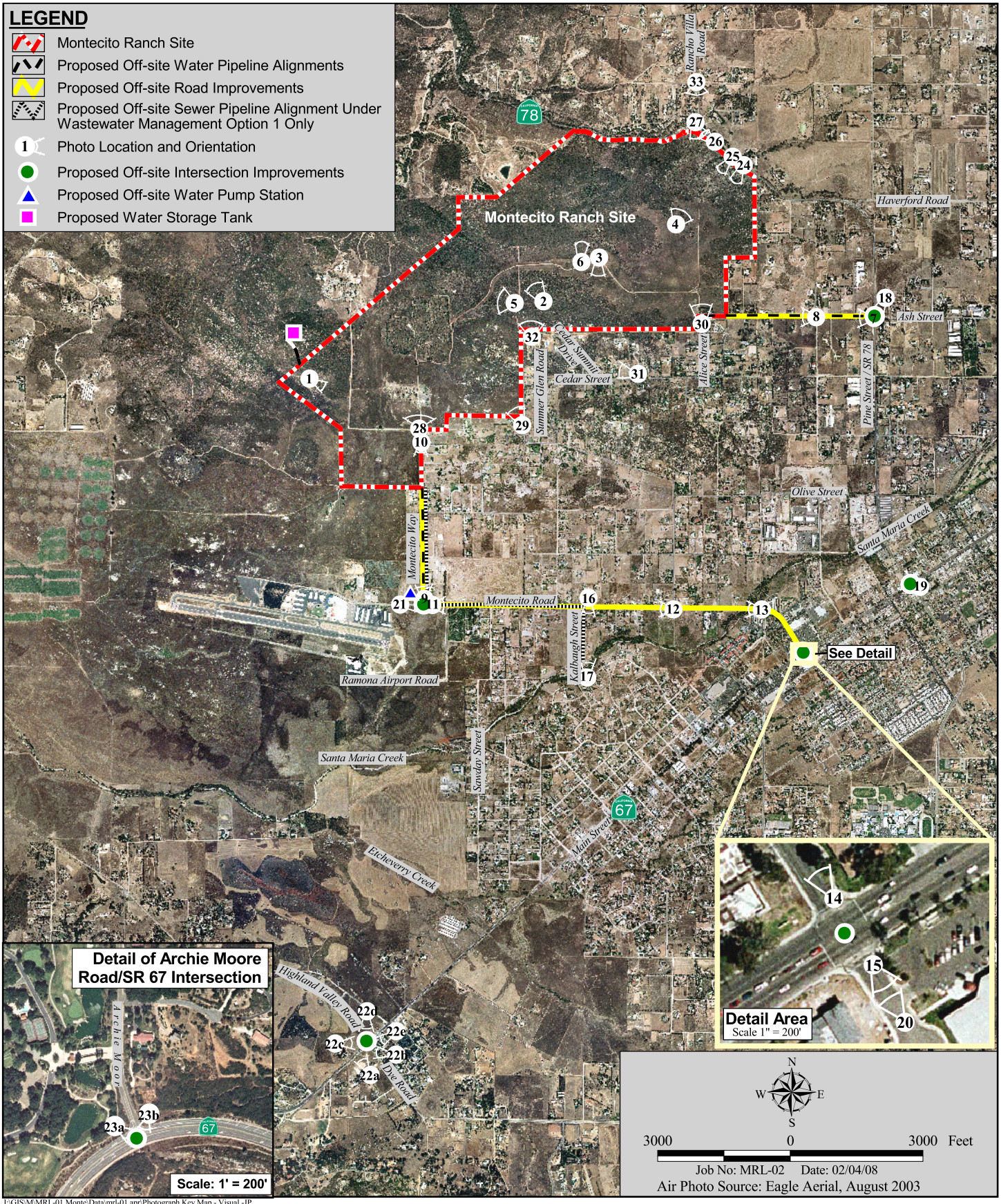
Figure 4



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Photograph Key Map

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Figure 5

Photograph 1

Photograph 2

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Photographs of SPA

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Figure 6

Photograph 3

Photograph 4

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Photographs of SPA

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Figure 7

Photograph 5

Photograph 6

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Photographs of SPA

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Figure 8

boundary. Views from this location include native vegetation and off-site hillsides and ridgelines, as well as three rural residences atop the hillside in the mid-ground.

2.1.3 Off-site Improvement Areas

Off-site visual elements along these roadway, intersection and utility improvement areas include improved rural roads, residences, landscaping, mailboxes, fencing, driveways, public facilities (i.e., overhead electrical and telephone lines, water meters, fire hydrants), businesses, pastureland, agricultural land (oat hay), undeveloped land, and Santa Maria Creek.

Ash Street

Photograph 7 (Figure 9) looks west onto Ash Street from the intersection of Ash Street/Pine Street (SR 78). The view from this location depicts a two-lane roadway with asphalt berms on both sides of the roadway. A manufactured slope planted with eucalyptus trees occurs on the left portion of the photograph, and a residence with landscaping occurs on the right portion of the photograph. Overhead telephone and electrical lines are visible in the upper right portion of this photograph. Photograph 8 (Figure 9) depicts a continued view looking west onto Ash Street from the intersection of Ash Street/Maple Street. The view from this location shows a two-lane roadway with an asphalt berm on the south edge and curb and gutter on the north edge. Eucalyptus trees occur on the left portion of the photograph and a residence, which is part of a 12-unit subdivision, occurs on the right in the background. Overhead electrical lines are visible in the upper right portion of this photograph.

Montecito Way

Photograph 9 (Figure 10) is looking north on Montecito Way from the intersection of Montecito Way/Montecito Road. This photograph depicts a two-lane roadway without curbs or gutters. A recently tilled field occurs in the foreground of the left portion of the photograph while a residence and landscaping are visible on the right side of the photograph. Eucalyptus trees and a residence are located in the distance on the left of the photograph. Overhead telephone and electrical lines are present in the upper central portion of this photograph. Photograph 10 (Figure 10) shows a southerly view along Montecito Way from the intersection of Montecito Way/Sonora Way near the southern SPA boundary. This photograph depicts a two-lane roadway without curbs or gutters. Vegetation, consisting of eucalyptus trees and informal streetscape, is dense along this section of Montecito Way. Private driveways, mailboxes and utility meters are visible throughout the photograph. Overhead telephone and electrical lines can be seen in the upper portion of this photograph.

Montecito Road

Photograph 11 (Figure 11) depicts a view to the east along Montecito Road from the intersection of Montecito Way/Montecito Road. This photograph shows a two-lane roadway without curbs or gutters. Pastureland occurs on the right portion of the photograph, with eucalyptus trees and an orchard in the background. A fenced equestrian facility, Copper Meadows, is seen on the left portion of the photograph, with eucalyptus trees scattered throughout the area. Overhead telephone and electrical lines are visible within this photograph. Photograph 12 (Figure 11) looks west along Montecito Road from the intersection of Davis Street/Montecito Road. This photograph shows a two-lane roadway with curbs and a five-foot-wide parking lane on the right side of the photograph. A

crosswalk is also located at this intersection due to the school (not shown) located toward the left side of the photograph. Private fencing, a mailbox, a water meter, overhead telephone and electrical lines and pepper and eucalyptus trees are visible within this photograph. Photograph 13 (Figure 11) depicts the view looking west on Montecito Road from the eastern edge of the bridge crossing at Santa Maria Creek. The bridge consists of a two-lane roadway with a pedestrian footbridge on the south side. Native and non-native vegetation occur within the creek to the right and left of the bridge, including willow (*Salix* sp.) and giant reed (*Arundo donax*). A field is located in the background on the right side of the photograph, along with eucalyptus trees and a residence. Overhead telephone and electrical lines are visible within this photograph, as is a school crossing sign. Photograph 14 (Figure 11) looks north on Montecito Road from the commercial shopping center located at the intersection of Montecito Road/Main Street (SR 67). This photograph depicts a two-lane road with a sidewalk, curb and gutter on the left side of the photograph. A concrete swale edges the east side of the road in the forefront, which transitions to sidewalk, curb and gutter. Grass, eucalyptus trees and other landscaping occur on both sides of the street, as do commercial and multi-family residential development. Overhead telephone and electrical lines also are visible within this photograph. Photograph 15 (Figure 11) shows the view looking south on Montecito Road from the commercial shopping center. This photograph also depicts a two-lane road with a sidewalk, curb and gutter on the right side of the photograph and a concrete swale on the left side. Grass, eucalyptus trees and other landscaping occur on both sides of the street. The commercial shopping center and associated driveway occur on the left side of the photograph, while multi-family residential development occurs on the right. Fencing and overhead telephone and electrical lines are visible within this photograph.

Kalbaugh Street

Photograph 16 (Figure 12) looks southerly along the paved portion of Kalbaugh Street from its intersection with Montecito Road. The three-rail white fencing on both sides of Kalbaugh Street in the photograph is repeated at the southern terminus of the street. Where present, other fencing along the street includes post and wire, chain-link and solid wood. Rural residential and small farm uses (including limited livestock) line the street; some abutting the roadway and some set back at various distances. Utility lines both line and cross the street. Vegetation ranges from the formal Italian cypress planted along the fence in the property on the right-hand side of the photograph to more informal and somewhat denser (more mature) plantings mid-street and visible on the left-hand side of the photograph.

Photographs 17a and 17b (Figure 12) are taken from points more southerly along Kalbaugh Street, along the unpaved portion of this street. Photograph 17a was taken from a point south of the Kalbaugh terminus near the Sewer Option 1 tie-in to the existing sewer main. The open nature of some of the lots is illustrated in this photograph, as is the pole and wire and chain-link fencing styles. Overhead utility wires are visible. Mid photograph (at the northern extent of the portion of Kalbaugh visible here), the solid wood fencing and temporary hay storage are depicted, shown more clearly on Photograph 17b.

Ash Street/Pine Street (SR 78)

Photograph 18 (Figure 13a) shows a view of the intersection of Ash Street/Pine Street (SR 78) looking southwest along Pine Street (SR 78). This intersection is currently a two-way, stop-controlled intersection, with stop signs at the eastbound and westbound approaches (at Ash Street) allowing for

Photograph 7

Photograph 8

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Photographs of Ash Street

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 9

Photograph 9

Photograph 10

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Photographs of Montecito Way

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Figure 10

Photograph 11

Photograph 12

Photograph 13

Photograph 14

Photograph 15

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Photographs of Montecito Road

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Figure 11

Photograph 16

Photograph 17a

Photograph 17b

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Photographs of Kalbaugh Street

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Figure 12

Photograph 18:
Ash Street/Pine Street (SR 78)

Photograph 19:
Main Street (SR 67)/Pine Street (SR 78)

Photograph 20:
Montecito Road/Main Street (SR 67)

Photograph 21:
Montecito Road/Montecito Way (SA 330)

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Photographs of Off-site Intersections

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 13a

continuous through traffic on Pine Street (SR 78). This view consists of a two-lane highway with shoulders and curbs intersecting with a County roadway. Northbound and southbound left-turn lanes are also provided at this intersection. Manufactured slopes south of Ash Street are pictured along the right side of Pine Street (SR 78). Street signs, fencing, landscaping, a single-family residence and overhead utilities are also pictured.

Main Street (SR 67)/Pine Street (SR 78)

Photograph 19 (Figure 13a) is looking north along Pine Street (SR 78) at the intersection of Main Street (SR 67) and Pine Street (SR 78). This view depicts a signalized intersection with streetlights, sidewalks, curb and gutter, overhead utilities, a gas station and other commercial uses.

Montecito Road/Main Street (SR 67)

Photograph 20 (Figure 13a) depicts a northerly view of the Montecito Road/Main Street (SR 67) intersection from Montecito Road. As seen in the photograph, this intersection is signalized and includes street trees and landscaping, streetlights, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and commercial and public uses (i.e., library).

Montecito Road/Montecito Way (SA 330)

Photograph 21 (Figure 13a) is looking east along Montecito Road at the intersection of Montecito Way (SA 330) and Montecito Road. Visual elements pictured at this three-legged intersection (i.e., "T" intersection) include asphalt roadway with no curb and no gutter, street signs, fencing, trees and utilities (i.e., utility poles, overhead lines and water meters).

SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road

Photograph 22a (Figure 13b) looks northerly along Highland Valley Road from the southwest quadrant of the existing intersection. Turn-lane striping is visible and signals from the northwest and northeast quadrants can also be seen. The open nature of the lot in this northwesterly corner (a residential use is located further to the west) is depicted. Photograph 22b moves to the east side of Dye Road and again looks northerly to the lot abutting Highland Valley Road on the east side. The open nature of this lot is shown, as is the start of a brief row of streetscape trees planted in a row paralleling SR 67. A variety of signalization elements is depicted. Photograph 22c looks easterly along SR 67 from the northwestern quadrant of the intersection. Residential and parking uses along the south side of SR 67, as well as overhead utility lines, signs and a signal are shown. Photograph 22d was taken from Highland Valley Road terminus at SR 67 looking southerly across the intersection and along Dye Road. As shown, the intersection is signalized and existing Dye Road is overall a two-lane facility with a left-turn lane at the SR 67 intersection. On the left side of the photograph, the dense planting is associated with residential uses. Over-head utility lines extend along the easterly side of Dye Road. The last photograph (22e) of this intersection looks westerly along SR 67, and illustrates the unpaved park-and-ride lot at the southwestern quadrant of SR 67 and Dye Road, the rural residence referred to in the description of Photograph 22a, above, roadway striping for left and right turns onto Highland Valley Road and Dye Road (respectively, and overhead utility lines.

SR 67/Archie Moore Road

Photographs 23a and 23b (Figure 13c) depict the existing "T" intersection and the curve in SR 67 to which Archie Moore Road connects. As shown, primary visible elements include multiple landforms both immediately abutting (e.g., the slope across the street) and at distance from the intersection, widened pavement to accommodate turn lanes, road signs, a stop sign and overhead utility lines.

2.2 SITE AND AREA TOPOGRAPHY

As noted above, the Project site is located in an area of varied topography. A broad valley is located in the central portion of the Project site, flanked by gently to steeply sloping terrain to the north and south. The site also contains knolls, rolling hillsides, steep sloping canyons, ridgelines and scenic vistas. As with the Project site, the broader visual environment of the area is topographically varied. A series of small to medium, localized peaks surrounded by hillsides sloping into relatively narrow ravines are located to the north and northwest. Areas to the south and east are generally topographically level, interspersed with small knolls and developed with rural residential uses. Topographically level, low-lying areas of the broad Santa Maria Valley are located to the southwest.

2.3 KEY VIEWS

A field survey was conducted to assess the visibility of the Proposed Project from the surrounding area, and to identify and describe the significant Project-related viewsheds. Through an analysis of the viewshed surrounding the Project site, off-site public and private viewpoints were identified from which the Project would be most visible.

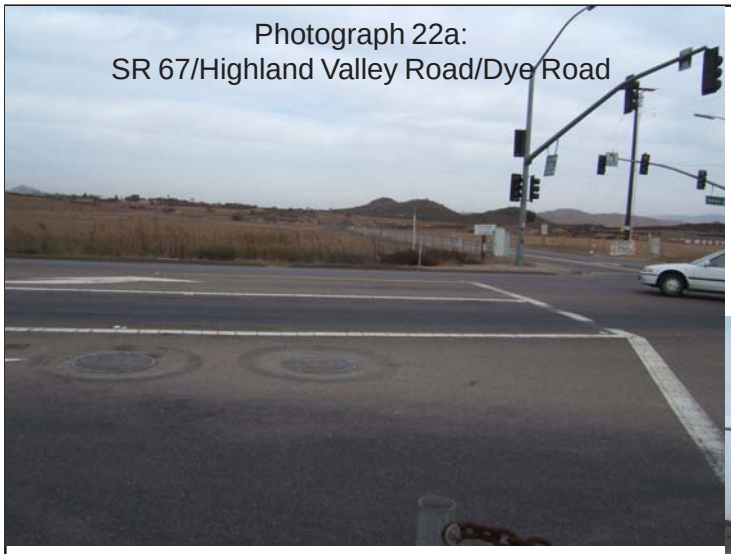
2.3.1 Criteria for Determining Key Views

The following criteria were considered in determining key views of the Project site from surrounding vantage points:

- Type of viewers/viewpoint (public views are considered more sensitive than private views)
- Breadth of the view (views taking in a number of elements rely less on any one element than those focusing on a specific criterion)
- Depth of the view (increased distance from the observed element makes it appear smaller, less detail is registered, and visibility may be affected by atmospheric conditions such as fog, smog, etc.)
- Amount of time (and/or number of times) each observer is exposed to the view
- Number of viewers exposed to the view (a greater number of viewers makes the view more sensitive)
- Designated scenic viewpoints and scenic highways are considered sensitive viewpoints

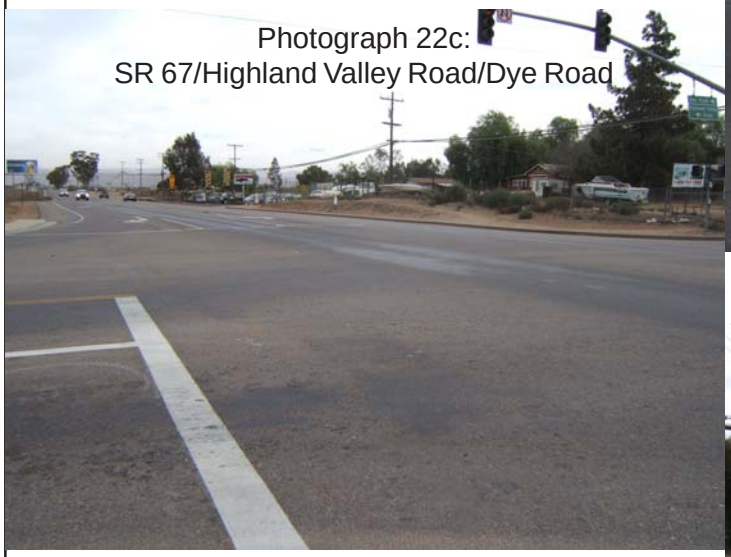
2.3.2 Existing Public Viewpoints

The key identified public viewpoints that provide views into the Project site are from surrounding public roadways. Pine Street (SR 78), Montecito Way, Summer Glen Road, Alice Street, Cedar Street and Ash Street provide motorists and pedestrians with restricted to expansive views into the SPA site. Proposed off-site roadway/intersection improvements and utility connections would be visible from



Photograph 22a:
SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road

Photograph 22b:
SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road



Photograph 22c:
SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road

Photograph 22d:
SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road

Photograph 22e:
SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road

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Photographs of Off-site Intersections

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 13b

Photograph 23a:
Archie Moore Road/SR 67

Photograph 23b:
Archie Moore Road/SR 67

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Photographs of Off-site Intersections

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 13c

Pine Street (SR 78), Ash Street, Main Street (SR 67), Montecito Way, Montecito Road, SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road and SR 67/Archie Moore Road. Photographs were taken at the above locations, which are identified on Figure 5. Two public parks are located in the general vicinity; Ramona Community Park is located approximately 1.3 miles to the east, and Collier County Park is located approximately 1.5 miles to the southeast. These parks, however, are located at lower elevations and do not provide views into the SPA site. No other existing public vantage points were identified within close enough proximity to the Project site to have the potential for a significant adverse visual impact from the Proposed Project.

In general, roadways within the Project site vicinity, with the exception of Pine Street (SR 78) and Main Street (SR 67), consist of two-lane rural collectors utilized by local residents within the existing low-density residential community. Montecito Way and Ash Street are not through streets, and Summer Glen Road and Alice Street are relatively short streets. The number of viewers traveling on these surrounding local roadways is, therefore, minimal and primarily limited to existing residents and their visitors. As mentioned above, the number of viewers exposed to a view is considered when determining the sensitivity of a particular view. Where existing traffic counts have been conducted on these local roadways, they are included in the following discussion.

Pine Street (SR 78)

The northern-most portion of the Montecito Ranch SPA is immediately adjacent to a portion of Pine Street (SR 78), which is designated a Scenic Highway and Resource Conservation Area in the Ramona Community Plan (RCP). Views of the Project site from SR 78 are generally limited to the moderately steep, north-facing slopes along the northern edge of the SPA site and associated dense oak woodlands. The RCP protects views of these slopes and oak woodlands from SR 78. Existing average daily traffic (ADT) volumes along Pine Street (SR 78) are 9,700 ADT north of Ash Street, 10,200 ADT between Ash Street and Olive Street, and 10,700 ADT between Olive Street and Main Street (SR 67) (Urban Systems Associates, Inc. [USAI] 2008). Pine Street (SR 78) is used by Ramona residents and visitors, and for travel through Ramona to other destinations. It represents the most sensitive view location to the Proposed Project.

Main Street (SR 67)

Main Street (SR 67) extends in a northeast-southwest trend through the Ramona Town Center with generally level topography. Commercial and industrial uses are prevalent on both sides of this roadway. Existing development, landscaping and the distance from the Project site prohibit any potential view into the SPA from Main Street (SR 67). Views of proposed off-site intersection improvements at Main Street (SR 67)/Pine Street (SR 78), Main Street (SR 67)/Montecito Road, SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road and SR 67/Archie Moore Road would be available to those traveling along Main Street (SR 67). Existing ADT along Main Street (SR 67) is 29,500 ADT between Pine Street (SR 78) and Montecito Road, 27,300 ADT between Montecito Road and Hunter Street, and 27,000 ADT between Hunter Street and Highland Valley Road/Dye Road (USAI 2008).

Montecito Way

Montecito Way extends northerly from Montecito Road to its intersection with Sonora Way at the southern SPA boundary and currently provides access to the Montecito Ranch SPA via a gated entry.

A public road easement also extends at this location as an unimproved dirt road through the SPA site, where it intersects with another dirt road that extends northerly across the SPA site to provide access to the Lemurian Fellowship property to the northwest. Low-density residential development, landscaping, fencing and utilities are located along Montecito Way. Topography in this area consists of generally level terrain with limited vertical elements to disrupt views into the Montecito Ranch SPA. Montecito Way has an ADT of 600 (USAI 2008).

Summer Glen Road

Summer Glen Road extends southerly along a southeastern portion of the SPA boundary and connects Cedar Street with Olive Street. The road is relatively level and offers unobstructed westerly views into the Montecito Ranch SPA. Northern views into the site, however, are obstructed by intervening topography. No traffic data are available for Summer Glen Road.

Alice Street

Alice Street extends southerly from the southeastern SPA boundary at Ash Street and terminates at Cedar Street. Existing topography along Alice Street is generally level with moderately sloping terrain to the north and northwest. Views into the Montecito Ranch SPA from Alice Street are virtually unobstructed. No traffic data are available for Alice Street.

Cedar Street

Cedar Street extends easterly from Summer Glen Road south of the southern SPA boundary. Cedar Street is lined with low-density residential development and is situated at the toe of a south-facing slope rising to the ridgeline along the southern SPA boundary. Consequently, northerly views into the Montecito Ranch SPA are completely obstructed by intervening topography. Westerly views into the SPA site, however, are available along the western portion of Cedar Street. No traffic data are available for Cedar Street.

Ash Street

Ash Street extends easterly from the eastern SPA boundary and is characterized by low-density residences. Existing topography along Ash Street is varied with gently sloping hillsides to the north. These hillsides partially obstruct northern views into the Montecito Ranch SPA. The northwestern viewshed, however, offers expansive views across the low-lying central valley of the Montecito Ranch SPA from the western extent of Ash Street. Ash Street, west of Pine Street (SR 78), has an ADT of 500 (USAI 2008).

Montecito Road

Montecito Road extends northerly from Main Street (SR 67) for approximately 800 feet where it gently curves and generally trends in an east-west direction. Montecito Road, south of the curve is developed with commercial and industrial uses and is characterized by generally level topography. Montecito Road continues to be generally flat west of the curve. Intervening topography and residences obstruct views into the Montecito Ranch SPA. Views of the proposed off-site roadway improvements along Montecito Way and off-site intersection improvements at Montecito

Road/Montecito Way (SA 330) and Montecito Road/Main Street (SR 67) would be provided from Montecito Road. Existing ADT along Montecito Road is 6,000 ADT between Main Street (SR 67) and Davis Street, and 3,500 ADT between Davis Street and Montecito Way (USAI 2008).

2.3.3 Existing Private Viewpoints

In addition to the public viewpoints discussed above, two private viewpoints were identified that provide direct views into the SPA site. Existing homes with views into the SPA are located north of Cedar Street and north of Pine Street (SR 78).

North of Cedar Street

Existing residences located on the ridge north of Cedar Street (along or near Cedar Summit Drive) have direct views into the SPA site. This area is characterized by low-density rural residences on lots that abut the southern SPA boundary. Access is provided via Cedar Summit Drive or private driveways from Cedar Street. These access roads are generally curvilinear with some vegetation, and ascend approximately 200 feet in elevation from Cedar Street to the ridge. Due to intervening topography and vegetation, views into the SPA site from the access roads are provided only at the top of the ridge.

North of Pine Street (SR 78)

Several existing residences located approximately 0.25 mile north of the SPA site across SR 78 (along Rancho Villa Road) have direct views of the steep hillsides in the northern portion of the SPA site. This area contains low-density rural residences on terrain that slopes down toward SR 78 and Clevenger Canyon. Views into the interior of the SPA site are fully obstructed due to intervening topography.

3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Proposed Project would include development of a rural residential community consisting of 417 single-family residential units on lots ranging in size from approximately 0.5 acre (20,000 square feet minimum) to 1.8 acres, and associated public facilities and infrastructure improvements. The Project would be built in two separate units: Unit 1 would include 243 single-family residences, and Unit 2 would include 174 residences (Figures 14 and 15). Residential pads would generally be sited on the level and gently sloping portions of the property. The steep slopes, sensitive hillsides and knolls on site would be preserved on site. The Project would fully develop and dedicate an 8.3-acre local park, as well as dedicate land for an 11.9-acre historic park encompassing the historic Montecito Ranch House and a 10.6-acre charter high school site (Figure 16). The southern portion of the historic park site would include an equestrian staging area, as well as act as an overflow parking area for the parks and school site (Figure 17). The equestrian facilities that would be provided at the staging area would include several 15-foot by 15-foot horse pens, an 80-foot diameter round pen, an animal wash down area, hitching posts, a 100-foot by 150-foot arena with bleacher seating, a picnic area, restrooms, and parking (including horse trailer parking). This area would connect to the regional trail system. The parking area would be graded, surfaced with decomposed granite, and landscaped around the perimeter. A retaining wall would be constructed adjacent to Lot 9, a private storm drain easement, and a small drainage within an open space lot.

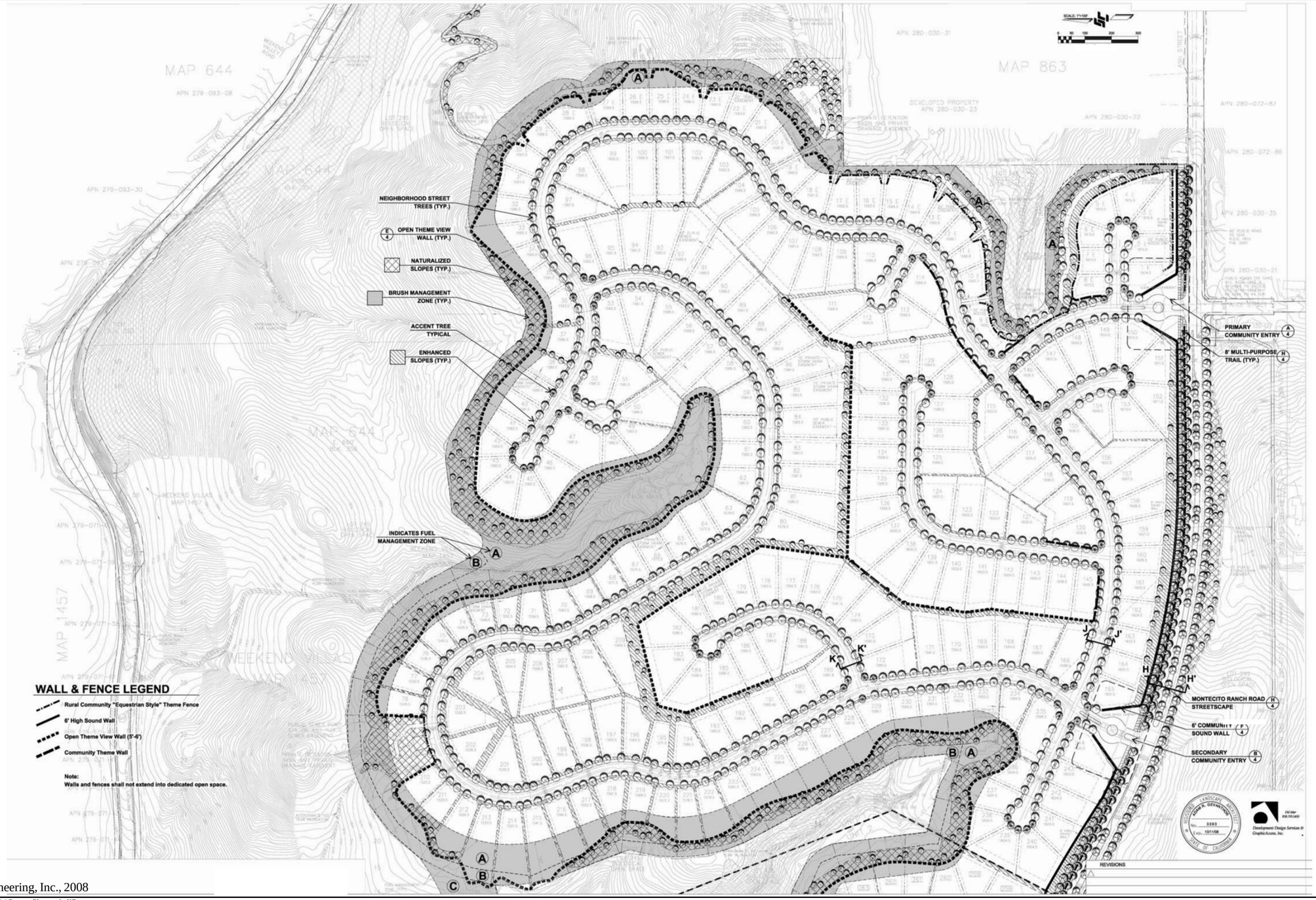
The Proposed Project includes two wastewater management options, only one of which would be implemented. Since a final determination as to the most appropriate approach to treatment of Project wastewater has not yet been made, Wastewater Management Option 1, Off-site Sewer Connection, is addressed equally with Wastewater Management Option 2, WRF, throughout this report.

Wastewater Management Option 1 requires construction of an off-site sewer line connecting to the Santa Maria Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP) following juncture with an existing facility just south of the terminus of Kalbaugh Street. Under Option 1, a sewer pump station also would be located within the southern portion of the historic park planned for equestrian staging and overflow parking. Details of this option are additionally discussed below. Option 2 is an on-site wastewater reclamation facility (WRF) to treat all on-site wastewater and utilize the reclaimed water to irrigate on-site public landscaped areas, as well as the private Homeowners' Association (HOA) areas. The WRF would treat 110,000 gallons per day and would include a 0.9-acre treatment facility, five treated storage ponds on 6.9 acres and a 16.9-acre spray field (Figure 17), and also additionally discussed below.

Proposed off-site potable water facility improvements would entail construction of pipelines, a booster pump station and a storage tank (Figure 2b). Water lines would be constructed within Ash Street, Montecito Way and undeveloped land to the northwest that would connect to a proposed water storage tank. A water booster pump station is proposed at the intersection of Montecito Way/Montecito Road.

An overall objective of the Project is to provide an environmentally sensitive, residential community compatible with the rural character of the surrounding area while preserving a substantial portion of existing, contiguous natural open space, landforms and topography. Approximately 573.8 acres of the site (61.2 percent) would be dedicated open space under Wastewater Management Option 1, and 549.1 acres (58.8 percent) would be dedicated under Option 2. These acres would include open space preserve areas, multi-purpose trails (approximately 3.8 miles within open space areas), sensitive biological habitat, important archaeological resources, steep slopes, buffer areas and other environmentally sensitive areas to create viable wildlife corridors and linkages.

The Project would construct Montecito Ranch Road between Ash Street at the eastern SPA boundary and Montecito Way at the southwestern SPA boundary. Montecito Ranch Road would be built as a two-lane major roadway within a 118-foot-wide right-of-way. The 118-foot-wide right-of-way would include an 18-foot-wide landscaped thematic street scene on the south side of Montecito Ranch Road with a 5-foot-wide sidewalk. The center of the 118-foot-wide right-of-way would consist of two 20-foot-wide lanes (one 14-foot-wide vehicle lane and one 6-foot-wide bike lane traveling in each direction), separated by a 20-foot-wide landscaped median. The north side of Montecito Ranch Road would be improved with a 40-foot-wide landscaped parkway encompassing an 8-foot-wide multi-purpose trail and landscaping (Figure 18). From Lot 392 southwesterly to Montecito Way at the southern SPA boundary, Montecito Ranch Road would be constructed within an 80-foot-wide right-of-way, including the following: an 18-foot-wide thematic street scene on the south side, which would include a 5-foot-wide sidewalk; two 20-foot-wide lanes with one lane traveling in each direction; and a 22-foot-wide landscaped parkway on the north side encompassing an 8-foot-wide multi-purpose trail (Figure 18). No on-street parking would be permitted along Montecito Ranch Road. This roadway is expected to carry 2,060 ADT between main Project access points and onto the SPA site immediately following development of the Proposed Project (USAI 2008).



Source: Stevens-Cresto Engineering, Inc., 2008

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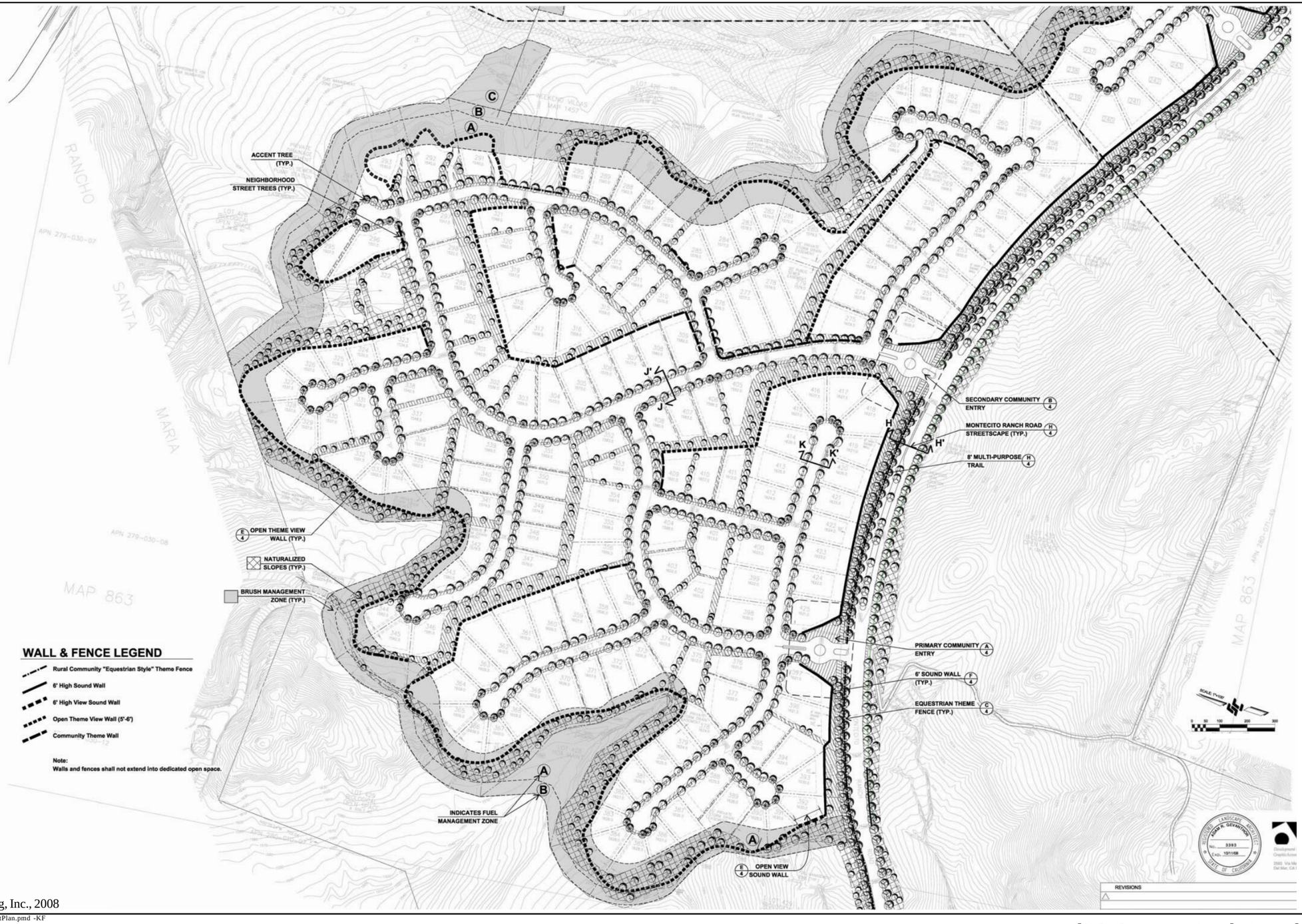
Unit 1 Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Figure 14

HELIX



Source: Stevens-Cresto Engineering, Inc., 2008

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Unit 2 Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Figure 15

HELIX

Note:
This exhibit is a conceptual depiction of proposed land uses and is subject to change during the Vesting Tentative Map phase.

Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Proposed Project Illustrative Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Figure 16

HELIX

LEGEND

FUEL MANAGEMENT SETBACK
(WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT OPTIONS 1 AND 2)

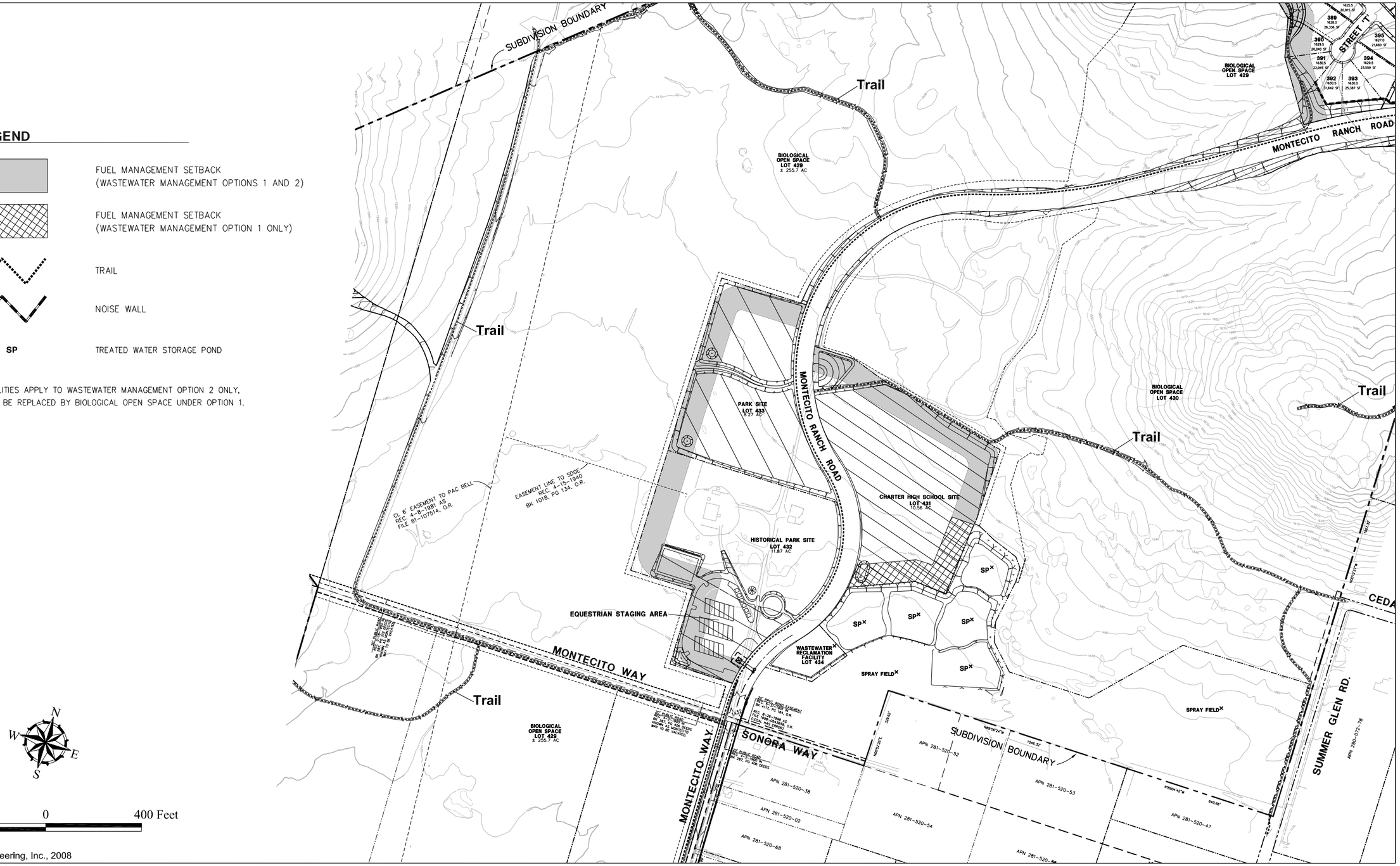
FUEL MANAGEMENT SETBACK
(WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT OPTION 1 ONLY)

TRAIL

NOISE WALL

SP TREATED WATER STORAGE POND

× THESE FACILITIES APPLY TO WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT OPTION 2 ONLY, AND WOULD BE REPLACED BY BIOLOGICAL OPEN SPACE UNDER OPTION 1.



Source: Stevens-Cresto Engineering, Inc., 2008

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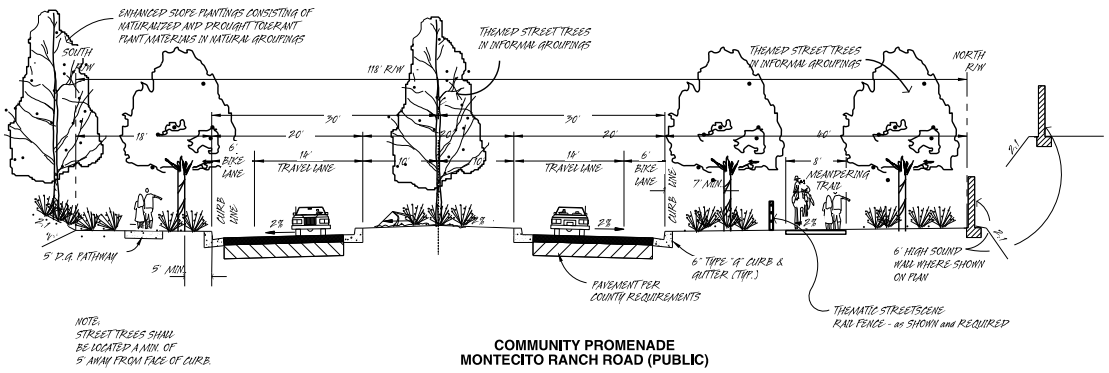
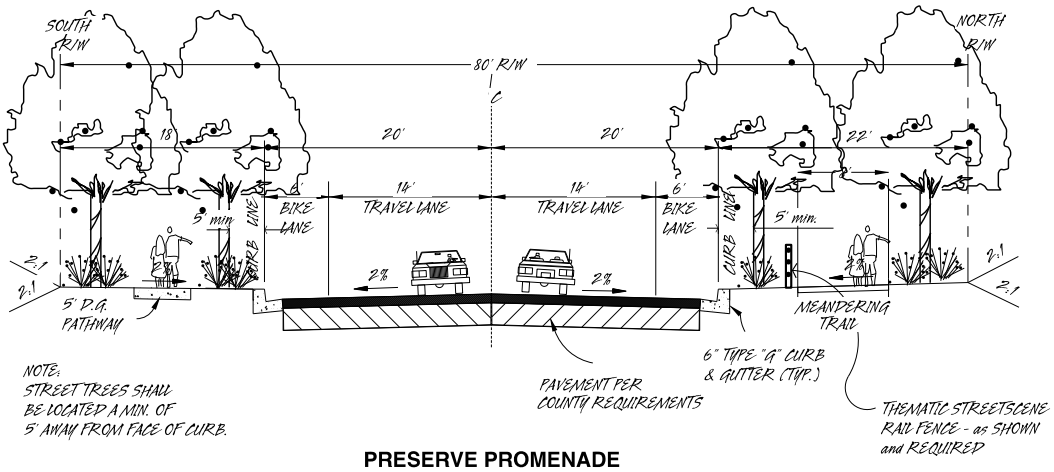
Charter High School Site, Park Sites, Equestrian Staging Area, and Wastewater Reclamation Facility



COMMUNITY PROMENADE
MONTECITO RANCH ROAD (PUBLIC)

FROM E'LY PROJECT BNDRY TO "K" STREET
NO SCALE

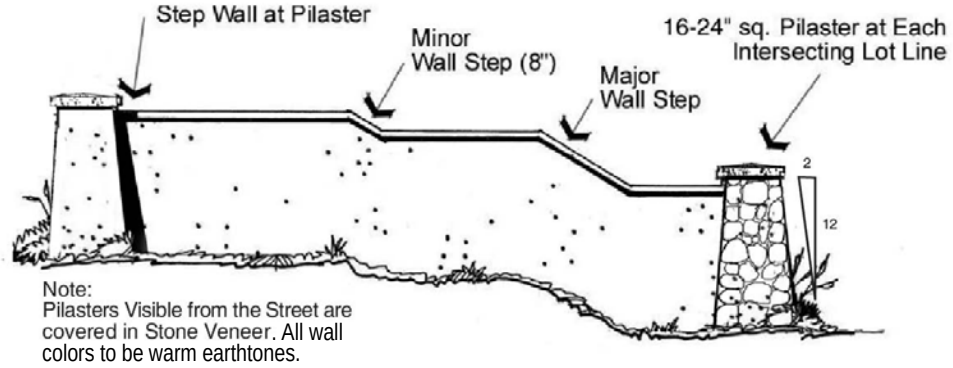
FROM EASTERLY PROJECT BOUNDARY TO LOT 392
NO SCALE



PRESERVE PROMENADE
MONTECITO RANCH ROAD (PUBLIC)

LOT 392 TO EXIST. MONTECITO WAY
NO SCALE

FROM LOT 392 TO EXISTING MONTECITO WAY
NO SCALE



SOLID/SOUND WALL

Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Montecito Ranch Road and On-site Montecito Way Sections

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 18

In addition to Montecito Ranch Road, several on-site private loop roads and cul-de-sac streets are proposed, temporarily named after letters of the alphabet. Unit 1 would include Streets A through I, and Unit 2 would include Streets J through W. Each loop road would have a 60-foot-wide right-of-way, with a pavement width of 40 feet (to include two lanes, one 12-foot-wide travel lane with 8 feet provided for on-street parking in each direction), a 5-foot-wide decomposed granite trail on one side of the road and a landscaped parkway on both sides of the road (Figure 19). Each cul-de-sac street would have a 56-foot-wide right-of-way with a pavement width of 36 feet (to include two lanes with one 12-foot-wide travel lane with 6 feet provided for on-street parking in each direction), a 5-foot-wide decomposed granite trail on one side of the street and a landscaped parkway on both sides of the street (Figure 19). All internal streets would be constructed with streetlights and standard curbs and gutters and are designed to accommodate anticipated long-term traffic volumes. On-street parking would be permitted along both sides of all proposed residential collector roads within the SPA site. Gated entrances to the proposed residential developments would be provided where Streets A, H, J and K intersect with the proposed Montecito Ranch Road.

Other on-site road improvements would include road dedication and future slope easement of varying width (up to 55 feet) along San Pasqual Valley Road (SR 78) (sufficient to accommodate an ultimate future road right-of-way of 98 feet and potential associated graded slopes along the Project frontage), dedication of 20 feet of road right-of-way along the portion of the SPA boundary that abuts Summer Glen Road, retention of a 10-foot-wide private road easement along the southern-most SPA boundary, dedication of 10 feet of road right-of-way along the portion of the SPA boundary adjacent to Sonora Way, dedication of 30 feet of road right-of-way along the portion of the SPA boundary adjacent to Montecito Way, and construction of a 20-foot-wide decomposed granite access road and water easement extending northwesterly from an existing 40-foot-wide dedicated (undeveloped) right-of-way that extends westerly from the intersection of Montecito Way and Sonora Way. This access road would extend off site to the northwest to a proposed above-grade water storage tank. In addition, right-of-way and a future slope easement of varying width would be dedicated at the northern Project boundary along SR 78.

To mitigate Project traffic impacts and improve traffic flow in the vicinity, additional off-site improvements to several street segments and intersections are proposed. Ash Street, Montecito Way and Montecito Road would be widened. Off-site improvements to six intersections consisting of additional focused right-of-way to support localized turn pockets/merge lanes and/or signals also would occur, including Ash Street/Pine Street (SR 78), Main Street (SR 67)/Pine Street (SR 78), Main Street (SR 67)/Montecito Road, Montecito Road/Montecito Way (SA 330), SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road and SR 67/Archie Moore Road. The intersection of SR 67/Archie Moore Road would only be signalized, while improvements to the other intersections would include widening of pavement and/or signalization. All of the localized improvements would be located at already signalized or stop signed intersections.

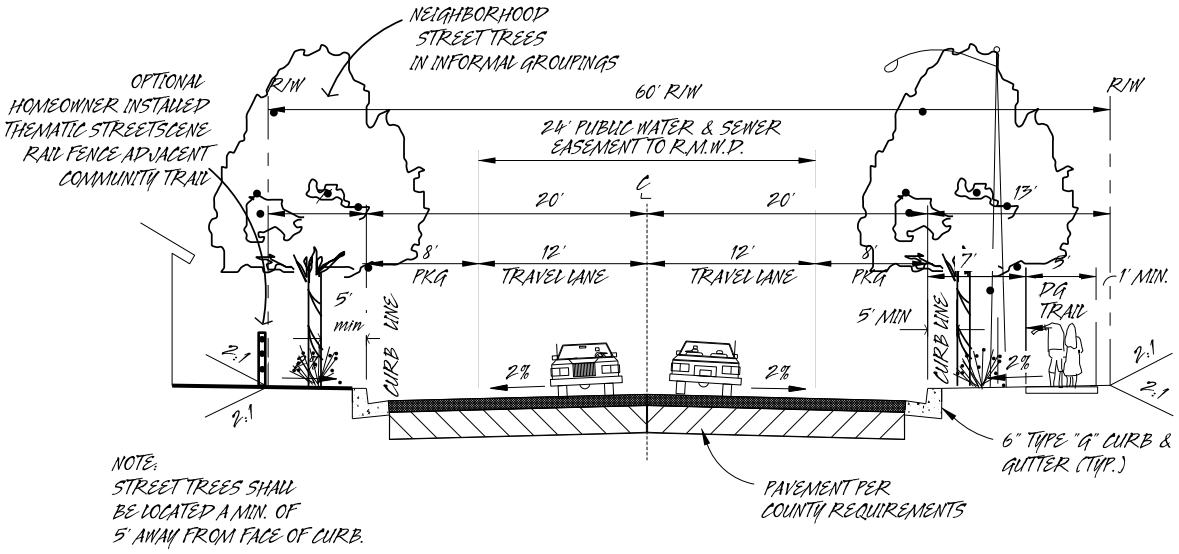
Ash Street is currently a two-lane rural light collector road extending approximately 3,800 feet from Pine Street westerly to the eastern Project site boundary. Between Pine Street and the eastern Project site boundary, Ash Street has an existing 60-foot-wide right-of-way with varying pavement widths. The existing pavement width of Ash Street from Pine Street to Maple Street is 24 feet wide, with two 12-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction) and low asphalt berms along the pavement edges. The portion of Ash Street extending approximately 1,320 feet west of Maple Street has a paved width of 32 feet with one 20-foot-wide westbound travel lane and one 12-foot-wide

eastbound travel lane. The westbound lane along this segment has a concrete curb and gutter while the eastbound lane has a low asphalt berm edge. The remaining segment of Ash Street, east of the SPA boundary, has a pavement width of 24 feet with two 12-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction). The Project proposes to increase the paved width of Ash Street to a uniform 40 feet within the existing 60-foot-wide right-of-way, with two 14-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction) and a 6-foot-wide bicycle lane on each side of the road. The edge of the pavement would be finished with curbs and gutters and an eight-foot-wide native soil multi-purpose trail would be located along the northern side of the road within the remaining right-of-way. No parking would be permitted along this roadway segment.

The north-south segment of Montecito Way is currently a two-lane rural collector road connecting Montecito Road to the southern site boundary at Sonora Way. This segment of Montecito Way has a 40-foot-wide right-of-way and is paved to a width of 24 feet consisting of two 12-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction). This roadway segment would be reclassified as a rural light collector road. Within Montecito Way, the Project proposes a uniform paved width of 40 feet within a 60-foot-wide right-of-way. Up to 20 feet of excess, unimproved, right-of-way width would remain from Sonora Way to within approximately 500 feet north of El Paso Street. Within the proposed 60-foot-wide right-of-way improvement area, the Project would construct two 14-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction; Figure 20). A six-foot-wide bicycle lane would be provided on each side of the road. The edge of the pavement would be finished with curbs and gutters or asphalt concrete berms and an eight-foot-wide native soil multi-purpose trail would be located along the western side of the road within the remaining right-of-way.

Montecito Road would be improved from a 36-foot pavement width within a 40-foot-wide right-of-way to a paved uniform width of 40 feet within a 60-foot-wide right-of-way. The improved roadway would consist of two 14-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction), a six-foot-wide bike lane on each side of the road, curbs and gutters at the pavement edges, and an eight-foot-wide native soil multi-purpose trail along both the northern side of the road within the remaining right-of-way (Figure 21). Proposed improvements to Montecito Road would require acquisition of approximately five feet of additional right-of-way along both sides of this roadway, not including acquisition that is required for intersection improvements. The existing bridge crossing along Montecito Road over Santa Maria Creek also would be improved. Proposed improvements would entail widening the bridge from 30 feet to 52 feet, which would include two 20-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction) and one 8-foot wide pedestrian/equestrian pathway along the north side of the bridge. To ensure equestrian safety, the pathway would be covered with an acceptable non-slip, all weather surface (e.g., stabilized decomposed granite, wood, etc.) and appropriate railing would be constructed along both sides of the pathway. The railing would be a minimum of 60 inches high to protect equestrians.

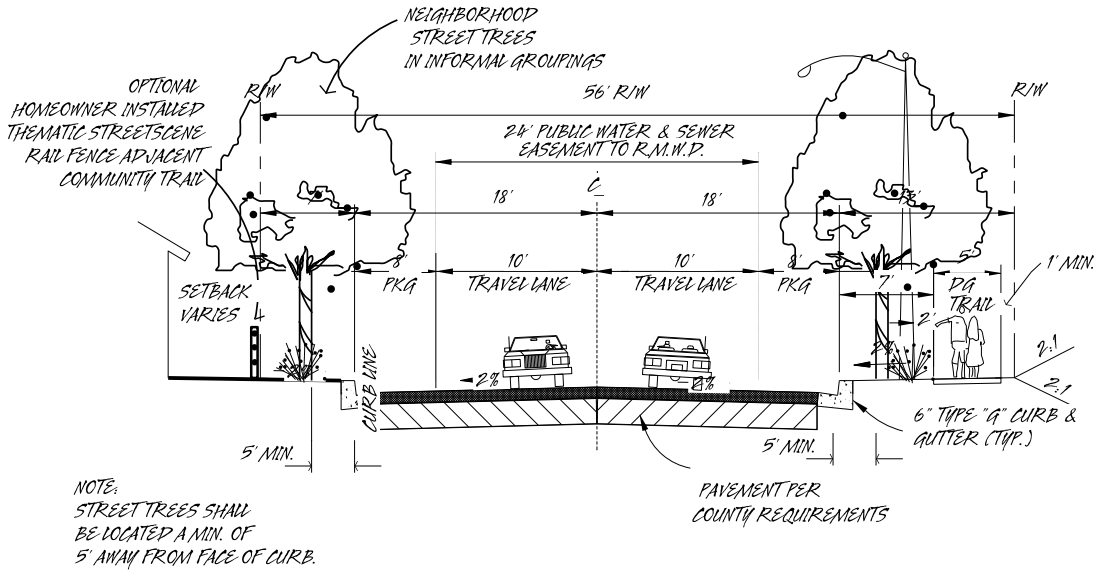
Potable water would be provided to the Proposed Project via off-site connections to existing pipelines within Montecito Road and Pine Street (SR 78). An approximately 0.75-mile-long, 12-inch-diameter water line would be extended northerly to the Project site from the existing 24-inch-diameter main within the existing roadway right-of-way of Montecito Road. Another 12-inch-diameter off-site water line would be constructed from the existing 14-inch-diameter water main under Pine Street (SR 78) approximately 0.75 mile westerly within the existing right-of-way of Ash Street to the Project site boundary. In addition, an off-site water storage tank would be installed west of the Project site on an adjacent property. Under Wastewater Management Option 1, an off-site 1.26-millon gallon water storage tank would be installed just west of the Project site on an adjacent property. The tank would



NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS (PRIVATE)

(Loop Roads)

NO SCALE



NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS (PRIVATE)

(Cul-de-sacs)

NO SCALE

Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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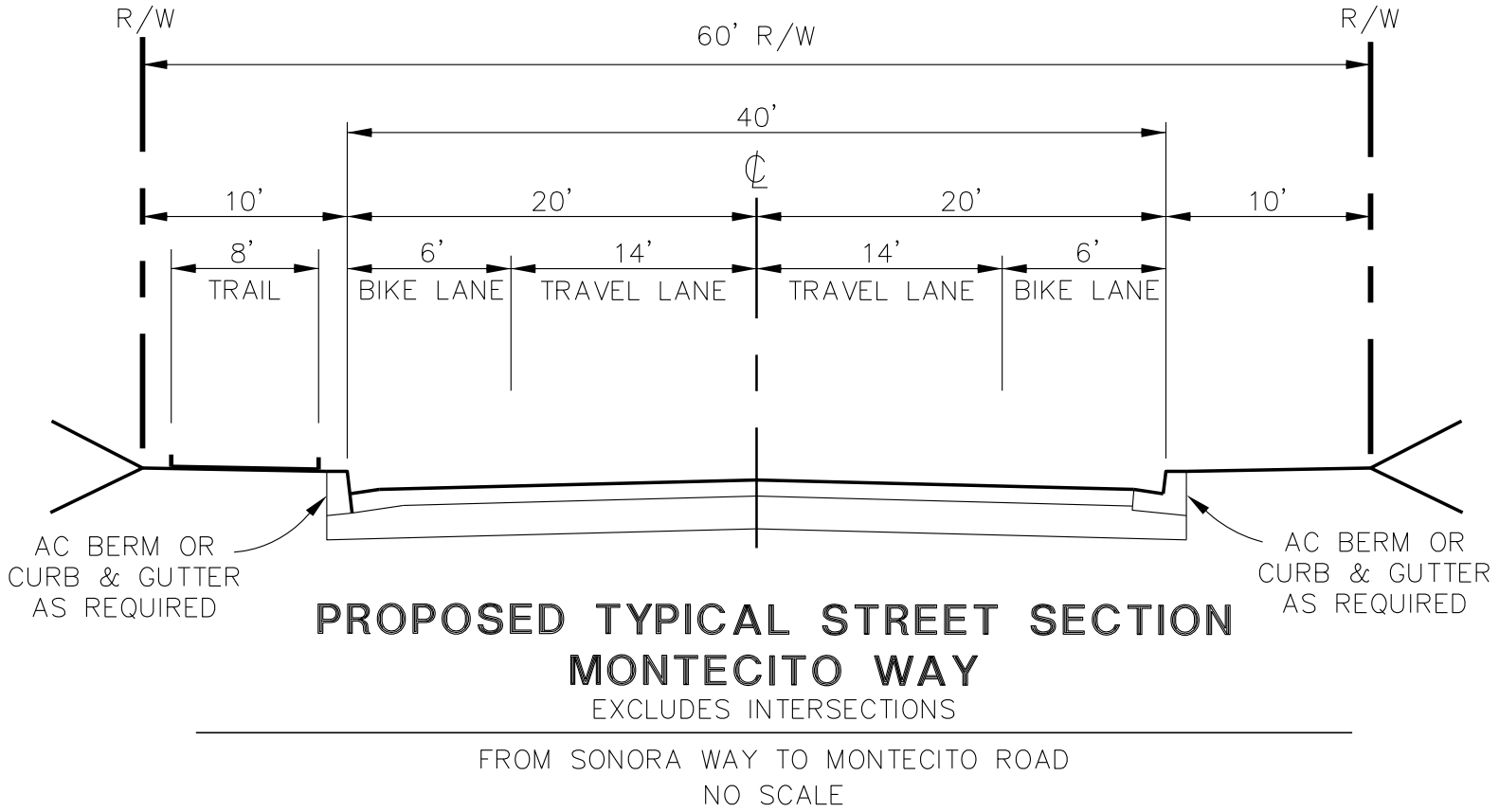
Proposed Project Private Street Sections

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 19



Source: Stevens-Cresto Engineering, Inc., 2008

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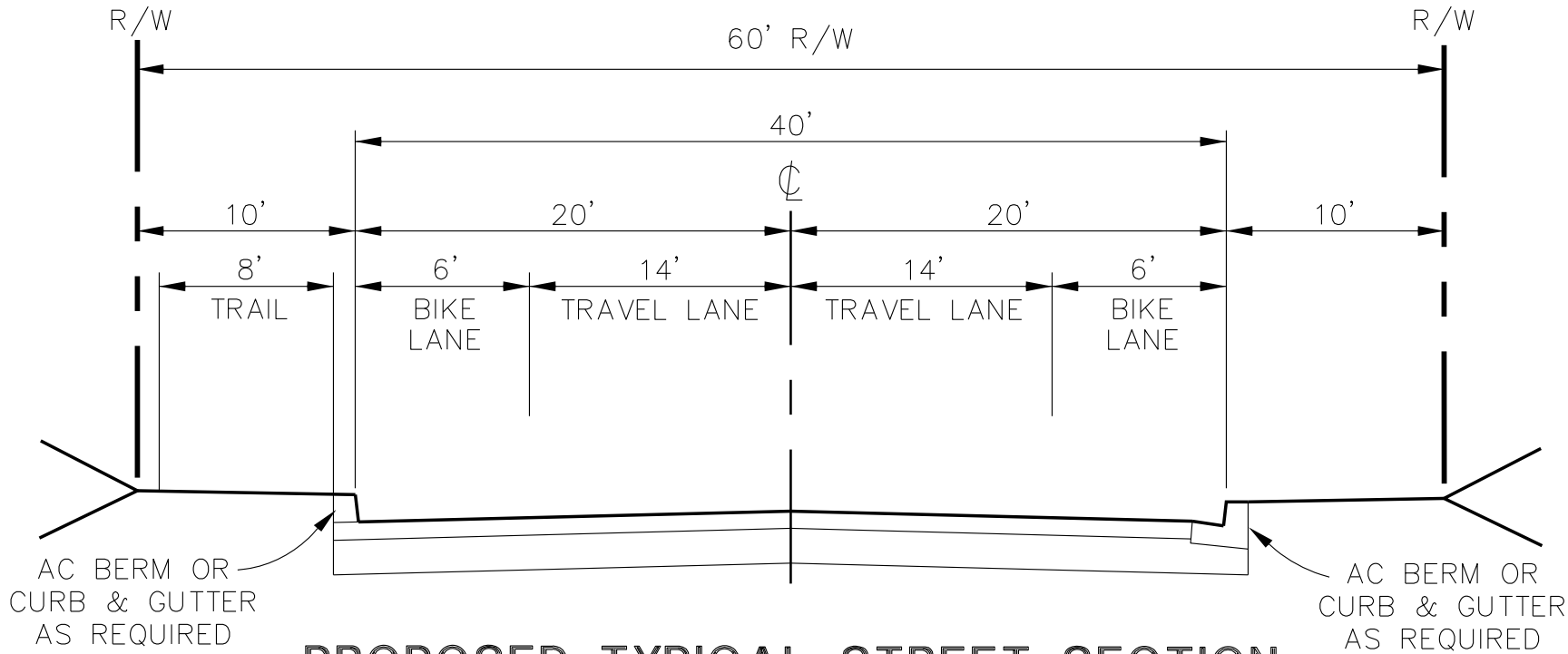
Montecito Way Typical Section



PROPOSED TYPICAL STREET SECTION
MONTECITO ROAD
(EXCLUDES INTERSECTIONS)

FROM MONTECITO WAY TO MAIN STREET (SR 67)
NO SCALE

Source: Stevens-Cresto Engineering, Inc., 2008

I:\Gis\M\MRL-01 Monte\Map\Visual\Fig21_MontRdSection.dwg -JP

Montecito Road Typical Section

be approximately 88 feet in diameter and 30 feet high. An off-site water storage tank also would be required under Option 2. This tank would be 0.91 million gallons (approximately 40 percent smaller that the tank under Option 1). The smaller tank would adequately accommodate water storage under Option 2, because the Project would have the benefit of using reclaimed water from an on-site WRF. A 20-foot-wide access road surfaced with decomposed granite would be constructed from the unimproved segment of Montecito Way (at the western Project boundary) to the proposed water storage tank. A water pipeline would be constructed within this access road to connect the water storage tank to the proposed water pipeline within Montecito Way. The water storage tank and associated pipelines and roadways would disturb approximately 1.7 acres on site and 2.2 acres off site. The Project also would include the installation of a water booster pump station on a 10,000-square foot (0.2-acre) lot at the northwestern corner of the Montecito Road/Montecito Way intersection.

Wastewater generated by the Project would flow to two proposed sewer pump stations. One proposed pump station would be located on Lot 79 along Street H in Unit 1. The second pump station would be located on Lot 294 at the terminus of Street L in Unit 2. The sewer pump stations would convey flows to sewer lines within Montecito Ranch Road. Under Wastewater Management Option 1, proposed off-site sewer main improvements would consist of a sewer force main from the southwestern corner of the Project site to just south of the Kalbaugh Street southern terminus north of Santa Maria Creek within the roadbeds of Montecito Way, Montecito Road, and Kalbaugh Street (both paved and unpaved sections). The total length of this sewer line would be approximately 9,000 feet (1.7 miles). Wastewater from the Proposed Project would be treated at the Santa Maria WTP, if capacity becomes available. In addition, a sewer pump station (housed within a structure designed with architectural elements to blend with the surrounding historic buildings) would be provided on site within the southern portion of the proposed historic park under Wastewater Management Option 1.

Under Wastewater Management Option 2, all wastewater generated by the Proposed Project would flow to the proposed on-site WRF for treatment. The WRF would accommodate up to 110,000 gallons per day of wastewater. This facility would be located in the southern portion of the SPA site, adjacent to the proposed charter high school site. In addition to the WRF, five treated water storage ponds on 6.9 acres and a 16.9-acre spray field would be located adjacent to the proposed school site. The reclaimed water from the proposed WRF would be used for irrigation of the proposed on-site parks, landscaped areas along Project roadways and the future school. Reclaimed water distribution pipelines would be installed within project roadways to deliver the reclaimed water to the targeted on-site uses. Any remaining reclaimed water would be distributed over the spray field.

Fuel modification zones would be provided in accordance with the Public Resources Code for Minimum Statewide Clearance of Brush. The fuel modification zones generally would be 100 to 150 feet wide according to adjacency to high fuel threat vegetation. The fuel modification zones would consist of Zones A, B and C (Figure 22). Zone A would be 100 feet wide around proposed structures and would consist of landscape plantings that are maintained and irrigated. Zone B could extend up to 50 feet in width in areas where the fuel management zone is greater than 100 feet Within Zone B, native vegetation would be either cleared in conformance with Zone A or thinned to 50 percent. Zone C would occur within HOA maintenance lots surrounding drainages adjacent to proposed residential development. Native vegetation within Zone C would be thinned to 30 percent, and annual weedy species would be trimmed to a height no greater than three inches. In addition, 10-foot-wide fuel modification zones, pursuant to the Consolidated Fire Code, would be provided on either side of roadways. Fuel modification zones along roadways would be cleared in conformance with Zone A.

This also would be consistent with the Wildland/Urban Interface Standards of the County Fire Code, which requires a minimum 100-foot-wide fuel modification zone from structures and a minimum of 10 feet of clearance on either side of roadways.

According to the proposed Montecito Ranch Specific Plan (Development Design Services and GraphicAccess 2008a), the landscape concept is intended to enhance the existing vegetation and prominent landforms that would be preserved on site. Throughout the Project site, vegetation indigenous to the area would be emphasized in the landscape concept, supplemented by non-invasive ornamental plant materials that are compatible with the native plant materials existing on site. Community entryways and streetscapes would be landscaped to define and establish a consistent visual theme throughout Montecito Ranch. Major community entryways would be provided at the east site boundary along Montecito Ranch Road and Street K, which would be accented by trees, shrubs, and stone wall entry monuments with signage and fencing (Figure 23). All community entry streets (Streets A, H, J and K) would include landscaped, gated entry plazas (Figure 24). Streetscapes generally would consist of themed street trees, planted median (Montecito Ranch Road, from Lot 389 to Ash Street), landscaped parkways and fencing. In addition, trailhead treatments would consist of accent trees, flowering vines, community theme fencing and signage (Figure 25). Where sound walls have been proposed for traffic noise attenuation along future on-site Montecito Ranch Road, the walls would be colored in warm tones, length would be visually broken by pilasters, and screening vines would be used. Under Wastewater Management Option 2, reclaimed water generated from the proposed WRF would be used for irrigation of the proposed on-site parks, landscaped areas along project roadways and the future school. Reclaimed water distribution pipelines would be installed within project roadways to deliver the reclaimed water to the targeted on-site uses.

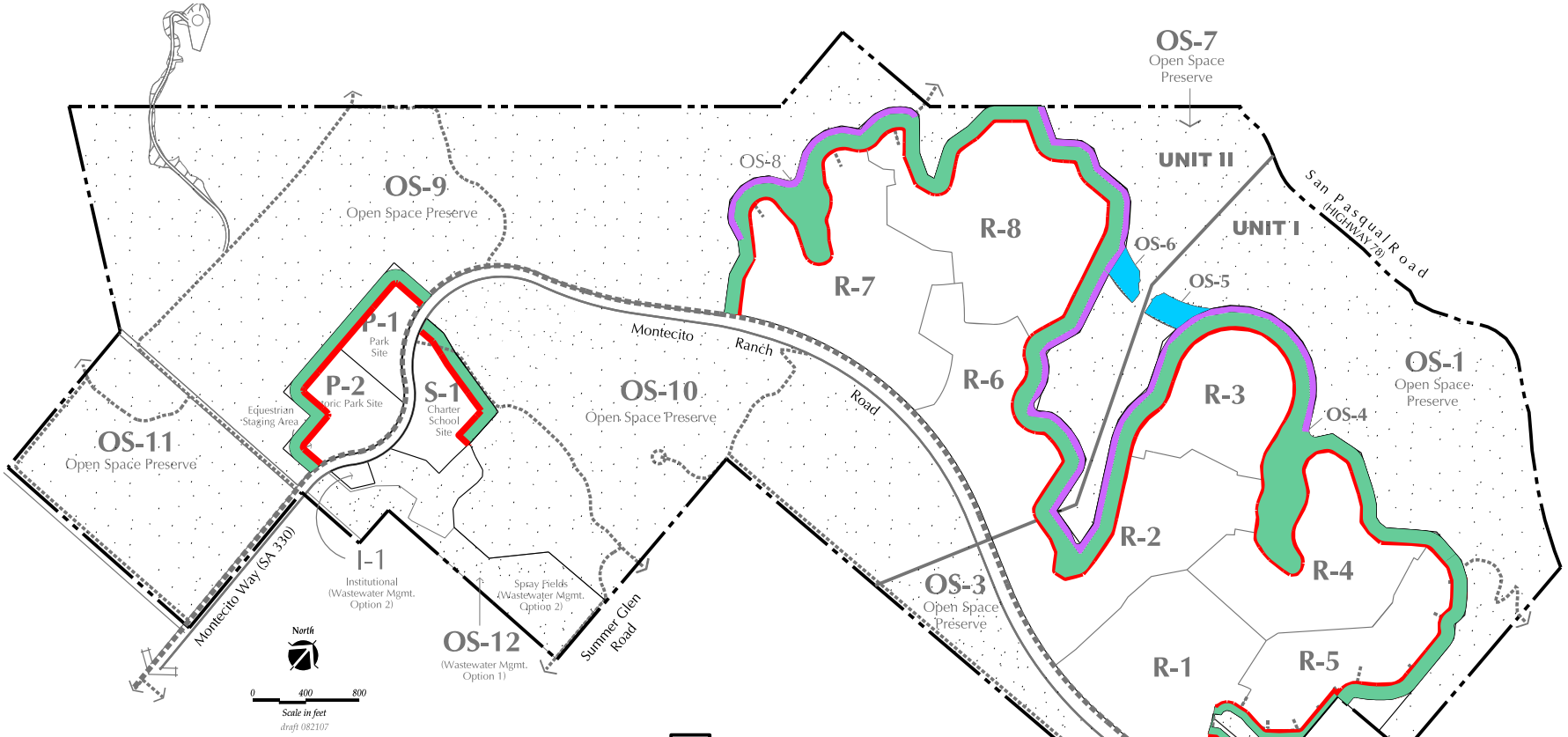
Pursuant to the development guidelines set forth in the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area section of the RCP text, design guidelines addressing landscaping, architecture, site planning and community signage are contained in the proposed Montecito Ranch Major Use Permit to create a distinct community identity that complements the landscaping and topography of Montecito Ranch and is compatible with the Ramona community. Such guidelines would be established and implemented through procurement of the proposed Montecito Ranch Major Use Permit. The architectural guidelines specifically focus on architectural style, building mass, roofs, exterior materials, windows, landscaping, outdoor living areas, outdoor lighting and garages. The site planning guidelines are intended to preserve natural resources and topographical features through Project design, building orientation and grading. The community signage guidelines would clearly identify the Project, as well as define the overall Project theme.

4.0 GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Project visual effects will be assessed as significant impacts if the Proposed Project:

1. Will cause a physical change in the visual environment that is determined to be in conflict or incompatible with the existing visual character of the Project site area, including the Montecito Ranch historic site and Pine Street, in terms of dominance, scale, diversity and continuity.

2. Will degrade the vividness or unity of the visual environment, including the Montecito Ranch historic site and Pine Street, as defined by the criteria below.



NOTES

THIS MAP APPLIES TO WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT OPTION 2 (WRF) ONLY. ADDITIONAL FUEL MANAGEMENT WOULD BE REQUIRED ALONG SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL SITE UNDER OPTION 1 (OFF-SITE SEWER CONNECTION).

THE FUEL MANAGEMENT ZONES SHALL BE 100 TO 150 FEET ACCORDING TO ADJACENCY TO HIGH FUEL THREAT VEGETATION.

FUEL MANAGEMENT ZONES BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT AND OPEN SPACE ARE DIVIDED INTO ZONE A AND ZONE B.

ZONE A SHALL BE 100 FEET AROUND PROPOSED PADS, EXCLUDING PARCELS 5-13, WHICH WOULD BE 50 FEET, AND PARCELS 3, 4, 14-17, WHICH WOULD BE 30 FEET. ZONE B WILL BE REMAINING 50 FEET IN AREAS WHERE FUEL MANAGEMENT IS GREATER THAN 100 FEET.

ZONE C IS A 200-FOOT WIDE AREA AT THE HEAD OF THE DRAINAGE. PURPOSE OF ZONE C IS TO STOP AND/OR SLOW A FIRE THAT MAY FOLLOW NATURAL VEGETATION DOWN THE DRAINAGE AND BETWEEN PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AREAS.

REFER TO MONTECITO RANCH SUBDIVISION FIRE PROTECTION PLAN FOR MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS.

Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Fuel Management Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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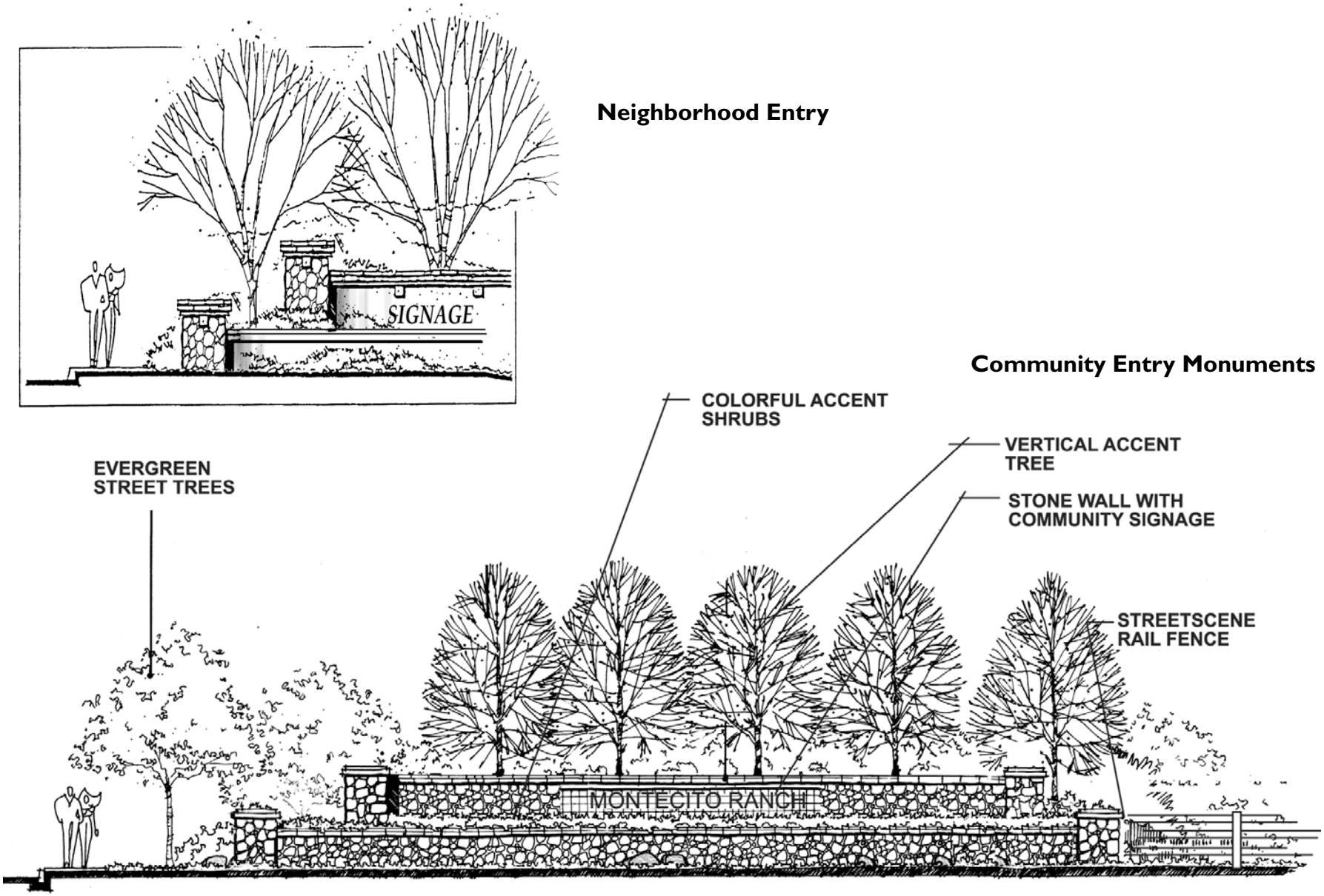
Figure 22



Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Major Community Entries

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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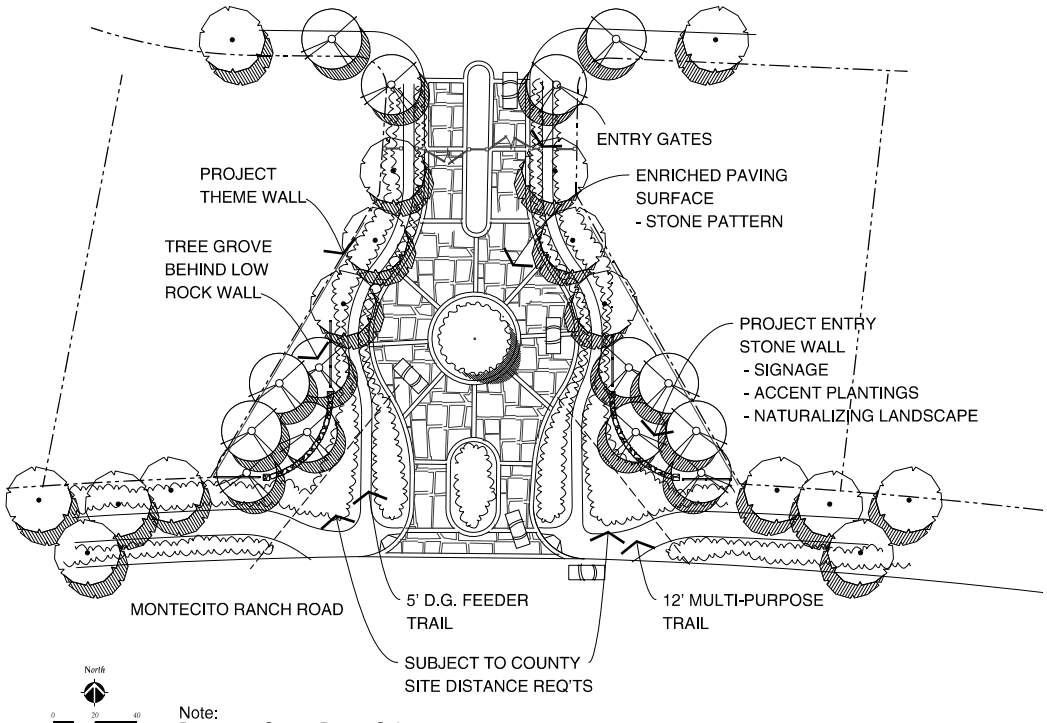
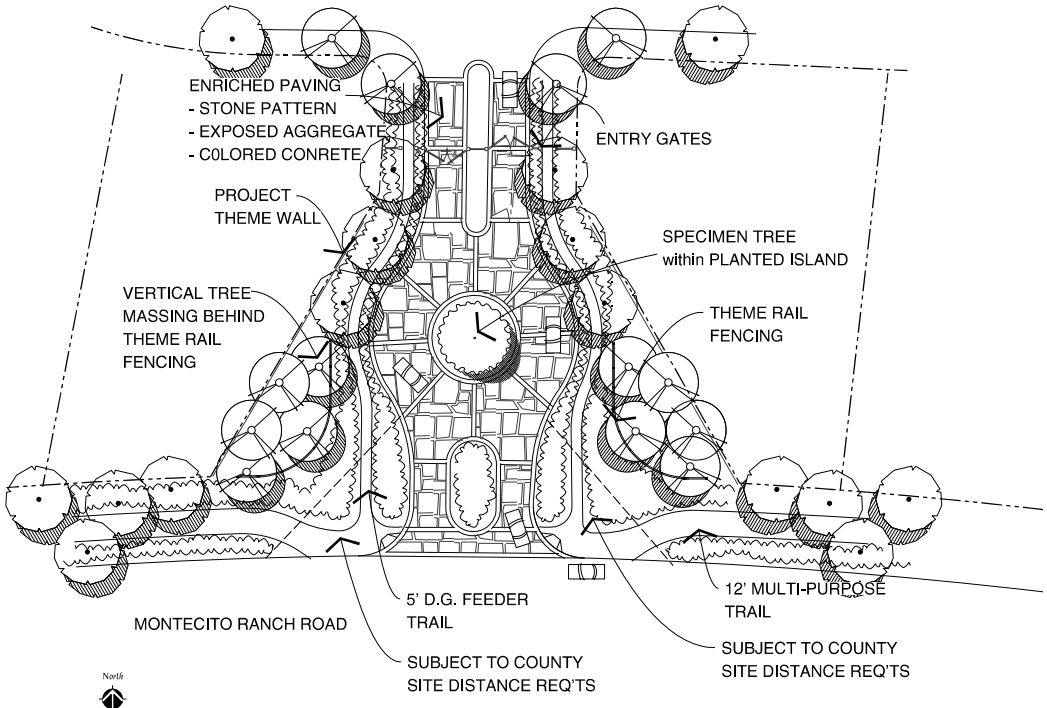
Figure 23



Note:
Design per County Design Stds.
DS 17, 18, or 19 for
Gated Driveway Entries.

Primary Community Entry



Note:
Design per County Design Stds.
DS 17, 18, or 19 for
Gated Driveway Entries.

Secondary Community Entry

Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Neighborhood Community Entries

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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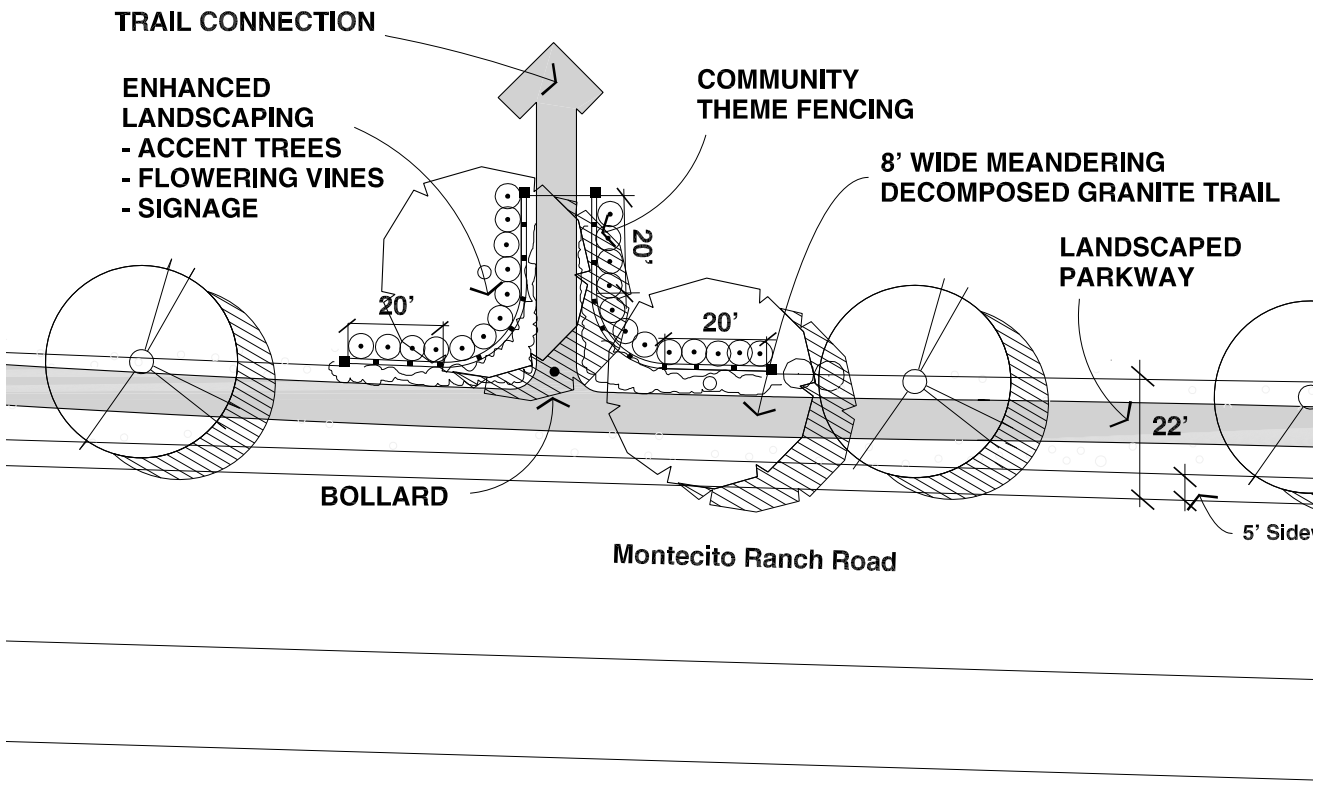
Figure 24



Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Typical Trail Intersection Treatments

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Figure 25

a. Vividness is degraded if the Proposed Project will restrain, moderate, limit or dull contrasting landscape components that combine to create striking and distinctive visual pattern and impression in the existing visual environment.

b. Unity is degraded if the Proposed Project will damage the compositional harmony and inter-compatibility between landscape components.

3. Is inconsistent with goals, standards or policies related to visual effects as outlined in the County General Plan and Ramona Community Plan.

4. Is inconsistent with the San Diego County Light Pollution Code (LPC).

5. Is inconsistent with the County Resource Protection Ordinance relative to steep slopes.

Although this report largely predates new County guidelines, the above guidelines are consistent in focus and intent with the County Guidelines for Determining Significance, adopted in July 2007.

Guideline Nos. 1 and 2 focus on measuring impacts to visual character and quality, as required by Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. The measurement of impacts is based on the principles in the most widely used and accepted visual resource assessment methodologies, including the U.S. Department of Transportation, *FHWA Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects*; the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USFS) Visual Management System; and the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) modified Visual Management System. The concepts contained in these assessment approaches are accepted practices for evaluating visual resources both objectively (visual character) and subjectively (visual quality). This is accomplished by comparing the visual environment resulting from Project construction and operation with the existing visual environment. Guideline Nos. 3, 4, and 5 are based on the County General Plan (Scenic Highways Element and RCP), LPC, and County Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO). The Proposed Project is required to be in conformance with applicable County standards related to aesthetics, including the noted criteria on visual effects and steep slopes. Non-compliance would result in a project that is inconsistent with County standards.

5.0 IMPACT EVALUATION

The following discussion addresses changes to the existing visual character resulting from implementation of the proposed residential development and off-site roadway and utility improvements. Visual effects were determined via analysis of viewsheds from public roadways, private residences, planned public facilities, other planned facilities such as the WRF, and grading and landform alteration based on significance guidelines 1, 2, and 4 listed above.

This study also evaluates consistency with the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area section and other applicable sections of the RCP, the County General Plan, the County Zoning Ordinance, the Dark Sky Ordinance (Light Pollution Code) and RPO, pursuant to significance guidelines 3 and 4 listed above. Policies directly related to visual resources/aesthetics issues address location of development on the Project site relative to steep slopes and sensitive biological resources, views onto and off of the Project site, landform alteration, architecture and landscaping.

5.1 VIEWSHEDS FROM PUBLIC ROADWAYS

As noted in Section 2.3.2 above, views into the SPA site are available from Pine Street (SR 78), Montecito Way, Summer Glen Road, Alice Street, Cedar Street and Ash Street. Proposed off-site roadway/intersection improvements and above-ground utility connections would be visible from Pine Street (SR 78), Ash Street, Main Street (SR 67), Montecito Way and Montecito Road.

5.1.1 Pine Street (SR 78) Viewshed

The RCP designates SR 78 as a Scenic Highway and a Resource Conservation Area and recommends preservation of the visual integrity of this corridor. The northern-most portion of the SPA site is immediately adjacent to SR 78 and is characterized by steeply sloping hillsides and dense oak woodlands. East of the Project site, SR 78 turns southward near Haverford Road and becomes Pine Street. In general, the SR 78 scenic corridor traverses the Clevenger Canyon area and ultimately descends into the San Pasqual Valley to the west. The section of SR 78 adjacent to the SPA site contains numerous natural scenic elements characteristic of the Clevenger Canyon area, including dense vegetation and steeply sloping terrain that generally direct viewers along the linear viewshed of the winding roadway. Peripheral views are obscured due to these steep slopes and dense vegetation. Photograph 24 (Figure 26) illustrates typical southwesterly views into the Project site from SR 78. Brief, intermittent views of the northern on-site hilltops are available to motorists through breaks in the dense oak woodland or above and beyond the trees, as shown in Photograph 25 (Figure 26). Approximately 9,700 vehicles currently pass the Project site each day on SR 78, north of Ash Street. Following Project development, the ADT on this roadway segment is expected to increase by approximately 300 vehicles to 9,994 (USAI 2008). The high number of viewers from Pine Street (SR 78) and its designation as a scenic highway makes the SR 78 viewshed the most sensitive viewpoint with respect to the Proposed Project.

Project development would not change the composition of the existing visual environment along this portion of Pine Street (SR 78). As discussed above, this portion of the SPA site contains undeveloped hillsides and dense vegetation cover, which contribute to high visual continuity in the area. The Proposed Project would dedicate the area immediately adjacent to SR 78 as permanent open space. The dense oak woodlands and steeply sloping hillsides would be retained in their natural state. Proposed residential development would occur within the topographically level and gently sloping portions of the SPA located south and west of the hills visible from SR 78. Residential lots abutting the open space would provide an overall setback from SR 78 ranging from approximately 700 feet to more than 1,500 feet. The combination of the intervening topography and the open space buffer between the proposed residential lots and the road would essentially preclude any visibility of the Project development from viewers along SR 78. Photograph 26 (Figure 26) depicts one view from SR 78 looking northwest. Dense oak woodlands are present on the south side of the roadway, effectively screening views into the Project site. Photograph 27 (Figure 26) shows the view looking southeast from the intersection of SR 78 and Weekend Villa Road. The right half of the photograph depicts the steeply sloping topography and dense vegetation characteristic of the northern portion of the Montecito Ranch SPA. These views would not change upon Project development, as no additional visual elements or physical changes would occur. Project development, therefore, would not disrupt existing visual continuity provided by the undeveloped hillsides, and no significant visual impacts would result.

Photograph 24

Photograph 25

Photograph 26

Photograph 27

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Views from SR 78 Toward SPA

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Figure 26

The Proposed Project would require improvements at the intersection of Pine Street (SR 78)/Main Street (SR 67), including widening and re-striping. The segment of Pine Street (SR 78) between B Street and Main Street (SR 67) would be improved in pavement width from approximately 30 feet to 42 feet within the existing 60-foot-wide right-of-way. The visual environment within this area can be characterized as developed due to the surrounding commercial uses, SR 67 and associated traffic, and the signalized intersection (refer to Photograph 19 on Figure 13a). Vividness is low due to the lack of unique or distinct visual elements or landmarks. Pavement widening would occur therefore on developed land in a developed visual environment with generally low visual quality. Upon completion of these roadway improvements, the existing visual environment would remain intact. The viewer would continue to observe a roadway within a developed area, such that no noticeable physical change to the visual environment would occur. The proposed improvements would not add any dominant or contrasting visual elements to this viewshed. For this reason, increasing the pavement width along this segment of Pine Street (SR 78) within the existing right-of-way would not degrade the visual environment along Pine Street (SR 78). Thus, no significant visual impacts would occur.

The Project also would require improvements to the Pine Street's (SR 78) intersection with Ash Street, including installation of a traffic signal, and re-striping. This intersection is currently a two-way, stop-controlled intersection, with stop signs at the eastbound and westbound approaches (at Ash Street) allowing for continuous through traffic on Pine Street (SR 78). The segment of Pine Street (SR 78), from Main Street (SR 67) to Ash Street, is lined with industrial, commercial and some residential development, and a stoplight is located at Pine Street's (SR 78) intersection with Main Street (SR 67). Overhead utility lines also are located along the roadway. The visual landscape along Pine Street (SR 78) transitions to a more rural setting as it continues northerly past Haverford Road and westerly into Clevenger Canyon. The proposed lane configurations and traffic signal would not substantially alter the existing visual environment at this intersection. While the Project would introduce a stoplight at this intersection, the scale and dominance of this new element would not be incompatible with the existing visual character. As described above, this area is developed with a mixture of industrial, commercial and residential uses, as well as roadways and utilities. The existing view contains comparable man-made vertical elements, such as utility poles and street signs, as well as overhead utility lines that occur at similar levels within the viewshed (refer to Photograph 18 on Figure 13a). The introduction of an additional stoplight along this developed segment of Pine Street (SR 78), therefore, would not degrade existing unity of the visual environment, which is already quite diverse. No significant visual impacts would occur.

5.1.2 Montecito Way Viewshed

The public street portion of Montecito Way currently extends between Montecito Road and the Montecito Ranch SPA site. It serves Montecito Way residents and their visitors, as well as the Montecito Ranch SPA and the Lemurian Fellowship to the north (via the east-west dirt road that extends westerly across the SPA). It does not provide through access to any other locations. The existing ADT for Montecito Way is estimated at 600, and is projected to increase to 3,131 following the proposed SPA development and associated roadway improvements, including improvements to Montecito Way. Approximately one-half of these trips (i.e., 1,566 trips per day) are northbound with views into the Project site (USAI 2008). Existing views from this roadway are considered to be of moderate sensitivity.

Views available into the Montecito Ranch SPA at the northern extent of Montecito Way are expansive and unobstructed. This area is topographically level with limited vertical elements to disrupt views across the southern portion of the SPA. Photograph 28 (Figure 27) depicts a northerly view from the intersection of Montecito Way and Sonora Way, near the southern SPA boundary. Fencing is located on both sides of the private dirt road that traverses the southwest portion of the SPA site, where oat hay farming and cattle grazing have occurred for many decades. An outbuilding and storage tank associated with the historic Montecito Ranch House are pictured in the mid-ground, and trees occur in the background. The road set against the background of the trees and ranch structures forms a dominant visual feature in this viewshed. Overhead utility lines also are seen along the left side of the dirt road. These visual attributes comprise a generally rural existing visual character. Vividness is moderately high due to the ranch outbuilding and storage tank, which are distinct and unique landscape components within the viewshed.

Figure 28 illustrates a simulation of the Montecito Way viewshed upon construction of the Proposed Project. Most of the southern portion of the SPA site would be preserved as permanent open space. Montecito Way would connect with the proposed Montecito Ranch Road, providing direct access to the Project. The outbuilding and storage tank associated with the historic Montecito Ranch House and most of the existing trees within this viewshed would be preserved. The Project would introduce additional developed elements into views from Montecito Way, most notably Montecito Ranch Road, the WRF (only under Wastewater Management Option 2) and ultimately a developed school facility (see Figure 28). These elements generally would be compatible with the existing visual character of the area, as described below.

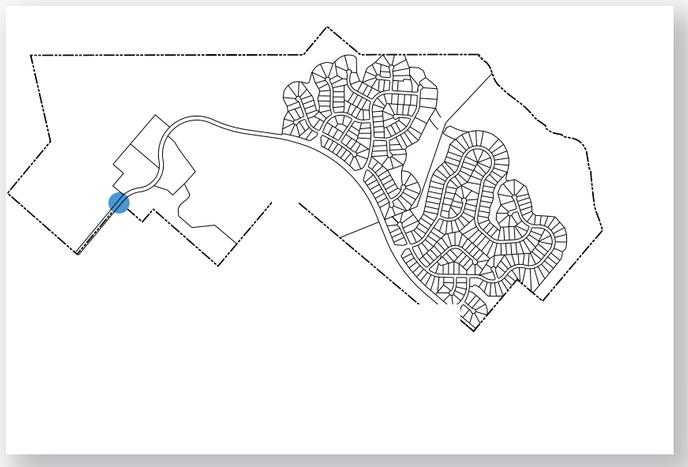
Montecito Ranch Road would consist of a two-lane roadway designed to reinforce the existing rural character. The roadway would continue to be a dominant visual feature, but the nature of the road would change from an unimproved private dirt road to a paved public roadway. Design features of the proposed roadway would soften its appearance and dominance so as to not detract from the vividness of the view. As seen in the photo simulation, a landscaped parkway would be constructed adjacent to the paved roadway and planted with shrubs and trees compatible with existing vegetation in the area that would have the effect of softening the new hardscaped elements. Split-rail fencing would be constructed along the right-of-way, which would reinforce the rural character, as well as provide a harmonious interface between the improved roadway and open space. In addition, no on-street parking or lighting would be provided along the roadway. These design features combined with the preservation of the ranch facilities and stands of mature trees in the background would ensure that the vividness of the visual environment related to these disparate items is not degraded.

The two buildings in the center right of the photo simulation comprise conceptual representations of the future charter high school, shown here to approximate mass and scale. To the extent feasible, the future school buildings would be designed to be compatible in scale and character with other Project development and the existing ranch buildings. Landscaping around the school also is anticipated, as shown in the photo simulation. In accordance with the MUP (Development Design Services and GraphicAccess 2008b), an additional conformity review would be required for the future school facility. The background of existing mature trees in horizon views would be retained. Incorporation of compatible design elements and respect to scale would provide some visual continuity.

Although not pictured in the photo simulation, the proposed WRF under Wastewater Management Option 2 would be visible from Montecito Way. The WRF would include four buildings immediately south of the charter high school site along the eastern side of Montecito Ranch Road. An operations

Photograph 28

Simulated View



Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Existing and Simulated View From Off-site Toward SPA - Montecito Way

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Figure 27

Photograph 29

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View From Off-site Toward SPA - Summer Glen Road

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Figure 28

building would contain some offices, a laboratory, and the emergency power generator. A below-grade (and therefore at least partially not visible) structure would house a non-compliant effluent storage tank. The treatment process package and the influent pump station would occupy a third building. The remaining building would house the effluent filter and chlorine contact tank. The dimensions and locations of the buildings have not been finalized; however, all of the above-grade buildings would be single story and no taller than 14 feet, consistent with rural residential structures. The above-grade buildings would be designed to include architectural treatments similar to the rest of Project development, which would provide some visual continuity. The WRF would be fenced with coated chain link fencing and landscaping would be planted around the perimeter to fully screen its appearance. The associated treated water storage ponds and spray field would not be visible from this viewpoint due to intervening vegetation and topography. Thus, while the change from an undeveloped to developed pad would be notable, the overall change in visual quality due to the WRF would not be significant.

Under Wastewater Management Option 1, Off-site Sewer Connection, the WRF would not be constructed and this area would be included as part of the Project's dedicated open space preserve. No associated visual impacts would occur under Wastewater Management Option 1.

Off site, Montecito Way is lined with a limited number of rural residential houses and in most areas, associated landscaping and/or mature trees are located along the road frontage (refer to Photograph 10 in Figure 10). This fairly dense landscaping edging the roadway and the pattern of rural residences provide some visual continuity, as well as draw the viewer's eye toward the end of this rural byway to the hills in the distant. Additionally, an equestrian facility and an agricultural field (oat hay farming) occur along Montecito Way's southern extent. These uses mixed with rural residential development also provide some diversity. Overall unity however is provided, as the noted uses are rural and compatible with each other.

The Proposed Project would include off-site road improvements to Montecito Way (from Sonora Way to Montecito Road) consisting of widening the existing pavement width of 24 feet within a 40-foot-wide right-of-way to a uniform pavement width of 40 feet within a 60-foot-wide right-of-way. Near the Montecito Way intersection with Montecito Road, the right-of-way would be expanded to 66 feet wide. Excess right-of-way up to 80 feet wide exists in some locations, which would not be improved. The improved Montecito Way would include two 14-foot-wide travel lanes with one lane traveling in each direction and a 6-foot-wide bicycle lane on each side of the road. The edge of the pavement would be finished with curbs and gutters or asphalt concrete berms. An eight-foot-wide multi-purpose trail would be located on the west side of the road within the remaining right-of-way. These proposed improvements would require dedication of the portion of proposed right-of-way within the Montecito Ranch SPA (approximately 30 feet), as well as acquisition of additional new right-of-way. A width of 10 feet would be acquired along the entire length of the eastern side of Montecito Way (3,880 linear feet), and 10 feet would be acquired along the western side of the road between Montecito Road and the SPA boundary (2,560 linear feet). Additional improvements along Montecito Way would include replacement of storm drain crossings, replacement/relocation of public utilities (i.e., water meters, overhead electrical lines, fire hydrants), mail boxes, fencing, driveways, trees and landscaping, and creation of small cut/fill slopes along the roadway (one to four feet in height). In addition, two four-foot high masonry walls could be constructed within the proposed right-of-way as mitigation for interior noise impacts to two houses along Montecito Way. The northernmost wall would be approximately 90 feet long and the southernmost wall would be 80 feet long.

Proposed road widening would require removal of existing mature trees and other landscaping. Because this vegetation is comprised of a relatively thin strip of greenery along the existing roadway, the loss of these trees and shrubs would result in a short-term change in the visual character along this roadway. The homes and yards currently obscured by the vegetation would be visible. The emphasis on the distant hill provided by this visual channel of greenery would be lost, and the partial screening the vegetation currently provides to views into the SPA site would be temporarily eliminated. Additionally, the two sound attenuation walls would be visible, particularly in the near-term, when existing landscaping is denuded. Views in the short-term would be substantially different, as landscaping would be sparse, and the scale would be much smaller compared to current conditions. Visibility would be much more "open." Combined with the approximate doubling of the existing pavement width (from 24 feet to 40 feet), short-term visual impacts along Montecito Way would be adverse and significant. Replacement trees would be planted along Montecito Way to offset any loss as part of the Project design and would include existing species in the area to ensure compatibility with the existing visual character. Screening vegetation consistent with existing species in the area would be planted along the proposed sound attenuation walls to soften their appearance. Views in the long-term would encompass mature landscaping and a slightly wider view of the hills in the background. Such views would be somewhat different, but still similar with the unity of the existing view. No significant long-term visual effects would occur due to proposed Montecito Way off-site road improvements. Although no long-term significant adverse effects would occur, mitigation is proposed to reduce adverse short-term impacts to less than significant levels.

The Montecito Way/Montecito Road intersection would be improved by expanding existing rights-of-way and pavement, as well as re-striping. Montecito Road's right-of-way would be expanded to a maximum of 66 feet wide and Montecito Way's right-of-way would be expanded to a maximum of 72 feet wide. Pavement would be expanded to 46 feet wide along Montecito Road and 52 feet wide along Montecito Way. Montecito Way also would be re-striped to provide dedicated turn lanes onto Montecito Road. These proposed improvements would require a smaller development footprint and less right-of-way acquisition. As discussed above, the resulting change in the visual environment would not substantially alter existing land uses or the corresponding visual landscape. Conversion of a strip adjacent to an existing roadway while retaining large contiguous portions of abutting land uses would not disrupt the unity of the visual environment. Visual impacts would be less than significant.

5.1.3 Summer Glen Road Viewshed

The Summer Glen Road viewshed provides both unobstructed and obstructed views into the Montecito Ranch SPA site for a limited number of viewers traveling northbound on Summer Glen Road. ADT data are not available for this road, but are assumed to be fewer than 500 trips per day, with one half of these trips traveling northbound with views of the site. No increase in the ADT for this roadway is anticipated following the Montecito Ranch development. Destinations served by this road are generally all rural residential. Due to the low number of travelers combined with the restricted nature of views from this road, such views are considered to be relatively low in sensitivity.

Topographically, Summer Glen Road is located in an area of relatively flat terrain. Immediately north of the roadway, the landform transitions to moderate- to steep-sloping hillsides that form a minor ridgeline along the southern Project site boundary. Photograph 29 (Figure 28) shows the view looking northwest to north into the SPA site. The central to right portion of the photograph pictures the hillsides that comprise the larger minor ridgeline that traverses the southern Project site boundary. As seen in Photograph 29, the ridgeline contains numerous rock outcroppings that form a dominant

visual feature and provide diversity within the view. The ridgeline provides a visual barrier to northerly views into the SPA site. South and west of the hillsides, the topography begins to level out as seen in the left portion of Photograph 29, offering partial to unobstructed views into the SPA site. Existing vegetation consists of various types and colors, providing a moderate level of diversity.

Development of the Proposed Project would not substantially change the existing viewshed into the SPA site from Summer Glen Road. Proposed residential lots would be located north of the ridgeline that traverses the southern Project site boundary and obstructs northerly views into the SPA site. Thus, the proposed residences would not be visible from Summer Glen Road. Views of the undeveloped hillsides and ridgeline would remain. The noted on-site low-lying areas visible from Summer Glen Road would be included within dedicated permanent open space. A portion of this area would encompass the proposed spray field designed to allow disposal of excess treated effluent via irrigation. After the initial installation of irrigation lines and sprinkler heads, the spray field area would appear as patches of greenery due to irrigation. This change would not be substantially different from existing agricultural views. Viewers would continue to see diverse vegetation and an undeveloped hillside and ridgeline scattered with distinct rock outcroppings. Project development, therefore, would not degrade the vividness of the existing visual environment.

The Montecito Ranch Road alignment, dedicated park and charter high school sites (both the interim graded pad and future developed school facility), and WRF (only under Wastewater Management Option 2) located approximately 0.3 to 0.5 mile to the west, may not be visible due to a combination of distance and presence of intervening topography. Views of these features from Summer Glen Road, if available at all, would be very brief and localized. Viewers would travel in a north-south direction along Summer Glen Road, and all of these facilities are located due west, within the peripheral view. If the viewer does observe them, they would be at such a small scale in the overall visual environment that they would not constitute a substantial change in visual character. Therefore, the Project would not result in significant visual impacts to the Summer Glen Road viewshed.

5.1.4 Alice Street Viewshed

Alice Street extends southerly from the southeastern SPA boundary at Ash Street and terminates at Cedar Street. It serves a limited number of residences and does not cater to through traffic. ADT data are not available for this road but are assumed to be fewer than 500 ADT, with half of those trips being northbound. This number is expected to increase substantially following Project implementation. Although proposed Street "A" would connect with Alice Street at the SPA boundary, this connection would not provide access to any major roadways for future SPA residents and would not typically be used by them. Views from this road segment are thus considered to be of relatively low sensitivity.

The topography in the vicinity of Alice Street is relatively level. Where Alice Street intersects with Ash Street at the southern SPA boundary, the terrain begins to gently slope downward into the low-lying central valley of the SPA. Northwest of Alice Street, the level terrain transitions to sloping hillsides and more varied landforms. Photograph 30 (Figure 29) depicts a view looking northwest to north toward the SPA from Alice Street, near its intersection with Ash Street. The fenced lot on the left side of the photograph is part of an adjacent existing rural residence. The unimproved dirt road extending from the roadway, the trees and the area beyond are located on the Project site. To a limited extent, the existing trees currently provide screening of northerly views into the SPA site, as only intermittent views of undeveloped areas of the Project site and a distant off-site ridgeline are

provided in between the trees. As pictured in Photograph 30, the trees occur in two distinct stands along with one isolated eucalyptus immediately adjacent to the roadway. These mature trees comprise a dominant visual element given their prominence and scale compared to surrounding landscape components. Although not illustrated in Photograph 30, the area beyond the trees to the north consists of rolling grasslands, which contrasts with the trees and provides visual diversity. Vividness, therefore, is moderate due to these contrasting landscape components.

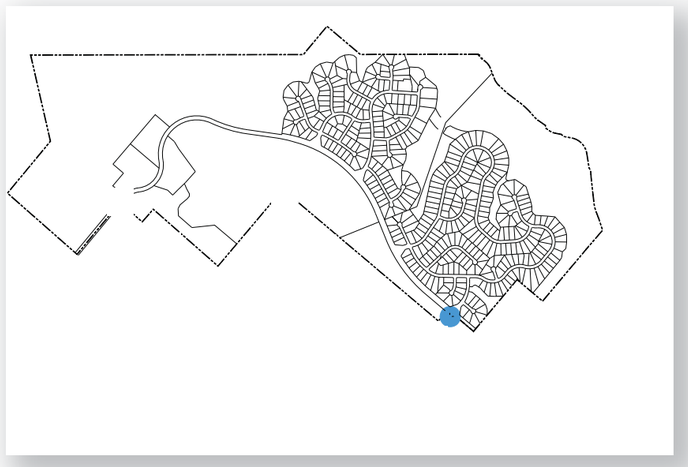
Development of the Proposed Project would provide unobstructed views from Alice Street of a limited number of proposed residences, Montecito Ranch Road, a proposed noise wall along the north side of Montecito Ranch Road and Project landscaping. The retaining wall within the drainage to the north of the intersection of Montecito Ranch Road/Ash Street/Street "A" would not be visible due to intervening topography. The alignment of the proposed Montecito Ranch Road would connect with Ash Street and cut through the Project site where the trees are at present and continue northwest. Figure 29 provides a simulation of the Alice Street viewshed upon construction of the Project. The major community entry at the intersection of Street A and Montecito Ranch Road is pictured along with proposed landscaping and Project entry treatments. Project development would impact the existing trees pictured in Photograph 27; however, they would be replaced with street trees along Montecito Ranch Road and Street "A." As with the existing trees, the proposed street trees would be a dominant visual element compared to other proposed visual components. Entry monuments, a proposed six-foot-high noise wall along the north side of Montecito Ranch Road, extensive landscaping and partial views of the residence on Lot 151 in between Project landscaping can be seen in the simulation.

These physical changes would result in a change in the existing visual character of the Alice Street northerly viewshed. Such changes, however, would not decrease the visual quality or conflict with or be incompatible with the existing visual character of the Alice Street viewshed for the following reasons. First, this portion of the Project is located within a semi-rural residential area and is surrounded by semi-rural residential development to the east and south. Provision of additional residential development within an area already developed with residential uses would provide visual continuity with adjacent off-site uses. Secondly, as shown in the photo simulation, most of the man-made developed elements (i.e., structures) would be screened by either Project landscaping or topography. The most prominent developed feature would be roadway, which beyond width, and more intensely planted roadscape, would not substantially differ from the existing condition. As discussed above, proposed street trees would be planted within this major Project entry, and would replace mature trees that are currently located along Alice Street. Post-development views would continue to encompass paved roadway lined with trees with distant views of the same ridgeline in between the trees. Landscaping would be more verdant and ornamental in nature than what currently exists; however, this would contribute to visual diversity. Third, design guidelines set forth in the proposed Montecito Ranch Major Use Permit (MUP; Development Design Services and GraphicAccess 2008b) would be incorporated into the Project to ensure compatibility with existing development. The design guidelines address issues of site planning, architecture, landscaping, fencing, and community signage. Incorporation of these design guidelines would ensure compositional harmony and compatibility between existing and proposed landscape components.

With regard to sound attenuation walls proposed as mitigation for traffic noise, future walls have been shown as grey in the Project simulations in order to increase visibility for the reviewer. In actuality, a warmer color would be used, more in keeping with area soils colors, rendering the wall less visible than depicted in Figure 29. Similarly, vegetation depicted does not illustrate total vegetative

Photograph 30

Simulated View



Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Existing and Simulated View From Off-site Toward SPA - Alice Street

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Figure 29

screening. In order to allow the reader to clearly see proposed wall location, screening vines assumed in the Project landscape plan and shown on Figure 18 of this document have been omitted. These vines, to consist of a mix of ivy and creeping fig, would provide year-round screening and visual interest. In the warm months, the walls would be completely covered in different shades of green where visible between shrubs. During colder months, the ivy in particular would be expected to die back, revealing arabesque patterns of trunks and stems against the earth colored wall. The combination of varied and effective screening vegetation (both specific to the sound walls and otherwise proposed as part of roadscape) render any adverse impact to existing views from off-site Alice Street less than significant.

Finally, Alice Street is a relatively short roadway (approximately 1,200 feet), and views by northbound motorists would be very brief and localized and would only affect a limited number of viewers. Therefore, the change in visual character resulting from the Proposed Project would not represent a significant visual impact to the Alice Street viewshed.

5.1.5 Cedar Street Viewshed

Cedar Street currently extends easterly from Summer Glen Road adjacent to the southern SPA boundary and serves a limited number of residences. The existing ADT along this minor roadway has not been measured and is assumed to be less than 500. This number is not expected to increase following Project implementation. Although Cedar Street is currently designated in the Circulation Element as future SA 603, the Proposed Project would eliminate this designation from Cedar Street between Pine Street and Rangeland Road. Views from the Cedar Street viewshed into the Montecito Ranch SPA are unobstructed to fully obstructed, as described below. Views from this road are considered to be of relatively low sensitivity.

Cedar Street is located along the toe of the slope that rises to the minor ridgeline along the southern Project site boundary. Existing rural residences with mature landscaping are located along this slope. Consequently, northerly views into the Project site (located approximately 1,000 feet to the north) are completely obstructed by the sloping hillsides, as well as residential structures and landscaping. Photograph 31 (Figure 30) consists of a view looking northwest from Cedar Street. As shown in the photograph, the northern side of the roadway is characterized by verdant landscaping characteristic of existing rural residences along the roadway. The residences along Cedar Street are located on similar lot sizes with landscaping and other common elements (i.e., fencing, mailboxes) that provide overall visual continuity within this neighborhood.

Existing views toward the Project site from this portion of Cedar Street would not change upon Project development. No ridgeline development is proposed along the Project site edges, and existing landscaping and sloping hillsides ascending from Cedar Street would continue to obstruct northerly views into the Project site. Viewers traveling along Cedar Street upon buildout of the Project would capture the same landscape components within the existing visual environment. Thus, Project development would not disrupt continuity or degrade visual unity of the Cedar Street viewshed.

Motorists traveling west along Cedar Street approaching the SPA would have views directly into the SPA (west of the preceding view location along Cedar Street). These views of the Project site, however, would not encompass any substantial development, as most of this portion of the SPA would be dedicated as open space. Proposed residential lots would be located north of the ridgeline that traverses the southern Project site boundary and obstructs northerly views into the SPA site. Thus,

proposed residences would not be visible. As discussed above, views of the ridgeline would remain. The Montecito Ranch Road alignment, dedicated park and charter high school sites (both the interim graded pad and future developed school facility), and WRF (under Wastewater Management Option 2) would not be visible due to a combination of intervening topography, existing vegetation and distance. These proposed facilities would be located approximately 0.5 mile to the west separated by undeveloped sloping hillsides that rise to one of the prominent on-site knolls. Under Wastewater Management Option 2, views of the proposed spray field would be available from this segment of Cedar Street. The addition of the spray field would not substantially alter existing views due to the lack of vertical elements and consistent visual nature with other agricultural uses. The spray field would not form a dominant visual element due to its size and would contribute to visual continuity by producing additional vegetation in a natural area. Under Wastewater Management Option 1, the WRF and associated spray fields would not be constructed, and the area would be included as part of the Project's open space preserve. Existing views from this portion of Cedar Street would not be altered under Option 1 and therefore no associated visual impacts would occur. In addition, the slight variation of grade along the Cedar Street corridor and the existing landscaping of the surrounding residences depicted in Photograph 28 would further obscure views of any additional visual elements. Project development, therefore, would not degrade the unity of the visual environment as seen from Cedar Street.

5.1.6 Ash Street Viewshed

Ash Street currently extends easterly from the eastern SPA boundary and serves the existing residents within the vicinity. The existing daily traffic volume along Ash Street is estimated at 500 trips, half of which travel westbound with a view of the Project site (USAI 2008). The Proposed Project would connect Ash Street with Montecito Way, via construction of proposed Montecito Ranch Road. Ash Street, a rural light collector, is projected to carry 2,795 ADT following Project implementation (USAI 2008). The Ash Street viewshed would provide partially obstructed to unobstructed views into the Project site. Existing views from this road are considered to be of moderately high sensitivity.

Ash Street is characterized by varied topography with gently sloping hillsides to the west and north. The elevation of Ash Street at the SPA boundary is approximately 1,620 feet AMSL. As Ash Street extends easterly, it gently slopes to an elevation of 1,550 feet AMSL, then slightly rises to 1,560 feet AMSL before it slopes down again to approximately 1,545 feet AMSL at its intersection with Pine Street (SR 78). As a result, views into the SPA from most of Ash Street are essentially obstructed by intervening topography. Refer to Photograph 8 (Figure 9) for a view looking west from Ash Street toward the SPA. The right side of the photograph shows one recently constructed home within the 12-unit Barrett/Hibbard Subdivision. Associated roadway improvements constructed in conjunction with this residential development are also depicted, including road widening on the north side of Ash Street and curbs and gutters along the subdivision's frontage. Large lot rural residences are located along the south side of Ash Street. The mature eucalyptus trees visible in the backdrop in the upper right-hand portion of the photograph and north of the roadway form the eastern boundary of the SPA, and the distant hillsides beyond the eucalyptus trees are located on the Project site. The SPA slopes downward out of view beyond the hillside and opens into the central valley where most of the Montecito Ranch residences are proposed.

The Project would include proposed off-site improvements to Ash Street, consisting of widening the existing 24- to 32-foot-wide pavement to a uniform width of 40 feet within the existing 60-foot-wide right-of-way to accommodate two 14-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction) and

Photograph 31

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View From Off-site Toward SPA - Cedar Street

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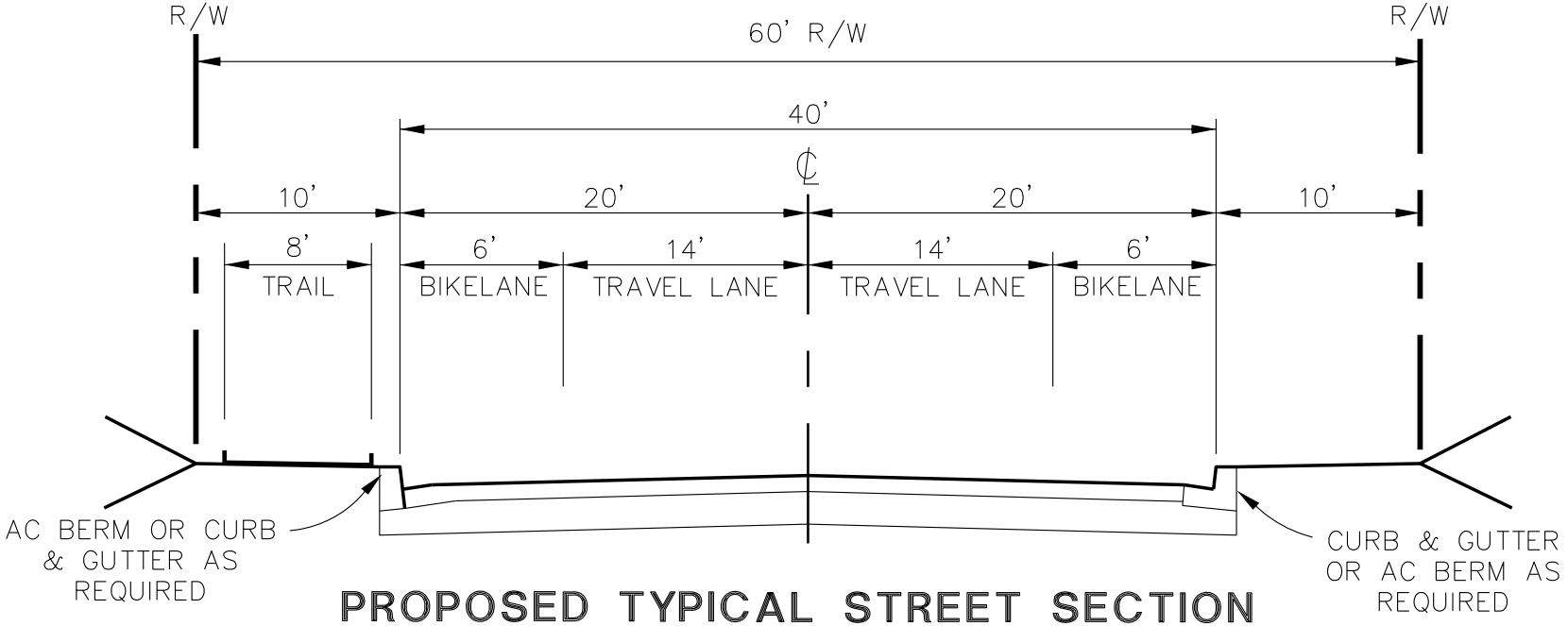
Figure 30



Source: Stevens-Cresto Engineering, Inc., 2008

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Ash Street Typical Section

a 6-foot-wide bicycle lane on each side of the road (Figure 31). The edge of the pavement would be finished with curbs and gutters or an asphalt concrete berm, and an eight-foot-wide multi-purpose trail would be located on the north side of the road within the remaining right-of-way. No on-street parking would be permitted along this segment of Ash Street. Additional improvements would include minor right-of-way acquisition, creation of manufactured slopes along the roadway, and replacement/relocation of public utility facilities (i.e., storm drain crossings, water meters, overhead electrical lines, fire hydrants). Most of the proposed improvements can be accomplished within the existing right-of-way. Acquisition of additional new right-of-way, however, may be required at the intersection of Ash Street with Alice Street. Cut/fill slopes required to accommodate the pavement widening may extend beyond the right-of-way. Several such slopes would occur along both sides of Ash Street with maximum heights of approximately 11 feet. Pavement widening would require removal and/or relocation of existing trees, landscaping, mail boxes, fencing and portions of driveways and property access roads, as well as relocation or additional storm drain crossings. The loss of these visual features would result in a short-term change in the visual character along Ash Street, but no long-term visual effects would occur since they would be replaced upon completion of the roadway improvements. Proposed road widening also would require the removal of several mature trees that currently edge Ash Street. Loss of these trees would not substantially affect the existing visual character of the area because these trees are not distinctive; they occur in isolated stands and do not function as a unifying element of the Ash Street visual environment. In addition, the overall design and character of the improved roadway would not substantially change since no additional lanes, sidewalks, medians or parkways are proposed. These proposed road improvements to Ash Street would not, therefore, cause a physical change in the visual environment that would decrease the visual quality or, conflict or be incompatible with the existing visual character of the Ash Street area.

The Project would require improvements to the intersection of Ash Street and Pine Street (SR 78), including installation of a traffic signal and re-striping. These improvements would not adversely affect the visual character of the Ash Street viewshed, as the improvements would occur at the roadway's intersection with a state highway (Pine Street/SR 78). The segment of Pine Street (SR 78) in the vicinity of this intersection is characterized by industrial, commercial and some residential development, and is projected to carry larger traffic volumes (approximately 10,000 to 12,000 ADT [USAI 2008]) compared to Ash Street (estimated 2,795 ADT [USAI 2008]). Accordingly, a traffic signal and re-striping at this extent of Ash Street would not be incompatible with the visual environment of this intersection with a state highway (Pine Street/SR 78). Additionally, as discussed in Section 5.1.1, the scale and dominance of a new traffic signal would not be incompatible with the existing visual character. The existing view contains comparable man-made vertical elements, such as utility poles and street signs, as well as overhead utility lines that occur at similar levels within the viewshed (refer to Photograph 7 on Figure 9 and Photograph 18 on Figure 13a). Existing visual unity would not be interrupted by the addition of this single vertical element. The resulting change in the visual environment is assessed as less than significant.

Development of the Proposed Project would provide unobstructed views from the western extent of Ash Street of residences sited in the eastern portion of the Project site, as well as broader views of rooflines and Project landscaping. Proposed residential lots would abut the southeastern Project site boundary and would be visible to westbound motorists and pedestrians along the western portion of Ash Street. Existing residences and landscaping along Ash Street would partially screen these homes. This change in the visual environment would not conflict or be incompatible with the existing visual character of the Ash Street area because the Ash Street vicinity can be characterized as transitioning to increased rural residential development. As described above, rural residential development occurs

along both sides of Ash Street, and a residential subdivision consisting of 12 residential lots was recently constructed along a portion of the northern frontage of this street. Approximately 11 homes have been developed, and road improvements consisting of road widening (approximately 10 feet) and new curb/gutter along a portion of the north side of Ash Street were constructed in conjunction with this new subdivision. Provision of additional residential development in an area characterized by existing and recently constructed residential development would reinforce the continuity and unity of the visual environment. Impacts to the visual character of Ash Street, therefore, would be less than significant.

5.1.7 Main Street (SR 67) Viewshed

Main Street (SR 67) provides regional access to Ramona and serves as the primary thoroughfare through Ramona Town Center. Existing ADT along Main Street (SR 67) is 29,500 ADT between Pine Street (SR 78) and Montecito Road, 27,300 ADT between Montecito Road and Hunter Street, and 27,000 ADT between Hunter Street and Highland Valley Road/Dye Road. Projected volumes upon Project implementation are 30,206 ADT between Pine Street (SR 78) and Montecito Road, 29,006 ADT between Montecito Road and Hunter Street and 28,471 between Hunter Street and Highland Valley Road/Dye Road (USAI 2008). Views into the SPA are not provided from Main Street (SR 67); however, unobstructed views of the proposed off-site intersection improvements at Main Street (SR 67)/Pine Street (SR 78) and SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road are provided. More constrained views along SR 67 are available to the SR 67/Archie Moore Road junction. Given the number of viewers, views from this roadway are considered to be of high sensitivity.

As discussed above in Section 5.1.1, the Project would be required to widen and re-stripe the northern leg of the Main Street (SR 67)/Pine Street (SR 78) intersection. The segment of Pine Street (SR 78) between B Street and Main Street (SR 67) would be improved to pavement width of 42 feet within the existing 60-foot-wide right-of-way. Pavement widening would occur on developed hardscape areas in a developed visual environment. Existing landscape components consist of commercial uses, roadways and associated traffic, and the signalized intersection (refer to Photograph 19 on Figure 13a). Vividness is low due to the lack of unique or distinct visual elements or landmarks. Conversion of these developed hardscape areas to additional road surfaces would be visually consistent with the developed nature of the existing visual landscape. The proposed improvements would not add any dominant or contrasting visual element to this viewshed and thus, existing views of developed roadways with surrounding commercial development would be maintained, resulting in no notable physical change to the viewer. Consequently, the proposed improvements at the Main Street (SR 67)/Pine Street (SR 78) intersection would not degrade the visual environment along Main Street (SR 67). No significant visual impacts would occur.

The Project would construct off-site improvements to the intersection of Montecito Road/Main Street (SR 67), including widening and re-striping. Acquisition of 15 feet of right-of-way would be required along the west side of Montecito Road for a distance of approximately 350 feet north of Main Street (SR 67). The affected area consists of existing road, sidewalk and a street yard portion of the Ramona County Resource Center. Utility poles, overhead utility lines, electrical transformer boxes and traffic lights also may be impacted. No dominant or distinctive visual elements would be added, and conversion of these developed areas to additional road surfaces would be visually consistent with the developed nature of the existing visual landscape. Thus, no significant visual impacts would occur.

At the SR 67/Highland Valley Road/Dye Road intersection, the visual environment can be characterized as disturbed and generally of low quality. This is due to a lack of native vegetation or consistent visual elements. An irregular development pattern has resulted in a "jumble" of observable elements in the vicinity, including residential, agricultural and institutional (church, fire station, park-and-ride) signage, SR 67 and associated traffic, and large-scale signalization. Vividness is low due to the lack of unique or distinct visual elements or landmarks. Pavement widening would occur therefore on already disturbed land in a developed visual environment with generally low visual quality. Upon completion of these roadway improvements, the viewer would continue to observe a roadway within a developed area, and no (or a very negligible) noticeable physical change to the visual environment would occur. The proposed improvements would not add any dominant or contrasting visual elements to this viewshed. As a result, no significant visual impacts would occur pursuant to Significance Guideline Nos. 1 and 2.

Westerly along SR 67, a traffic signal would be installed at the existing Archie Moore Road juncture, located on a relatively acute curve in SR 67, which limits long term views to the intersection. This "T" intersection is currently signed and no road widening is proposed. Given the existing linear stop sign and the lack of vegetation removal/hardscape addition (required if an extra turn lane were to be required along this fairly rural stretch), provision of a stoplight would not introduce a notably inconsistent visual element to the immediate setting. While the scale of the signal would be expected to exceed that of the existing stop sign, any adverse effect would be less than significant in terms of overall visual impact to the SR 67/Archie Moore Road viewshed, pursuant to Significance Guideline Nos. 1 and 2.

5.1.8 Montecito Road Viewshed

Montecito Road extends north from Main Street (SR 67) and then turns west to Ramona Airport. Existing ADT along Montecito Road is 6,000 ADT between Main Street (SR 67) and Davis Street and 3,500 ADT between Davis Street and Montecito Way. Projected traffic volumes upon Project implementation are 7,942 ADT between Main Street (SR 67) and Davis Street and 5,560 ADT between Davis Street and Montecito Way (USAI 2008). Views into the SPA are not provided from Montecito Road due to intervening structures and topography. Views of the proposed off-site roadway improvements along Montecito Way and off-site intersection improvements to Montecito Road/Montecito Way (SA 330) would be provided from Montecito Road. Refer to Photograph 19 in Figure 13a for a view along Montecito Road at its intersection with Montecito Way. Various land uses occur within this area, including an equestrian facility, agricultural land, Ramona Airport and open space/undeveloped areas, which contribute to moderate visual diversity. Existing views from this roadway are considered to be of moderate sensitivity.

The Project would widen Montecito Way from Sonora Way to Montecito Road, Portions of the improved roadway and the reconfigured intersection would be visible to travelers along the western extent of Montecito Road. Implementation of these roadway improvements would result in a change in the existing visual environment along the Montecito Road viewshed; however, for the reasons discussed in Section 5.1.2, these roadway improvements would not result in any long-term visual effects on the Montecito Road viewshed.

Montecito Road would be widened from Montecito Way to Main Street to accommodate Project traffic and complete a northern bypass route. The existing roadway has a right-of-way width of 50 feet, with approximately 36 feet of pavement. The Project proposes a paved uniform width of 40 feet

within a 60-foot-wide right-of-way, consisting of two 12-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction), an e8-foot-wide bike lane on each side of the road, curbs and gutters along the pavement edges and an 8-foot-wide native soil multi-purpose trail along both sides of the road within the remaining right-of-way (Figure 21). Proposed improvements to Montecito Road would require acquisition of approximately five feet of additional right-of-way along both sides of this roadway, not including acquisition that is required for intersection improvements. Additional improvements along Montecito Road would include replacing seven storm drain crossings and existing public utilities, such as water meters, electrical lines, and fire hydrants. Existing mailboxes, fencing, driveways, and landscaping and overhead utility lines impacted by the road widening would require replacement, as included within the environmental design considerations for the Project. It is estimated that portions of approximately 33 existing driveways or access roads would be affected by this road widening. The existing bridge crossing over Santa Maria Creek along Montecito Road also would be improved. The existing 30-foot-wide bridge consists of two 15-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction) with a five-foot-wide pedestrian footbridge attached to the south side of the bridge. Proposed improvements would entail widening the bridge to a total width of 52 feet, which would include two 20-foot-wide travel lanes (one lane traveling in each direction) and one 8-foot-wide pedestrian/equestrian pathway along the north side of the bridge. To accommodate equestrians, the pathway would be covered with an acceptable non-slip, all weather surface (e.g., stabilized decomposed granite, wood, etc.) and appropriate railing (a minimum of 60 inches high) would be constructed along both sides of the pathway.

Montecito Road is lined with various uses, including rural residential homes, an equestrian facility, agricultural, multi-family residential and commercial development. Higher density development (i.e., multi-family residential and commercial uses) occurs east of the Santa Maria Creek as the road approaches Main Street (SR 67). The mix of multi-family and commercial developments provides some diversity. This segment of Montecito Road does not contain any distinct or unique visual elements, resulting in low vividness. West of the Santa Maria Creek, the visual character transitions to rural with single-family rural residences and other noted rural uses (i.e., equestrian facility and agricultural). Mature trees and other homeowner landscaping occur sporadically along portions of this segment. These rural uses provide overall visual continuity within this segment of Montecito Road.

Proposed road widening would result in an additional four feet of paved road surface. The visual environment along Montecito Road, east of Santa Maria Creek, can be characterized as developed due to the higher intensity uses associated with multi-family and commercial developments. Pavement widening would occur on developed land in a developed visual environment. Following roadway widening, the existing visual environment would remain intact. Increasing the pavement width an additional four feet would not result in a substantially noticeable physical change, as viewers would continue to observe a roadway within a developed area. Additionally, proposed widening would not add any dominant or contrasting visual element. No significant visual impacts would occur.

Widening Montecito Road west of Santa Maria Creek also would not substantially degrade the existing visual environment. As stated above, road widening would temporarily affect some mailboxes, fencing, driveways, and landscaping along the roadway, resulting in a short-term change in the visual character. No long-term visual effects would occur since these features would be replaced/relocated upon completion of road widening. In some areas along this segment of the roadway, mature trees and other landscaping associated with abutting rural residences would be removed. The roadway however is not lined with a contiguous dense swathe of greenery, but rather informal patches of landscaping that are not distinctive and do not constitute a unifying element

within the existing visual environment. Moreover, increasing the pavement width an additional 4feet (from 36 to 40 feet) would not be a highly noticeable change to the roadway. The resulting change in the visual environment would not be adverse. No significant visual impacts would occur.

To accommodate pedestrian circulation and wider vehicular travel lanes, the existing bridge along Montecito Road crossing Santa Maria Creek would be widened 20 feet. The widened bridge would not substantially modify the design of the existing bridge. The attached pedestrian footbridge consists of a wooden structure that is compatible in character with the adjacent rural uses to the immediate west and beyond. This structure would be removed and replaced with dedicated pedestrian shoulders adjacent to the travel lanes. It is anticipated that these pedestrian shoulders would include similar design features that would be visually consistent with the existing visual environment. Some of the existing vegetation adjacent to the bridge within the creek would be removed, but loss of this vegetation would not disrupt the visual continuity of the existing visual environment. The trees and shrubs that would be impacted comprise part of a larger mass of riparian vegetation within the Santa Maria Creek corridor. Upon completion of the widened bridge, the viewer would continue to observe a bridge crossing a creek lined with riparian vegetation. No associated significant visual impacts would occur.

The Project also would be required to construct off-site improvements to the intersections of Montecito Road/Montecito Way and Montecito Road/Main Street (SR 67). Improvements would entail road widening and re-striping. Implementation of these roadway improvements would result in a change in the existing visual environment along the Montecito Road viewshed; however, for the reasons discussed in Sections 5.1.2 and 5.1.7, these roadway improvements would not result in any long-term visual effects on the Montecito Road viewshed. Thus, no significant visual impacts would occur.

5.2 VIEWSHEDS FROM PRIVATE RESIDENCES

The Montecito Ranch SPA is surrounded by rural residential development to the north, east and south. Existing homes with views into the SPA site are located north of Cedar Street and north of Pine Street (SR 78). Because these viewpoints are private, they are somewhat less sensitive than public viewpoints, which usually have a greater number of viewers and may be protected by public policies, plans and regulations.

5.2.1 North of Cedar Street

Existing residences located adjacent to the southern Project site boundary would have unobstructed views of the Montecito Ranch SPA, particularly those located atop the ridge north of Cedar Street (along or near Cedar Summit Drive). Photograph 32 (Figure 32) is a view looking north from this ridge along Cedar Summit Drive. The undeveloped gently sloping terrain in the mid-ground is located on the Project site, with more distant views of off-site scattered rural residential development and ridgelines.

Figure 32 illustrates a simulation of the Project from this viewpoint. As seen in the simulation, development of the Proposed Project would provide direct unobstructed views of a number of residences and rooflines.

Views of the proposed noise wall along the north side of Montecito Ranch Road also would be available, but would not be highly visible from this vantage point due to intervening topography and vegetation, and proposed landscaping along the roadway alignment. Portions of the noise wall are visible in the simulation to the left, directly in front of the two closest homes. These six-foot sound attenuation walls (proposed as mitigation for traffic noise from Montecito Ranch Road for these abutting homes) would track along the southerly lot edges of all the homes along future "R," "U," "C" and "B" streets, on the north side of future Montecito Ranch Road. As previously noted, the walls have been shown as grey in the Project simulations in order to increase visibility for the reviewer. In actuality, a warmer color would be used, more in keeping with area soils colors, rendering the wall even less visually intrusive than depicted. Similarly, vegetation depicted does not illustrate total vegetative screening. Along Montecito Ranch Road in this area, three rows of intervening shrubs and trees would be placed between the sound walls and off-site viewers. South of Montecito Ranch Road and abutting open space, there would be trees and shrubs associated with the pathway. A median with themed street trees placed in informal groupings would comprise the next layer of "shielding" and north of the roadway additional trees, shrubs and general slope plantings would be located between the roadway and meandering trail/lots. The trees and shrubs in the simulation assume approximately five years of growth, and do not depict coverage anticipated at maturity. In addition (and again), to allow wall location to be seen, screening vines assumed in the Project landscape plan and shown on Figure 18 of this document have been omitted. These vines, to consist of a mix of ivy and creeping fig, would provide year-round screening and visual interest. In the warm months, the walls would be completely covered in different shades of green where visible between shrubs. During colder months, the ivy in particular would be expected to die back, revealing arabesque patterns of trunks and stems against the earth colored wall. The combination of varied and effective screening vegetation (both specific to the sound walls and otherwise proposed as part of roadscape) render any adverse impact to existing views from off-site private view points north of Cedar Street less than significant.

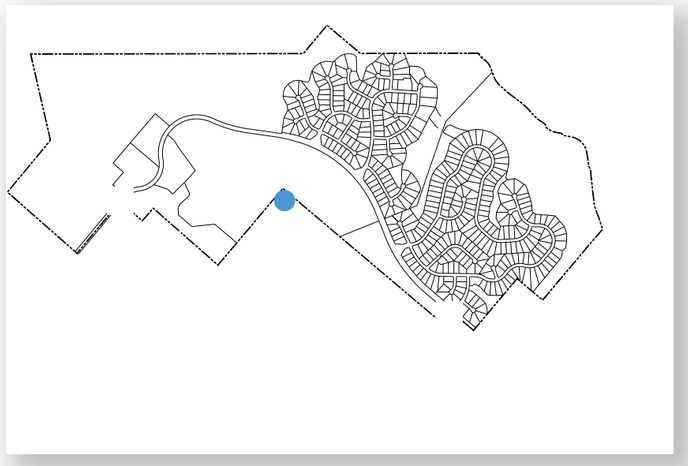
While Project development would introduce new elements into the views from these residences, such elements would not decrease the visual quality or substantially change the visual character of the area. The visible elements of the Project from this viewpoint would be compatible with surrounding development patterns. Views would capture proposed residences and landscaping in the mid-ground that would blend with existing residences and landscaping in background. Additionally, these proposed developed features would not interrupt the visual continuity of existing large lot residential development in the middle ground and the slopes behind them. Distant views of ridgelines and topographic features beyond the SPA site also would not be affected. Development of the Project would provide as much as 1,000 feet of open space between the southern Project site boundary and the closest residential lot. Proposed landscaping predominantly would consist of native species that would partially screen and soften views into the Project site, as well as reinforce the existing rural visual character. Slopes adjacent to these existing homes north of Cedar Street also would be included within permanent open space, contributing to visual unity. Development of the Proposed Project, therefore, would not significantly impact the existing viewshed from these private residences.

5.2.2 North of Pine Street (SR 78)

Existing residences located north of the SPA site across SR 78 also would have unobstructed views of the northern portion of the SPA site. Photograph 32 (Figure 33) provides a view from the intersection of Rancho Villa Road and Washington Street. Views from these residences generally encompass

Photograph 32

Simulated View



Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2006

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Existing and Simulated View From Off-site Toward SPA - Cedar Summit Drive

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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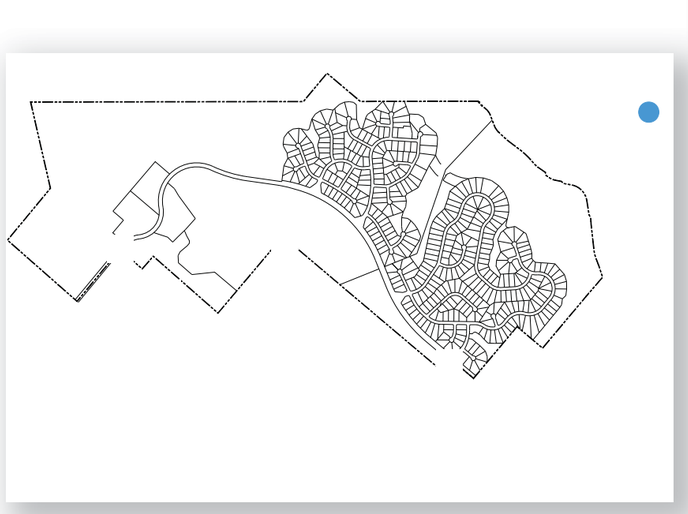
Figure 32

Photograph 33



Simulated View

Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2006

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Existing and Simulated View From Off-site Toward SPA - Rancho Villa Road

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Figure 33

distant views of the moderate to steep slopes covered with dense oak woodlands that flank Pine Street (SR 78) and ascend to the ridgeline in the northern portion of the Project site.

Figure 33 provides a simulation of the Proposed Project from this viewpoint. While the Project would introduce new elements into this view, they would not substantially change the existing visual character of the area. Project development mostly would occur down slope on the opposite side of the ridgeline. Distant views of approximately 15 to 20 proposed residences within the northeastern-most area of development would be available from this viewpoint. As shown in the simulation, the homes would be screened with landscaping compatible with existing vegetation that would soften their appearance and minimize any skylining effect of the proposed structures. In addition, views of Project development are somewhat distant and would occur at a small scale that would preclude any perception of dominance. The on-site hillsides and dense vegetation cover that are highly visible in the mid-ground and other existing visual elements would remain intact, thereby maintaining overall visual unity. For these reasons, associated visual impacts would not be considered significant.

5.3 VIEWSHEDS FROM PLANNED PUBLIC FACILITIES

5.3.1 Local Park

The Proposed Project would fully develop and dedicate an 8.3-acre local park in the southern portion of the SPA site (Figure 34). This portion of Montecito Ranch is characterized by relatively level topography and contains the historic Montecito Ranch House. Other planned facilities within this portion of the SPA include a charter high school site, an historic park site the WRF (under Wastewater Management Option 2), Montecito Ranch Road, a detention basin and trails. No residential development would be located in this area, as most of the southern portion of the SPA would be dedicated open space. Proposed Montecito Ranch residences would be located in the northern and eastern portions of the SPA, resulting in an open space buffer of approximately 0.5 mile between the planned park and residences. Views from this planned park generally would encompass large open space areas to the north and west, the proposed historical park site to the south, and the proposed charter high school site (interim graded pad and future school facility) and Montecito Ranch Road to the east. Views of these adjacent facilities would be somewhat screened by Project landscaping, as well as existing vegetation. Moreover, the park is anticipated to contain active uses, such as sports fields and playground equipment, which tend to focus views inward. A local park at this location would be visually compatible with other planned adjacent public facilities and open space preserve. The future charter high school is likely to include similar sports-related facilities (i.e., ball fields, tennis courts, track) to provide visual continuity. The park also would contain a drainage channel planted with riparian and oak species that would provide some visual continuity between the park and adjacent open space. The developed facilities all would include landscaping with a unified theme to support additional visual unity. Visual impacts would be less than significant.

5.3.2 Historic Park Site

The Proposed Project would dedicate land for an 11.9-acre historic park site featuring the historic Montecito Ranch House, which would be dedicated to the County or cooperating group for preservation and maintenance as an interpretive center, community center or museum (Figure 34). This site would be located in the southern portion of the Project site, which is characterized by relatively level terrain. The Montecito Ranch historic complex is identified as a significant

archaeological site (SDI-12,476H). It includes historic outbuildings and landscape features and is associated with events or patterns of events that have made a contribution to the cultural heritage of California. Thus, the Montecito Ranch House appears eligible for placement on the California Register of Historical Resources (Heritage Resources 2007a and 2007b). The Montecito Ranch House is also designated as an Historic Preservation Area in the RCP. Implementation of the Project would preserve the physical setting of the historic Montecito Ranch House, as well as the house itself. A review of historic aerial photographs and maps was combined with locations of existing historic structures and features to identify a site boundary. The site boundary encompasses not only the historic structures, but also what was identified as the site's historic landscape. Development of the Project would not impact the site boundary. Therefore, development of the Project would not degrade the existing visual environment and/or character of the historic Montecito Ranch House.

As described above, the historic park site would be adjacent to the proposed local park and Montecito Ranch Road, which would form the eastern boundary of the historical park site. The proposed charter high school site and WRF (under Wastewater Management Option 2) would be located across Montecito Ranch Road. These proposed adjacent facilities would not physically impact the Montecito Ranch historic complex, and existing trees within the historic park site, as well as proposed Project landscaping, would largely screen views of the charter high school site and WRF. In addition, as described above, the WRF would be fully screened by landscaping. Since all residential development would be sited in the northern and eastern portions of the SPA site, a buffer of approximately 0.5 mile would be provided between the historic park site and proposed residences. Distant views of select residences to the east may be available, but not at a scale that would substantially alter the existing visual character of the historic Ranch House or its setting, and no significant impacts would occur.

A portion of the southern portion of the historic park would be utilized as an equestrian staging and overflow parking area for the adjacent uses. The equestrian area would include several 15-foot by 15-foot horse pens, an 80-foot diameter round pen, an animal wash down area, hitching posts, a 100-foot by 150-foot arena with bleacher seating, a picnic area, and parking for vehicles and horse trailers (Figure 34). This area would be surfaced with decomposed granite, and existing trees would not be affected. In the event that additional parking is needed at the adjacent facilities, up to 170 vehicles could park in this area between existing trees. It is anticipated that this overflow parking area would be utilized only for special events and thus, usual views would not consist of an occupied parking lot, but rather natural (trees and other vegetation) and rural elements (gravel and horse trailers). Thus, the resulting change in the visual character would not be substantial, as the existing rural character would largely remain intact and the equestrian staging would be consistent with the historic ranch house. No significant visual impacts would occur.

Under Wastewater Management Option 1, a sewer pump station would be located within the southern portion of the historic park that also would be utilized as an equestrian staging and overflow parking area. A sewer pump station within the historic park would introduce an additional developed element into the visual environment. This portion of the historic park however is not within the historic site boundary (as discussed above) and other improvements would occur (i.e., decomposed granite overflow parking area and equestrian staging) in the immediate setting. The sewer pump station would be housed within a structure with architectural treatments that would be compatible with the surrounding historic buildings. The resulting change in the visual character would not be substantial since the pump station would provide visual unity with the historic ranch house and ancillary buildings. No significant visual impacts would occur.

Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Conceptual Charter High School, Park Sites, and Equestrian Staging Area

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Figure 34

5.3.3 Charter High School Site

The Proposed Project would dedicate land for a 10.6-acre charter high school site in the southern portion of the SPA (Figure 34). The Project would construct a graded pad for future development by the Ramona Unified School District or other appropriate entity. Thus, interim improvements would consist of a 10.6-acre graded pad with fuel management zones and drainage facilities (i.e., brow ditches and desiltation basins). Long-term improvements would consist of a developed school facility containing buildings and associated recreation areas.

This portion of the Project site is characterized by generally level topography and would be largely surrounded by dedicated open space. Montecito Ranch Road would separate the charter high school site from the proposed local and historic parks to the west. Proposed residential development would occur to the northeast and would be buffered from the charter high school by an approximately 1,200-foot-wide open space area. A prominent knoll located along the central southern SPA boundary, which reaches an elevation of approximately 1,760 feet AMSL, would largely obstruct views of proposed residences from the charter high school site. Westerly views from the charter high school site would look over Montecito Ranch Road to encompass other community facilities, specifically the proposed local and historic park, and Montecito Ranch Road. These adjacent uses would be compatible with the charter high school and required roadway access due to similarity of uses and common landscaping. The charter school and local park would contain similar sports-related facilities. A unified landscape treatment also would be planted within the area of the community facilities.

Under Wastewater Management Option 2, the Proposed Project would include a WRF located in southern portion of the SPA site, immediately south of the charter high school site. The WRF would include four structures (one would be below grade and thus at least partially not visible), five treated water storage ponds on 6.9 acres and a 16.9-acre spray field. Viewers from the charter high school would look down at this facility and would encompass rooftops, portions of building façades, the water storage ponds and Project landscaping. The dimensions and locations of the buildings have not been finalized; however, no building would be taller than 14 feet above grade and would be designed to include architectural treatments similar to the rest of Project development, which would provide visual continuity. The WRF would be fenced with coated chain link fencing and landscaping would be planted around the perimeter to soften its appearance. Views of these structures from the charter school site would not result in adverse visual impacts.

Four of the five water storage ponds would be located immediately adjacent to the southern and eastern boundary of the school site. The ponds would be approximately 200 feet wide by 200 feet long each and would be five feet deep at full capacity. They would not be lined with concrete or any other surface. Landscaping would be planted along the interface between the ponds and the adjacent charter high school site. The ponds would be sited approximately 20 to 25 feet below finished grade of the school.

While no users would be associated with the interim graded pad, views of the ponds would be provided to students and school employees upon construction of the school. The ponds are not features with high profile vertical elements and would only be visible from the charter high school if the viewer is near the edge of the school site looking downward into the ponds. The view would encompass open water features with natural habitat and ornamental landscaping, which would not be visually incompatible with the existing rural character. No significant visual impacts would occur.

If Wastewater Management Option 1 is implemented, the WRF would not be constructed and the area of the WRF would be included within the Project's open space preserve. Views to the south from the charter high school would encompass open space with no associated visual impacts.

5.3.4 Trails

There are no existing community trails on the Project site. The Project would include an 8.9-mile-long multi-purpose trail system to accommodate hiking, horseback riding and bicycling. The proposed trail system would consist of trails within the dedicated open space that would connect with planned on- and off-site trails to the northwest, west and east, as well as a trail along Ash Street, Montecito Way, proposed Montecito Ranch Road and Montecito Road, and feeder trails within the residential neighborhoods (Figure 35). The proposed trails within open space would extend from the trail along Montecito Ranch Road. One proposed trail would be located along the existing dirt road that extends west and north between Montecito Way and the Lemurian Fellowship property to the northwest, and another would generally traverse northerly through dedicated open space and connect to a planned regional trail at the northwest Project site boundary. A third trail would extend easterly from the proposed local park and would traverse open space to connect to the Summer Glen Road/Cedar Street intersection. Other trails within open spaces areas would be located along the southern and eastern Project site boundaries. The trails along off-site roadways would encompass approximately 4.1 acres (approximately 2.8 miles long), and the trails in the open space areas would encompass approximately 11.1 acres (approximately 3.8 miles long).

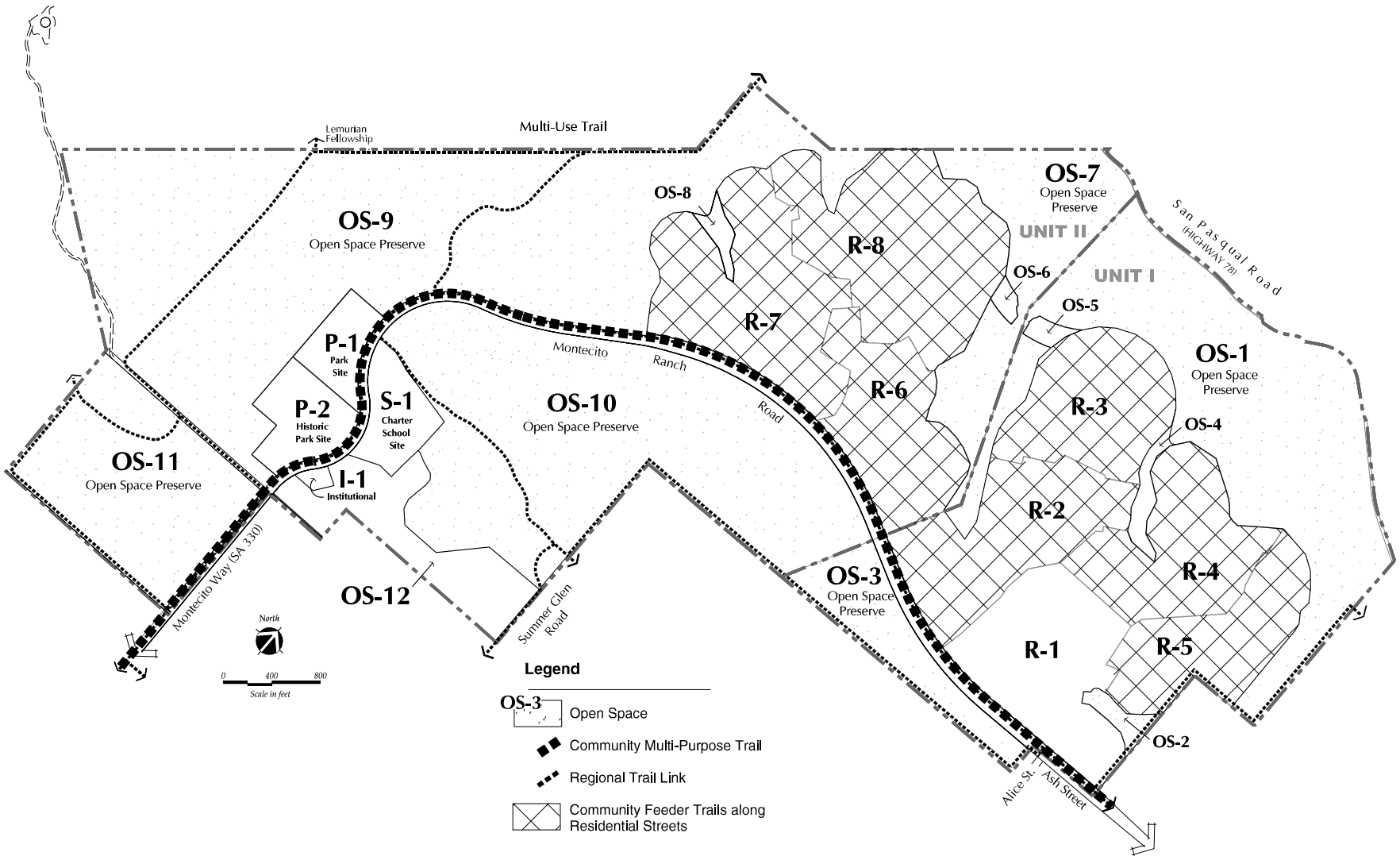
Views offered to trail users along proposed trail routes would include natural open space, varied terrain, and various Project elements such as residences, the local and historic park, an interim grade pad and ultimately a developed charter high school, the WRF and associated water storage ponds and spray fields (only under Wastewater Management Option 2) and an off-site water storage tank. Views generally would be aesthetically pleasing, as they would predominantly consist of broad open space areas and natural landforms with some clusters of Project development. No significant adverse visual effects would occur.

5.4 OTHER PLANNED FACILITIES

5.4.1 Wastewater Collection and Treatment

Wastewater Management Option 1, Off-site Sewer Connection

As stated above, under Wastewater Management Option 1, wastewater would be conveyed to the Santa Maria WTP (the on-site sewer pump station associated with this designation is discussed in Section 5.3.2, above. The off-site sewer line would be constructed within the existing Montecito Way, Montecito Road and Kalbaugh Street roadbeds (paved or unpaved). Trenching and construction staging would occur along Montecito Way, Montecito Road and Kalbaugh Street, resulting in short-term changes to the existing visual environment. Utility trenches would be backfilled, Montecito Way and Montecito Road would be re-paved (a portion of Kalbaugh Street currently is unpaved and would be left so), and construction staging would disappear upon construction of the proposed sewer line. No long-term visual effect would occur and no significant visual impact is identified.



Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Open Space and Trails Plan

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Figure 35

Wastewater Management Option 2, Wastewater Reclamation Facility

As previously discussed, this Project option would include a WRF in the southern portion of the SPA site to treat effluent generated by the Project. The visual impacts of the WRF on the Montecito Way viewshed and adjacent charter high school site are discussed in detail above in Sections 5.1.2 and 5.3.3, respectively. The referenced discussions conclude that the proposed WRF would result not in significant adverse visual effects.

In addition, existing residences along Sonora Way, adjacent to the southern SPA boundary, would have direct views of the WRF treatment facility, the storage ponds and the spray field. The buildings at the WRF would not be dominant visual elements, as their scale would be similar or smaller than the existing adjacent rural residences and would be fully screened with landscaping. The ponds and spray field would provide additional rural features that would be visually compatible with the existing visual character. The introduction of these elements into northerly views from these existing residences would not degrade the unity of the visual environment. Visual impacts would be less than significant.

5.4.2 Water Storage Tank

An off-site water storage tank would be installed just west of the Project site atop a knoll on an adjacent parcel. Under Wastewater Management Option 1, the tank would hold 1.26 million gallons and would be approximately 88 feet in diameter and approximately 30 feet above grade, with landscaping installed around its perimeter. Under Wastewater Management Option 2, the tank would hold 0.91 million gallons (approximately 40 percent smaller that the tank under Option 1). The smaller tank would adequately accommodate water storage under Option 2, because the Project would have the benefit of using reclaimed water from an on-site WRF. The size of the smaller water tank under Option 2 would be 30 feet tall and 75 feet in diameter. A 20-foot-wide access road surfaced with decomposed granite would be constructed from the unimproved segment of Montecito Way (at the western Project boundary) to the proposed tank. A water pipeline would be constructed within this access road to connect the water storage tank to the proposed water pipeline within Montecito Way. The water storage tank and associated pipelines and roadways would disturb approximately 1.7 acre on site and 2.2 acres off site. The tank would be constructed on a knoll at an elevation of approximately 1,800 feet AMSL and thus, distant views (approximately one mile) of the water tank would be provided from some of the proposed residences to the northeast, Project roadways and existing public viewpoints due to its elevation. This additional water tank would not introduce a new visual element into the broader visual environment, as other water tanks are located in the Project vicinity to the north and northwest. The tank, however, would be located atop a large ridgeline in an undeveloped natural area with no other developed features in close proximity. Thus, the tank would substantially disrupt the existing visual continuity. Visual impacts are assessed as significant.

Grading required for the access road would require cut slopes of up to 30 feet tall within steep terrain at the upper elevations. In some areas, the gradient of these cut slopes would be steeper than 2:1 due to topographic constraints. The access road would be located in an undeveloped area approximately 0.75 mile from the closest proposed public facility and approximately 1.0 mile from the closest existing or proposed residence. Manufactured slopes would substantially contrast with the existing

natural topography in the area. The resulting change in the visual character would disrupt the existing continuity. A significant adverse visual impact is assessed.

5.4.3 Water Booster Pump Station

The Project also would include the installation of a water booster pump station on a 10,000-square foot (0.2-acre) lot at the northwestern corner of the Montecito Road/Montecito Way intersection. The water booster pump station would be an above grade, single-story structure with 10-foot-high walls and a pitched roof, encompassing approximately 300 square feet. Fencing and landscaping would be installed around the building.

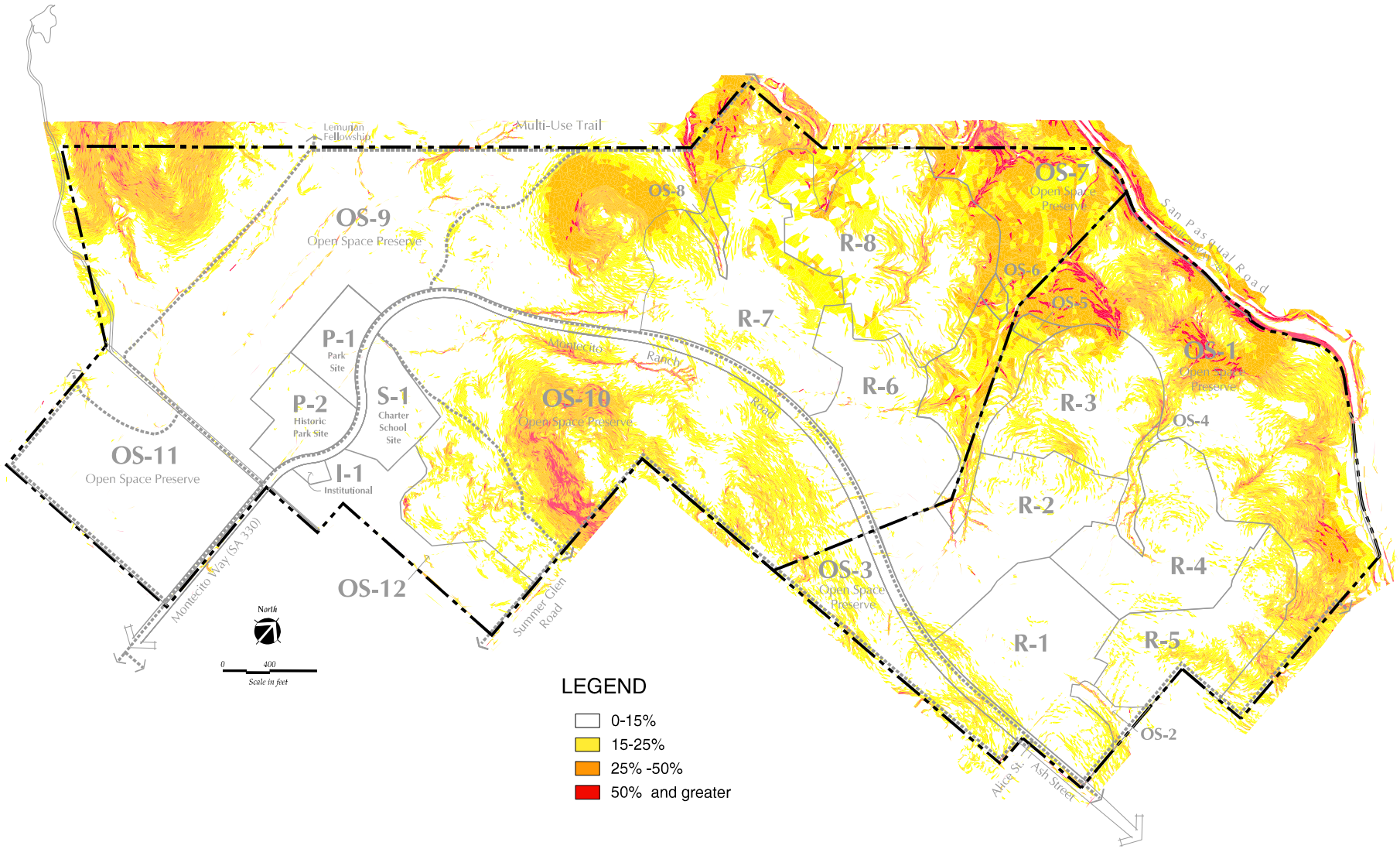
The pump station would be located in area containing single-family homes, equestrian facilities, some agricultural uses (oat hay farming and a nursery) and the Ramona Airport. The pump station would appear as a small outbuilding, which would be compatible with surrounding uses. Many of the homes and other uses in the immediate area include sheds, outbuildings or other ancillary structures. The addition of another such structure would not contrast with existing visual landscape. Moreover, installation of fencing and landscaping would soften its appearance and provide unifying elements consistent with the existing visual character of the area. Surrounding residential lots along Montecito Way contain landscaping and various types of fencing. Fencing and vegetation also occurs in the immediate area along the airport boundaries, the equestrian facility and the commercial nursery. No adverse or significant visual impact is identified.

5.5 GRADING AND LANDFORM ALTERATION

Approximately 15.8 percent (147.8 acres) of the site is comprised of 25 percent or greater slopes (Figure 36). The Proposed Project, however, has been designed to conform closely to the natural landforms and existing topography. Although development of the Project would require mass grading of approximately 330 acres on site (approximately 35 percent of the Project site) and an estimated 2.95 million cubic yards (cy) of cut and fill (each), Project grading would be balanced on site). Manufactured slopes would be at a maximum ratio of 2:1 with a maximum cut and fill slope height of 50 feet. The majority of steep slopes would be retained in their natural state through the designation of large open space areas.

The Project proposes to consolidate the residential development in the northern and eastern portions of the SPA site to minimize the development area and provide a larger open space preserve. Public facilities also would be consolidated in the flatter areas in the southern portion of the SPA site. Residential and public facility lots would be sited primarily on the topographically level and gently sloping portions of the Project site. Existing landforms within the large open space preserve, including steep slopes, canyons, major natural drainages, floodways and prominent rock outcroppings would not be modified. Therefore, proposed grading would not substantially alter the overall existing visual character of the Project site.

Grading of the off-site access road to the proposed water storage tank would require cut slopes of up to 30 feet tall within steep terrain. In some areas, the gradient of these cut slopes would be steeper than 2:1. As discussed above in Section 5.4.2, these cut slopes would substantially contrast with the surrounding topography, and would disrupt existing visual continuity. Associated impacts are assessed as significant.



Source: Development Design Services and GraphicAccess, 2008

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Slope Map

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Figure 36

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5.6 CONSISTENCY WITH THE MONTECITO RANCH SPECIFIC PLANNING AREA SECTION OF THE RAMONA COMMUNITY PLAN

The RCP describes the Montecito Ranch SPA as a proposed rural development with an overall density of 0.5 dwelling unit per acre and a maximum of 417 single-family residential units on large lots. The RCP requires preparation of a specific plan prior to development of the Montecito Ranch SPA and specifies conditions that must be met by the specific plan. Relevant conditions pertaining to aesthetics are listed by condition number below.

5.6.1 General Conditions

8. The visual impact of all hillside development shall be minimized.

The proposed development within the SPA has been designed to minimize visual impacts to hillsides by locating residential development, community facilities and Project roadways on the level and gently sloping areas of the Project site. The steepest slopes, canyons and hillsides would be preserved as permanent open space. The northern portion of the Project site contains steep hillsides covered with dense oak woodlands and is located immediately adjacent to SR 78, which is designated as a Scenic Highway and Resource Conservation Area in the RCP. The Proposed Project would preserve the slopes and oak woodlands in this area as part of the proposed dedicated open space. Views of the proposed residential development would be fully screened by these steep slopes, as well as the noted preserved oak woodlands along the adjacent SR 78 segment. Retention of these and other on-site hillsides would maintain diversity and vividness within the Project site vicinity, and the proposed development within the SPA would be consistent with Condition 8.

5.6.2 Residential Conditions

12. Rural residential lots shall be designed consistent with the topography of this site.

The Proposed Project has been designed to site residential lots on the level and gently sloping portions of the Project site, thus folding into or respecting the existing topography and natural landforms. The reader is referred to the discussion of landform alteration in Section 5.5 above. The Proposed Project would be consistent with this condition.

15. The locations of residential lots shall be based in part on a slope analysis, but also shall be based on the design guidelines of the Ramona Community Plan.

Proposed residential lots are generally located on the level and gently sloping portions of the site, based on both a slope analysis and the design guidelines of the RCP. Approximately 15.8 percent (147.8 acres) of the site is comprised of 25 percent or greater slopes (see Figure 34). The majority of these slopes would be retained in their natural state through the designation of permanent open space areas. Additional existing natural features, such as drainages, rock outcroppings and sensitive vegetation would be retained as well. Much of the conserved sensitive habitat coincides with steep slopes in the northern portion of the Project site. This area also has relatively high elevations and is a visible portion of the Project from on and off site. Steep slopes associated with the on-site knolls and minor ridgelines would be preserved. This is consistent with the General Guideline 3 within the RCP

Design Guidelines, which states, "Development proposals should demonstrate an effort to retain significant existing natural features characteristic of the community's landscape." The Proposed Project would be consistent with this condition. Retention of these natural features would retain diversity and vividness within the Project site vicinity.

13. Ridgeline development shall be discouraged. It should only be allowed if a viewshed analysis can show only minimal impact on adjacent properties and scenic roads identified in the Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan.

The proposed development within the SPA would occur primarily on level and gently sloping terrain. The prominent minor ridgeline, located along a portion of the southeastern SPA boundary, would be preserved in addition to the knolls and steep hillsides. In addition, the steep hillsides in the northern portion of the Project site closest to SR 78, a designated Scenic Highway and Resource Conservation Area, would be dedicated as open space. As discussed in Section 5.2.2, private views from north of Pine Street (SR 78), approximately 0.25 mile from the Project site, would capture proposed homes that would appear to line the ridgeline. These homes actually would be located behind the ridgeline, but would be visible in horizon views from the noted vantage point. Visible homes would be partially screened with Project landscaping compatible with existing vegetation that would soften their appearance and minimize any skylining effect. No associated significant visual impacts were assessed for the development within the SPA.

5.6.3 Design Guidelines

29. To ensure that the design of the proposed neighborhoods and community areas maintains a sense of variety without sacrificing unity, the Specific Plan shall include a Design Plan that illustrates the intended character of individual neighborhoods and community areas.

The proposed Montecito Ranch MUP (Development Design Services and GraphicAccess 2008b) contains comprehensive design guidelines and development standards intended to reinforce the existing rural community character of the Project area. Proposed residences would be located in the flatter portions of the Project site, and large contiguous open space areas containing steep slopes, knolls, ridgelines, canyons, drainages and rock outcroppings would be preserved. Retention of these natural features and landforms would retain diversity and vividness within the Project area. The Proposed Project would be consistent with this condition.

5.6.4 Conservation/Environmental Conditions

32. Existing rock outcroppings shall be preserved and integrated into the development of the site.

The Montecito Ranch SPA is characterized by large granitic outcroppings interspersed throughout the Project site. The Proposed Project has been designed to maximize preservation of existing rock outcroppings to the extent possible and integrate them into the Project design. Although minor impacts to select rock outcrops would occur upon Project development, the prominent outcrops would be retained thereby not detracting from the existing vividness provided by these distinct visual features. The Project would comply with the intent of this condition.

33. Grading shall be minimized. Streets, walkways, buildings, retaining walls, and other improvements should not modify the natural landforms.

The Proposed Project has been designed to preserve the existing steep slopes, canyons and major natural landforms to a substantial degree. The Project proposes to consolidate the residential development in the northern and eastern portions of the SPA site to minimize the development area and provide a larger open space preserve. Development of the Project would require grading of approximately 330 acres of the 935-acre site (approximately 35 percent) located generally within the topographically level and gently sloping portions of the site. The remainder of the Project site, which largely contains steep slopes, canyons and major landforms, would be preserved in its natural form. The heights of proposed manufactured cut and fill slopes have been minimized to retain natural landforms while preserving substantial biological or cultural resources. Manufactured slopes would be at a maximum ratio of 2:1 and the maximum height of cut and fill slopes would be a maximum of 50 feet. All manufactured slopes in excess of 15 feet would be contour graded (using techniques such as slope undulation, rounding the top and toe of slopes and varying gradients) and/or would be hydroseeded with a native seed mix. In addition, street alignments have been designed to avoid major landforms and minimize encroachment into steep terrain. Proposed grading within the SPA, therefore, would not substantially alter the overall visual character of the Project site, and would not conflict with Condition 33.

34. Open space easements shall be placed on the oak woodlands and slopes over 50 percent.

The northern portion of the Project site contains dense oak woodlands, which are dominant visual features and provide visual continuity within this portion of the SPA. This area would be included in permanent open space upon development of the Proposed Project. Isolated oaks occur elsewhere on site, and Project development would impact eight individual trees that are separated from the main woodland area to the north (REC 2008a). Preservation of this dominant visual feature would not interrupt existing visual continuity.

Most of the on-site steep slopes would be included as part of the open space preserve. Minor encroachments would occur to very small slopes over 50 percent, however, such slopes are located within the residential development footprint and not protected by the RPO (REC 2008b). These minor encroachments would not disrupt the visual continuity of the larger slopes that they comprise. The Proposed Project would be consistent with the intent of this condition.

5.7 CONSISTENCY WITH THE RAMONA COMMUNITY PLAN

The Project site is located within the area addressed in the RCP, which was adopted by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on October 5, 1978, and last amended on April 17, 2002. The RCP implements the goals and policies of the Regional Land Use Element and sets forth goals, objectives and policies intended to guide development within the community. The Community Character, Circulation, Scenic Highways and Open Space Elements of the Community Plan contain criteria pertaining to visual quality that were not addressed in the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area section of the RCP. The relevant policies are listed and analyzed by Element and policy number.

5.7.1 Community Character Element

1. Mature trees should be conserved wherever possible in all public and private development projects.

The northern portion of the Project site contains dense mature oak woodlands, which are dominant visual features and provide visual continuity within this portion of the SPA. This area would be included in permanent open space upon development of the Proposed Project. Isolated oaks occur elsewhere on site, and Project development would impact eight individual trees that are separated from the main woodland area to the north (REC 2008a). In addition, one stand of mature eucalyptus trees, located in the south central portion of the SPA site would be preserved within dedicated open space. Where prominent mature trees that substantially contribute to the visual environment are lost due to proposed off-site road widening (e.g., along Ash Street and existing Montecito Way), such trees will be replaced. Impacts to trees comprising sensitive vegetation communities would be mitigated accordingly (via biology mitigation measures). The Proposed Project would be consistent with this policy.

3. Site design should include appropriate street tree planting as an element of landscaping requirements.

The landscape design guidelines within the proposed Montecito Ranch MUP require provision of street trees along all Project roadways. Street trees would consist of a variety of native and non-native species, to be visually compatible with the existing rural community character. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be consistent with this policy.

4. Drainage and sidewalk design shall be appropriate to a rural community, recognizing existing road edge patterns and accommodating existing street landscaping.

Site runoff would be directed into existing, natural drainage courses, to the extent possible. In areas where this is not possible, drainage would be directed to underground conveyances and detention basins. All internal streets would be constructed with curbs and gutters, which is consistent with Ash Street. Sidewalks would only be provided along the south side of Montecito Ranch Road. Sidewalks would be five-feet-wide and would integrate with the proposed streetscape treatments, including street trees, landscaped median and parkways. Streetscapes would reinforce a rural character within the SPA community. Off-site roadway widening would be finished with curbs and gutters at the roadway edge. Existing drainage facilities would be extended with similar types of facilities, although the road grades may be raised above the floodplain to correct existing flood problems. The proposed SPA development and off-site roadway improvements would be consistent with this policy.

11. Site design shall minimize the destruction of existing trees, both native and non-native.

As discussed above, the Proposed Project would preserve all of the oak woodlands in the northern portion of the SPA site in dedicated open space (REC 2008a). A mature stand of eucalyptus trees in the south central portion of the SPA also would be preserved. In addition, Project landscape plans propose to plant several species of deciduous and evergreen trees throughout the Project site. The proposed roadway improvements would avoid impacts to existing mature trees where feasible, while still maintaining the road design capacity and speeds. Where tree removal cannot be avoided, removed trees will be replaced at a 2:1 ratio with 24-inch box specimens, thereby retaining existing visual amenities related to the existence of existing trees. The Proposed Project would be consistent with this policy.

17. Grading shall be minimized. Streets, walkways, buildings, retaining walls, and other improvements should not modify the natural landforms.

The proposed water tank location is sited off site in order to achieve the required elevation for gravity flow to the Project. The proposed off-site water tank would be located on a local hilltop (approximately 1,800 feet AMSL), and the associated access road would cut into steep hillsides. These cut slopes would substantially contrast with the surrounding topography, and would disrupt existing visual continuity. The resulting visual effects are discussed above under "Visual Quality Impacts," which identifies significant adverse visual impacts. Development of the water tank and access road, therefore, would be inconsistent with this condition.

5.7.2 Land Use Element

5. Ridgeline development should be discouraged. It should only be allowed if a viewshed analysis shows only minimal impact on adjacent properties and scenic roads identified in the Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan. County Road Standards in new subdivisions shall conform to the standards in the Ramona Design Review Manual to be prepared.

The proposed off-site water tank would be located on a local hilltop (approximately 1,800 feet AMSL), and the associated access road would cut into steep hillsides. In some areas, cut slopes would occur in excess of 30 feet and the gradient would be steeper than 2:1. The tank and cut slopes would substantially contrast with the surrounding topography, and would disrupt existing visual continuity. The resulting visual effects of this ridgeline development are discussed above under "Visual Quality Impacts," which identifies significant adverse visual impacts. The Proposed Project, therefore, would be inconsistent with this condition.

5.7.3 Circulation Element

5. Ensure that road design follows the natural contours, thereby minimizing any impact upon the aesthetic and environmental character of the Planning Area.

On-site Project roadways generally would be located in the gently sloping and topographically level portions of the Montecito Ranch SPA. Construction of Montecito Ranch Road would encroach into steeper hillsides at approximately four locations in an effort to preserve sensitive biological resources. Manufactured cut slopes, however, would be contour graded (if over 15 feet in height) and hydroseeded with a native seed mix to minimize visual impacts associated with these manufactured slopes. Proposed off-site roadway improvements would not require substantial changes to roadway grade. Any changes would occur only if necessary to maintain the safety, design capacity and design speed of these improved roads. The Proposed Project would be consistent with this policy.

5.7.4 Scenic Highways Element

1. Corridors of the Scenic Highways identified in the Ramona Community Plan Scenic Highway Map will be protected from incompatible land uses.

The northern-most portion of the Project site is immediately adjacent to a portion of SR 78, a designated Scenic Highway corridor and Resource Conservation Area in the RCP. This area,

characterized by moderate to steep slopes and dense oak woodlands, would be dedicated open space. Thus, the visual character of the scenic corridor would be retained and protected from incompatible land uses. The Proposed Project would be consistent with this policy.

5.8 CONSISTENCY WITH THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The San Diego County General Plan (various dates, as amended) designates appropriate planned land uses for each portion of the County. The Project site is located within the County's Estate Development Area regional plan category, which includes agricultural and low-density residential uses, with parcel sizes ranging from 2 to 20 acres. The land use designations for the Montecito Ranch SPA site include (21) Specific Plan Area (.5), (18) Multiple Rural Use and (19) Intensive Agricultural. The General Plan designation for a majority of the site (approximately 926.3 acres) is (21) Specific Plan Area (.5). A small triangular area located adjacent to the northwestern SPA boundary (approximately seven acres) is designated (18) Multiple Rural Use. A small portion (approximately two acres) of the Project site located in the northeastern portion of the site, adjacent to SR 78, is designated as (19) Intensive Agricultural.

All policies pertaining to visual quality within the various elements of the General Plan are addressed either in the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area section of the RCP or in the elements of the RCP (refer to Sections 5.6 and 5.7). Therefore, no further discussion of General Plan policies is required.

5.9 CONSISTENCY WITH THE ZONING ORDINANCE

The County Zoning Ordinance identifies the permitted uses of the Project site, consistent with the land use designations of the General Plan. The majority of the Montecito Ranch SPA site (approximately 926.3 acres) is zoned S88, Specific Plan Land Use Designation. The S88 designation is intended to accommodate Specific Plan Areas. In addition, a two-acre portion, located in the northeast portion of the site, and a seven-acre triangular area adjacent to the northwestern site boundary, are zoned A70, Limited Agriculture. The A70 zone is intended to create and preserve areas primarily for agricultural crop production and permits residential development with a minimum lot size of four acres. The County, however, will require these areas be rezoned to S88 to be consistent with the remainder of the Project site.

The portion of the Project site zoned S88 has a Special Area Regulation of Scenic (S Designator) because the Project site abuts a portion of SR 78 that is designated a Scenic Highway corridor in the General Plan. Thus, the Proposed Project must comply with the Scenic Area Regulations criteria set forth in §5200 through §5299 of the zoning ordinance. These regulations control development in areas of high scenic value to: (1) assure exclusion of incompatible uses and structures, and (2) preserve and enhance the scenic resources present in adjacent areas. Applicable criteria contained in §5210 are listed below, followed immediately by a discussion of Project conformance.

§5210(a) All development shall be compatible with the topography, vegetation and colors of the natural environment and with the scenic, historic and recreational resources of the designated areas.

The Proposed Project would be developed to integrate with the existing topography and natural landforms of the Project site. Proposed residential lots and roadways generally would be located on the topographically level and gently sloping portions of the site. On-site knolls, steep slopes and large areas of natural vegetation would be preserved. Implementation of the design guidelines contained in the proposed Montecito Ranch MUP would ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment and with the designated scenic, historic and recreational resources on site. The guidelines also establish color schemes that would integrate with the surrounding environment. In addition, proposed landscaping emphasizes native species indigenous to the area. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be consistent with this criterion.

§5210(b)(1) The placement of buildings and structures shall not detract from the visual setting or obstruct significant views, and shall be compatible with the topography of the site and adjacent areas.

The Proposed Project would develop single-family residential homes in accordance with the design guidelines set forth in the proposed Montecito Ranch MUP to complement the existing Montecito Ranch house and the landforms and topography of the site and environs. Proposed residential lots generally would be located on the topographically level and gently sloping portions of the site and residences would not be substantially visible from surrounding vantage points (see Sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4). Siting and orientation of individual residences would vary to retain natural landforms. On-site knolls and steep hillsides would be preserved and proposed residences would not substantially obstruct views of these on-site landforms. Moreover, the northernmost portion of the SPA is characterized by moderate to steep slopes and dense oak woodlands. No development would occur within this area and thus, the existing scenic corridor would not be affected by Project development. Based on the viewshed analysis in Section 5.0 of this report, the Project would not obstruct significant views of the scenic corridor. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this criterion.

§5210(c) The removal of native vegetation, especially timber, shall be minimized and replacement vegetation and landscaping shall be compatible with the vegetation of the designated area. Landscaping and plantings shall be used to the maximum extent practicable to screen those features listed in subsections "d," "e" and "f" of this section. Landscaping and plantings shall not obstruct significant views, either when installed or when they reach mature growth.

Approximately 18.60 acres of open Engelmann oak woodland, 10.60 acres of southern coast live oak riparian forest and 13.60 acres of dense Engelmann oak woodland are located in the northern portion of the SPA site (REC 2008a). Development of the Proposed Project would preserve all of the SPA's southern coast live oak riparian forest on site and 97.9 percent (18.21 acres) of the on-site open Engelmann oak woodland and 93.1 percent (12.67 acres) of the dense Engelmann oak woodland.

Development of the Proposed Project would preserve approximately 45.4 percent (103.96 acres) of the Project site's southern mixed chaparral and 56.1 percent (14.14 acres) of the Project site's chamise chaparral, most of which is located in the northern portion of the site. In addition, the Project would preserve approximately 78.5 percent (250.36 acres) of the Project site's Diegan coastal sage scrub, some of which is located in the northern portion of the site. The Project, therefore, would preserve a majority of the on-site scrub habitats (chaparral and Diegan coastal sage scrub), thereby minimizing removal of native vegetation in accordance with the guideline.

The proposed Montecito Ranch MUP includes landscape design guidelines intended to define and establish a rural residential community character compatible with the surrounding community. The proposed plant palette incorporates a variety of plant materials to provide flexibility and diversity and emphasizes native species supplemented by ornamental plantings. Native species would be predominantly planted in slope revegetation/erosion control areas to integrate with the existing native vegetation, while drought tolerant non-native species would be more appropriate in the streetscapes. The northernmost portion of the SPA, characterized by moderate to steep slopes and oak woodlands, would be within dedicated permanent open space areas. No landscaping would be installed in this area that would affect views within the scenic corridor along Pine Street. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be consistent with this criterion.

§5210(d) Any development involving more than one building or structure shall provide common access roads and pedestrian walkways. Parking and outside storage areas shall be screened from view, to the maximum extent feasible, from either the scenic highway or adjacent scenic, historic or recreational resource by existing topography, by the placement of buildings and structures or by landscaping and plantings which harmonize with the natural landscape of the designated area.

The Proposed Project would provide common public and private roadways, as well as walkways and trails. Proposed common parking or outside storage areas that could be seen from the above-named sensitive areas would be shielded. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this criterion.

§5210(f) The alteration of the natural topography of the site shall be minimized and shall avoid detrimental effects to the visual setting of the designated area and the existing natural drainage system. Alterations of the natural topography shall be screened from view from either the scenic highway or the adjacent scenic, historic or recreational resource by landscaping and plantings which harmonize with the natural landscape of the designated area, except when such alterations add variety to or otherwise enhance the visual setting of the designated area.

The Proposed Project would preserve the area immediately adjacent to SR 78 as dedicated open space. The dense oak woodlands and steeply sloping hillsides would be retained in their natural state and no development would occur within this area. In addition, the proposed residential development would occur within the topographically level and gently sloping portions of the SPA located south and west of the hills visible from SR 78. The residential lots abutting the open space would provide an overall setback from SR 78 ranging from approximately 700 feet to more than 1,500 feet. No development would occur along the minor east-west trending ridgeline on site. Dense oak woodlands are present on the south side of SR 78, effectively screening views into the Project site from the scenic highway. The combination of the intervening topography and the open space buffer between the proposed residences and the road would essentially preclude visibility of Project development from SR 78. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with this criterion.

§5210(h) The interior and exterior lighting of the buildings and structures and the lighting of signs, roads and parking areas shall be compatible with the lighting employed in the designated area.

All Project lighting would incorporate the design guidelines set forth in the proposed Montecito Ranch MUP. In addition, all exterior lighting associated with homes would be directed and shielded, per the design guidelines. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be consistent with this criterion.

5.10 CONSISTENCY WITH THE DARK SKY ORDINANCE

The Dark Sky Ordinance (Division 9 of the LPC) is a County Regulatory Ordinance (Division 9, §59.101 - 59.115) that restricts the use of outdoor lighting that emits undesirable light rays into the night sky. The primary intent of this code is to minimize lighting that may affect astronomical research at the Mount Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories. The LPC defines two zones in the unincorporated portion of San Diego County, Zone A and B. Zone A consists of areas within a 15-mile radius of Mount Laguna and Mount Palomar, Zone B includes all remaining areas within the unincorporated County which are not defined as Zone A. The Project site, the off-site utility improvements and off-site roadway and intersection improvements all would be located within Zone B.

Currently, the project site and immediate surrounding area are not lit with streetlights. Visible night lighting is associated with private homes and the nearby Ramona Airport. Project lighting would include lights similar to, or lesser in intensity than, other developed areas in the County. All public road improvements would include lighting (where proposed) that is consistent with the County LPC. Streetlights and pathway lighting along Montecito Ranch Road and neighborhood streets would illuminate areas that are currently dark, and the proposed houses and public facilities (i.e., parks and school) would be illuminated. Although project lighting would produce light levels brighter than currently exist, all lighting would adhere to the County of San Diego's Dark Sky Ordinance. Lighting design would include the use of shields and full cut-off light fixtures to ensure that light rays are projected downward and that glare and spillage into the sky or onto adjacent property are limited. Each light would provide the lowest light level necessary, and would be limited to less than 4,050 lumens output, maintaining compliance with the LPC. Based on compliance with the LPC and the design measures to minimize glare and spill, Project lighting would result in less than significant adverse impacts.

5.11 CONSISTENCY WITH THE RESOURCE PROTECTION ORDINANCE

The County's RPO provides special regulations applicable to certain types of discretionary applications, including tentative maps. The ordinance focuses on the preservation and protection of the County's unique topography, natural beauty, diversity, natural resources and quality of life. It is intended to protect the integrity of sensitive lands including wetlands, wetland buffers, floodplains/floodways, sensitive habitats, cultural resources and steep slopes, which are components of visual quality and community character.

The RPO defines steep slopes as all lands having a natural gradient of 25 percent or greater and a minimum rise of 50 vertical feet, unless said land has been substantially disturbed by previous legal grading. The RPO includes the following elements with regard to steep slopes:

- Provision of a density formula for limiting the number of lots and/or dwelling units in specific slope categories

- Provision of a steep slope encroachment allowance for development, based on the percentage of the lot in steep slopes

- Requirement of the dedication of an open space easement over all steep slopes, except for the allowable encroachment area (and other specific exemptions)

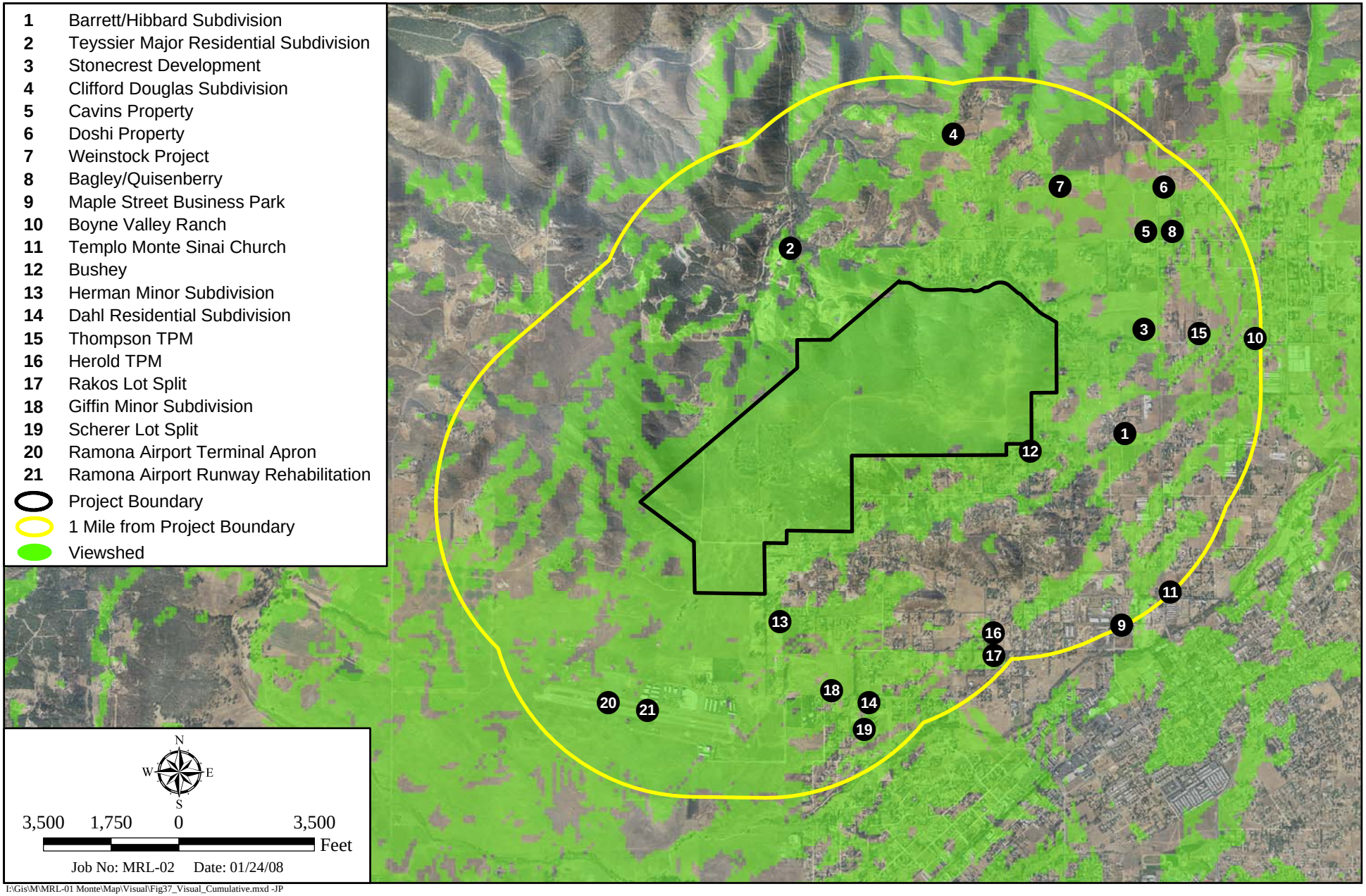
- Requirement of submittal of a resource protection study, including a slope analysis, with specific requirements

Pursuant to the RPO, the Project site includes a total of 102.6 acres of RPO-defined steep slopes. The Project would preserve all of these RPO-defined steep slopes in natural open space areas (REC 2008b). No RPO slopes occur along the proposed roadway improvement/construction alignments. The off-site water storage tank and associated access road would impact RPO steep slopes; however, the RPO provides an exemption for essential public facilities or projects, or recreational facilities that include public use. The RPO defines an "essential public facility or project" as "any structure or improvement necessary for the provision of public services, which must be located in the particular location to serve its purpose and for which no less environmentally damaging location, alignment, or non-structural alternative exists." The proposed water tank and access road meet this definition, as they comprise a necessary public facility and infrastructure to provide potable water service and the tank must be located at a particular elevation in order to adequately function. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the RPO with respect to steep slopes.

5.12 SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION-RELATED VISUAL IMPACTS

Construction of the proposed off-site roadway and utilities improvements would result in temporary visual impacts along roadways during construction activities. Off-site water and sewer (under Wastewater Management Option 1) pipelines would be constructed within existing road rights-of-way, including Ash Street, Montecito Way, Montecito Road and Kalbaugh Street. Construction of these utility pipelines would require excavation of trenches within the road rights-of-way. Off-site roadway improvements also would be required along Ash Street, Montecito Way and Montecito Road. Disruptions to the rural visual character of these existing streets would occur throughout the duration of the construction period, resulting in short-term construction-related visual impacts. These construction-related impacts, would be temporary, however, and although a nuisance, are not considered significant.

Similarly, construction of the proposed residential development would require several types and quantities of heavy construction equipment. Maximum grading equipment on site are estimated to include: eight scrapers, four roller compactors, four haul trucks, three water trucks, two backhoes, one D-8 dozer, one D-9 dozer, one D-10 dozer, one rubber tire dozer, one loader, one motor grader, and one tube grinder. Utilities and surface improvements would require at a maximum three rollers, two backhoes, two motor graders, one excavator, one excavator with a compaction wheel, one loader, one water truck, one scraper, one vibratory roller, one curb machine (concrete paver), one paver, one crane, one paving machine, and one skiploader. During housing construction, the maximum equipment would include eight forklifts, four generators, and two cranes. An estimated 15 to 240 workers per day (depending on the construction activity) would be required to complete grading and construction of the Project under Wastewater Management Option 1. It is estimated that an additional 70 workers per day would be required to construct the WRF under Option 2. Construction vehicles



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Visual Resources Cumulative Study Area

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 37

would access the site via Montecito Way and Ash Street. Construction staging would be located within proposed grading areas of the SPA site and off-site roads. The Proposed Project would be constructed in phases, beginning with Unit 1 and ending with Unit 2, although both units would be in various stages of grading/construction at one time. Construction is anticipated to take a total of three to six years to complete. Views into the Project site during the construction period would likely capture construction equipment and various stages of Project development, largely contrasting with the existing rural environment. While these views could be unsightly and would disrupt the existing rural visual character of the Project site area, they would be temporary, and although a nuisance, would not be considered significant.

5.13 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Figure 37 depicts the cumulative projects study area for visual resources. Projects within the study area include the Proposed Project, as well as 21 additional projects located within one mile of Proposed Project boundaries (Table 1 and Figure 37). Figure 37 also illustrates the Project viewshed. A viewshed is an analytical tool that identifies the locations of viewers potentially affected as a result of Project implementation. For the Project area, views within a one-mile radius were considered close enough to allow viewers to visually "read" Project elements such as landform modifications and the spatial mass and form of proposed structures. Beyond one mile, topographic modifications and structures become visually muted and distinguishable only as components of the larger visual landscape. The viewshed was generated via computer software that applies topographic data and determines which areas are "seen" or "not seen" and identifies from which part of the surrounding area some portion of the Project site is potentially visible. Shielding from intervening structures or vegetation is not factored into the generated viewshed map.

The projects included within the cumulative visual resources study area consist of 16 residential projects, 1 industrial project, 2 institutional projects, and the Ramona Airport expansion (two separate elements). Implementation of the Proposed Project and cumulative projects would contribute to an overall change in the visual character in some areas of the RCP area, particularly the immediate vicinity of the Montecito Ranch SPA. These proposed residential developments would involve smaller subdivisions and lot splits (2 to 36 lots) at smaller densities, but nonetheless would contribute to an overall change in the visual character in the Project area. Several of the identified residential developments are located to the east and southeast within or adjacent to the more developed Ramona Town Center. Construction of these proposed residential developments would not substantially change the visual environment. Proposed residential projects within the more rural Santa Maria Valley would constitute a more noticeable change in the visual environment, as this area shifts from an open space environment to one of planned rural/estate residential uses.

The Proposed Project and other planned residential projects in the vicinity, however, would preserve large open space areas. The Project would site residences on approximately 0.5-acre (20,000-square feet minimum) lots, but would provide larger areas of contiguous open space. This is generally consistent with the existing developed areas and the planned visual character of the community. Rural residential development is located to the immediate south, east and north with lot sizes ranging from one to eight or more acres. In general, existing residences to the southeast are sited on smaller rural lots compared to those to the north and northeast. Proposed residences within the SPA would be located in the eastern portion of the Project site, which would be adjacent to existing residential development. Large undeveloped and open space areas are located adjacent to the western, southwestern and northwestern SPA boundaries, and the Project would preserve large on-site areas of

open space that would be contiguous with the adjacent off-site undeveloped land/open space. Development of residences adjacent to existing rural residences and provision of contiguous open space would be consistent with overall existing visual patterns in the Ramona community of developed areas located within more agricultural and open space areas.

In addition, although existing landforms in the Project site vicinity would be altered through development of rural/estate residential uses (including the Proposed Project, as well as other planned residential projects in the Ramona community), major topographic features and scenic resources would be retained pursuant to adopted County policies and ordinances. These overall landform and visual changes are anticipated in existing land use and zoning designations in the Project site vicinity. Preservation of large open space areas would contribute to retention of the rural visual character currently experienced in outlying of the Ramona area as a whole. Additionally, retention of major landforms and topographic features would retain visual diversity and vividness within this rural community.

Table 1 PROJECTS WITHIN THE VISUAL RESOURCES CUMULATIVE STUDY AREA					
Map Key	Identifying Project Number	Project Name	Project Location	Acreage of Project Site	Proposed Improvements
Proposed Project	TM 5250	Montecito Ranch (Proposed Project)	North/northwest of Montecito Way and Montecito Road	935.2	417 SFR, charter high school site, local park and historic park sites, WRF, improvements to segments of Ash Street, Montecito Way and Montecito Road
1	TM 5091	Barrett/Hibbard Subdivision	1105 Ash Street	49.67	12 SFR
2	TM 5194	Teyssier Major Residential Subdivision	Intersection of Horizon View Drive and San Pasqual Road	287	36 lots
3	TM 5244	Stonecrest Development	Northwest corner of Haverford Road and SR 78	67.7	14 lots, 4 acres each
4	BC 97-0164/ TPM 13136	Clifford Douglas Subdivision	Rancho Villa Road between Rustic Villa Road and San Pasqual Valley Road	51.3	Boundary adjustment merging parcels into 7 SFR lots
5	TPM 20465	Cavins Property	Northwest corner of Pine Street and Washington Street	40	5 lots and SFR (four 4-acre lots and one 19-acre lot)
6	TPM 19214RPL	Doshi Property	Northeast intersection of SR 78 and Rancho Trails Road	24.3	5 lots and SFR
7	TPM 20615	Weinstock Project	Northeast corner of Quest Road and Prestige Road	37.5	5 lots and SFR
8	TPM 20498	Bagley/Quisenberry	East of SR 78 between Washington Street and Rancho Trails Road	37.4	5 SFR
9	TM 5368/ MUP 03-005/ STP 99-070	Maple Street Business Park	432 Maple Street	2.9	Condo conversion of 16 existing industrial and commercial units
10	MUP 00-004	Boyne Valley Ranch	535 West Haverford Road	4.74	Increase from 6 to 14 beds and construction of 11 new parking spaces

Table 1 (cont.) PROJECTS WITHIN THE VISUAL RESOURCES CUMULATIVE STUDY AREA					
Map Key	Identifying Project Number	Project Name	Project Location	Acreage of Project Site	Proposed Improvements
11	MUP 04-052	Templo Monte Sinai Church	Northeast corner of Olive Street and SR 78	4	2 church buildings and 147 parking spaces
12	TPM 20403RPL1	Bushey	1336 Ash Street between Alice Street and Maple Street	9.5	3 SFR lots
13	TPM 20801	Herman Minor Subdivision	2268 El Paso Street	10	4 lots
14	TPM 20598	Dahl Residential Subdivision	2156 Montecito Road. South side of Montecito Road between Hughes Street and Kalbaugh Street	12.53	4 lots
15	TPM 20769	Thompson TPM	717 Haverford Road	8	1 SFR
16	TPM 20463	Herold TPM	North side of Walnut Street between Alice and Davis Street	4.4	4 SFR
17	TPM 20442	Rakos Lot Split	South side of Walnut Street between Alice Street and Davis Street	4.85	4 parcels
18	TPM 20826	Giffin Minor Subdivision	2249 Montecito Road	5.17	2 lots
19	TPM 20983	Scherer Lot Split	505 Matthew Court	2.36	2 lots
20	TBD	Ramona Airport Runway Rehabilitation	Ramona Airport	Unknown	Rehabilitation of runway 9/27 and drainage improvements phase I, at Ramona Airport
21	TBD	Ramona Airport Terminal Apron	Ramona Airport	Unknown	Terminal apron improvements at Ramona Airport. To be completed by Summer 2010

du = dwelling unit(s); SFR = single-family residential unit(s)

Furthermore, the proposed residences would not be visible from the SR 78, which is a designated scenic corridor and Resource Conservation Area in the RCP making it the most sensitive public viewpoint with respect to the Project. Proposed homes would be located on the generally level and gently sloping portions of the SPA site behind the hillsides that abut SR 78. The lack of visibility from this major thoroughfare in the community would further contribute to the retention of the existing rural visual character of the Ramona community. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would not result in cumulatively significant visual impacts.

6.0 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

6.1 MONTECITO WAY VIEWSHED

The Proposed Project would widen Montecito Way (from Sonora Way to Montecito Road) from the existing pavement width of 24 feet within a 40-foot-wide right-of-way to a uniform pavement width of 40 feet within a 60-foot-wide right-of-way. Two four-foot high masonry sound attenuation walls would be constructed in the road right-of-way in front of two houses. The walls would be approximately 80 and 90 feet in length. Road widening would require removal of existing mature trees and other landscaping along the roadway, which form dominant visual elements within the Montecito Way viewshed. The loss of these trees and shrubs and the addition of the sound walls would result in a short-term change in the visual character along this roadway. Removal of the existing landscaping temporarily eliminate the partial screening they currently provide of views into the SPA site. Views in the short-term would be substantially different, as landscaping would be sparse, and the scale would be much smaller compared to current conditions. Combined with the approximate doubling of the existing pavement width (from 24 feet to 40 feet), short-term visual impacts along Montecito Way would be adverse and significant.

6.2 OFF-SITE WATER STORAGE TANK/ACCESS ROAD

The proposed off-site water storage tank would be constructed on a local hilltop at an elevation of approximately 1,800 feet AMSL and thus views of the water tank would be provided from some of the proposed residences to the northeast, Project roadways and existing public viewpoints. Although the tank would not be a unique visual feature in the general Project vicinity, it would be located atop a ridgeline in an undeveloped natural area with no other developed features in close proximity. Thus, the tank would substantially disrupt the existing visual continuity, resulting in a significant visual impact.

In addition, grading required for the access road to the tank would require cut slopes of up to 30 feet tall within steep terrain at the upper elevations. In some areas, the gradient of these cut slopes would be steeper than 2:1. Creation of manufactured slopes of this height and steepness would substantially contrast with the existing natural topography in the area. Impacts related to visual quality and landform alteration would be significant.

6.3 VISUAL POLICY CONSISTENCY

The Proposed Project would be inconsistent with Conditions 8, 16 and 33 of the Montecito Ranch Specific Planning Area section of the RCP. These policies address hillside/ridgeline development and landform modification. Development of the proposed off-site water storage tank and associated access

road would be inconsistent with these three policies in the RCP for the reasons summarized above in section 6.2.

7.0 RECOMMENDED MITIGATION/AVOIDANCE MEASURES

The following section discusses potential mitigation to reduce potentially significant visual impacts identified in Section 6.0 to below a level of significance/avoidance measures.

7.1 MONTECITO WAY VIEWSHED

The following mitigation is proposed to reduce short-term visual impacts along Montecito Way to less than significant levels:

- Following improvements to Montecito Way, the sides of the roadway shall be planted with trees and scrubs similar to what is currently present along the roadway. Trees will be planted from 24-inch container boxes and are anticipated to initially be approximately 12 to 15 feet in height. The trees have a growth rate of up to three feet per year. Tree species will include, but not be limited to eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), Brisbane box tree (*Tristania converta*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), and California pepper (*Schinus molle*). Trees will be spaced randomly along the roadway approximately every 30 to 40 feet. Scrubs will be used to screen the understory of the trees. Scrubs will be planted from five-gallon containers and would grow up to approximately two feet per year. Scrub species will include, but not be limited to, toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* spp.), agave (*Agave* spp.), and lantana (Lantana sp.).
- Screening vegetation (similar to that discussed above) shall be planted in front of the noise walls along Montecito Way.

7.2 OFF-SITE WATER STORAGE TANK/ACCESS ROAD

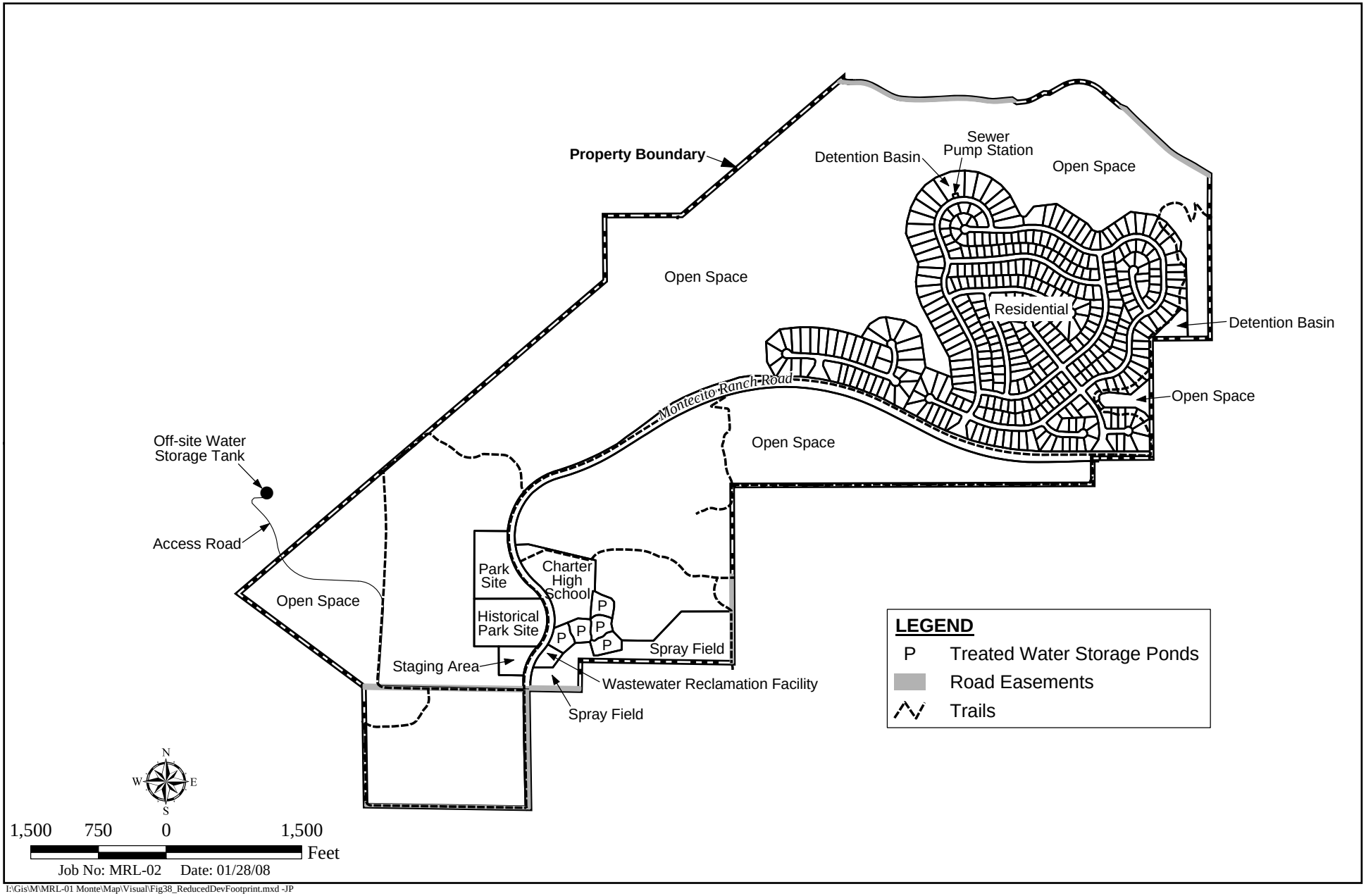
Potential mitigation for impacts to visual quality and landform alteration associated with the off-site water storage tank and associated access road include installation of special landscaping treatments around the water tank and on cut slopes required for the access road. Landscape treatments shall consist of native species compatible with existing trees and vegetation cover. This mitigation will reduce visual impacts associated with the off-site water storage tank and associated access road to less than significant levels.

7.3 VISUAL POLICY CONSISTENCY

Impacts related to visual policy would be mitigated through implementation of measures identified above for the off-site water storage tank.

8.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

This section evaluates four project alternatives, including the Reduced Development Footprint Alternative, the Reduced Density Alternative, the No Project–Develop Per Legal Parcels Alternative and the Closed Water System Alternative.



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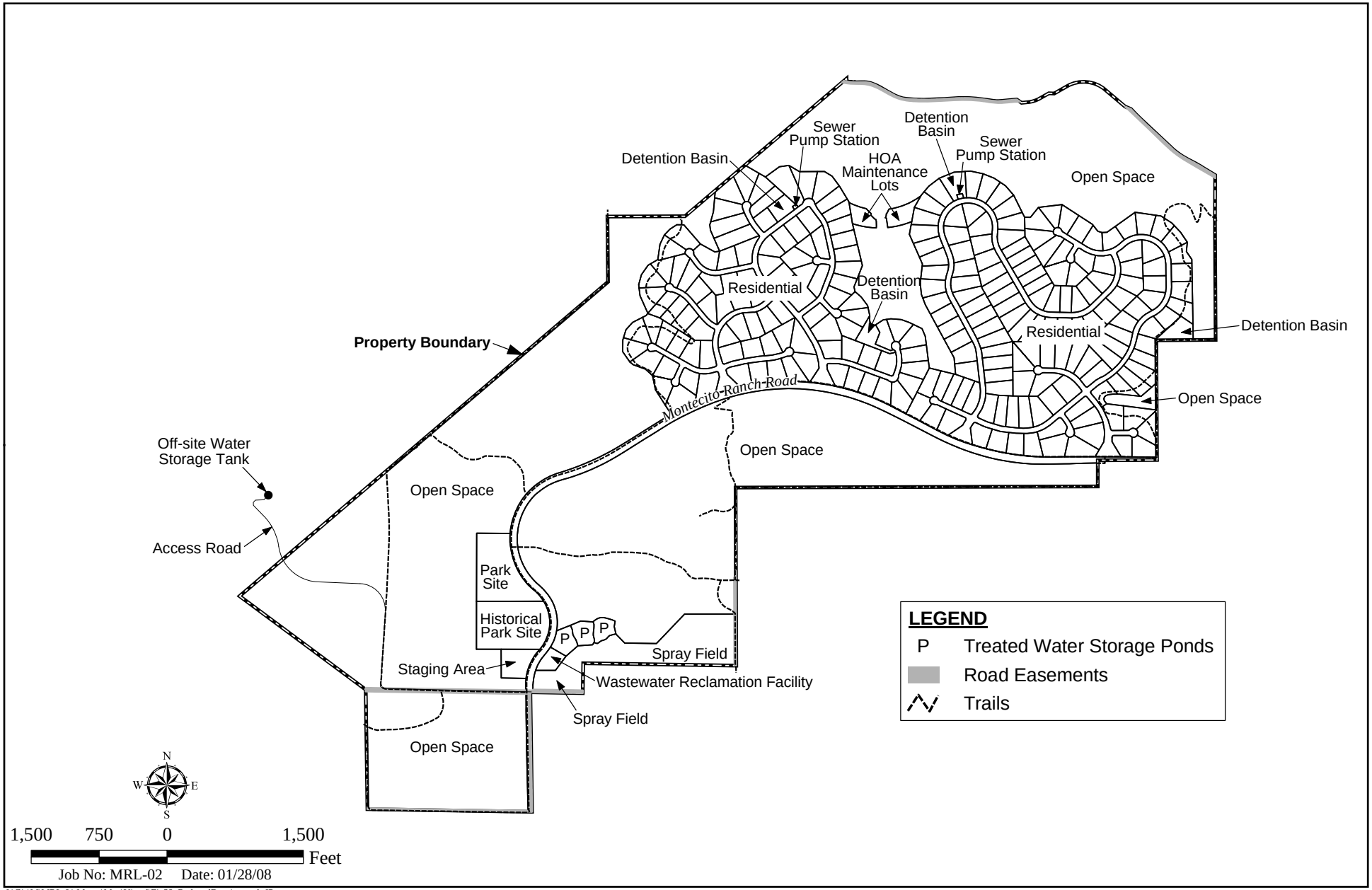
Reduced Development Footprint Alternative Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 38



Reduced Density Alternative Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 39

8.1 REDUCED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT ALTERNATIVE

8.1.1 Description

The Reduced Development Footprint Alternative would include 417 single-family residential units on minimum 10,000-square foot lots (Figure 38). This alternative would retain the same park sites, charter high school site and WRF (under Wastewater Management Option 2) as the Proposed Project. Because this alternative would have a smaller residential development footprint, more open space would be provided than under the Proposed Project. As for the Proposed Project, open space easements would encompass areas such as sensitive biological habitats, important archaeological resources, steep slopes, buffers, and other environmentally sensitive areas to create viable wildlife corridors and linkages (but to slightly greater extents), with no development permitted in the open space easements. All off-site roadway and utility improvements under this alternative would be the same as those described for the Proposed Project.

8.1.2 Potentially Significant Impacts

The Reduced Development Footprint Alternative would result in similar visual impacts as the Proposed Project. Significant short-term impacts resulting from widening Montecito Way would remain significant. Visual impacts resulting from the off-site water tank and access road also would remain significant. Views into the residential development from off-site areas would capture a higher intensity development that would contrast more with the surrounding neighborhoods than the Proposed Project. However, reducing the development footprint of the residential uses would afford larger areas of contiguous open space, which would provide greater visual continuity with adjacent undeveloped areas. Design features could be implemented to reduce the appearance of massing, such as enhanced landscaped treatments and/or berming to screen views from adjacent rural residential neighborhoods. Any visual impacts resulting from intensifying residential clusters would be offset by expanding open space areas. No additional visual impacts would occur under this alternative.

8.1.3 Mitigation/Avoidance Measures

Mitigation to reduce impacts resulting from widening Montecito Way and construction of the off-site water tank and access road would be the same as identified for the Proposed Project.

8.2 REDUCED DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

8.2.1 Description

The Reduced Density Alternative would develop 244 single-family residential units on minimum one-acre lots (Figure 39). While the overall site density under this alternative would be lower than that identified for the Proposed Project, the development footprint and open space areas would be similar, except that there would be no dedication of a charter high school site, with this land instead being preserved as additional open space. This alternative would include the same historic park site, local park, and WRF (under Wastewater Management Option 2) as noted for the Proposed Project. Open space easements would encompass areas such as sensitive biological habitats, important archaeological resources, steep slopes, buffers and other environmentally sensitive areas to create viable wildlife corridors and linkages, with no development permitted in the open space easements.

Montecito Road would not be widened under this alternative. All other off-site road and utility improvements would be the same as those described for the Proposed Project.

8.2.2 Potentially Significant Impacts

The Reduce Density Alternative would result in similar visual impacts that were identified for the Proposed Project. Residences would be located on larger lots (one-acre versus half-acre) that would be more consistent with surrounding large lot rural residential neighborhoods, which would further reduce less than significant impacts to visual character. Short-term impacts to the Montecito Way viewshed would remain significant. Visual impacts resulting from the off-site water tank and access road also would remain significant. No additional visual impacts are anticipated under this alternative.

8.2.3 Mitigation/Avoidance Measures

Mitigation to reduce impacts resulting from widening Montecito Way and construction of the off-site water tank and access road would be the same as identified for the Proposed Project.

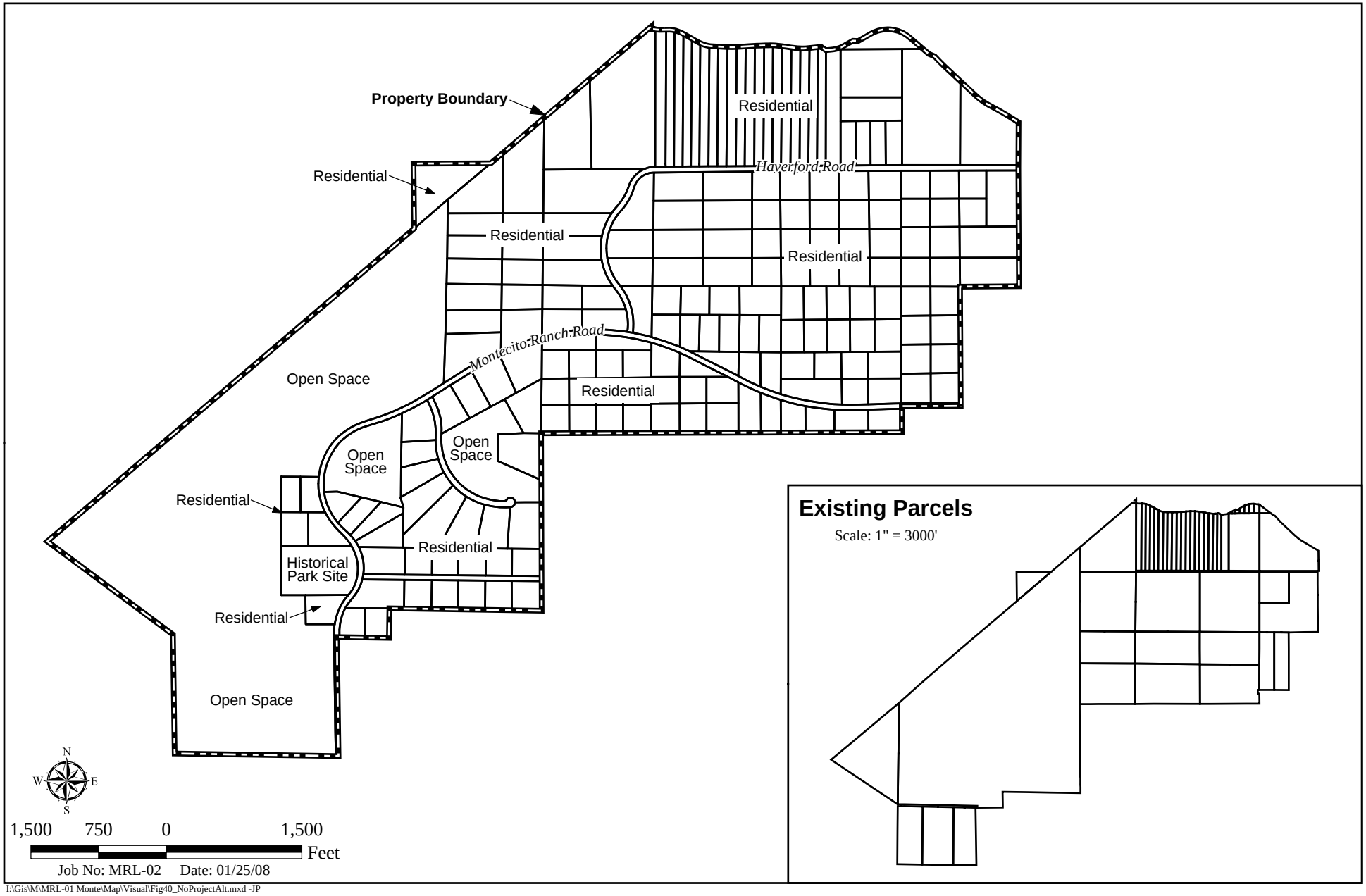
8.3 NO PROJECT–DEVELOPMENT PER LEGAL PARCELS ALTERNATIVE

8.3.1 Description

The No Project–Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative assumes that the existing legal parcels within the Montecito Ranch planning area would develop gradually via a series of applications from separate property owners according to the existing zoning for the site. Based on existing zoning, this could result in development of an estimated maximum of 196 single-family residential units on minimum two- to four-acre lots (Figure 40). Dedication of an historical park site containing the Montecito Ranch House also would likely be required under this alternative. Topographical constraints were considered during the development of this conceptual plan, with lots containing steep slopes assumed to be a minimum of four acres. This alternative would not include a local park, charter high school site, or WRF, and would result in less on-site open space than the Proposed Project. It is assumed that no off-site roadway improvements would be built as part of this alternative; each smaller development would likely pay a fair share toward the improvement of impacted roadways and intersections. The properties would use water wells and septic tanks; therefore, this alternative would not include the on-site WRF nor the off-site water storage tank and associated pipeline, access road, and water booster pump station.

8.3.2 Potentially Significant Impacts

The No Project–Develop Per Legal Parcels Alternative would avoid the significant impacts assessed for the Proposed Project, as the off-site water tank and access road and improvements to Montecito Way would not occur under this alternative. The No Project–Develop Per Legal Parcels Alternative would consist of a less intense development, which would provide for larger residential lots that would be more representative of existing development patterns in the general Project site area. Development of this alternative, however, would not provide the large contiguous open space areas afforded by the Proposed Project.



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No Project-Development Per Legal Parcels Alternative Conceptual Development Plan

MONTECITO RANCH - VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

HELIX

Figure 40

8.3.3 Mitigation/Avoidance Measures

Because no potentially significant visual impacts would occur from development of the No Project–Develop Per Legal Parcels Alternative, no mitigation/avoidance measures would be required.

8.4 CLOSED WATER SYSTEM ALTERNATIVE

8.4.1 Description

The Closed Water System Alternative would be the same as the Proposed Project, except that the off-site water storage tank and the associated pipeline and access road would not be constructed. The water line connections to the Project site and the water booster pump station northwest of the Montecito Way/Montecito Road intersection still would be required, and the booster pump station would be expanded to include a holding/surge tank on the 10,000-square foot lot.

8.4.2 Potentially Significant Impacts

Since the only difference between the Closed Water System Alternative and the Proposed Project is the off-site water storage tank and access road/water line, this alternative would avoid the significant visual impacts resulting from the off-site water tank and access road. Short-term impacts to the Montecito Way viewshed would remain significant. No additional visual impacts would occur due to the addition of the holding/surge tank at the water booster pump station.

8.4.3 Mitigation/Avoidance Measures

Mitigation to reduce impacts resulting from widening Montecito Way would be the same as identified for the Proposed Project.

9.0 CERTIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

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