



County of San Diego

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NEGATIVE DECLARATION

PROJECT NAME: Ramona Boutique Hotel

RECORD ID: PDS2023-STP-23-021, PDS2026-CC-26-0013

ENVIRONMENTAL LOG NO.: PDS2023-ER-23-09-002

**This Document is Considered Draft Until it is Adopted by the Appropriate
County of San Diego Decision-Making Body.**

This Negative Declaration is comprised of this form along with the Environmental Initial Study that includes the following:

- a. Initial Study and Environmental Analysis Form
 - b. Attached extended studies prepared for the Project
1. California Environmental Quality Act Negative Declaration Findings:

Find, that this Negative Declaration reflects the decision-making body's independent judgment and analysis; that the decision-making body has reviewed and considered the information contained in this Negative Declaration and the comments received during the public review period; and, on the basis of the whole record before the decision-making body, including the Initial Study and this Negative Declaration, that there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

ADOPTION STATEMENT: This Negative Declaration was adopted and above California Environmental Quality Act findings made by the:

on _____

Bronwyn Brown, Land Use/Environmental Planner
Project Planning Division



VINCE NICOLETTI
DIRECTOR

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TYLER FARMER
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

September 3, 2026

**CEQA Initial Study - Environmental Checklist Form
(Based on the State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G)**

1. Title; Project Number(s); Environmental Log Number:
Ramona Boutique Hotel Site Plan and Lot Merger; PDS2023-STP-23-021, PDS2026-CC-26-0013, PDS2023-ER-23-09-002.
2. Lead agency name and address:
County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services
3. 5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123-1239
4. a. Contact Bronwyn Brown, Planner
b. Phone number: (619) 323-4869
c. E-mail: Bronwyn.Brown2@sdcounty.ca.gov.
5. Project location:
The proposed project is located along Main Street/State Route 67 between Vermont Street and Letton Street, in the Ramona Community Plan area within the unincorporated County of San Diego. The project site consists of approximately 3.3 acres comprising three parcels, APNs 282-141-32, 282-141-33, and 282-141-34. Thomas Guide Coordinates: Page 1152, Grid E7.
6. Project Applicant name and address:

Lauren Welty
2428 Montecito Road
Ramona, CA 92065
Phone: (619) 548-4494
7. General Plan:
Community Plan: Ramona Community Plan
Regional Category: Village
Land Use Designation: General Commercial
Density: 14.5 units per gross acre
Floor Area Ratio (FAR): N/A

8. Zoning
Use Regulation: RMV4 - District of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code
Minimum Lot Size: -
Special Area Designator: Community Design Review (B), Airport (C), Design Review (D), (D5)

9. Description of project:
The Ramona Boutique Hotel Project (Project) proposes demolition of existing structures and construction and operation of a two-story, 101-room boutique hotel on approximately 3.3 acres in the unincorporated community of Ramona. The site consists of three parcels (APNs 282-141-32, 282-141-33, and 282-141-34) along Main Street/State Route 67 (SR-67) between Vermont Street and Letton Street. The parcels would be consolidated through a Lot Merger to create one legal parcel.

The Site Plan identifies approximately 60,327 square feet of gross building area, including a 59,451-square-foot hotel building and accessory structures. The hotel would contain a mix of King, Double Queen, King Suite, and one-bedroom King studio rooms, including accessible options. Amenities would include a lobby and breakfast area, fitness room, guest laundry, boardroom and meeting/event space, outdoor courtyard, second-floor deck, swimming pool, covered arrival canopy, commercial loading area, trash and storage enclosure, pool support building, internal circulation, landscaping, and stormwater facilities.

Pool use would be limited to 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily, with closure between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Signs identifying the permitted hours would be posted within the pool area.

The site is within the Village General Plan Regional Category, has a General Commercial Land Use Designation, and is subject to the RM-V4 District of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code. The property is currently developed, and existing structures and improvements would be removed to accommodate the proposed hotel.

Site Access and Roadway Improvements

Vehicular access would be provided from Main Street/SR-67 through two 40-foot-wide commercial driveways serving guests, employees, service vehicles, and emergency vehicles. No access would be provided from Vermont Street, which is a private roadway. The proposed access configuration would replace three existing direct access points along the Project's SR-67 frontage with two commercial driveways, thereby consolidating access along the frontage. Caltrans Traffic Engineering and Analysis has reviewed and conditionally approved the proposed two-driveway configuration, subject to completion of applicable final frontage and design requirements.

A ten-foot-wide all-purpose decomposed-granite trail would be constructed along the Main Street frontage for pedestrian and bicycle use. Frontage improvements would be coordinated with Caltrans and subject to applicable driveway, pedestrian, ADA, and encroachment-permit requirements. The Caltrans encroachment-permit process would address final engineering and construction-level conformance for improvements within State right-of-way.

Utilities and Service Improvements

Water and sewer service would be provided by the Ramona Municipal Water District, and electrical service would be provided by San Diego Gas & Electric. Onsite improvements would include water, sewer, electrical, fire-service, drainage, and related infrastructure.

The hotel would operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and is anticipated to employ approximately 18 employees, with approximately six employees per shift during normal operations and reduced staffing during the off-season.

Fire Protection and Emergency Access

The two Main Street/SR-67 driveways would provide the required emergency access points. Internal circulation would include designated fire apparatus access roads, fire lanes, required turning radii, fire hydrants, and maneuvering areas consistent with Fire Authority requirements.

Grading and Drainage Improvements

Grading would disturb approximately 119,300 square feet, or 2.74 acres. Earthwork would include approximately 3,000 cubic yards of excavation, 1,900 cubic yards of embankment, and approximately 1,100 cubic yards of import/export material.

Stormwater quality, hydromodification, and drainage facilities would be provided in accordance with applicable County requirements. Improvements would include onsite storm drains, catch basins, biofiltration facilities, flow-control improvements, a duplex lift station, and force main.

The drainage concept was revised through coordination with Caltrans. No new direct connection to the Caltrans drainage system is proposed. Runoff reaching the State facility would continue by surface/sheet flow to the existing Caltrans inlet consistent with existing drainage conditions.

Landscaping and Eucalyptus Preservation

Landscaping would include parking-lot shade trees, perimeter plantings, shrubs, groundcover, and landscaped guest-amenity areas. Landscape and irrigation plans would comply with the County Water Efficient Landscape Design Manual, Water Conservation in Landscaping Ordinance, Parking Design Manual, Ramona Design Guidelines, and applicable Climate Action Plan requirements.

The historic eucalyptus colonnade along Main Street/SR-67 would be retained and protected in place. Driveways, the decomposed-granite trail, grading, landscaping, and frontage improvements would be designed to avoid disturbance to these trees, which are identified in the Ramona Design Guidelines as an important element of the community's character.

Hazardous Materials, Demolition, and Excavation

Construction would include demolition, grading, utility trenching, storm drain improvements, the duplex stormwater lift station and force main, and related subsurface work. Final plans would identify excavation depths and locations.

If excavation reaches a depth where the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board requires preparation of a Soil and Groundwater Management Plan, the Project would comply with that requirement before deeper excavation proceeds. Condition HAZ#1 would memorialize this regulatory obligation as a condition of approval.

Prior to demolition, existing structures would be evaluated for asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, and other regulated hazardous building materials. Any identified materials would be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.

Community Design and Sustainability Features

The architectural design is intended to be compatible with the Ramona Village Center and Main Street corridor. The hotel would be two stories with a maximum height of approximately 35 feet and would incorporate pitched roofs, stone veneer, cement plaster, vertical siding, architectural brackets, and earth-tone materials. The Ramona Design Review Board approved the architectural and landscape design subject to removal of palms from the landscape plan, and the Ramona Community Planning Group subsequently approved the Project as presented.

Sustainability and CAP consistency requirements would be incorporated into final plans and conditions of approval. The hotel would be all-electric with no onsite natural gas use and would comply with applicable California Energy Code, Tier 2 CALGreen, renewable-energy, and nonresidential water-efficiency requirements. Rooftop solar photovoltaic facilities would be incorporated consistent with applicable requirements and the final roof design.

Of the 102 proposed parking spaces, 41 would be EV Ready with receptacles, including 11 spaces equipped with EV charging infrastructure. Short- and long-term bicycle parking would also be provided.

Construction would be subject to Condition GHG/AQ#1 for fugitive-dust control and Condition GHG/AQ#2 for construction-equipment emissions. Conditions GHG/AQ#3 and GHG/AQ#4 would implement applicable requirements of the County's 2024 CAP Consistency Review Checklist, including EV infrastructure, active transportation, building electrification, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water efficiency. These conditions are CAP consistency and regulatory-compliance conditions and are not identified as project-specific CEQA mitigation measures.

10. Surrounding land uses and setting (Briefly describe the project's surroundings):

The Project Site is located within the Ramona Village Center along Main Street/State Route 67 between Vermont Street and Letton Street. The site is currently developed and is located within an established area of Ramona characterized by a mix of commercial, public/semi-public, and residential uses. The Main Street/Village Center area functions as a primary

commercial corridor and includes retail stores, restaurants, and other commercial development, with residential uses generally located beyond the commercial corridor.

Properties immediately surrounding the Project Site along Main Street are predominantly developed or designated for commercial uses. Residential and semi-rural residential uses are located generally to the north and northwest. The Project Site fronts Main Street/SR-67, a primary roadway through the Ramona Village Center, with the Vermont Street area located to the rear. Overall, the surrounding area is urbanized and developed with commercial businesses, roadways, residences, and public services. The Project Site is within the Village Regional Category and has a General Commercial land use designation.

The Main Street corridor is also distinguished by mature eucalyptus trees, which contribute to the established visual character and identity of the Ramona community.

11. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

Permit Type/Action	Agency
Site Plan PDS2023-STP-23-021 / Community Design Review	County of San Diego
Lot Merger - PDS2026-CC-26-0013	County of San Diego
Grading and Improvement Plan Approvals	County of San Diego
Caltrans Encroachment Permit	California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Construction Stormwater Approvals	San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board / County of San Diego
Landscape and Building Plan Approvals	County of San Diego
Fire Authority Permits and Approvals	County Fire Authority
Water and Sewer Approvals	Ramona Municipal Water District
FAA Notification	Federal Aviation Administration

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?

YES
☒

NO
☐

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, public lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and to reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process (see Public Resources Code §21080.3.2). Information is also available from the Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code §5097.96 and the California

Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code §21082.3(e) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project and involve at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” or a “Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated,” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| ☐ <u>Aesthetics</u> | ☐ <u>Agriculture and Forest Resources</u> | ☐ <u>Air Quality</u> |
| ☐ <u>Biological Resources</u> | ☐ <u>Cultural Resources</u> | ☐ <u>Geology & Soils</u> |
| ☐ <u>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</u> | ☐ <u>Hazards & Haz. Materials</u> | ☐ <u>Hydrology & Water Quality</u> |
| ☐ <u>Land Use & Planning</u> | ☐ <u>Mineral Resources</u> | ☐ <u>Noise</u> |
| ☐ <u>Population & Housing</u> | ☐ <u>Public Services</u> | ☐ <u>Recreation</u> |
| ☐ <u>Transportation/Traffic</u> | ☐ <u>Utilities & Service Systems</u> | ☐ <u>Mandatory Findings of Significance</u> |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)
On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☒ On the basis of this Initial Study, Planning & Development Services finds that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ On the basis of this Initial Study, Planning & Development Services finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ On the basis of this Initial Study, Planning & Development Services finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Signature

Bronwyn Brown
Printed Name

Date

Land Use/Environmental Planner
Title

INSTRUCTIONS ON EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

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

I. AESTHETICS.

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099,

Would the project:

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation: A vista is a view from a particular location or composite views along a roadway or trail. Scenic vistas often refer to views of natural lands, but may also be compositions of natural and developed areas, or even entirely of developed and unnatural areas, such as a scenic vista of a rural town and surrounding agricultural lands. What is scenic to one person may not be scenic to another, so the assessment of what constitutes a scenic vista must consider the perceptions of a variety of viewer groups.

The items that can be seen within a vista are visual resources. Adverse impacts to individual visual resources or the addition of structures or developed areas may or may not adversely affect the vista. Determining the level of impact to a scenic vista requires analyzing the changes to the vista as a whole and also to individual visual resources.

Less Than Significant Impact: A scenic vista generally consists of a view from a public vantage point toward a scenic landscape or other visually important resource. Ramona's visual setting includes mountain and valley views and the historic Main Street eucalyptus colonnade, which the Ramona Community Plan identifies as an important component of the community's environmental setting and character.

The Project site is located within the developed Ramona Village Center along Main Street/SR-67 and within the Colonnade Sub-Area of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code. The Form-Based Code identifies the tall eucalyptus trees along Main Street as creating the character-defining experience of arriving in Ramona and directs development in the Colonnade to maintain its more rural commercial development pattern. Development within the Colonnade is limited to two stories and 35 feet in height.

Consistent with these standards, the Project would construct a two-story hotel with a maximum height of approximately 35 feet. The building incorporates varying roof forms, projecting and recessed wall planes, a covered porte cochere, architectural brackets, window awnings, balconies and railings, and changes in exterior materials that visually break up the mass of the structure. The Form-Based Code similarly requires buildings wider than 50 feet to incorporate façade divisions and roofline articulation to reduce the appearance of long, uninterrupted building forms.

The Project would also retain the existing mature eucalyptus trees along the Main Street frontage. The landscape plan identifies the existing large eucalyptus trees to remain and be

protected in place and includes a ten-foot-wide decomposed-granite pathway beneath and adjacent to the eucalyptus frontage. This treatment is consistent with the Form-Based Code's Type D pathway concept, which provides for an eight- to ten-foot decomposed-granite or natural-tread pathway along a Caltrans highway while maintaining the historic eucalyptus colonnade. Therefore, the Project's limited height, articulated building form, retention of the established eucalyptus street edge, and landscaped frontage would avoid substantial obstruction or degradation of an identified scenic vista. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation: State scenic highways refer to those highways that are officially designated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as scenic (Caltrans - California Scenic Highway Program). Generally, the area defined within a State scenic highway is the land adjacent to and visible from the vehicular right-of-way. The dimension of a scenic highway is usually identified using a motorist's line of vision, but a reasonable boundary is selected when the view extends to the distant horizon. The scenic highway corridor extends to the visual limits of the landscape abutting the scenic highway.

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project site is not located along an officially designated State Scenic Highway. However, the Main Street/SR-67 corridor and, in particular, its mature eucalyptus colonnade are recognized as an important visual and community resources.

The Ramona Community Plan describes the approximately century-old Main Street eucalyptus colonnade as a scenic landmark associated with the history and identity of Ramona. The Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code similarly identifies the eucalyptus trees as the character-defining feature of the Colonnade Sub-Area and directs that the mature trees be preserved and that new development maintain the tree canopy.

The Project has been designed to retain the existing mature eucalyptus trees along the Main Street frontage. The trees would remain and be protected in place, with the decomposed-granite pathway, landscaping, and frontage improvements integrated around the existing trees. The Project would not remove identified rock outcroppings or historic buildings from the development site.

The Project's architecture would also use a subdued, earth-tone palette consisting primarily of stone veneer, cement plaster, vertical siding, dark asphalt-shingle roofing, bronze-colored metal, and terracotta-colored awnings. These treatments reinforce rather than substantially contrast with the rural commercial character contemplated for the Colonnade.

Therefore, the Project would not substantially damage identified scenic resources, and impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation: Visual character is the objective composition of the visible landscape within a viewshed. Visual character is based on the organization of the pattern elements line, form, color, and texture. Visual character is commonly discussed in terms of dominance, scale, diversity, and continuity. Visual quality is the viewer's perception of the visual environment and varies based on exposure, sensitivity, and expectation of the viewers.

Less Than Significant Impact: The Ramona Community Plan establishes preservation and enhancement of Ramona's rural atmosphere as a community goal and identifies commercial uses and Main Street as areas appropriate for design review. The Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code further establishes design standards intended to preserve and promote Ramona's character while supporting a pedestrian-, bicycle-, and automobile-friendly Village Center.

The Project site is within the RM-V4 General District and Colonnade Sub-Area. The Colonnade standards are intended to maintain a more rural commercial development pattern along Main Street, preserve the eucalyptus street edge, and limit buildings to two stories and 35 feet. The Project's proposed two-story, 35-foot maximum height is consistent with the RM-V4 building-height standard.

The architectural design further incorporates the types of façade and roof articulation contemplated by the applicable design standards. Long elevations are broken into smaller visual components through projecting and recessed wall planes, changes in roof height and orientation, window groupings, architectural brackets, awnings, and differentiated exterior materials. The Form-Based Code expressly requires wider buildings within the Colonnade to divide façades into proportional bays and use changes in eaves, cornice lines, parapets, or gables to break up long rooflines. The Ramona Design Guidelines similarly encourage articulation of building form and mass, shadow relief, varied rooflines, and avoidance of long continuous wall planes.

Exterior materials would consist primarily of stone veneer, cement plaster, vertical siding, asphalt shingles, bronze-colored metal, and terracotta-colored awnings in a coordinated earth-tone palette. The Form-Based Code favors material- and soil-based color palettes and prohibits bright or highly reflective exterior colors. The older Ramona Design Guidelines likewise encourage stone, masonry, siding and cement plaster and emphasize architectural forms that reflect Ramona's rural character.

The Project's landscaping would provide additional visual integration and screening through parking-lot shade trees, perimeter trees and shrubs, informal accent planting, low rail fencing, and preservation of the eucalyptus frontage. The RM-V4 standards require canopy trees within parking areas and integration of landscaping into parking and stormwater areas. The conceptual landscape plan provides approximately 21,545 square feet of onsite landscaping and identifies parking-lot shade trees, perimeter screening, and low- and medium-water-use landscaping.

The resulting development would therefore replace an existing developed and disturbed commercial site with a coordinated architectural and landscape design that retains the principal character-defining landscape feature of the corridor and incorporates building form, height, materials, landscaping, and frontage treatments responsive to the Ramona Village Center standards. The Project would not substantially degrade the visual character or quality of public views of the site and surroundings or conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: Ramona's nighttime environment is an important component of the community's visual character. The Project would introduce exterior lighting associated with the hotel building, parking and circulation areas, pedestrian areas, guest amenity spaces, signage, security, and frontage improvements.

A Site Lighting and Photometrics Plan has been prepared for the Project. The lighting concept generally includes warm-color-temperature LED fixtures, 15-foot parking lot poles, 10-foot pedestrian lighting, architectural and landscape lighting, and lighting controls. The plan specifies that exterior lighting would be controlled by an astronomical timeclock and that parking lot fixtures would include motion sensors that dim the fixtures when the parking area is not in use.

The Project is located within the RM-V4 General District of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code. Applicable RM-V4 lighting standards require privately owned, publicly accessible areas to maintain Ramona's dark-sky character; limit lighting measured at the building Frontage Line to 1.0 foot-candle; require full-cutoff, fully shielded luminaires so that lighting does not escape above the horizontal plane; limit overhead lighting to a maximum height of 15 feet; and require compliance with applicable County outdoor-lighting requirements.

As a condition of approval, the final lighting and photometric plans would be required to demonstrate compliance with the applicable provisions of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code, County Zoning Ordinance, and County Light Pollution Code, including applicable requirements governing fixture type and shielding, illumination levels at property and frontage

lines, fixture height, light trespass, glare, and operational controls. Compliance would be verified by the County during review of the applicable building and/or electrical plans.

In addition, the Project would be required to annex into Zone A of the San Diego County Street Lighting District and install and energize required streetlights in accordance with applicable County standards.

The Project's exterior architectural palette would consist primarily of earth-tone cement plaster, stone veneer, vertical siding, dark asphalt-shingle roofing, bronze-colored metal finishes, and terracotta-colored awnings. These materials are not anticipated to create substantial daytime glare.

Therefore, compliance with applicable County and Ramona Village Center lighting standards, as required through conditions of approval and final plan review, would ensure that Project lighting would not result in substantial light spill, glare, or adverse effects on nighttime views. Impacts would be less than significant.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

- a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or local Importance (Important Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, or other agricultural resources, to non-agricultural use?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The Project site does not contain land designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Although County mapping identifies Prime Soils on portions of the property, the site has been developed and disturbed for decades, is mapped as Urban/Developed, is designated General Commercial, and is not currently used for agricultural production.

The Project would redevelop the existing developed site with a commercial hospitality use consistent with the property's General Commercial land use designation. No existing agricultural operation or Important Farmland would be converted to a non-agricultural use. Therefore, no impact would occur.

- b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The Project site is designated General Commercial and is within the RM-V4 District of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code. The property is not zoned for agricultural use and is not subject to a Williamson Act contract or located within an Agricultural Preserve. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract, and no impact would occur.

- c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), or timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The Project site does not contain forest land, timberland, or land zoned for Timberland Production. The site is developed, mapped as Urban/Developed, designated General Commercial, and located within the Ramona Village Center. The Project does not propose a rezone. Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production land. No impact would occur.

- d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, or involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The Project site does not contain forest land as defined by Public Resources Code §12220(g), timberland, or timber-production uses. The Project consists of redevelopment of an existing developed commercial site within the Ramona Village Center and would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land to a non-forest use. Therefore, no impact would occur.

- e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Important Farmland or other agricultural resources, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: s discussed in Sections II(a) through II(d), the Project site does not contain Important Farmland, an active agricultural operation, forest land, timberland, or timber-production uses. The site has been developed and disturbed for decades and is located within the developed Ramona Village Center.

The proposed hotel would not expand development into agricultural or forest lands, restrict existing agricultural operations, or otherwise induce the conversion of nearby agricultural or forest resources. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

III. AIR QUALITY -- Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) or applicable portions of the State Implementation Plan (SIP)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

The following Technical Study was prepared for the project related to Air Quality:

Ldn Consulting, Inc. Air Quality Assessment, Ramona Hotel Development. September 2024.

Less Than Significant Impact: An Air Quality Assessment, Ramona Hotel Development was prepared by Ldn Consulting, Inc. to evaluate potential air quality impacts associated with construction and operation of the Project. The assessment evaluates criteria pollutant emissions associated with demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, architectural coatings, construction equipment and vehicles, and long-term mobile, area, and energy sources. The assessment also evaluates potential construction-related health risks associated with diesel particulate matter (DPM).

The Project consists of development of a two-story, 101-room hotel on an approximately 3.3-acre site. Current Project plans identify approximately 60,327 square feet of total gross building area, consisting of an approximately 59,451-square-foot main hotel building, a 226-square-foot pool building, and a 650-square-foot trash enclosure. The Air Quality Assessment evaluates the same 101-room hotel and identifies the approximately 59,451-square-foot main hotel building as the principal building analyzed. Therefore, the 59,451-square-foot figure in the Air Quality Assessment represents the principal hotel building and is consistent with the current Project design; the 60,327-square-foot figure represents the Project's total gross building area.

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) prepares the Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) to identify measures necessary to achieve applicable air quality standards within the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB). The Air Quality Assessment identifies the SDAB as nonattainment for federal and State ozone standards and State PM10 and PM2.5 standards. The RAQS was updated in 2022 and focuses principally on reducing emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOC), which are precursors to ozone formation. The RAQS relies substantially on population and growth projections prepared by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), which uses adopted General Plan land use maps as a basis for forecasting growth in the unincorporated County. Projects that are consistent with the growth anticipated by the General Plan are therefore generally considered consistent with the growth assumptions underlying the RAQS and SIP.

The Project site is designated for General Commercial development, and the proposed hotel does not require a General Plan Amendment or rezone. The Air Quality Assessment identifies a floor area ratio (FAR) of approximately 0.42 and concludes that the Project is below the allowable FAR and does not require an amendment to the applicable zoning to accommodate the proposed development. The Project therefore would not introduce land use growth or development intensity beyond that anticipated for the site under the General Plan and regional growth projections.

Construction would include demolition of existing improvements, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coatings. The current Project record identifies approximately 3,000 cubic yards of cut and 1,900 cubic yards of fill, with approximately 1,100 cubic yards identified for import in the County's Project description. Grading and earthwork would temporarily generate fugitive dust and combustion emissions from soil disturbance, construction equipment, worker and vendor vehicles, and associated hauling activities.

The Air Quality Assessment models demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural-coating activities and evaluates construction equipment including rubber-tired dozers, tractors/loaders/backhoes, forklifts, paving equipment, rollers, and other equipment associated with hotel construction.

As discussed in Section III(b), modeled construction and operational criteria pollutant emissions would remain below the applicable County screening-level thresholds (SLTs). The Air Quality Assessment concludes that construction, operational, and cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant and that the Project would be consistent with the RAQS and SIP.

Therefore, because the Project is consistent with the commercial development anticipated for the site and construction and operational emissions would remain below applicable County SLTs, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the RAQS or applicable portions of the SIP. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (APCD) does not provide quantitative thresholds for determining the significance of construction or mobile source-related impacts. However, the APCD does specify Air Quality Impact Analysis (AQIA) trigger levels for new or modified stationary sources (APCD Rules 20.2 and 20.3). If these incremental levels for stationary sources are exceeded, an AQIA must be performed for the proposed new or modified source. Although these trigger levels do not generally apply to mobile sources or general land development projects, for comparative purposes these levels may be used to evaluate the increased emissions which would be discharged to the San Diego Air Basin from proposed land development projects. For projects whose stationary-source emissions are below these criteria, no AQIA is typically required, and project level emissions are presumed to be less than significant.

For CEQA purposes, these screening level thresholds (SLTs) can be used to demonstrate that a project's total emissions would not result in a significant impact to air quality. The daily SLTs are most appropriately used for standard construction and operational emissions. When project emissions have the potential to approach or exceed the SLTs listed below in Table 1, additional air quality modeling may need to be prepared to demonstrate that ground level concentrations resulting from project emissions (with background levels) will be below National and California Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS and CAAQS, respectively).

APCD Rules 20.2 and 20.3 do not have AQIA thresholds for emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and PM_{2.5}. The use of the screening level for VOCs specified by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), which generally has stricter emissions thresholds than San Diego's APCD, is recommended for evaluating projects in San Diego County. For PM_{2.5}, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) "Proposed Rule to Implement the Fine Particle National Ambient Air Quality Standards" published September 8, 2005, which quantifies significant emissions as 10 tons per year, will be used as the screening-level criteria as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. San Diego County Screening-Level Thresholds for Air Quality Impact Analysis

Pollutant	Total Emissions		
	Lbs. per Hour	Lbs. per Day	Tons per Year
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	---	100	15
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	--- *	55	10*
Nitrogen Oxides (NO _x)	25	250	40
Sulfur Oxides (SO _x)	25	250	40
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	100	550	100
Lead	---	3.2	0.6
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)	---	75**	13.7***

Notes: * USEPA “Proposed Rule to Implement the Fine Particle National Ambient Air Quality Standards” published September 8, 2005. Also used by the SCAQMD.

** Threshold for VOCs based on the threshold of significance for VOCs from the SCAQMD for the Coachella Valley.

*** 13.7 Tons Per Year threshold based on 75 lbs/day multiplied by 365 days/year and divided by 2,000 lbs/ton.

Construction Emissions

Construction would result in temporary emissions associated with demolition, site preparation and grading, operation of off-road construction equipment, worker and vendor vehicles, building construction, paving, and architectural coatings. Project earthwork would include approximately 3,000 cubic yards of cut and 1,900 cubic yards of fill. Construction-related emissions would include fugitive dust generated by soil disturbance and combustion emissions generated by construction equipment and vehicles.

The Air Quality Assessment used CalEEMod Version 2022.1 to calculate Project construction emissions. The assessment notes that electricity would be available at the site during construction; therefore, no electric generators would be required, and equipment such as air compressors and welders was assumed to operate electrically. The Project would also be subject to applicable requirements of the County Grading Ordinance.

The Air Quality Assessment calculated the following maximum daily construction emissions:

Table 2. Estimated Project-Related Air Emissions

Pollutant	Project Emissions (Lbs. per Day)	Screening-Level Thresholds (Lbs. per Day)	Above Threshold?
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	6.64	100	No
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	3.41	55	No
Nitrogen Oxides (NO _x)	9.22	250	No
Sulfur Oxides (SO _x)	0.02	250	No
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	11.0	550	No
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)	14.60	75	No

Note: The values shown represent the maximum daily construction emission identified for each pollutant in the Air Quality Assessment. The assessment does not report construction-related lead emissions; therefore, lead is not included in this table.

As shown in Table 2, maximum daily construction emissions would remain below each applicable County screening-level threshold. The Air Quality Assessment therefore concludes that construction-related criteria pollutant emissions would be less than significant.

The Project's construction emissions would be less than significant independent of Condition GHG/AQ#2, as demonstrated by the modeled criteria-pollutant emissions shown in Table 2. Condition GHG/AQ#2 is imposed as an enforceable construction-equipment compliance condition to implement applicable County, CAP, and CARB requirements and to ensure use of compliant low-emission construction equipment. The condition provides additional emissions

control but is not necessary to reduce criteria-pollutant emissions below the County significance thresholds.

In addition, the Project would be subject to Condition GHG/AQ#1 – Fugitive Dust, which requires implementation of a Fugitive Dust Control Plan consistent with SDAPCD Rule 55 and the County Grading Ordinance. Required measures include covering or maintaining freeboard on haul trucks, watering disturbed areas and unpaved roads, suspending grading during winds exceeding 25 mph, regularly cleaning public street access points, stabilizing soil stockpiles and internal construction roads, and enforcing a 15-mph speed limit on unpaved surfaces.

The Project would also be subject to Condition GHG/AQ#2 – Construction Exhaust Emissions, which requires heavy-duty diesel-powered construction equipment rated at 50 horsepower or greater to use Tier 4 diesel engines or equivalent retrofit technology, subject to the limited equipment-availability provisions specified in the condition. Applicable construction equipment would also be equipped with CARB-certified best available control technology (BACT), and construction contractors would comply with CARB off-road diesel fleet requirements and the five-minute diesel idling limitation.

These requirements would further minimize construction emissions. However, as demonstrated by Table 2, modeled criteria pollutant emissions are already below the applicable County SLTs.

Operational Emissions

Following construction, operation of the Project would generate criteria pollutant emissions from mobile, area, and energy sources. Mobile-source emissions would result primarily from vehicle travel associated with hotel operations. Area sources would include consumer products, landscaping equipment, and architectural coatings associated with routine maintenance, while energy-source emissions would result from onsite energy use.

The Air Quality Assessment evaluated both summer and winter operational conditions. Under the summer scenario, total daily operational emissions were estimated at approximately 3.53 pounds of VOC, 1.85 pounds of NOx, 15.0 pounds of CO, 0.03 pound of SOx, 2.62 pounds of PM10, and 0.72 pound of PM2.5. Under the winter scenario, total daily emissions were approximately 3.07 pounds of VOC, 1.94 pounds of NOx, 11.8 pounds of CO, 0.03 pound of SOx, 2.62 pounds of PM10, and 0.72 pound of PM2.5.

All modeled operational emissions would remain substantially below the applicable County screening-level thresholds. The Air Quality Assessment therefore concludes that operational criteria pollutant emissions would result in a less-than-significant impact.

Cumulative Emissions

The Air Quality Assessment also evaluated potential cumulative construction effects. The AERSCREEN analysis indicates that the highest construction-related concentrations would generally occur at approximately 75 meters, or 246 feet, from the Project property boundary. The cumulative-project review did not identify another similar construction project within that area that would be expected to result in sufficient simultaneous additive emissions to exceed

applicable thresholds. The assessment therefore concludes that cumulative construction impacts would be less than significant.

Operationally, the Project is consistent with the General Commercial development anticipated for the site and applicable General Plan development assumptions. The Air Quality Assessment therefore concludes that significant cumulative operational effects would not occur and that the Project would remain consistent with the RAQS and SIP.

Therefore, Project construction and operation would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutant emissions. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation: Air quality regulators typically define sensitive receptors as schools (Preschool-12th Grade), hospitals, resident care facilities, or day-care centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions that would be adversely impacted by changes in air quality. The County of San Diego also considers residences as sensitive receptors since they house children and the elderly.

Less Than Significant Impact: In addition to criteria pollutant emissions, the Air Quality Assessment evaluated potential health risks associated with diesel particulate matter (DPM) generated by construction equipment. The assessment used CalEEMod emissions and the AERSCREEN dispersion model to estimate DPM concentrations and potential cancer and non-cancer risks at the maximally exposed receptor.

For purposes of the technical health-risk analysis, the Air Quality Assessment assumed construction equipment meeting Tier 3 emission standards with diesel particulate filters, or better. Under that analyzed equipment-control scenario, construction would generate approximately 0.0022 ton of PM₁₀ exhaust over the modeled construction period, and the AERSCREEN analysis calculated a worst-case annual DPM concentration of approximately 0.0345 µg/m³. The resulting incremental cancer risk was estimated at approximately 7.09 in one million.

The assessment also evaluated non-cancer health effects. The modeled DPM concentrations resulted in a chronic hazard index of approximately 0.069, which is below the applicable significance criterion of 1.0. Therefore, the Air Quality Assessment demonstrates that construction-related cancer and non-cancer health risks would be less than significant under the equipment-control scenario evaluated in the technical analysis.

For purposes of the CEQA significance determination, the less-than-significant health-risk conclusion is established by the results of the Air Quality Assessment. The modeled incremental cancer risk of approximately 7.09 in one million and chronic hazard index of approximately 0.069

are both below the applicable significance thresholds under the analyzed equipment-control scenario. Therefore, the technical analysis does not identify an otherwise significant construction-related health-risk impact requiring project-specific CEQA mitigation.

The Project would also be subject to Condition GHG/AQ#2 – Construction Exhaust Emissions. Condition GHG/AQ#2 requires heavy-duty diesel-powered construction equipment rated at 50 horsepower or greater to use Tier 4 diesel engines or equivalent retrofit technology, subject to the applicable equipment-availability provisions of the condition. Applicable construction equipment would also be equipped with CARB-certified best available control technology (BACT), and construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable CARB off-road diesel fleet requirements and the five-minute diesel idling limitation.

Condition GHG/AQ#2 is imposed as an enforceable construction-equipment compliance condition to implement applicable County, CAP, and CARB requirements and to ensure use of compliant low-emission construction equipment. The equipment standards required by Condition GHG/AQ#2 meet or exceed the equipment controls evaluated in the Air Quality Assessment. Therefore, Condition GHG/AQ#2 provides an additional enforceable compliance mechanism and additional assurance that construction emissions would not exceed the health-risk scenario evaluated in the technical analysis; however, the condition is not relied upon as a project-specific CEQA mitigation measure to reduce an otherwise significant health-risk impact to a less-than-significant level.

Following construction, operation of the proposed hotel would not include an industrial use or other substantial stationary source of toxic air contaminants. The Air Quality Assessment concludes that operational health risks would also be less than significant.

Therefore, based on the construction health-risk analysis and the operational characteristics of the proposed hotel, the Project would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The construction health-risk analysis independently identifies cancer and non-cancer risks below the applicable significance thresholds under the analyzed equipment-control scenario, and Condition GHG/AQ#2 provides an enforceable construction-equipment compliance mechanism that is at least as protective as the controls evaluated in the Air Quality Assessment.

Therefore, the Project would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Impacts would be less than significant.

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact Potential odor sources during Project construction would include diesel-powered construction equipment, paving and asphalt placement, architectural coatings,

and similar temporary construction activities. The Air Quality Assessment identifies asphalt paving as a potential temporary odor source but notes that paving activities would occur for a limited duration and that associated odors would be short term.

The Project would also be subject to Condition GHG/AQ#2, which limits diesel equipment and vehicle idling to five minutes and requires cleaner construction equipment and CARB-certified control technology. These requirements would further minimize temporary diesel exhaust emissions during construction.

Land uses typically associated with substantial objectionable odors include wastewater treatment plants, rendering facilities, and similar industrial or commercial operations. The proposed hotel is not a use typically associated with substantial odor generation. The Air Quality Assessment therefore concludes that operation of the hotel would not generate objectionable odors and would result in a less-than-significant odor impact.

Temporary construction odors would cease following completion of the applicable construction activity, and long-term hotel operations would not constitute a substantial odor source. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

The following Technical Study was prepared for the project related to Biological Resources:

Blackhawk Environmental, Inc. Biological Resource Letter Report for the Hotel Ramona Project, PDS2023-STP-23-021. January 2025.

Robert Walton Jr., Consulting Arborist. Arborist Letter regarding proposed southwest driveway and existing eucalyptus trees. November 16, 2022.

Less Than Significant Impact: Based on the Biological Resource Letter Report for the Hotel Ramona Project, dated January 24, 2025, prepared by Blackhawk Environmental, the Project Site consists entirely of urban/developed habitat and does not contain sensitive habitat under the County Resource Protection Ordinance. No state- or federally threatened or endangered plant or wildlife species, and no other sensitive plant or wildlife species, were observed during

the biological survey, and no federally designated critical habitat occurs on the Project Site. Of the sensitive species evaluated, Cooper's hawk was identified as having a high potential to occur because mature eucalyptus trees on and adjacent to the site provide potential nesting habitat for raptors and other migratory birds.

The Project would be required to comply with independently applicable federal and State protections for migratory birds, raptors, and their active nests. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) regulates take of protected migratory birds, eggs, and chicks, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommends scheduling activities outside the nesting season where feasible to reduce the risk of take. California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5 also prohibits the take, possession, or destruction of birds of prey, or their nests or eggs, except as otherwise authorized.

BIO#1 – Resource Avoidance would be included as a Notice on the approved Site Plan to implement and document compliance with these applicable wildlife-protection requirements through the County's grading and biological resource review process. BIO#1 establishes a Resource Avoidance Area (RAA) and prohibits brushing, clearing, or grading within 300 feet of migratory bird nesting habitat and 500 feet of raptor nesting habitat during the January 1 through August 31 breeding season. The restriction may be waived by the County, with concurrence from the Wildlife Agencies, where a biological survey completed no more than 72 hours before the proposed activity demonstrates that migratory birds or raptors are not present.

The BIO#1 Notice provides an enforceable mechanism for implementing existing federal and State wildlife protections and the County's biological resource avoidance requirements during construction. It is a regulatory-compliance and resource-avoidance notice associated with Site Plan approval and is not identified as a project-specific CEQA mitigation measure. The specific County avoidance distances and timing provide a means of administering compliance; those numerical buffers themselves are not stated in the MBTA or Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5.

The Biological Resource Letter Report also identifies potential bat-roosting opportunities associated with existing buildings and mature trees. The existing mature eucalyptus trees along the Main Street frontage would be retained and protected as part of the Project.

A November 16, 2022 evaluation prepared by Robert Walton, Registered Consulting Arborist, specifically evaluated the proposed southwest driveway in relation to two existing eucalyptus trees along the Main Street/SR-67 frontage. The arborist determined that the edge of the proposed driveway would be approximately 40 feet from the base of each tree and concluded that the proposed separation should pose no problem for the trees. The arborist further noted that the approximately 40-foot separation is well above the minimum distance identified for root pruning of five times the tree's diameter at breast height (DBH), measured 4.5 feet above average grade. The arborist evaluation provides additional project-specific support that the proposed southwest driveway location would avoid adverse impacts to these existing eucalyptus trees.

BIO#2 – Pre-Construction Bat Survey would also be included as a Notice on the approved Site Plan. Prior to removal of mature trees or existing buildings or structures with potential to support roosting bats, a qualified biologist would conduct the required pre-construction surveys. If bats are identified, appropriate avoidance procedures would be implemented based on the time of year and type of roost present, including avoidance of an active maternity roost until the maternity season has ended or the qualified biologist determines that young are self-sufficiently volant. The Notice also establishes documentation and County review requirements before demolition or vegetation removal proceeds.

BIO#2 serves as a wildlife-protection and biological resource compliance notice to ensure that potential roosting bats are identified and protected before demolition or tree removal. The requirement would be enforced through the approved Site Plan and associated construction review and is not identified as a project-specific CEQA mitigation measure. The site is previously developed and supports only urban/developed habitat; no sensitive plant or wildlife species were observed during the biological survey; no federally designated critical habitat occurs onsite; and the mature eucalyptus frontage trees would remain. Construction would also remain subject to independently applicable wildlife-protection laws and County biological resource review requirements, as documented through BIO#1 and BIO#2.

For these reasons, the Project would not result in a substantial adverse effect on candidate, sensitive, or special-status species. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: Based on the January 24, 2025 Biological Resource Letter Report prepared by Blackhawk Environmental, the Project Site is entirely characterized as urban/developed habitat. The current Site Plan identifies the Project Site as approximately 3.26 acres in gross area. The urban/developed areas consist primarily of existing buildings, parking and paved areas, equipment and material storage areas, gravel surfaces, ornamental vegetation, and mature eucalyptus trees. Urban/developed habitat is not considered County RPO Sensitive Habitat Land or otherwise considered a sensitive natural community by state or federal agencies.

No riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community was identified on the Project Site. The Biological Resource Letter Report determined that impacts to urban/developed habitat would not be significant and that no habitat-based mitigation is required.

The BIO#1 and BIO#2 Notices address compliance associated with nesting birds, raptors, and potential bat-roosting habitat and are not required to reduce an impact to riparian habitat or

sensitive natural communities. The Project would have no impact on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: The Biological Resource Letter Report included a jurisdictional assessment of the Project Site for aquatic resources potentially regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the Regional Water Quality Control Board pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, CDFW pursuant to Sections 1600 through 1603 of the California Fish and Game Code, and the County of San Diego RPO. The Project Site consists entirely of urban/developed upland habitat, and no wetlands, jurisdictional waters, vernal pools, depressions, bed and bank features, hydrophytic vegetation, or other indicators of jurisdictional aquatic resources were identified.

Although vernal pools and other aquatic resources are known to occur in the broader Ramona area, the Project Site has been disturbed and/or developed since at least 1953 and has been fully developed since 2019. The biological assessment determined that vernal pools and RPO wetlands are absent from the Project Site. BIO#1 and BIO#2 do not relate to wetlands or jurisdictional aquatic resources and are not relied upon for this significance determination. The Project would have no impact on state- or federally protected wetlands or other jurisdictional aquatic resources.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: The Project Site is not located within a Biological Core Area identified by the Draft North County Multiple Species Conservation Program (NCMSCP) and does not function as a regional wildlife corridor or linkage. Santa Maria Creek, located approximately 0.35 mile north of the Project Site, provides wildlife movement opportunities through the Ramona Grasslands; however, the Project Site is separated from the creek by existing development and does not provide a continuous habitat connection to that corridor. The site has been historically disturbed and developed and is bordered by Main Street/SR-67 and surrounding urban development. Redevelopment of the site would not substantially interfere with local or regional wildlife movement.

The Biological Resource Letter Report identifies the mature eucalyptus trees and existing buildings as providing potential nesting or roosting opportunities for birds, raptors, and bats. The eucalyptus trees along the Main Street frontage would be retained and protected as part of the Project.

BIO#1 and BIO#2 would be placed as Notices on the approved Site Plan to document and enforce applicable biological resource avoidance and wildlife-protection requirements during construction. BIO#1 addresses migratory bird and raptor nesting activity, and BIO#2 requires pre-construction evaluation of mature trees and structures with potential to support roosting bats and establishes avoidance procedures if an active roost is identified. These are regulatory-compliance and resource-avoidance notices and are not identified as project-specific CEQA mitigation measures.

Because the Project Site does not function as an established wildlife corridor, the existing eucalyptus frontage trees would remain, and construction would be subject to applicable wildlife-protection requirements and County biological review, the Project would not substantially interfere with wildlife movement or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. Impacts would be less than significant.

- e) Would the project conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project Site is located within the area addressed by the Draft North County Multiple Species Conservation Program (NCMSCP) but is outside of the Pre-Conservation Area (PCA). The site is not located within a Biological Core Area and does not contain biological resources identified as critical to conservation of sensitive species under the Draft NCMSCP. The Project Site is situated along Main Street within an area where development is directed due, in part, to its limited biological resources.

The Project Site supports only urban/developed habitat, which is not afforded protection as sensitive habitat under the County Resource Protection Ordinance. The Project is also outside of the County's Ramona Grasslands Special Study Area. No sensitive habitat would be removed and no habitat mitigation credits are required. The County's biological conservation framework separately establishes avoidance and mitigation requirements applicable to discretionary projects where protected biological resources are present.

BIO#1 and BIO#2 would be included as Notices on the approved Site Plan to ensure that applicable biological resource avoidance and wildlife-protection requirements are carried

forward into grading, demolition, and construction. These Notices provide an enforceable mechanism for documenting compliance with applicable federal, State, and County biological resource requirements and are not identified as project-specific CEQA mitigation measures.

For these reasons, the Project would not conflict with an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or applicable local policy or ordinance protecting biological resources. Impacts would be less than significant.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: County cultural resources staff reviewed County records and the South Coastal Information Center database for the Project. The Project site has been historically developed, disturbed, and graded, and County staff determined that a project-specific cultural resources study would not be required.

The Project frontage along Main Street/SR-67 includes the existing mature eucalyptus colonnade. Caltrans has identified the eucalyptus trees along the Project frontage as a historic resource and has required preparation of a Historic Resources Compliance Report (HRCR) in connection with improvements proposed within the State right-of-way.

The Project has been designed to retain and protect the existing mature eucalyptus trees along Main Street/SR-67. The proposed frontage improvements, including the decomposed-granite pathway and driveway improvements, have been designed around the existing trees, and work within the State right-of-way would remain subject to Caltrans review and the applicable encroachment-permit requirements.

Therefore, the Project would not demolish, materially alter, or otherwise cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an identified historical resource. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact:

County cultural resources staff reviewed County records and the South Coastal Information Center database and determined that, while cultural resources are known to occur in the

surrounding area, the Project site has been historically developed, disturbed, and graded. Based on these conditions, County staff determined that a project-specific cultural resources study was not required, subject to completion of Native American consultation.

The County subsequently completed outreach pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) and only the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians requested consultation. County staff met with San Pasqual on October 7, 2024, at which time the County identified that the Project site was fully developed and that a cultural study was not required. San Pasqual raised no concerns regarding the Project.

County staff made additional efforts to schedule consultation meetings on February 18, 2025, June 17, 2025, June 24, 2025, and June 9, 2026. San Pasqual responded on July 30, 2026 regarding scheduling; however, based on the County's repeated consultation efforts during Project processing, County cultural resources staff determined that consultation could be considered concluded due to lack of further response from the Tribe.

Based on the historically developed and disturbed condition of the site, the County's cultural resources review, and completion of the AB 52 consultation process without identification of archaeological concerns requiring further study or mitigation, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: The Project site has been historically developed, disturbed, and graded, and County cultural resources staff determined that a project-specific cultural resources study was not required. In addition, consultation with the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians did not identify concerns requiring additional cultural resources investigation or monitoring. No known human remains have been identified within the Project development area based on the County's cultural resources review. However, because Project construction would involve ground-disturbing activities, the possibility of an inadvertent discovery cannot be entirely excluded. If human remains are discovered during construction, work in the vicinity of the discovery would be required to cease and the discovery would be handled in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, including notification of the County Coroner and, if the remains are determined to be Native American, coordination with the Native American Heritage Commission and the identified Most Likely Descendant. Compliance with these mandatory procedures would ensure that any inadvertent discovery of human remains would be appropriately protected and treated. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

VI. ENERGY. -- Would the project:

- a) Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: Development of the Project would require energy during both construction and operation. Construction-related energy use would consist primarily of transportation fuels used by construction equipment, haul trucks, vendor vehicles, and worker vehicles, as well as electricity used for construction activities. Construction energy use would be temporary and would cease upon completion of construction.

The Project would be subject to Condition GHG/AQ#2 – Construction Exhaust Emissions, which requires heavy-duty diesel-powered construction equipment rated 50 horsepower or greater to use Tier 4 engines or equivalent retrofit technology, subject to the equipment-availability provisions of the condition. Construction equipment would also be equipped with CARB-certified best available control technology, and construction contractors would be required to comply with applicable CARB off-road diesel fleet requirements and the five-minute diesel idling limitation. Limiting unnecessary equipment idling and requiring newer, cleaner construction equipment would reduce unnecessary fuel consumption during construction.

Operation of the 101-room hotel would require electricity for heating and cooling, lighting, water heating, appliances and equipment, guest rooms and common areas, pool and other amenity equipment, and other normal hotel operations. Vehicle travel associated with employees, guests, deliveries, and service vehicles would also consume transportation energy. However, the Project incorporates several features intended to reduce operational energy demand and reliance on fossil fuels.

As required through Condition GHG/AQ#4, the hotel would be designed and constructed as an all-electric building, with no natural gas used onsite for building appliances or equipment. The Project would comply with the applicable Tier 2 requirements of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) in effect at the time of construction, including applicable energy-efficiency and renewable-energy requirements. The Project would also maximize installation of rooftop solar photovoltaic panels to the extent accommodated by the final building and roof design. Compliance would be demonstrated through the applicable building plans, energy documentation, and other permit documents and verified by the County prior to permit issuance.

Condition GHG/AQ#4 would also require applicable Tier 2 nonresidential water-efficiency measures, including water-efficient plumbing fixtures, irrigation systems, and landscaping. Reductions in potable water use would also reduce energy associated with water treatment, conveyance, and use.

In addition, Condition GHG/AQ#3 requires the Project to provide bicycle and pedestrian improvements and infrastructure for 41 EV Ready parking spaces with receptacles, including 11 spaces equipped with EV charging infrastructure. These facilities would support use of electric vehicles and alternative transportation.

The Project's lighting design also incorporates energy-management features. Exterior lighting is proposed to be controlled by an astronomical timeclock, and parking-lot lighting would include motion sensors that dim pole-mounted fixtures when parking areas are not in use. Final lighting plans would remain subject to applicable County lighting and energy-efficiency requirements.

Therefore, while construction and operation of the hotel would consume energy, such consumption would be typical of the proposed commercial hospitality use and would be reduced through applicable building-energy standards, all-electric design, renewable-energy generation, efficient lighting controls, cleaner construction equipment, EV infrastructure, and other Project requirements. The Project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: Applicable State and local requirements addressing renewable energy and energy efficiency include the California Energy Code (Title 24), CALGreen, and the County of San Diego 2024 Climate Action Plan (CAP). The Project would be required to comply with the Energy Code and CALGreen provisions in effect at the time of construction and would implement the applicable energy-related requirements identified through the County's CAP consistency process.

The Project's CAP Consistency Review Checklist identifies the Project as subject to applicable nonresidential CALGreen requirements and documents consistency with County energy-efficiency and renewable-energy requirements. The Project also incorporates EV charging infrastructure, active-transportation improvements, water-efficiency measures, and renewable-energy features.

Conditions GHG/AQ#3 and GHG/AQ#4 implement applicable requirements identified through the County's 2024 CAP Consistency Review Checklist. These requirements are imposed as enforceable conditions of Project approval to demonstrate and maintain consistency with the

County's CAP and applicable CALGreen requirements. They are CAP consistency and regulatory-compliance conditions and are not identified as project-specific CEQA mitigation measures.

Specifically, Condition GHG/AQ#4 requires the hotel to be constructed as an all-electric building with no onsite natural gas use, comply with applicable Tier 2 CALGreen energy-efficiency and renewable-energy requirements, and maximize rooftop solar photovoltaic installation to the extent accommodated by the final building and roof design. Compliance would be verified through County review of the building plans and associated energy documentation prior to permit issuance.

Condition GHG/AQ#3 requires EV infrastructure and active-transportation improvements, including 41 EV Ready spaces with receptacles, 11 EV charging spaces, bicycle parking, and pedestrian/bicycle circulation improvements.

These CAP consistency and regulatory-compliance requirements support the County CAP's objectives related to building electrification, increased energy efficiency, renewable energy, and reduced reliance on fossil fuels. The Project would therefore comply with, rather than obstruct, applicable State and County energy-efficiency and renewable-energy requirements.

Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Impacts would be less than significant.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

- i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project site as not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone or County Special Study Zone and indicates that no mapped Quaternary or Pre-Quaternary fault crosses the Project site. Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects from surface fault rupture. Impacts would be less than significant.

- ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
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- ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project site is located within a seismically active region and could experience strong ground shaking during a regional earthquake. The proposed project would be required to comply with applicable seismic design and structural requirements of the California Building Code and County Building Code. Applicable geotechnical, foundation, compaction, and structural recommendations would be incorporated into final grading and building plans. Compliance with these requirements would reduce risks associated with seismic ground shaking to acceptable levels. Impacts would be less than significant.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

- ☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Less than Significant Impact: Liquefaction typically occurs when a site is located in a zone with seismic activity, onsite soils are cohesionless (such as sand or gravel), groundwater is encountered within 50 feet of the surface, and soil relative densities are less than about 70 percent. The Project site is within a "Potential Liquefaction Area" as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards, and it is underlain by some high shrink swell soils (expansive soils). Final grading and building design would be required to address liquefaction and related settlement conditions through applicable geotechnical investigation, foundation design, and compliance with the California Building Code and County requirements. Any required recommendations regarding site preparation, foundations, engineered fill, settlement, groundwater, or other geotechnical conditions would be incorporated into the final grading and building plans. Therefore, although the Project site is located within a Potential Liquefaction Area, compliance with applicable geotechnical and building requirements would reduce potential risks associated with liquefaction and seismic-related ground failure. Impacts would be less than significant.

iv. Landslides?

- ☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project site is not located within a "Landslide Susceptibility Area" as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards. the Project consists of redevelopment of an existing developed and disturbed commercial site and would be subject to applicable County grading and geotechnical requirements. Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects associated with landslides. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: County soil mapping identifies underlain primarily by Bonsall sandy loam and Placentia sandy loam, which are identified as Alfisols and have a severe soil erosion rating. However, the Project would not result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil because grading and construction would be required to comply with the County Watershed Protection Ordinance, Grading Ordinance, and applicable erosion-control requirements. In addition, the Project would implement construction-phase erosion and sediment-control Best Management Practices (BMPs) pursuant to the Project's Priority Development Project Storm Water Quality Management Plan (SWQMP). The SWQMP identifies perimeter protection and sediment control for disturbed areas and requires applicable construction-phase erosion and sediment-control BMPs to be incorporated into the final erosion-control plans. Compliance with these requirements would minimize erosion and prevent substantial sediment transport during and following construction. Therefore, impacts related to soil erosion and loss of topsoil would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: The Project site as not located within a Landslide Susceptibility Area. However, project site is identified as being within a Potential Liquefaction Area, and the site is underlain by Quaternary Alluvium. The County screening report also identifies the site as being within a High Shrink Swell Zone. The County's Potential Liquefaction map similarly shows the Project area within the mapped potential liquefaction area. Because the site is within a mapped Potential Liquefaction Area, final grading and building design would be required to comply with applicable California Building Code, County Building Code, and geotechnical requirements. Applicable recommendations addressing site preparation, engineered fill, compaction, foundations, settlement, liquefaction, groundwater, and other subsurface conditions would be incorporated into the final grading and building plans.

The Project would also be required to comply with the County Grading Ordinance and approved SWQMP, which would control grading, drainage, erosion, and related site-stability conditions. Therefore, although the site is within a mapped Potential Liquefaction Area, compliance with applicable geotechnical, grading, and building requirements would ensure that the Project would not result in substantial risks associated with landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Impacts would be less than significant.

d) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project site is within a High Shrink Swell Zone (Expansive Soil) and includes soil types—Bonsall sandy loam and Placentia sandy loam—as having high shrink/swell characteristics. Therefore, the Project's final grading, foundation, and structural design would be required to account for expansive soil conditions. Applicable geotechnical recommendations regarding moisture conditioning, subgrade preparation, engineered fill, foundations, slabs, drainage, and other measures would be incorporated into the final plans in accordance with the California Building Code and County requirements. With implementation of applicable engineering requirements, expansive soils would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: The Project would not rely on septic tanks or an alternative onsite wastewater disposal system. The proposed hotel would receive public water and sewer service from the Ramona Municipal Water District, and Project-specific RMWD sewer requirements have been identified for the development. Because no septic tank or alternative wastewater disposal system is proposed, the suitability of onsite soils for such systems is not relevant to Project implementation. Therefore, no impact would occur.

f) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation: San Diego County contains a variety of geologic formations that may contain paleontological resources, as well as geologic features that may be considered unique. The potential for paleontological resources is generally dependent on the underlying geologic formation and the extent of previous disturbance.

Less Than Significant Impact: County records and paleontological resource mapping were reviewed for the Project site. The site is underlain by Quaternary Alluvium and is identified by

the County as having low paleontological sensitivity. The County's preliminary resource review also identifies the site as not located within an area having a high or moderate potential for unique geologic features.

Although underlying soils have some potential to contain fossil resources, the Project site has been historically developed and substantially disturbed by previous grading and development activities. Based on the extent of prior disturbance and the low paleontological sensitivity of the underlying deposits, a Project-specific paleontological monitoring program is not required.

The Project would nevertheless be subject to the standard requirements of County Clearing, Grading, and Watercourses Ordinance Section 87.430. If fossils greater than 12 inches in any dimension are encountered during grading, work in the area of the discovery would be suspended, the County would be notified, and appropriate resource recovery would be completed before grading resumes.

Because the Project site has been substantially disturbed, the underlying deposits have low paleontological sensitivity, no unique geologic features have been identified onsite, and standard County procedures would apply in the event of an inadvertent fossil discovery, the Project would not directly or indirectly destroy a significant paleontological resource or unique geologic feature. Impacts would be less than significant.

VIII GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: A CAP Consistency Review Checklist was prepared for the Project, and the following analysis incorporates the Checklist's consistency determinations. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions contribute to global climate change, which may result in adverse environmental effects such as drought, flooding, sea level rise, increased wildfire risk, air quality impacts, and ecosystem changes. Because climate change is global in nature, an individual project generally does not cause a direct climate change impact but may contribute to a cumulative impact.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4 allows lead agencies to evaluate GHG emissions quantitatively, qualitatively, or through performance-based standards. In addition, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(3), a project's incremental contribution to a cumulative impact may be found not cumulatively considerable where the project complies with an adopted plan or program that includes measures to reduce GHG emissions.

The County of San Diego's 2024 Climate Action Plan (CAP) establishes GHG reduction measures and a goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2045, consistent with the State's 2022

Scoping Plan. The CAP Consistency Review Checklist provides a two-step process for determining project consistency with the CAP. Step 1 evaluates consistency with the General Plan, applicable land use designations, and development intensity allowed by zoning. Step 2 evaluates compliance with applicable CAP measures and actions. Projects determined to be consistent with both steps may rely on the CAP for the cumulative GHG impacts analysis under CEQA.

The Project proposes development of a two-story, 101-room hotel with approximately 60,327 square feet of gross building area, 53,220 square feet of net building area, and 102 parking spaces. The completed CAP Consistency Review Checklist demonstrates that the Project is consistent with the General Plan and applicable zoning and therefore may rely on the County CAP for the cumulative analysis of GHG emissions. The Project site is zoned C36 General Commercial within the RM-V4 Form-Based Code district, which accommodates the proposed commercial hospitality use.

As described in the CAP Consistency Review Checklist, the Project would implement the following applicable CAP consistency requirements, regulatory requirements, and Project design features through the Project design and enforceable conditions of approval:

1. Building Electrification. The hotel would be designed as an all-electric building, with no natural gas used onsite.
2. Energy Efficiency. The Project would comply with the applicable California Energy Code and applicable Tier 2 CALGreen energy-efficiency requirements in effect at the time of construction.
3. Renewable Energy. Rooftop photovoltaic facilities would be incorporated consistent with applicable Tier 2 CALGreen requirements, with rooftop solar installation maximized to the extent accommodated by the final building and roof design.
4. Electric Vehicle Infrastructure. Of the 102 parking spaces proposed, the Project would provide infrastructure for 41 EV Ready spaces with receptacles, including 11 spaces equipped with EV charging infrastructure. The final CAP Checklist determines this requirement to be consistent with applicable CAP requirements.
5. Active Transportation. The Project would provide bicycle parking and pedestrian and bicycle circulation improvements, including the all-purpose decomposed-granite pathway along the Project frontage. The final CAP Checklist identifies this feature as consistent with the applicable active-transportation requirement.
6. Water Efficiency. The Project would comply with applicable Tier 2 CALGreen requirements for nonresidential water efficiency, including applicable requirements of Section A5.303.2.3.2 and elective measures from Sections A5.303, A5.304, and A5.305. Water-efficient plumbing fixtures, irrigation systems, and landscaping would be incorporated into the Project design. The final Checklist finds the Project consistent with the applicable CAP water-efficiency requirements.
7. Landscape Water Conservation. Landscaping would comply with applicable County water-efficient landscaping requirements and would incorporate low-water-use plant material and efficient irrigation.
8. Construction Equipment. Project construction would be subject to Condition GHG/AQ#2, requiring heavy-duty diesel-powered equipment rated 50 horsepower or greater to use

Tier 4 engines or equivalent retrofit technology, subject to the availability provisions of the condition. Applicable construction equipment would also be equipped with CARB-certified best available control technology, and diesel idling would be limited in accordance with applicable CARB requirements. As discussed in Section III, Condition GHG/AQ#2 is imposed as a construction-equipment compliance condition and is not relied upon as CEQA mitigation to reduce an otherwise significant air quality impact.

9. Fugitive Dust Controls. Project construction would comply with SDAPCD Rule 55 and the County Grading Ordinance through Condition GHG/AQ#1, including watering disturbed areas, controlling vehicle speeds on unpaved surfaces, stabilizing stockpiles and construction roadways, controlling haul-truck loads, and suspending grading during high-wind conditions.
10. Construction and Demolition Waste. The Project would comply with applicable County construction and demolition material diversion requirements. Project conditions require documentation of materials recycled, salvaged, reused, or disposed of through the County's debris-management process.
11. Tree Preservation and Landscaping. The Project would retain and protect the existing historic eucalyptus frontage trees and implement the approved landscape plan consistent with applicable County landscaping requirements.
12. Vehicle Miles Traveled. The Project's VMT analysis concludes that the proposed hotel would serve latent lodging demand within Ramona by allowing visitors to stay closer to their destinations rather than lodging in surrounding communities. The analysis therefore concludes that the Project would have a less-than-significant VMT impact.

Conditions GHG/AQ#3 and GHG/AQ#4 implement applicable requirements of the County's 2024 CAP Consistency Review Checklist and are imposed as enforceable CAP consistency and regulatory-compliance conditions. These conditions are not identified as project-specific CEQA mitigation measures. Rather, they provide the mechanism for implementing and documenting the Project's compliance with applicable CAP consistency requirements through final Project design and permit review.

The Project would therefore be consistent with the growth assumptions underlying the County CAP and would implement applicable CAP consistency requirements through its design and enforceable conditions of approval. The project-specific GHG Screening Letter provides additional supporting information and identifies the same general sustainable design features, including an all-electric building, EV infrastructure, rooftop solar, and water-efficient design.

However, the Project's significance determination is based primarily on consistency with the County's adopted CAP and completed CAP Consistency Review Checklist rather than on the older quantitative emissions estimates contained in the GHG Screening Letter. Therefore, the Project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to GHG emissions. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: There are numerous State plans, policies, and regulations adopted to reduce GHG emissions. The principal State plan and policy is Senate Bill (SB) 32 and the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. The quantitative goal of SB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. In 2022, the State passed AB 1279, which establishes a goal of achieving net-zero GHG emissions by 2045 and reducing GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. Pursuant to these goals, the 2022 Scoping Plan identifies measures and strategies for the State to achieve the required reductions. Additionally, SANDAG adopted San Diego Forward: 2021 Regional Plan in 2021, and the County of San Diego General Plan contains goals and policies intended to reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, the analysis is based on the Project's consistency with plans and policies adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, including the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan, SANDAG's 2021 Regional Plan, the County General Plan, and the County's 2024 CAP.

2022 Scoping Plan

The 2022 Scoping Plan focuses on the actions needed to achieve carbon neutrality, including clean technology, energy deployment, transportation, building decarbonization, and waste reduction. Strategies applicable to the Project include:

- Reducing fossil fuel use, energy demand, and VMT;
- Building decarbonization; and
- Maximizing recycling and diversion from landfills.

The Project would support these strategies through its all-electric building design, energy-efficiency requirements, EV infrastructure, active-transportation improvements, renewable-energy features, and construction and demolition waste-diversion requirements.

San Diego Forward: 2021 Regional Plan

The 2021 Regional Plan provides a framework for coordinated land use and transportation planning. The Sustainable Communities Strategy includes strategies to expand multimodal transportation, encourage sustainable development, reduce solo driving, and support zero-emission transportation options.

The Project is located within the existing Ramona Village area on land designated and zoned for commercial development. The Project would provide EV infrastructure, bicycle parking, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements along the Project frontage. The Project's VMT analysis also concludes that the hotel would respond to an existing unmet lodging demand within Ramona and would result in a less-than-significant VMT impact.

County of San Diego Climate Action Plan

The County's 2024 CAP is the principal local GHG reduction plan applicable to the Project. The CAP establishes a two-step project consistency process that evaluates consistency with General Plan-based growth assumptions and applicable CAP measures and actions. Projects that

demonstrate consistency with both steps may rely on the CAP for the cumulative analysis of GHG emissions under CEQA.

The Project satisfies Step 1 because the proposed commercial hospitality use is consistent with the applicable General Plan and zoning framework and would not require a General Plan Amendment or rezone.

The completed CAP Consistency Review Checklist demonstrates that the Project also satisfies the applicable Step 2 consistency requirements. These include EV infrastructure, active transportation, building energy and electrification, renewable energy, and water-efficiency requirements.

The applicable CAP consistency requirements would be implemented through the Project design and enforceable conditions of approval, including Condition GHG/AQ#3 – Electric Vehicle Design Standards and Increase Active Transportation and Condition GHG/AQ#4 – Building Electrification, Renewable Energy, and Tier 2 CALGreen Requirements. These conditions implement the applicable requirements of the County’s 2024 CAP Consistency Review Checklist and are CAP consistency and regulatory-compliance conditions, rather than project-specific CEQA mitigation measures. Compliance would be demonstrated through final Project plans, applicable building and permit documentation, and County review prior to issuance of the applicable permits. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the County’s 2024 CAP.

San Diego County General Plan

The County General Plan contains goals and policies intended to reduce GHG emissions and promote sustainable development. Policies applicable to the Project include:

- COS-14.3 – Sustainable Development: requires residential subdivisions and nonresidential development to incorporate green and sustainable land development practices that conserve energy, water, open space, and natural resources;
- COS-15.4 – Title 24 Energy Standards: requires development to minimize energy impacts from new buildings consistent with or exceeding applicable Title 24 standards; and
- LU-5.1 – Reduction of Vehicle Trips within Communities: supports land use patterns within Villages and Rural Villages that facilitate multimodal transportation, including walking and bicycling, where appropriate.

The Project would be consistent with these policies through compliance with the applicable Energy Code and CALGreen standards, an all-electric building design, renewable-energy features, water-efficient fixtures and landscaping, EV infrastructure, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. In addition, the Project is located within the existing Ramona Village area on property designated and zoned for commercial development.

The Project’s VMT analysis concludes that the hotel would respond to an existing unmet lodging demand within Ramona and would have a less-than-significant VMT impact. Therefore, the

Project would be consistent with applicable General Plan policies intended to reduce energy use, vehicle travel, and GHG emissions.

Overall, the Project would comply with applicable plans, policies, regulations, and GHG-reduction actions identified in the 2022 Scoping Plan, San Diego Forward: 2021 Regional Plan, County of San Diego General Plan, and County of San Diego 2024 Climate Action Plan. The Project would implement applicable CAP consistency requirements through its design and enforceable CAP consistency and regulatory-compliance conditions. Conditions GHG/AQ#3 and GHG/AQ#4 are not relied upon as project-specific CEQA mitigation measures; rather, they ensure that the requirements identified through the County's adopted CAP consistency process are incorporated into final Project design and permit approvals. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Impacts would be less than significant.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS --

- a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or wastes or through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

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|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

The following Technical Study was prepared for the project related to Hazards:

Weis Environmental, LLC. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, County of San Diego APNs 282-141-32-00, -33-00 and -34-00, Ramona, California. April 2026.

Less than Significant Impact: A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (Phase I ESA) was prepared by Weis Environmental, LLC, dated April 2, 2026, for the three Project parcels. The Phase I ESA included a review of regulatory databases, historical land uses, available agency records, and a site reconnaissance. The assessment identified historical automobile repair activities and petroleum-product storage onsite; however, no releases of hazardous substances or petroleum products to the subsurface were identified. The Phase I ESA classified these conditions as de minimis and concluded that the site contains no recognized environmental conditions (RECs), historical RECs, or controlled RECs. No significant data gaps were identified, and no additional environmental investigation was recommended.

Construction would involve the temporary use of fuels, lubricants, paints, coatings, and similar materials typical of construction activities. Hotel operations may also involve small quantities of cleaning, maintenance, landscaping, and pool-treatment products. These materials would be

handled in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local hazardous-materials requirements.

The Project also includes demolition of existing structures. The Phase I ESA did not evaluate asbestos-containing materials or lead-based paint because these are outside the scope of a standard ASTM Phase I assessment. Demolition would therefore remain subject to applicable survey, handling, abatement, and disposal requirements for hazardous building materials.

Condition HAZ#1 – Hazardous Materials, Soil Remediation, and Construction Management would be imposed as a regulatory-compliance condition to ensure applicable hazardous-materials requirements are followed during demolition, grading, excavation, and construction. If previously unknown contaminated soil or groundwater, petroleum products, underground storage tanks, buried debris, staining, odors, or other evidence of hazardous materials is encountered, work in the affected area would stop and the appropriate regulatory agencies would be contacted. Any required investigation or remediation would be completed in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.

The Phase I ESA also notes that groundwater in the area may occur at depths of less than approximately 15 feet below ground surface and that leaking underground storage tank cases have occurred in the surrounding Ramona area. However, the available information did not indicate that offsite contamination had migrated to the Project site, and these conditions were not identified as a REC. If excavation reaches a depth where the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board requires a Soil and Groundwater Management Plan, the Project would be required to comply with that requirement before deeper excavation proceeds. Condition HAZ#1 memorializes that obligation as a condition of approval.

Based on the current Project design, excavation is not anticipated to reach approximately 15 feet below ground surface or encounter groundwater. Based on the Phase I ESA findings, including the absence of RECs, HRECs, or CRECs and the recommendation that no additional environmental assessment is warranted, together with compliance with applicable hazardous-materials and Water Board requirements, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment. Condition HAZ#1 serves as a regulatory-compliance condition and is not relied upon as CEQA mitigation to reduce an otherwise significant impact. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: The nearest existing school, Ramona Lutheran Church and School, is located approximately 0.8 mile from the Project site. Because the school is located more than one-quarter mile from the Project site, the Project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an

existing or proposed school. Therefore, the Project would not result in a hazardous materials impact to a school within the distance specified by this threshold. No impact would occur.

- c) Would the Project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, or is otherwise known to have been subject to a release of hazardous substances and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant: The Phase I ESA included a review of federal, State, and local environmental databases. The Project site is identified in the County HAZ SANDIEGO database in association with former automobile repair businesses at 2037 Main Street and inactive hazardous-waste generation permits. However, no reported releases or violations were identified, and the Phase I ESA did not identify the listing as a recognized environmental condition (REC). The Phase I ESA also found no State or Regional Water Board GeoTracker records associated with the Project site.

The Phase I ESA also reviewed nearby properties with known petroleum releases, including Stars Petroleum at 1910 Main Street, approximately 0.12 mile east-northeast of the Project site. That property is associated with a leaking underground storage tank case involving gasoline and MTBE impacts to groundwater and is subject to Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R9-2023-0051.

Although leaking-UST cases with groundwater impacts have occurred in the surrounding area, the Phase I ESA found no evidence that those impacts had migrated to the Project site. The assessment concluded that no REC, historical REC, or controlled REC is present at the Project site and did not recommend additional environmental investigation.

Groundwater in the Project area is estimated to occur at less than approximately 15 feet below ground surface. The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board has advised that, if excavation reaches a depth where contaminated soil or groundwater could be encountered, a Soil and Groundwater Management Plan may be required prior to deeper excavation. The Water Board also indicated that the proposed hotel use is acceptable because the Project would rely on municipal water and would not include a groundwater supply well.

Based on the current Project design, excavation is anticipated to remain substantially above the approximately 15-foot groundwater depth and is therefore not expected to encounter groundwater or trigger the Water Board's Soil and Groundwater Management Plan requirement. If future design changes result in deeper excavation, the Project would be required to comply with any applicable Water Board requirements before that work occurs. Condition HAZ#1 would memorialize these existing regulatory requirements and would also require appropriate regulatory coordination if previously unknown contamination, underground storage tanks, or other evidence of hazardous materials is encountered during construction.

Therefore, although an off-site MTBE groundwater plume exists in the surrounding Ramona area, the Phase I ESA does not identify contamination or a REC at the Project site, and the proposed excavation is not anticipated to reach groundwater. Any deeper excavation or unexpected discovery would remain subject to applicable Water Board and hazardous-materials requirements. Condition HAZ#1 serves as a regulatory-compliance condition and is not relied upon as CEQA mitigation to reduce an otherwise significant impact. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: The Project is located within the Ramona Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) area. County airport review determined that the Project site is located within Safety Zone 6 – Traffic Pattern Zone. The Ramona Airport ALUCP does not impose land use limitations on the proposed hotel use within Safety Zone 6. The Project is also located outside the 60–65 dB CNEL airport noise contour and therefore is not subject to the ALUCP noise compatibility policies and standards. A portion of the Project site is located within an airport overflight path; however, the County's review indicates that an Airport Overflight Agreement would only be required if residential structures were proposed in the future. The Project proposes a hotel and does not include residential development. The Project is also located within an area requiring Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) notification because of its proximity to an aviation navigation facility. The proposed hotel would have a maximum height of approximately 35 feet, and the FAA previously issued a Determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation for the proposed 35-foot structure. The Project would be required to comply with any applicable FAA notification, extension, or filing requirements associated with the final building design. Therefore, because the proposed hotel is an allowable use within Safety Zone 6, is outside the applicable airport noise contour, and would comply with applicable FAA airspace requirements, the Project would not result in a substantial airport-related safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area. Impacts would be less than significant.

- e) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

The following sections summarize the project's consistency with applicable emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans.

i. OPERATIONAL AREA EMERGENCY PLAN AND MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN:

Less Than Significant Impact: The Operational Area Emergency Plan is a comprehensive emergency plan that defines responsibilities, establishes an emergency organization, defines lines of communication, and is designed to be part of the statewide Standardized Emergency Management System. The Operational Area Emergency Plan provides guidance for emergency planning and requires subsequent plans to be established by jurisdictions having responsibilities during a disaster. The Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies hazards present within the County, evaluates vulnerability to those hazards, and establishes goals, objectives, and actions for participating jurisdictions.

The Project would redevelop an existing commercial site within the Ramona Village area and would not close, obstruct, or substantially alter an established regional evacuation route. Access to the Project would be provided by two commercial driveways along Main Street/SR-67, and the site design includes internal circulation and fire apparatus access and turnaround. The Project would therefore not prohibit implementation of subsequent emergency plans or prevent the goals and objectives of existing emergency response or hazard mitigation plans from being carried out. Impacts would be less than significant.

ii. SAN DIEGO COUNTY NUCLEAR POWER STATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

No Impact: The San Diego County Nuclear Power Station Emergency Response Plan will not be interfered with by the project due to the location of the project, plant and the specific requirements of the plan. The emergency plan for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station includes an emergency planning zone within a 10-mile radius. All land area within 10 miles of the plant is not within the jurisdiction of the unincorporated County and as such a project in the unincorporated area is not expected to interfere with any response or evacuation.

iii. OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY ELEMENT

No Impact: The Oil Spill Contingency Element will not be interfered with because the project is not located along the coastal zone or coastline.

iv. EMERGENCY WATER CONTINGENCIES ANNEX AND ENERGY SHORTAGE RESPONSE PLAN

No Impact: The Emergency Water Contingencies Annex and Energy Shortage Response Plan will not be interfered with because the project does not propose altering major water or energy supply infrastructure, such as the California Aqueduct.

v. DAM EVACUATION PLAN

No Impact: The Project site as being outside a mapped Dam Inundation Zone. The Project would construct and operate a two-story, 101-room hotel on an existing developed site and would not involve improvements within a dam inundation area or otherwise obstruct designated evacuation routes or interfere with implementation of an applicable Dam Evacuation Plan. Therefore, the Project would not impair implementation of a Dam Evacuation Plan, and no impact would occur.

f) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project site is located within the developed Ramona Village area; however, areas in the vicinity have the potential to support wildland fires. The Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires because it would be required to comply with applicable County fire and life-safety requirements, including requirements related to emergency access, water supply, fire protection, and defensible space, as applicable.

The Project design incorporates fire protection features including fire apparatus access and turning areas, aerial fire apparatus access, designated fire lanes, a minimum 13-foot-6-inch porte-cochere clearance, and proposed fire hydrants. The Project has also undergone review by the applicable fire authority, and fire-related comments have been addressed through the Project design and review process.

Implementation of applicable fire safety requirements would continue through the building permit and fire review process. Therefore, based on the Project's fire-protection design, review by the applicable fire authority, and required compliance with applicable County fire and life-safety standards, the Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Impacts would be less than significant.

g) Would the project propose a use, or place residents adjacent to an existing or reasonably foreseeable use that would substantially increase current or future resident's exposure to vectors, including mosquitoes, rats or flies, which are capable of transmitting significant public health diseases or nuisances?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: The Project proposes a commercial hotel use and would not include agricultural operations, animal facilities, wastewater ponds, or similar uses that

commonly produce conditions conducive to substantial vector populations. The Project would include a swimming pool, refuse facilities, landscaping, and stormwater-management facilities. The swimming pool would be operated and maintained as a hotel amenity in accordance with applicable public-health requirements. Refuse would be stored within designated refuse facilities and removed through routine commercial solid-waste service. Stormwater facilities would be designed, operated, and maintained pursuant to the approved SWQMP and applicable County requirements, which would prevent unmanaged standing-water conditions.

Therefore, the Project would not create conditions expected to substantially increase exposure to mosquitoes, rats, flies, or other disease vectors. Impacts would be less than significant.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Discussion/Explanation:

The following analysis is based primarily on the Preliminary Drainage Report, the Priority Development Project Stormwater Quality Management Plan (PDP SWQMP), the current Preliminary Grading Plan, County resource screening, and applicable Caltrans drainage coordination.

The following Technical Studies were prepared for the project related to hydrology and water quality:

Tory R. Walker Engineering. Preliminary Drainage Report – Colonnade Hotel.
December 2025.

Tory R. Walker Engineering. Stormwater Quality Management Plan (SWQMP) for
Priority Development Projects – Colonnade Hotel. December 2025.

- a) Would the project violate any *water quality standards* or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: Construction and operation of the Project could generate potential water-quality pollutants. Construction activities including demolition, grading, excavation, material storage, and equipment operation could temporarily generate sediment, fuels, oils, construction debris, and similar pollutants. Following construction, potential pollutant sources would include parking and circulation areas, refuse facilities, landscaping, and other developed surfaces.

A PDP SWQMP has been prepared for the Project to comply with applicable County stormwater requirements. The SWQMP incorporates site-design, source-control, pollutant-control, and hydromodification-management BMPs. The principal structural pollutant-control BMP consists

of a flow-based proprietary biofiltration system with a treatment flow rate of at least 0.693 cubic feet per second, with flows above the water-quality treatment rate conveyed to the downstream flow-control system. The SWQMP also incorporates a separate downstream underground detention system for hydromodification flow control.

Source-control measures would also be incorporated into Project design and operation. The SWQMP identifies controls for trash and refuse storage, storm drain inlet marking, and prevention of non-stormwater discharges from applicable interior work surfaces and drain lines. During construction, the Project would be required to comply with applicable Construction General Permit, County Watershed Protection Ordinance, SWPPP, SWQMP, and erosion-control requirements. County conditions require implementation and maintenance of onsite and offsite BMPs pursuant to the approved SWQMP and Erosion Control Plan, including erosion control, sediment control, slope protection, drainage, desilting, energy dissipation, and silt-control measures. Because the Project involves disturbance of more than one acre, applicable County stormwater requirements also require a SWPPP to be maintained onsite and updated as necessary during construction.

With implementation of the Project's construction and operational BMPs and compliance with applicable stormwater requirements, the Project would not violate water-quality standards or waste-discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Is the project tributary to an already impaired water body, as listed on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list? If so, could the project result in an increase in any pollutant for which the water body is already impaired?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: County resource screening identifies the Project within the San Dieguito Hydrologic Unit and Ramona Hydrologic Subarea 905.41 and identifies the Project site as tributary to 303(d)-listed impaired waters, including the Pacific Ocean Shoreline within the San Dieguito Hydrologic Unit, the San Dieguito River, and Lake Hodges. The Project SWQMP identifies the local drainage path as ultimately discharging through an unnamed tributary to Santa Maria Creek.

The Project would incorporate construction and operational BMPs to minimize pollutants in stormwater runoff before discharge. As described in response X(a), runoff from developed portions of the site would be subject to source-control measures and structural treatment, including proprietary biofiltration. The separate underground detention system would also provide hydromodification flow control.

Construction-phase erosion and sediment controls would further reduce the potential for sediment and other construction-related pollutants to enter downstream receiving waters. Because stormwater runoff would be managed through the approved SWQMP and applicable

construction and operational BMPs, the Project would not substantially increase pollutants associated with downstream impaired waters. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Could the proposed project cause or contribute to an exceedance of applicable surface or groundwater receiving water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: The Project is located within the San Dieguito Hydrologic Unit, Ramona Hydrologic Subarea 905.41. County resource screening also identifies the site as tributary to an Environmentally Sensitive Area and as located within a Source Water Protection Area.

Potential pollutants associated with construction and hotel operation would be typical of developed commercial uses and would be addressed through the construction and permanent BMPs identified in the Project SWQMP. As discussed above, the Project includes source controls, proprietary biofiltration for pollutant treatment, and separate hydromodification flow control. The SWQMP was prepared consistent with the County BMP Design Manual, Watershed Protection Ordinance, and regional stormwater permit requirements.

Sanitary wastewater generated by the hotel would be conveyed to the public sewer system rather than discharged to surface water or groundwater. Water and sewer service are proposed from the Ramona Municipal Water District.

Potential soil or groundwater contamination encountered during construction is addressed separately in Section IX, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, including Condition HAZ#1. The Phase I ESA estimates groundwater in the area at less than approximately 15 feet below ground surface but concludes, based on available information, that reported regional groundwater contamination does not appear to have migrated to the Project site.

With implementation of the SWQMP and applicable construction and operational stormwater requirements, the Project would not cause or contribute to an exceedance of applicable receiving-water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses. Impacts would be less than significant.

d) Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project would not rely on groundwater for its water supply. Water service would be provided by the Ramona Municipal Water District, and County resource screening specifically identifies the Project as not groundwater dependent. Therefore, the Project would not require groundwater pumping that could substantially decrease groundwater supplies.

The site is currently developed and substantially disturbed and already contains structures, hardscape, gravel, and compacted surfaces. The Project SWQMP identifies the site as predominantly underlain by Hydrologic Soil Group D soils, with approximately 82.6 percent mapped as Bonsall sandy loam and 17.4 percent as Hydrologic Soil Group C Placentia sandy loam. Due to the predominance of Type D soils, the SWQMP determines that infiltration is restricted and applies a design infiltration rate of 0.00 inches per hour.

Therefore, the Project would rely primarily on biofiltration and detention rather than onsite infiltration for stormwater management. Because the Project would not extract groundwater and existing site conditions provide limited recharge potential, development would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. Impacts would be less than significant.

- e) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or through the addition of impervious surface, in a manner which would:

Discussion/Explanation:

The current Preliminary Grading Plan incorporates a duplex stormwater lift station with low- and high-flow pumps, a 2-inch force main, Type G catch basin facilities, proprietary biofiltration, and associated storm-drain and frontage drainage improvements. The Project SWQMP additionally provides a downstream underground detention system for hydromodification and peak-flow control.

The revised design does not propose a new direct connection to existing Caltrans drainage infrastructure. Instead, treated and flow-controlled runoff would be conveyed through the Project drainage system and discharged consistent with the surface-flow configuration required by Caltrans. Caltrans specifically directed that the Project not connect directly to its drainage infrastructure and that runoff continue as surface flow to the existing inlet. County engineering review identifies the resulting current configuration as a pump, force main, and surface-flow design and requires final engineering to detail the pump, grades, pipe protection, and demonstrate that the pump does not adversely affect HMP flows.

The hydrologic calculations in the December 2025 Preliminary Drainage Report are used below to describe the Project's detention and peak-flow-control requirements. The downstream conveyance description in that report has been superseded by the later Caltrans direction and current grading design.

- (i) result in substantial erosion or siltration on- or off-site;

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: Construction of the Project would involve demolition and grading that could temporarily expose soils to wind and water erosion. However, construction would be subject to the County Watershed Protection Ordinance, Construction General Permit, approved Erosion Control Plan, SWPPP, and applicable erosion and sediment-control BMPs. Current Project conditions require appropriate onsite and offsite BMPs pursuant to the approved SWQMP and Erosion Control Plan, including erosion-control measures, slope protection, drainage systems, desilting facilities, energy dissipation, and silt control.

Following construction, site runoff would be collected, treated through the proprietary biofiltration BMP, and subject to underground detention and flow control before discharge through the current pump/force-main/surface-flow configuration. The detention system is designed to limit post-Project peak flows to approximately existing-condition levels, thereby limiting the potential for increased downstream erosive forces.

Unlike the superseded drainage-report configuration, the current analysis does not rely on the prior assumption that the Project would discharge through a new direct underground connection to Caltrans facilities. Final surface-flow discharge details would be established through final engineering consistent with Caltrans requirements.

Therefore, with implementation of construction erosion controls and the Project's permanent stormwater and flow-control system, the Project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite. Impacts would be less than significant.

- (ii) Would the project substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: Redevelopment of the site would increase impervious surfaces and would increase peak runoff in the absence of flow-control measures. The Preliminary Drainage Report conservatively evaluated post-Project conditions assuming approximately 90 percent impervious cover. The report calculated a pre-Project 100-year peak flow of 7.44 cfs and an unattenuated post-Project peak flow of 16.94 cfs. With the proposed underground detention and flow-control system, the modeled post-Project peak discharge is approximately 7.00 cfs, which is below the modeled pre-Project peak discharge. The detention analysis similarly concludes that the controlled 100-year peak discharge would be approximately five percent below the pre-Project peak flow.

The downstream conveyance configuration has subsequently been revised from the direct Caltrans connection described in the Preliminary Drainage Report. As discussed above, the

current grading design utilizes the pump, force-main, and surface-flow configuration required to comply with Caltrans direction. Final engineering would be required to maintain the Project's required detention and hydromodification performance and demonstrate that operation of the pump system would not adversely affect HMP flows.

Therefore, the Project's flow-control system would prevent a substantial increase in surface runoff that could result in flooding on or offsite. Impacts would be less than significant.

(iii) Would the project create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: As discussed in response X(e)(ii), the Preliminary Drainage Report calculates that the Project's underground detention system would reduce the modeled 100-year post-Project peak discharge from approximately 16.94 cfs without flow control to approximately 7.00 cfs, compared with approximately 7.44 cfs under existing conditions. The drainage analysis therefore concludes that detention would reduce the potential for flooding and avoid exceeding the capacity of existing offsite or planned onsite drainage systems.

The Preliminary Drainage Report notes that detailed onsite storm-drain hydraulic calculations would be finalized during the engineering phase and that proposed inlets would be sized to intercept their tributary drainage areas while maintaining adequate freeboard. The current grading plan and County engineering review further require final design of the pump, force main, grades, pipe protection, and HMP performance for the revised downstream conveyance system. Potential polluted runoff would be treated through the source-control and structural BMPs described in responses X(a) through X(c), including proprietary biofiltration with a treatment flow rate of at least 0.693 cfs. Permanent BMPs would also be subject to County verification and ongoing maintenance requirements.

Therefore, the Project would not create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Impacts would be less than significant.

(iv) Would the project impede or redirect flood flows?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: County resource screening identifies all three Project parcels as outside a FEMA flood area, County Flood Plain, and County Floodway. The Preliminary Drainage Report similarly confirms that the Project site is not located within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area. Because

the Project would not place structures or fill within a mapped floodplain or floodway, it would not impede or redirect flood flows. No impact would occur.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: County resource screening identifies the Project site as outside a FEMA flood area, County Flood Plain, County Floodway, and mapped Dam Inundation Zone. The Project site is inland within Ramona and is not located along the coastline or shoreline of a large lake or reservoir where tsunami or seiche inundation would be expected.

Therefore, the Project is not located within a flood-hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone that could result in the release of pollutants due to Project inundation. No impact would occur.

- g) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: The Project would be required to comply with applicable regional and County water-quality requirements, including the County Watershed Protection Ordinance, County BMP Design Manual, and applicable San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board stormwater requirements. The Project SWQMP has been prepared to implement the applicable site-design, source-control, pollutant-control, and hydromodification requirements. The SWQMP engineer's certification identifies consistency with the County BMP Design Manual, Watershed Protection Ordinance, and regional MS4 permit requirements.

Construction would also be subject to applicable SWPPP, erosion-control, sediment-control, materials and waste-control, Low Impact Development, and hydromodification requirements. These requirements would protect downstream receiving waters, including the impaired waters identified in County resource screening.

The Project would not rely on groundwater for its water supply and is identified by County resource screening as not groundwater dependent. As discussed in response X(d), infiltration at the site is also limited by predominantly Type D soils, and the SWQMP assigns a design infiltration rate of 0.00 inches per hour. Therefore, the Project would not substantially deplete groundwater or interfere with groundwater recharge in a manner that would obstruct sustainable groundwater management.

Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of an applicable water-quality control plan or sustainable groundwater-management plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: The Project Site consists of three existing developed parcels located along Main Street/State Route 67 between Vermont Street and Letton Street within the established Ramona Village Center. The Project would consolidate the three parcels through a Lot Merger and redevelop the site with a two-story, 101-room boutique hotel. The Project Site and properties to the east and west are designated General Commercial, while residential uses are located to the north across Vermont Street.

The Project would not introduce a new major roadway, utility corridor, or other linear feature that would create a physical barrier or separate existing land uses. Vehicular access would continue to be provided from Main Street/SR-67 through two proposed commercial driveways, and no Project access would be provided from Vermont Street. The Project would also provide pedestrian and bicycle improvements along the Main Street frontage. The Lot Merger would consolidate, rather than divide, the existing parcels. Therefore, the Project would not physically divide an established community, and no impact would occur.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project Site is located within the Ramona Community Plan Area, within the Village General Plan Regional Category, and has a General Commercial land use designation. The site is subject to the RM-V4 District and Colonnade Sub-Area of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code. The Project would redevelop the existing developed site with a two-story, 101-room boutique hotel and associated parking, landscaping, pedestrian improvements, utilities, stormwater facilities, and related site improvements.

The Project has been designed to be consistent with applicable County and Ramona Village Center land use and design standards. The proposed hotel would be limited to two stories and approximately 35 feet in height and would incorporate articulated building forms, varied rooflines, architectural detailing, landscaping, and frontage improvements consistent with the character of the Colonnade Sub-Area. The Project would also retain and protect the mature eucalyptus trees

along Main Street/SR-67 and provide a decomposed-granite pathway and landscaping along the frontage.

The Project has undergone local community design review. The Ramona Design Review Board approved the Project subject to removal of palms from the landscape plan, and the Ramona Community Planning Group subsequently recommended approval of the Project. These reviews provide additional support that the proposed use and design are compatible with the applicable planning framework and established character of the Ramona Village Center.

Therefore, the Project would not conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Impacts would be less than significant.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

- a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) provides for the classification of lands according to their mineral resource potential. The project site is classified as Mineral Resource Zone 3 (MRZ-3), indicating that mineral resources may potentially be present. The project is identified as MRZ-3, with alluvium present and no mines located on the site. The site is also underlain by Quaternary alluvium.

The Project would redevelop an approximately 3.3-acre, previously developed and disturbed commercial site within the Ramona Village Center with a two-story, 101-room boutique hotel and associated parking, landscaping, utilities, drainage facilities, and other site improvements. Although the site is classified as MRZ-3, it is located within an established developed area surrounded by commercial, residential, roadway, and other urban uses. These existing and planned land uses substantially constrain the practical feasibility of mineral extraction because mining activities would be incompatible with surrounding development and could result in land use conflicts related to noise, air quality, traffic, and other environmental effects.

Therefore, although mineral resources may potentially be present, implementation of the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that is practically available for extraction and of value to the region and residents of the state. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: As described above, the project site is classified as MRZ-3 and is underlain by Quaternary alluvium; however, an MRZ-3 classification alone does not identify the property as a locally important mineral resource recovery site. The project site is designated General Commercial under the County General Plan and is located within the RM-V4 District of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code. The site is currently developed, and no active mining or mineral extraction operations occur on the property. The project would demolish the existing onsite structures and improvements and redevelop the approximately 3.3-acre site with a two-story, 101-room boutique hotel and associated parking, landscaping, utilities, drainage facilities, and other site improvements. Neither the County General Plan, an applicable specific plan, nor any other applicable local land use plan identifies the project site as a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, implementation of the project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site, and no impact would occur.

XIII. NOISE

- a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

The following Technical Study was prepared for the project related to Noise:

Ldn Consulting, Inc. Noise Assessment – Ramona Hotel Development. March 2026.

Less Than Significant Impact: A Noise Assessment, Ramona Hotel Development was prepared by Ldn Consulting, Inc. to evaluate potential noise impacts associated with construction and operation of the Project. The Noise Assessment evaluates the proposed two-story, 101-room hotel and associated pool area and addresses off-site traffic noise, temporary construction noise, and operational noise from sources including outdoor pool activities, pool equipment, and mechanical/HVAC equipment. The Noise Assessment concludes that Project noise would comply with applicable County standards and that no noise mitigation is required.

General Plan – Noise Element: The County of San Diego General Plan Noise Element establishes noise compatibility standards for proposed development and noise-sensitive land uses. The Project site is located within an existing commercial area along Main Street/SR-67, with commercial uses located to the east and west and residential uses located north of the Project site across Vermont Street. The Project-specific Noise Assessment evaluated the proposed hotel in accordance with the County's applicable noise standards.

The Noise Assessment also evaluated potential increases in off-site roadway noise associated with Project-generated traffic. Existing traffic volumes along Main Street/SR-67 at the Project frontage are approximately 24,176 average daily trips (ADT). The Noise Assessment identifies that an approximate doubling of roadway traffic volumes would generally be necessary to result in a 3 dBA CNEL increase. The current Project transportation analysis estimates approximately 807 daily Project trips for the proposed 101-room hotel. Even conservatively assuming that Project traffic is added to Main Street/SR-67, the incremental increase would remain substantially below that necessary to result in a 3 dBA CNEL increase. Therefore, Project-generated traffic would not result in a substantial direct or cumulative increase in roadway noise affecting existing or future noise-sensitive land uses.

Noise Ordinance – Section 36.404: Operational noise generated by the Project would primarily consist of outdoor pool activities, pool equipment, and mechanical/HVAC equipment. Section 36.404 of the County Noise Ordinance establishes one-hour average sound-level limits based on the applicable land use and zoning. Commercial uses are subject to limits of 60 dBA during daytime hours and 55 dBA during nighttime hours. Residential uses north of the Project are subject to limits of 50 dBA during daytime hours and 45 dBA during nighttime hours. Where two different zones meet, Section 36.404 requires use of the arithmetic mean of the respective standards. Therefore, the Noise Assessment applies a 55-dBA daytime standard and 50-dBA nighttime standard at the northern Project property line adjacent to the residential uses.

The Noise Assessment conservatively evaluated the cumulative operational noise generated by the outdoor pool and mechanical equipment. Cumulative daytime operational noise at the northern property line was calculated at approximately 52.1 dBA, below the applicable 55-dBA standard. During nighttime hours, mechanical/HVAC noise was calculated at approximately 46.2 dBA, below the applicable 50-dBA standard. The Noise Assessment concludes that Project operational noise would comply with applicable daytime and nighttime property-line standards and that no mitigation is required.

As an operational characteristic of the Project, the outdoor swimming pool and associated outdoor pool area would operate between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. The pool operating hours would be included in the Project Description and conditions of approval. This is consistent with the Noise Assessment's assumption that outdoor pool activities would occur only during daytime hours and that mechanical/HVAC equipment would be the principal Project noise source during nighttime hours.

Noise Ordinance – Sections 36.409 and 36.410: Construction activities would result in temporary increases in ambient noise and would be subject to the County Noise Ordinance, including permitted construction hours and the applicable construction-equipment noise limitations. The County Noise Ordinance generally prohibits operation of construction equipment that exceeds an average sound level of 75 dBA over an eight-hour period when measured at the applicable property boundary or occupied property.

The Noise Assessment evaluated grading as the anticipated loudest construction phase. Construction equipment would be distributed throughout the Project site, with the center of the site approximately 200 feet from the existing residences to the north. At an average distance of

approximately 200 feet, cumulative grading noise was calculated at approximately 69.4 dBA, below the County's 75-dBA construction-noise standard. The Noise Assessment therefore concludes that construction activities would comply with the applicable County standard and would not require mitigation measures.

No blasting or rock crushing is proposed. Therefore, no substantial impulsive-noise sources are anticipated, and Project construction would comply with Section 36.410 of the County Noise Ordinance.

Based on the Project-specific Noise Assessment and compliance with the County General Plan Noise Element and County Noise Ordinance, the Project would not generate temporary or permanent noise levels in excess of applicable standards. Project traffic would not result in a substantial roadway-noise increase, construction noise would remain below applicable County standards, and operational noise would comply with applicable daytime and nighttime property-line limits. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

- b) Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The proposed hotel is considered a vibration-sensitive land use because it includes guest rooms where people would normally sleep. Therefore, the analysis considers whether Project construction or operation could expose hotel guests or nearby sensitive receptors to excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise.

Project construction would involve conventional demolition, grading, building construction, paving, and related activities that may generate temporary and localized groundborne vibration. However, construction would not include blasting, rock crushing, pile driving, or other substantial impulsive vibration-generating activities. The Project-specific Noise Assessment likewise identifies that no blasting or rock crushing is anticipated.

Following construction, operation of the hotel would not involve equipment or activities that would generate substantial groundborne vibration. Typical hotel activities, including guest and vehicle movements, pool use, and operation of mechanical/HVAC equipment, would not constitute significant permanent sources of groundborne vibration or groundborne noise.

Therefore, the Project would not expose hotel guests, nearby residences, or other existing or foreseeable sensitive receptors to excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. Impacts would be less than significant.

- c) Would the project result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above existing levels?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: As discussed in Section XIII(a), permanent Project noise would primarily be associated with vehicle traffic and stationary operational sources, including outdoor pool activities, pool equipment, and mechanical/HVAC equipment.

The Project-specific Noise Assessment concludes that Project traffic would not result in a roadway-noise increase of more than 3 dBA CNEL, which is the threshold used in the analysis to identify a substantial roadway-noise increase. Using the current Project trip-generation estimate, Project traffic would remain substantially below the approximate doubling of existing Main Street/SR-67 traffic volumes associated with a 3-dBA CNEL increase.

Operational noise from the Project's pool and mechanical/HVAC equipment would also remain below applicable County property-line noise standards. The Noise Assessment concludes that none of the proposed operational noise sources, either individually or cumulatively, would exceed applicable daytime or nighttime standards at the residential uses north of the Project site and that no mitigation is required.

The outdoor pool would operate between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., consistent with the Project Description. Therefore, the Project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the Project vicinity. Impacts would be less than significant.

- d) Would the project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant: Temporary increases in ambient noise would occur during demolition, grading, building construction, paving, and related construction activities. As discussed in Section XIII(a), construction activities would be temporary and would be required to comply with the permitted construction hours and sound-level limitations of the County Noise Ordinance.

The Noise Assessment identifies grading as the anticipated loudest construction phase. At an average distance of approximately 200 feet from nearby residences, cumulative grading noise was calculated at approximately 69.4 dBA, below the County's 75-dBA construction-noise standard. The Noise Assessment therefore concludes that construction activities would comply with the applicable construction-noise standard and would not require mitigation.

No blasting or rock crushing is proposed, and no substantial impulsive-noise source is anticipated. Construction noise would be temporary and would cease following completion of Project construction. Therefore, the Project would not result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in excess of applicable County standards. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: The Project is located within the Ramona Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) area. The County reviewed the proposed two-story, 101-room hotel for consistency with the Ramona Airport ALUCP. The County's review determined that the Project site is located within Safety Zone 6 – Traffic Pattern Zone, which does not impose a land-use limitation on the proposed commercial lodging use.

With respect to airport noise, the County determined that the proposed hotel is located outside the 60–65 dB CNEL airport noise contour and is therefore not subject to the noise-compatibility policies and standards of the Ramona Airport ALUCP.

Although the Project is subject to separate FAA notification requirements related to airspace protection, those requirements do not indicate exposure of Project guests or employees to excessive airport-related noise. Therefore, the Project would not expose people residing or working at the Project site to excessive airport noise levels. No impact would occur.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

- a) Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project proposes redevelopment of an existing developed site with a two-story, 101-room boutique hotel on approximately 3.26 acres. The Project does not include residential development and would not directly increase the permanent residential population of the Ramona community. The Project Site is located within the Village Regional Category, has a General Commercial land use designation, and is within the RM-V4 District of the Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code; therefore, commercial development of the site is

consistent with the planned land use pattern for the area. The current Site Plan identifies a 101-room hotel and approximately 60,327 square feet of gross building area.

The hotel is anticipated to employ approximately 18 employees. Although the Project would create new employment opportunities, the relatively limited number of employees would not be expected to induce substantial unplanned population growth or require a substantial influx of new residents into the area. The Project would also be served by existing roadways and existing utility providers and does not propose major extensions of roads, water or sewer infrastructure, or other public facilities that would remove a barrier to growth.

The Project would not result in a physical or regulatory change that would substantially encourage unplanned population growth. Therefore, impacts related to population growth would be less than significant.

- b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

No Impact: The Project Site is currently developed but does not contain residential housing. Two of the existing parcels contain structures associated with developed uses, while the third parcel has been used as a vehicle and equipment staging area. The Project would demolish existing buildings, paving, fences, and other site improvements to accommodate construction of the proposed hotel. No residential dwelling units would be demolished, and no existing residents would be displaced as a result of the Project. Therefore, the Project would not necessitate construction of replacement housing elsewhere, and no impact would occur.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

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

- i. Fire protection?
- ii. Police protection?
- iii. Schools?
- iv. Parks?
- v. Other public facilities?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Project would construct and operate a 101-room boutique hotel within an existing developed portion of the Ramona Village Center. Operation of the hotel could result in an incremental increase in demand for fire protection, law enforcement, emergency response, and other public services; however, the Project is not anticipated to require the construction or substantial physical expansion of governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service levels.

The Project has been designed to accommodate required fire and emergency access. The Site Plan provides two commercial access points from Main Street/SR-67, internal fire apparatus access roads and fire lanes, required turning and maneuvering areas, and proposed fire hydrants. The preliminary fire access plan identifies fire apparatus access throughout the site and proposed hydrants with a minimum design flow of 2,500 gallons per minute. The Project would also be subject to applicable Fire Authority permits and approvals prior to construction and operation.

The Project would not construct residential units or otherwise generate a substantial new permanent residential population. As a result, the Project would not generate substantial new demand for schools, parks, libraries, or similar population-serving public facilities. Although hotel guests and employees may incrementally increase demand for law enforcement and emergency services, the nature and scale of the Project would not be expected to necessitate construction of new or physically expanded governmental facilities.

Therefore, impacts associated with public services would be **less than significant**.

XVI. RECREATION

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

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|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant: The Project proposes a commercial hotel use and would not include residential development or otherwise generate a substantial new permanent population that would create significant demand for neighborhood or regional parks. The Project would also provide several recreational and guest amenities onsite, including a swimming pool, fitness room, landscaped courtyard, and second-floor deck, which would accommodate a portion of the recreational needs of hotel guests.

Hotel guests and employees may occasionally use existing parks, trails, or other recreational facilities within the Ramona area; however, such use would be temporary and incidental to the proposed hotel use. The limited increase in recreational facility use associated with the Project

would not be expected to cause or accelerate substantial physical deterioration of existing neighborhood or regional parks or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, the Project would not substantially increase the use of existing recreational facilities in a manner that would result in their physical deterioration, and impacts would be less than significant.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The Project includes several on-site recreational and guest amenities, including a swimming pool, fitness room, outdoor courtyard, and second-floor deck. The Site Plan identifies an approximately 792-square-foot swimming pool and an associated pool support building as part of the proposed development.

These recreational amenities are components of the proposed hotel development and are located entirely within the Project Site. The Project would not require construction or expansion of off-site public parks or recreational facilities. Potential environmental effects associated with construction and operation of the on-site recreational amenities, including grading, drainage, lighting, noise, and other physical improvements, are evaluated as part of the overall Project. The Noise Assessment, for example, specifically evaluated operation of the outdoor swimming pool and concluded that cumulative operational noise levels would comply with applicable property-line standards.

Therefore, construction and operation of the Project's on-site recreational amenities would not result in a substantial adverse physical effect on the environment, and impacts would be less than significant.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION -- Would the project:

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

The following Technical Studies were prepared for the project related to Traffic:

Darnell & Associates. Colonnade on Main Street Hotel Project – Traffic Memorandum.
September 2022.

Intersecting Metrics. Ramona Boutique Hotel – VMT Analysis. March 2024.

Less Than Significant Impact: The County of San Diego Transportation Study Guidelines establish procedures for evaluating transportation effects and incorporate applicable County roadway and mobility standards. Because the Project fronts Main Street/State Route 67 (SR-67), proposed access and frontage improvements within State right-of-way are also subject to Caltrans review and approval.

The Project would provide two commercial driveways on SR-67 and would not take access from Vermont Street because the Project does not have legal access to that private roadway. The Project would also construct a 10-foot-wide decomposed-granite pedestrian pathway along the Main Street frontage while retaining and protecting the existing historic eucalyptus colonnade. Caltrans has reviewed the proposed two-driveway configuration and conditionally approved it subject to final frontage and design requirements, including applicable sidewalk and ADA improvements, driveway design standards, heavy-vehicle turning documentation, drainage and other right-of-way improvements, and protection of the existing eucalyptus trees. These requirements would be incorporated into the final Project plans and completed through the Caltrans encroachment-permit process prior to construction.

Consistent with the Project design and Caltrans requirements, the existing mature eucalyptus trees along the Main Street/SR-67 frontage would remain and be protected in place. Final sidewalk, ADA, pedestrian, driveway, drainage, utility, grading, and other frontage improvements would be designed to maintain the trees and avoid disturbance within their root-protection areas. Removal of the existing frontage eucalyptus trees is not proposed as part of the Project.

The Project would not eliminate or interfere with an existing roadway, transit facility, bicycle facility, or pedestrian route. Rather, it would consolidate vehicular access into the two-driveway configuration reviewed by Caltrans and provide new pedestrian improvements along the frontage. The consolidation of the existing three SR-67 access points into two commercial driveways would reduce the number of driveway access locations and associated vehicle conflict points along the Project frontage. Subsequent Caltrans encroachment-permit review would address final engineering and construction-level conformance for improvements within State right-of-way and is not relied upon to determine the significance of the Project's transportation impacts under CEQA.

Therefore, with implementation of the proposed circulation improvements and compliance with applicable County and Caltrans design and permitting requirements, the Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing roadway, pedestrian, bicycle, or transit circulation. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) Would the project conflict or be consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation: The County of San Diego's Transportation Study Guidelines (TSG) establish thresholds and screening criteria for transportation VMT.

Less Than Significant Impact: Less Than Significant Impact: CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 establishes vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the primary metric for evaluating transportation impacts associated with land use projects. Under the County's Transportation Study Guidelines (TSG), a project may demonstrate a less-than-significant VMT impact through applicable screening criteria or other project-specific evidence demonstrating that the Project would not result in a significant increase in VMT.

A VMT Analysis was prepared for the Project by Intersecting Metrics, dated March 11, 2024, using the County of San Diego Transportation Study Guidelines in effect at the time of preparation. The analysis first evaluated whether the Project qualified for applicable VMT screening criteria. The analysis reviewed the County's VMT-efficient-area mapping; however, sufficient employment data were not available for the Project's traffic analysis zone to determine whether the site is located within a VMT-efficient area. The VMT conclusion is therefore based on the specific travel characteristics of the proposed hotel and the existing demand for lodging within Ramona rather than on either of these screening criteria.

The VMT Analysis evaluated whether there is an existing unmet demand for hotel rooms within Ramona and whether providing additional lodging within the community would reduce travel associated with visitors who currently stay outside Ramona. The analysis compared the number of hotel rooms within communities throughout the San Diego region and unincorporated County with population, total employment, service-sector employment, and overall service population. The analysis found that hotel-room supply has a relationship to employment, particularly service-sector employment associated with retail, restaurants, recreation, and other visitor-serving activity. Based on this relationship, the ratio of service jobs to available hotel rooms was used as an indicator of existing lodging demand.

Ramona currently has approximately 45 hotel rooms and 1,826 service jobs, or approximately 40.6 service jobs per hotel room. This is substantially higher than the regional average of approximately 16.6 and regional median of approximately 10.7 service jobs per hotel room. Using the regional median, the VMT Analysis estimated demand for approximately 174 hotel rooms within Ramona. With development of the proposed 101-room hotel, Ramona would have approximately 146 hotel rooms, which would remain below the estimated lodging demand. This indicates that the Project would serve existing unmet visitor demand within Ramona rather than create a new regional destination or induce substantial new vehicle travel.

The VMT Analysis also considered the location of existing lodging available to visitors traveling to Ramona. Rancho Bernardo, located approximately 21 miles from Ramona, has approximately 875 hotel rooms; Escondido, approximately 19 miles away, has approximately 1,061 rooms; and

Poway, also approximately 19 miles away, has approximately 198 rooms. Because of the limited lodging supply within Ramona, visitors whose destinations are within the community may currently stay in these surrounding areas and travel between their hotel and Ramona.

The proposed hotel would provide additional lodging within Ramona and allow a portion of these visitors to stay closer to their intended destinations. Trips that currently extend between Ramona and hotels in surrounding communities would be shortened or avoided. Based on the documented shortage of hotel rooms within Ramona, the distance to surrounding lodging areas, and the Project's function as lodging serving existing visitor activity, the VMT Analysis finds that the Project would result in shorter visitor trips and a net reduction in regional VMT.

The March 2024 VMT Analysis predates the County's current 2026 Transportation Study Guidelines; however, the conclusion is based on the Project-specific lodging demand and travel characteristics described above that is consistent with the new guidelines. As part of subsequent Project review, County transportation staff reviewed the Project-specific VMT Analysis and accepted the conclusion that the Project would not result in a significant VMT impact. The current IS also identifies the Project as a 101-room hotel and relies on the project-specific VMT analysis for the transportation determination.

For these reasons, the Project would accommodate existing unmet lodging demand within Ramona and reduce travel associated with visitors who may otherwise stay approximately 19 to 21 miles outside the community. The Project would not result in a significant increase in VMT or conflict with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b). Impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

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

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|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation: The September 20, 2022 Traffic Memorandum prepared by Darnell & Associates evaluated access to the Project Site from Main Street/SR-67. The memorandum identified that access is limited to Main Street because the Project does not have legal access to Vermont Street and that the Project would replace three existing SR-67 access points with the proposed two-driveway configuration. The two driveways were also identified as necessary to satisfy County Fire access requirements.

Less Than Significant Impact: The Traffic Memorandum evaluated existing roadway geometry, traffic volumes, Project traffic distribution, and the two proposed driveway locations. The preliminary review did not identify a significant traffic deficiency but identified corner sight distance at the western driveway as a design consideration due to the existing eucalyptus trees along the Main Street/SR-67 frontage.

Subsequent Caltrans review conditionally approved the proposed two-driveway configuration, which would reduce the number of access points and associated conflict points compared with the existing condition. Final approval remains subject to applicable Caltrans frontage and design requirements, including verification of sight distance, documentation of heavy-vehicle turning movements, compliance with applicable driveway and ADA standards, and protection of the existing historic eucalyptus trees in place. Preservation of the eucalyptus trees is a component of the Project design evaluated in this Initial Study, and removal of the existing frontage eucalyptus trees is not proposed as part of the Project.

Because the Project fronts directly on SR-67 and Project-generated traffic would utilize the State Highway System, the County also considered whether the proposed access configuration and Project traffic could create or substantially exacerbate a transportation safety condition on SR-67. The Project would not introduce access onto a previously access-controlled frontage; rather, it would replace three existing direct SR-67 access points with two driveways, thereby reducing the number of access locations and associated conflict points. Project traffic would use the existing SR-67 roadway network through the access configuration evaluated in the Traffic Memorandum and subsequently reviewed by Caltrans. The Traffic Memorandum did not identify a significant traffic deficiency associated with Project-generated traffic or the proposed access configuration.

Final driveway geometry, pedestrian and ADA improvements, heavy-vehicle turning documentation, grading, drainage, utilities, and other frontage improvements within State right-of-way would be completed consistent with the applicable Caltrans requirements. The Caltrans encroachment-permit process would confirm final engineering and construction-level conformance with applicable State standards. This subsequent permitting process is not relied upon to determine whether the Project would result in a significant transportation safety impact or to identify future mitigation necessary to reduce such an impact.

Final frontage design would also be coordinated with Caltrans' historical-resources review. Prior to approval of grading or improvement plans authorizing work within the Caltrans right-of-way, the Project would complete the applicable Historic Resources Compliance Report process and incorporate any avoidance, minimization, monitoring, or other protection requirements imposed by Caltrans into the final plans.

Therefore, based on the Project-specific Traffic Memorandum, the consolidation of three existing SR-67 access points into two driveways, the relatively limited Project-generated traffic, Caltrans' prior review and conditional approval of the proposed two-driveway access configuration, and the pedestrian and frontage improvements incorporated into the Project, the Project would not create a new hazardous roadway geometry, substantially exacerbate an existing transportation safety condition, or introduce an incompatible use on SR-67. Final Caltrans review would confirm that construction-level plans conform to the Project configuration analyzed herein and applicable State design requirements. Accordingly, the Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible use. Impacts would be less than significant.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

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|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Less Than Significant: The Project would provide two commercial access driveways from Main Street/SR-67 and would not take vehicular access from Vermont Street, which is a private road for which the Project does not have legal access. County Fire identified the need for two access points to provide adequate emergency and medical access to the site, and the Project has been designed accordingly with internal fire apparatus circulation, required turning areas, and emergency access provisions.

Caltrans reviewed the emergency-access justification and the proposed SR-67 access configuration and conditionally approved the use of two driveways, subject to completion of remaining frontage and design requirements. Improvements within the State right-of-way would be finalized through the Caltrans encroachment-permit process, which would ensure compliance with applicable State roadway and access requirements. This final permitting review would confirm engineering conformance of the approved access design and would not defer the determination of whether the Project provides adequate emergency access.

Final emergency-access design, including driveway geometry, fire-apparatus circulation, turning radii, and maneuvering areas, would comply with applicable County Fire requirements while maintaining and protecting the existing eucalyptus trees along the Main Street/SR-67 frontage. The final design would therefore accommodate required emergency access and fire-apparatus movements without removal of the existing eucalyptus trees. Therefore, the Project would provide adequate emergency access and would not interfere with the ability of emergency responders to access the site. Impacts would be less than significant.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

- i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of Historical Resources as defined in Public Resources Code §5020.1(k), or

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

- ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision

(c) of Public Resources Code §5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code §5024.1, the Lead Agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☐ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☒ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: County cultural resources staff reviewed County records and the South Coastal Information Center database for the Project. Although cultural resources are known to occur in the surrounding area, the Project site has been historically developed, disturbed, and graded. Based on these conditions, County staff determined that a project-specific cultural resources study was not required, subject to completion of Native American consultation.

The County subsequently conducted outreach pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52). Of the culturally affiliated tribes contacted, only the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians requested consultation. County staff met with San Pasqual on October 7, 2024, at which time the County explained that the Project site was fully developed and that a project-specific cultural resources study was not required. San Pasqual raised no concerns regarding the Project and did not identify any tribal cultural resources within the Project site.

County staff made additional efforts to continue consultation on February 18, 2025, June 17, 2025, June 24, 2025, and June 9, 2026. San Pasqual subsequently responded on July 30, 2026 regarding scheduling; however, based on the County's repeated consultation efforts during Project processing and the absence of identified concerns requiring further evaluation or mitigation, County cultural resources staff determined that consultation could be considered concluded.

Neither the County's cultural resources review nor the AB 52 consultation process identified a tribal cultural resource within the Project site that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or a local register, or that the County determined to be significant pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. Therefore, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21074. No impact would occur.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

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

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|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
|---|--|

☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
 ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The Project would demolish the existing onsite improvements and construct a two-story, 101-room boutique hotel requiring new onsite water, sewer, electrical, telecommunications, fire-service, and stormwater infrastructure. Water and sewer service would be provided by the Ramona Municipal Water District, electrical service would be provided by San Diego Gas & Electric, and the Project would be all-electric and would not require natural gas service. The Project would connect to existing utility systems, and no new or substantially expanded offsite water treatment, wastewater treatment, electrical generation, or telecommunications facilities have been identified as necessary. New onsite stormwater facilities would include storm drains, catch basins, biofiltration, underground detention and flow-control facilities, and a duplex lift station and force main. These improvements would be constructed primarily within the developed Project site and frontage areas, and their potential environmental effects are evaluated throughout this Initial Study. Final utility and drainage improvements would be subject to applicable County, RMWD, SDG&E, Caltrans, and other agency requirements. Therefore, although the Project would require new onsite utility and stormwater facilities, their construction or relocation would not result in significant environmental effects, and impacts would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact
 ☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated
 ☐ No Impact

Less than Significant Impact: The Project would receive potable water service from the Ramona Municipal Water District (RMWD). RMWD has identified the Project as being within its water service area and has provided Project Facility Availability documentation identifying the requirements for providing water service to the proposed development. The Project would be required to comply with applicable RMWD conditions and complete any necessary water-service improvements prior to connection.

The proposed hotel would also incorporate water-conservation measures required by applicable building, landscaping, and CAP requirements, including water-efficient plumbing fixtures, irrigation systems, and landscaping. These measures would reduce potable water demand associated with Project operations.

Based on the availability of public water service from RMWD, compliance with applicable District requirements, and incorporation of water-efficiency measures, sufficient water supplies would be available to serve the Project without requiring development of a new water supply source. Therefore, impacts to water supply during normal, dry, and multiple dry years would be less than significant.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less than Significant Impact: Wastewater generated by the proposed 101-room hotel would be conveyed to the public sewer system operated by the Ramona Municipal Water District (RMWD). RMWD has identified the Project as being within its wastewater service area and has provided Project Facility Availability documentation identifying the conditions applicable to sewer service.

Connection to the District's wastewater system would be subject to RMWD review and confirmation of adequate conveyance, treatment, and disposal capacity prior to connection. The Project would also be required to construct any onsite sewer improvements and other facilities necessary to satisfy applicable District standards and conditions of service.

Because the Project would be served by an existing public wastewater system and sewer service would be provided only after RMWD confirms that applicable capacity and facility requirements have been satisfied, the Project would not result in wastewater demand in excess of available treatment or conveyance capacity. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

- d) Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less Than Significant Impact: Construction of the Project would generate temporary solid waste associated with demolition, grading, site preparation, and building construction, while operation of the proposed hotel would generate routine commercial solid waste. Solid waste and recyclable materials generated during Project construction and operation would be collected by Ramona Disposal Service (RDS), an affiliate of EDCO, and transported for processing, transfer, recycling, or disposal through the regional solid waste system. RDS operates locally through the Ramona Transfer Station at 324 Maple Street, Ramona, California.

In San Diego County, the County Department of Environmental Health, Local Enforcement Agency issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 44001 through 44018 and California Code of Regulations, Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1,

Chapter 4, Section 21440 et seq. There are four permitted active landfills in San Diego County with remaining disposal capacity. Accordingly, sufficient permitted solid waste capacity exists within the County to accommodate the Project's solid waste disposal needs.

The Project would also be subject to the County's Grading Material Diversion Program and Condition ROADS#6 – Debris Management Report (DMR), which is intended to increase diversion of grading, land-clearing, brushing, and construction-related materials from landfills and support compliance with State waste-diversion requirements. Prior to rough-grade release and issuance of a building permit, the applicant would be required to submit a Final DMR to the County's DPW Recycling Compliance Official documenting the quantity and type of materials recycled, salvaged, reused onsite, or disposed of at a landfill, together with applicable facility and hauler receipts and a signed self-certification. County approval of the Final DMR would be required prior to condition satisfaction.

The Project would further be required to comply with applicable construction and demolition debris diversion, recycling, organic-waste management, and other solid waste reduction requirements. Therefore, because Project-generated solid waste would be collected and managed through existing permitted solid waste facilities with remaining capacity and would be subject to applicable waste diversion, recycling, and debris-management requirements, the Project would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards or the capacity of local infrastructure, nor would it impair attainment of State or local solid waste reduction goals. Impacts would be less than significant.

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: Solid waste generated during Project construction and operation would be managed in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local solid waste management and reduction requirements. Construction and demolition materials would be subject to the County's recycling and diversion requirements, including the Grading Material Diversion Program and Condition ROADS#6 – Debris Management Report (DMR). Prior to rough-grade release and issuance of a building permit, the applicant would be required to submit a Final DMR documenting the quantity and type of materials recycled, salvaged, reused onsite, or disposed of at a landfill, together with applicable receipts and a signed self-certification, for review and approval by the County's DPW Recycling Compliance Official. During operation, solid waste, recyclable materials, and applicable organic waste generated by the hotel would be collected by Ramona Disposal Service (RDS), an affiliate of EDCO, and managed through the existing regional solid waste and recycling system, including the Ramona Transfer Station at 324 Maple Street, Ramona. Therefore, compliance with applicable construction debris diversion, recycling, organic-waste, and solid waste management requirements would ensure that the

Project complies with applicable federal, State, and local solid waste management and reduction statutes and regulations. Impacts would be less than significant.

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

- a) Would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less than Significant Impact: The Project site is not located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and is located within an urban area in a Local Responsibility Area. County resource screening identifies the site as being within an Urban-Wildland Interface Zone. The site is not within the jurisdiction of a specific fire protection district; however, CAL FIRE/San Diego County Fire Station 80 is located approximately 1.7 miles from the Project site and Fire Station 82 is located approximately 2.1 miles from the site. Based on County staff review of GIS aerial and travel-time information, the Project site is within the 0- to 5-minute emergency response travel-time area, with an estimated travel time of approximately 4 minutes from the nearest fire station. This meets the County General Plan Safety Element travel-time standard of 5 minutes for lands designated Village.

The Project would not close, obstruct, or otherwise interfere with an established emergency evacuation route. Access would be provided from two driveways along Main Street/SR-67, and the Project design incorporates fire apparatus access roads, aerial apparatus access, fire lanes, required turning radii, hydrants, and a minimum 13-foot-6-inch clearance beneath the porte cochere. Therefore, the Project would provide adequate emergency access and would not substantially impair implementation of an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

- b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentration from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less than Significant Impact: the Project site within an Urban-Wildland Interface Zone; therefore, wildfire conditions in the surrounding area could potentially affect the site. However, the Project is redevelopment of an existing disturbed and developed commercial site. The Biological Resources Letter Report characterizes the site as urban/developed and notes that it is surrounded by developed roads and residential and commercial structures rather than native habitat. The Project would not substantially alter regional topography or prevailing wind

conditions. The Project would also be required to comply with applicable County fire and life-safety standards, including requirements related to fire apparatus access, water supply, fire protection, and defensible space, as applicable. Fire apparatus access, fire lanes, aerial apparatus access, and hydrants are incorporated into the Project design. Based on the developed condition of the site, the Project's fire-protection design, and required compliance with applicable fire and building requirements, the Project would not substantially exacerbate wildfire risk or expose occupants to significant risks from wildfire-related pollutant concentrations or uncontrolled wildfire spread. Impacts would be less than significant.

- c) Would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less than Significant Impact: The Project would require typical infrastructure associated with redevelopment of the site, including driveways and internal circulation, fire apparatus access, water and sewer connections, fire hydrants and fire-service facilities, electrical and telecommunications service, and stormwater facilities. The Project would not require construction of new remote access roads, emergency water reservoirs, or major utility corridors through undeveloped wildland areas. The Project site is previously developed and disturbed, and the biological analysis identifies the site as urban/developed and surrounded by developed land uses. Required utility, fire-access, and drainage improvements would generally occur within the existing Project site and developed frontage and would be subject to applicable County, RMWD, utility-provider, and Caltrans requirements.

The installation and maintenance of these facilities would therefore not be expected to exacerbate wildfire risk or result in a separate significant environmental effect. Impacts would be less than significant.

- d) Would the project expose people or structure to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less than Significant Impact: The Project site is not located within a FEMA-mapped Special Flood Hazard Area, County floodplain or floodway, or mapped dam inundation area. In addition, County resource screening identifies the Project site as outside a mapped Landslide Susceptibility Area. The Project would incorporate permanent stormwater treatment and flow-control facilities. The Preliminary Drainage Report calculates a pre-Project 100-year peak discharge of approximately 7.44 cfs, compared with a controlled post-Project discharge of

approximately 7.00 cfs following implementation of the proposed underground detention system. Therefore, the Project is designed so that post-Project peak runoff would not exceed existing conditions. As discussed in Section X, Hydrology and Water Quality, the final drainage design would also be required to maintain applicable hydromodification and flow-control performance. Therefore, the Project would not substantially increase downstream flooding, erosion, or drainage hazards. Combined with the site's lack of mapped landslide susceptibility, the Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks from post-fire runoff, slope instability, landslides, or drainage changes. Impacts would be less than significant.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less Than Significant Impact: The potential for the Project to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, adversely affect fish or wildlife habitat or populations, threaten plant or animal communities, reduce the number or restrict the range of rare or endangered species, or eliminate important examples of California history or prehistory was evaluated throughout this Initial Study, including the analyses of Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources.

The Project Site has been historically developed and disturbed and consists of urban/developed habitat. The Biological Resource Letter Report found no sensitive habitat, wetlands, vernal pools, or other jurisdictional aquatic resources onsite. No State- or federally threatened or endangered plant or wildlife species were observed during the biological survey, and no federally designated critical habitat occurs on the Project Site. The biological analysis identified Cooper's hawk as having a high potential to occur because the mature eucalyptus trees provide potential nesting habitat, and existing buildings and trees may provide potential roosting opportunities for bats.

The mature eucalyptus trees along Main Street/SR-67 would be retained and protected. Project construction would also remain subject to applicable federal, State, and County wildlife-protection requirements. BIO#1 – Resource Avoidance and BIO#2 – Pre-Construction Bat Survey would be placed as regulatory-compliance and resource-avoidance notices on the approved Site Plan to document and implement these requirements during demolition, grading, and construction. These notices are not relied upon as project-specific CEQA mitigation measures.

The Project Site is not within a Biological Core Area or Pre-Approved Mitigation Area under the Draft North County Multiple Species Conservation Program and does not function as a regional

wildlife corridor. Santa Maria Creek, approximately 0.35 mile north of the site, provides regional wildlife movement opportunities; however, the developed Project Site does not provide a continuous habitat connection to that corridor. The biological analysis found that impacts to urban/developed habitat would not be significant and that habitat-based mitigation is not required.

With respect to cultural resources, County cultural resources staff reviewed County records and the South Coastal Information Center database and determined that a project-specific cultural resources study was not required due to the historically developed, disturbed, and graded condition of the site. Consultation pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 was also conducted with the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, and no archaeological or tribal cultural resources requiring additional study or mitigation were identified.

The mature eucalyptus trees along the Main Street/SR-67 frontage have been identified by Caltrans as a historic resource. The Project has been designed to retain and protect the trees, and improvements within the State right-of-way would remain subject to Caltrans historical-resource review and applicable encroachment-permit requirements. CULT#1 would ensure completion and documentation of the Caltrans historical-resource review before work within the State right-of-way proceeds.

For these reasons, the Project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce fish or wildlife habitat or populations, eliminate a plant or animal community, restrict the range of a rare or endangered species, or eliminate an important example of California history or prehistory. Impacts would be less than significant, and the Project would not meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Potentially Significant Impact | ☒ Less than Significant Impact |
| ☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | ☐ No Impact |

The following list of past, present and future projects were considered and evaluated as a part of this Initial Study:

Project Name	Permit/Map Number	Details
Olympic Public Storage	PDS2002-3500-01-022	Site Plan for the addition of a one-story, 7,200-square-foot mini-storage building to an existing mini-storage facility.

Barron Stp	PDS2002-3500-02-040	Site Plan for construction of a new, single-story, 3,735-square-foot auto body repair building and authorization of an existing 2,975-square-foot auto body repair building for vehicle reassembly.
Nickel Creek Tm & Nickel Creek Site Plan	PDS2003-3500-03-082 & PDS2004-3100-5347	Site Plan for development of a 45-unit condominium complex.
Ramona Fitness	PDS2004-3500-04-048	Site Plan for the remodel of the existing 10,401-square-foot Ramona Fitness Center.
Adobe Animal Hospital	PDS2004-3500-04-057	Site Plan for development of a 6,224-square-foot animal hospital.
B & M Automotive	PDS2004-3500-04-059	Site Plan for development of an automotive repair facility, including repair areas, offices, parking, and landscaping.
Casa De Rio Vista Condo Conversion	PDS2005-3100-5439	Tentative Map for conversion of two existing six-unit apartment buildings on a 0.64-acre site into 12 condominium units.
Verizon Wireless - Downtown Ramona	PDS2005-3500-05-020	Site Plan for development of a wireless telecommunications facility serving the Downtown Ramona area.
Condo Conversion	PDS2005-3600-05-016	Rezone associated with the conversion of an existing 12-unit apartment complex into a 12-unit condominium complex.
Paseo Village Townhomes	PDS2006-3100-5509, PDS2006-3500-06-030	Tentative Map and Site Plan for development of a 31-unit condominium project on a 2.28-acre site.
Wireless Facility	PDS2006-3400-07-009	Minor Use Permit for development of an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility concealed within a 35-foot-high flagpole.
Ramona Longs Drugs	PDS2006-3500-06-024	Site Plan for construction of a Longs Drug Store.

Village Walk Townhomes	PDS2007-3100-5535 & PDS2007-3500-07-021	Tentative Map and Site Plan for development of approximately 1.31 net acres with 14 detached, two-story townhomes of approximately 1,764 square feet each.
Ramona Care Facility	PDS2007-3500-07-042	Site Plan for development of a 14,050-square-foot, two-story assisted living and memory care facility with 28 bedrooms.
Day Site Plan	PDS2007-3500-07-048	Site Plan for construction of a two-story, approximately 2,387-square-foot commercial office building.
Newman, Woodlot	PDS2008-3500-08-006	Site Plan for operation of a firewood sales business on an unimproved dirt lot.
Palomar Pomerado Health	PDS2009-3500-09-005	Site Plan for development of a one-story urgent care clinic and medical office building.
Richardson Recycling, Site Plan	PDS2009-3500-09-018	Site Plan for development and operation of a light-processing and large-scale recycling facility.
Sears Ramona Site Plan	PDS2009-3500-97-023	Site Plan for development of an 8,000-square-foot commercial building.
Ramona SDA Church Site Plan	PDS2010-3500-10-008	Site Plan for installation of a new 1,430-square-foot manufactured building for office space and church meetings.
T-Mobile, Ramona - Pac Bell Site Plan	PDS2010-3500-10-021	Site Plan for development of a wireless telecommunications facility.
Raymond Avenue - Detached Apartment Units (Counter)	PDS2023-STP-23-003	Site Plan for development of six detached apartment units, each approximately 598 square feet.
HSC Ramona LLC Tractor Supply Company	PDS2013-STP-13-010	Site Plan for development of an approximately 18,800-square-foot Tractor Supply commercial building.
Valley Park Apartments	PDS2014-STP-14-034	Site Plan for development of a 62-unit apartment complex.

Boulder Ridge Villas	PDS2014-TM-5587	Tentative Map for conversion of 11 existing apartment units into condominium units.
Taco Bell Ramona	PDS2015-STP-03-044W1	Site Plan for development and operation of a Taco Bell restaurant.
Creekside At Village Walk	PDS2016-TM-5610, PDS2016-STP-16-002	Tentative Map and Site Plan for development of a 40-unit condominium project.
Main Street Jiffy Lube	PDS2016-STP-16-012	Site Plan for development of a Jiffy Lube automotive service facility.
Franklin Site Plan Design Review Checklist Exemption	PDS2016-STP-16-028	Site Plan for use of the site for the storage and sale of agricultural, horticultural, and construction materials.
Mc Donalds	PDS2016-STP-16-030	Site Plan for tenant improvements to an existing McDonald's restaurant.
Aldi	PDS2018-STP-18-021	Site Plan for development of an approximately 19,000-square-foot grocery store.
Panda Express Ramona	PDS2018-STP-18-036	Site Plan for development of a 2,239-square-foot Panda Express restaurant and a 1,940-square-foot office building.
D Street Mixed Use	PDS2018-STP-18-037	Site Plan for development of two detached mixed-use buildings.
Ramona Senior Apartments	PDS2018-VAR-18-012	Noise Variance for nighttime water-line construction to minimize disruptions associated with shutting down water service to existing businesses.
405	PDS2020-STP-20-003	Site Plan for development of a mixed-use project.
Automotive Equipment And Parking	PDS2021-STP-21-007	Site Plan for commercial development and truck parking.
Cozy Cubs Daycare (Counter)	PDS2022-STP-22-005	Site Plan for the remodel of an existing approximately 11,600-square-foot large family daycare home for children.

Ramco Ramona Gas Station (Counter)	PDS2023-STP-79-040W1	Site Plan Modification for modifications to an existing gas station and car wash facility.
Paseo Norte Apartments	PDS2023-ZAP-23-003	Minor Use Permit for development of an 85-unit apartment complex.
El Salto Falls LLC Site Plan	PDS2024-STP-24-008	Site Plan for development of a daycare center.
11th And D Street Checklist Exemption (Counter)	PDS2025-STP-25-002	Site Plan for development of a single-family residence and an office building.
Tourmaline Ramona (Counter)	PDS2025-TPM-21484	Tentative Parcel Map for financial purposes associated with the remodel of an existing shopping center.

As evaluated throughout this Initial Study, the Project's environmental effects would either result in no impact or would be less than significant based on the Project design, technical analyses, and compliance with applicable federal, State, County, Caltrans, utility-provider, and other agency requirements.

The Project would redevelop an existing developed and disturbed site within the Ramona Village Center. Biological effects would be limited because the site consists of urban/developed habitat and does not contain sensitive vegetation communities, wetlands, or jurisdictional aquatic resources. The site is not a regional wildlife corridor, and the mature eucalyptus frontage trees would be retained. BIO#1 and BIO#2 would be included as Site Plan notices to document applicable biological resource avoidance and wildlife-protection requirements and are not relied upon as CEQA mitigation.

Air-quality modeling demonstrates that construction and operational emissions would remain below applicable County screening-level thresholds. Construction emissions are less than significant independent of Condition GHG/AQ#2, and the condition provides an additional construction-equipment compliance mechanism rather than mitigation necessary to reduce an otherwise significant impact.

The Project would also be consistent with the County's 2024 Climate Action Plan through the completed CAP Consistency Review Checklist. Conditions GHG/AQ#3 and GHG/AQ#4 implement applicable CAP consistency requirements through enforceable conditions of approval and are CAP consistency and regulatory-compliance conditions rather than project-specific CEQA mitigation measures. The County's 2024 CAP Checklist provides that projects demonstrating consistency through Steps 1 and 2 may rely on the CAP for the cumulative analysis of GHG emissions.

The Phase I ESA found no recognized environmental conditions, historical recognized environmental conditions, or controlled recognized environmental conditions at the Project Site

and recommended no additional environmental investigation. HAZ#1 would document compliance with independently applicable hazardous-materials, excavation, and Water Board requirements and is not relied upon to reduce an otherwise significant hazardous-materials impact.

The Project-specific VMT analysis also determined that the hotel would serve existing unmet lodging demand within Ramona by allowing visitors who may otherwise stay in surrounding communities to lodge closer to their destinations. Based on the Project-specific lodging-demand and travel characteristics analyzed in the VMT study, the Project is expected to shorten existing visitor trips rather than result in a significant increase in regional VMT. With respect to transportation safety, the Project would consolidate three existing direct SR-67 access points into two driveways and would not create a new hazardous roadway geometry or substantially exacerbate an existing transportation safety condition. Caltrans has reviewed and conditionally approved the proposed two-driveway access configuration. Accordingly, the Project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to a transportation safety impact on SR-67.

Potential cumulative effects related to geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, noise, public services, utilities, traffic operations and safety, and other resource areas would similarly remain less than significant through Project design and compliance with applicable regulatory and agency requirements. The Project would not introduce a new land use or development intensity beyond the commercial development anticipated for the site under the General Plan and Ramona Village Center Form-Based Code.

When considered together with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable development, the Project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant environmental effect. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant, and the Project would not meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

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

☐ Potentially Significant Impact	☒ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	☐ No Impact

Less Than Significant Impact: Potential direct and indirect effects on human beings were evaluated throughout this Initial Study, including the analyses of Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation, Wildfire, and Utilities and Service Systems.

The Project is located within an existing developed portion of Ramona and would be required to comply with applicable County development standards, building and fire codes, stormwater requirements, air-quality regulations, noise standards, roadway requirements, and utility-provider requirements. The Project design and conditions of approval provide enforceable mechanisms for documenting compliance with these requirements.

Air-quality modeling demonstrates that construction and operational criteria pollutant emissions would remain below applicable County screening-level thresholds. The construction health-risk analysis also identified cancer and non-cancer risks below applicable significance thresholds under the analyzed equipment-control scenario. Condition GHG/AQ#2 provides additional construction-equipment controls but is not relied upon as CEQA mitigation to reduce an otherwise significant air-quality or health-risk impact.

The Phase I ESA found no recognized environmental conditions, historical recognized environmental conditions, or controlled recognized environmental conditions at the Project Site and did not recommend additional environmental investigation. Although contaminated groundwater associated with offsite leaking underground storage tank cases has been identified in the surrounding Ramona area, the Phase I ESA found no evidence that the contamination has migrated to the Project Site. Current Project excavation is not anticipated to reach the depth at which groundwater may be encountered. HAZ#1 would document compliance with applicable hazardous-materials and Water Board requirements if previously unknown contamination is encountered or deeper excavation is subsequently proposed.

Potential noise effects would remain subject to the County Noise Ordinance and the Site Plan conditions governing pool operating hours, ongoing operational sound levels, and temporary construction noise. Transportation analysis determined that the Project would not create a significant VMT impact or a significant transportation safety hazard. As discussed in Section XVII, the Project would consolidate three existing SR-67 access points into two driveways, reducing the number of access locations along the Project frontage, and Caltrans has reviewed and conditionally approved the proposed two-driveway configuration. Final Caltrans permitting would confirm engineering and construction-level conformance for improvements within State right-of-way and is not relied upon to determine whether a significant transportation safety impact exists.

Water and wastewater service would be provided by the Ramona Municipal Water District. Prior to connection, the Project would be required to obtain District confirmation of service availability and comply with applicable requirements for water and sewer facilities, capacity, connections, and associated improvements. The Project would also provide required fire access, fire-service facilities, stormwater controls, drainage improvements, and emergency access in accordance with applicable agency requirements.

The Project's conditions relating to air quality, biological resources, hazardous materials, CAP consistency, noise, lighting, stormwater, utilities, roads, and other development requirements function as regulatory-compliance, resource-avoidance, CAP consistency, or permit-implementation requirements and are not relied upon as project-specific CEQA mitigation measures to reduce otherwise significant impacts to human beings.

Based on the analyses contained in this Initial Study, Project construction and operation would not cause substantial direct or indirect adverse effects on persons living, working, or traveling in the surrounding area. Impacts would be less than significant, and the Project would not meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

XXI. REFERENCES USED IN THE COMPLETION OF THE INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

Project Specific References

County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services. Scoping Letter, Ramona Boutique Hotels, PDS2023-STP-23-021. April 2024. The County scoping materials include project-specific review for biological, cultural, paleontological, water, sewer, and other resource issues.

Silverman & Light, Inc. Ramona Boutique Hotel – Site Lighting Plan. August 2023.

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Blackhawk Environmental, Inc. Biological Resource Letter Report for the Hotel Ramona Project, PDS2023-STP-23-021. August 2026.

Robert Walton Jr., Consulting Arborist. Arborist Letter regarding proposed southwest driveway and existing eucalyptus trees. November 16, 2022

County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services. 2024 Climate Action Plan Consistency Review Checklist, Ramona Boutique Hotel, PDS2023-STP-23-021. 2026.

Weis Environmental, LLC. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, County of San Diego APNs 282-141-32-00, -33-00 and -34-00, Ramona, California. April 2026.

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Tory R. Walker Engineering. Stormwater Quality Management Plan (SWQMP) for Priority Development Projects – Colonnade Hotel. December 2025.

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Darnell & Associates. Colonnade on Main Street Hotel Project – Traffic Memorandum. September 2022.

Intersecting Metrics. Ramona Boutique Hotel – VMT Analysis. March 2024.

Ramona Municipal Water District. Project Facility Availability – Water. August 2023.

Ramona Municipal Water District. Project Facility Availability – Sewer and Sewer System Conditions. August 2023.

Ramona Unified School District. Project Facility Availability – School. September 2023.

San Diego County Fire Protection District. Project Facility Availability – Fire. September 2024.

GENERAL REFERENCES

- California Air Resources Board. 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality; California Ambient Air Quality Standards; and Air Quality Data.
- California Building Standards Commission. California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), Title 24, Part 11, including applicable Wildland-Urban Interface provisions.
- California Department of Conservation. California Important Farmland Finder; Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program; and Williamson Act Program.
- California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey. Mineral Land Classification and Mineral Resource Zone Mapping.
- California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology. Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego County Production-Consumption Region.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife. California Natural Diversity Database.
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps.
- California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). Solid Waste Facility and Disposal Capacity Information.
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control. EnviroStor Database.
- California Department of Transportation. California Scenic Highway Program; Highway Design Manual; California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices; and Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual.
- California Energy Commission. Building Energy Efficiency Standards, Title 24, Part 6.
- California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq., including Sections 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, and 21083.2, and CEQA Guidelines, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Sections 15000 et seq.
- California Fish and Game Code, including applicable protections for nesting birds and wildlife.
- California Government Code Sections 8585 et seq., Emergency Services Act.
- California Health and Safety Code, including Section 7050.5 and applicable hazardous materials and hazardous waste provisions.
- California Integrated Waste Management Act, Public Resources Code Division 30.
- California Public Resources Code Sections 5024.1 and 5097.9–5097.991, including Section 5097.98, relating to historical resources, Native American heritage, human remains, and Most Likely Descendant procedures.
- California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.
- California Code of Regulations, Titles 14 and 27, applicable solid waste regulations.
- California Fire Code and County of San Diego Consolidated Fire Code.
- County of San Diego. BMP Design Manual.
- County of San Diego. Climate Action Plan and CAP Consistency Review Checklist.
- County of San Diego. Design Review Guidelines for the Communities of San Diego County – Ramona.
- County of San Diego. General Plan, including the Conservation and Open Space, Housing, Land Use, Mobility, Noise, and Safety Elements, as amended.
- County of San Diego. General Plan Update Final Program Environmental Impact Report, including the Mineral Resources analysis.

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- County of San Diego. Grading Ordinance.
- County of San Diego. Hydrology Manual.
- County of San Diego. Light Pollution Code, County Code of Regulatory Ordinances.
- County of San Diego. Noise Ordinance, County Code of Regulatory Ordinances.
- County of San Diego. Park Lands Dedication Ordinance.
- County of San Diego, Department of Environmental Health and Quality. Hazardous Materials Program.
- County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation. Park and Recreation Planning Documents.
- County of San Diego. Ramona Community Plan, as amended.
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- County of San Diego. SB 743 Vehicle Miles Traveled Location-Based Screening Maps.
- County of San Diego. Solid Waste Ordinances and Programs.
- County of San Diego. Transportation Study Guidelines. January 2026.
- California Department of Transportation, District 11. Colonnade on Main – Revised Site Plan Comments. December 15, 2022.
- California Department of Transportation, District 11. Ramona Boutique Hotel (formerly Colonnade on Main) – Response to Comments. May 30, 2024.
- California Department of Transportation, District 11. Ramona Boutique Hotel – Response to Comments, Hydraulics & Hydrology. March 19, 2026.
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- Federal Emergency Management Agency. National Flood Hazard Layer and Flood Insurance Rate Maps.
- Federal Highway Administration. Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Guidance.
- Federal Water Pollution Control Act, Clean Water Act.
- Institute of Transportation Engineers. Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition.
- Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. Air Toxics Hot Spots Program – Guidance Manual for Preparation of Health Risk Assessments.
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- Ramona Unified School District. School Facility Availability Information.
- San Diego Association of Governments. Regional Growth Forecast and Demographic Data.
- San Diego County Air Pollution Control District. Rules and Regulations and Regional Air Quality Strategy.
- San Diego County Fire Protection District. Fire Facility Availability Information.

- San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board. Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin.
- South Coastal Information Center. California Historical Resources Information System Records.
- State Water Resources Control Board. Construction General Permit and GeoTracker Database.
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- United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Web Soil Survey.
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