October 2019 | Initial Study

# DESERT TRAILS PREPARATORY ACADEMY

City of Victorville

*Prepared for:*

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PLACEWORKS

# MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 2100 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations (CCR) Sections 15000 et seq.), the City of Victorville has completed this Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project described below based on the assessment presented in the attached Initial Study.

**LEAD AGENCY:** City of Victorville

**PROJECT TITLE:** Desert Trails Preparatory Academy

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The project site is east of Mesa View Drive, north of Forest Park Lane, south of Pepperwood Street, and west of Bella Pine Street in the City of Victorville, California.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS:** Thee project site consists of vacant desert land. There are no buildings, structures, or improvements onsite. Desert vegetation onsite consists mostly of creosote bush scrub and some scattered Joshua trees.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The proposed project involves the construction of a new middle school campus for the Desert Trails Preparatory Academy (Project) on the project site, consisting of three buildings totaling 38,070 square feet. The new middle school campus would only serve children in grades six through eight. The proposed campus would include a large turf area for student activities, physical education, and athletic events and sports; a few sports courts for basketball and other hardcourt sports; and a multipurpose room, which would feature a high ceiling for the proposed indoor basketball court. The campus would also include a courtyard with landscaped seat walls, as well as an outdoor plaza and sheltered dining area. Approximately 39 percent of the site will be developed with the proposed campus with the remainder persisting as vacant desert land. Project development requires City approval of a site plan review and conditional use permit, and adoption of a mitigated negative declaration.

**DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY:** The MND and supporting Initial Study for the Project are available for public review at the following locations:

- Victorville City Hall Civic Center, Development Department, Planning Division, 14343 Civic Drive, Victorville, CA 92392

A copy of the Initial Study is also available online at: https://www.victorvilleca.gov/government/city-departments/development/planning/environmental-review-notices

**SUMMARY OF IMPACTS:** The attached Initial Study was prepared to identify the potential effects on the environment from development and operation of the Project and to evaluate the significance of those effects. Based on the environmental analysis, the Project would have no impacts or less-than-significant impacts related to the following environmental issues:

- Aesthetics
- Energy
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Population/Housing
- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Land Use/Planning
- Public Services
- Agricultural/Forestry Resources
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials
- Mineral Resources
- Recreation

- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities/Service Systems

The environmental assessment presented in the Initial Study identifies potentially significant environmental impacts related to the following environmental issues:

- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Transportation

However, compliance with the mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study would reduce potentially significant impacts related to these environmental issues to less than significant levels.

**FINDINGS:** It is hereby determined that, based on the information contained in the attached Initial Study, the Project would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. Mitigation measures necessary to avoid the potentially significant effects on the environment are included in the attached Initial Study, which is hereby incorporated and fully made part of this MND. The City of Victorville has hereby agreed to implement each of the identified mitigation measures, which will be adopted as part of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (provided in Section 4 of the Initial Study).

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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| AAQS | ambient air quality standards |
| AB | Assembly Bill |
| ACM | asbestos-containing materials |
| ADT | average daily traffic |
| amsl | above mean sea level |
| AQMP | air quality management plan |
| AST | aboveground storage tank |
| BAU | business as usual |
| bgs | below ground surface |
| BMP | best management practices |
| CAA | Clean Air Act |
| CAFE | corporate average fuel economy |
| CalARP | California Accidental Release Prevention Program |
| CalEMA | California Emergency Management Agency |
| Cal/EPA | California Environmental Protection Agency |
| CAL FIRE | California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection |
| CALGreen | California Green Building Standards Code |
| Cal/OSHA | California Occupational Safety and Health Administration |
| CalRecycle | California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery |
| Caltrans | California Department of Transportation |
| CARB | California Air Resources Board |
| CBC | California Building Code |
| CCAA | California Clean Air Act |
| CCR | California Code of Regulations |
| CDE | California Department of Education |
| CDFW | California Department of Fish and Wildlife |
| CEQA | California Environmental Quality Act |
| CERCLA | Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act |
| cfs | cubic feet per second |
| CGS | California Geologic Survey |
| CMP | congestion management program |
| CNDDB | California Natural Diversity Database |
| CNEL | community noise equivalent level |

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| CO | carbon monoxide |
| $CO_2e$ | carbon dioxide equivalent |
| Corps | US Army Corps of Engineers |
| CSO | combined sewer overflows |
| CUPA | Certified Unified Program Agency |
| CWA | Clean Water Act |
| dB | decibel |
| dBA | A-weighted decibel |
| DPM | diesel particulate matter |
| DTSC | Department of Toxic Substances Control |
| EIR | environmental impact report |
| EPA | United States Environmental Protection Agency |
| EPCRA | Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FHWA | Federal Highway Administration |
| FTA | Federal Transit Administration |
| GHG | greenhouse gases |
| GWP | global warming potential |
| HCM | Highway Capacity Manual |
| HQTA | high quality transit area |
| HVAC | heating, ventilating, and air conditioning system |
| IPCC | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change |
| $L_{dn}$ | day-night noise level |
| $L_{eq}$ | equivalent continuous noise level |
| LBP | lead-based paint |
| LCFS | low-carbon fuel standard |
| LOS | level of service |
| LST | localized significance thresholds |
| $M_W$ | moment magnitude |
| MCL | maximum contaminant level |
| MEP | maximum extent practicable |
| mgd | million gallons per day |
| MMT | million metric tons |

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| MPO | metropolitan planning organization |
| MT | metric ton |
| MWD | Metropolitan Water District of Southern California |
| NAHC | Native American Heritage Commission |
| $NO_X$ | nitrogen oxides |
| NPDES | National Pollution Discharge Elimination System |
| $O_3$ | ozone |
| OES | California Office of Emergency Services |
| PM | particulate matter |
| POTW | publicly owned treatment works |
| ppm | parts per million |
| PPV | peak particle velocity |
| RCRA | Resource Conservation and Recovery Act |
| REC | recognized environmental condition |
| RMP | risk management plan |
| RMS | root mean square |
| RPS | renewable portfolio standard |
| RWQCB | Regional Water Quality Control Board |
| SB | Senate Bill |
| SCAG | Southern California Association of Governments |
| MDAQMD | Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District |
| SIP | state implementation plan |
| SLM | sound level meter |
| SoCAB | South Coast Air Basin |
| $SO_X$ | sulfur oxides |
| SQMP | stormwater quality management plan |
| SRA | source receptor area [or state responsibility area] |
| SUSMP | standard urban stormwater mitigation plan |
| SWP | State Water Project |
| SWPPP | Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan |
| SWRCB | State Water Resources Control Board |
| TAC | toxic air contaminants |
| TNM | transportation noise model |

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| tpd | tons per day |
| TRI | toxic release inventory |
| TTCP | traditional tribal cultural places |
| USFWS | United States Fish and Wildlife Service |
| USGS | United States Geological Survey |
| UST | underground storage tank |
| UWMP | urban water management plan |
| V/C | volume-to-capacity ratio |
| VdB | velocity decibels |
| VHFHSZ | very high fire hazard severity zone |
| VMT | vehicle miles traveled |
| VOC | volatile organic compound |
| WQMP | water quality management plan |
| WSA | water supply assessment |

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Victorville (City or Victorville) is considering an application to permit construction of a new middle school campus for the Desert Trails Preparatory Academy on an approximately nine acre vacant site, which is situated generally east of Mesa View Drive, north of Forest Park Lane, south of Pepperwood Street, and west of Bella Pine Street. The project involves relocation of the charter school's existing middle school (including the students and staff), which currently operates from the combined elementary/middle school campus at 14350 Bellflower Street in the City of Adelanto, approximately 2.9 miles to the northwest. The new charter school campus would only serve children in grades six through eight. Upon completion of the new campus and relocation of the middle school to the new campus, the combined elementary/middle school campus in Adelanto would operate as an elementary school only. Other project features and improvements include recreational amenities and facilities; parking areas; vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation improvements; infrastructure improvements; and various hardscape and landscape improvements. Project development would require City approval and issuance of a conditional use permit and site plan. The proposed project, including all proposed facilities, supporting improvements, and associated discretionary actions comprise the project considered in this Initial Study.

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF CEQA AND THE INITIAL STUDY

CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act; Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) requires that before a lead agency[1] makes a decision to approve a project that could have one or more adverse effects on the physical environment, the agency must inform itself about and consider the project's potential environmental impacts, inform the public about the project's potential environmental impacts and provide them an opportunity to comment on the environmental issues, and take feasible measures to avoid or reduce potential harm to the physical environment.

Victorville — in its capacity as lead agency pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15050 — is responsible for preparing environmental documentation in accordance with CEQA to determine if approval of the discretionary actions and subsequent development associated with the proposed project would have a significant impact on the environment. As part of the project's environmental review and in its capacity as lead agency, the City authorized preparation of this Initial Study in accordance with the provisions of CEQA Guidelines Section 15063. Pursuant to Section 15063, purposes of an Initial Study are to:

[1] Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21067, lead agency refers to the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.

# 1. Introduction

- Provide the lead agency information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) or negative declaration.
- Enable an applicant or lead agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts before an EIR is prepared, thereby enabling the project to quality for a negative declaration.
- Assist in the preparation of an EIR, if one is required.
- Facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of a project.
- Provide documentation of the factual basis for the finding in a negative declaration that a project will not have a significant effect on the environment.
- Eliminate unnecessary EIRs.
- Determine whether a previously prepared EIR could be used with the project.

As further defined by Section 15063, an Initial Study is prepared to provide the City with information to use as the basis for determining whether an environmental impact report (EIR), Negative Declaration, or Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) would be appropriate for providing the necessary environmental documentation and clearance for the proposed project.

In its preparation of this Initial Study, the City determined that the Initial Study has been prepared to support the adoption of an MND. An MND is a written statement by the lead agency that briefly describes the reasons why a project that is not exempt from the requirements of CEQA will not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, does not require preparation of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15371). The CEQA Guidelines require preparation of an MND if the Initial Study prepared for a project identifies potentially significant effects, but: 1) revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by the applicant before a proposed MND and Initial Study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur; and 2) there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the Lead Agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15070[b]).

The City has considered the information contained in this Initial Study in its decision-making processes. Although the Initial Study was prepared with consultant support, the analysis, conclusions, and findings made as part of its preparation fully represent the independent judgment and analysis of the City.

## 1.3 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is in the southwestern portion of Victorville in San Bernardino County. Victorville is located along Interstate 15 (I-15), approximately 90 miles northeast of the City of Los Angeles and 30 miles north of the City of San Bernardino. Adjacent communities include the Town of Apple Valley to the east, the City of Adelanto to the west, and the City of Hesperia to the south (see Figure 1, *Regional Location*). Victorville is in the Mojave Desert region of the county, which consists of an assemblage of mountain ranges interspersed with long, broad valleys.

As shown in Figures 2, *Local Vicinity*, and 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the approximately nine-acre (8.9 acres) vacant project site is generally east of Mesa View Drive, north of Forest Park Lane, south of Pepperwood Street, and west of Bella Pine Street. Olivera Road, a dirt road, forms the northern site boundary. The project site is comprised of two parcels — Assessor Parcel Numbers 3096-361-06 and -07.

Regional access to the project site is from I-15, approximately 4.4 miles to the east via La Mesa Road and State Route 18 (SR 18 or Palmdale Drive). U.S. Route 395 (US 395) also provides regional access to the project site — the highway is approximately 0.65 mile east of the site. Local access to the project site is via Mesa View Drive, Luna Road, and Bear Valley Road.

## 1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

### 1.4.1 Existing Land Use

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the project site consists of vacant desert land. There are no buildings, structures, or improvements onsite. Desert vegetation onsite consists mostly of creosote bush scrub and some scattered Joshua trees. The project site is relatively flat with a mild slope across the site, downward to the northeast at an average gradient of less than 1.5 percent. Onsite elevations range from approximately 3,220 to 3,260 feet above mean sea level.

### 1.4.2 Surrounding Land Use

As shown in Figure 3, the project site is surrounded by a mix of residential development and vacant land. To the north and abutting the project is vacant land with single-family residences beyond; to the south and abutting the project site are single-family residences, with vacant land beyond; to the east, across Mesa View Drive are single-family residences and vacant land beyond; and to the west is vacant land. Olivera Road, a dirt road, forms the northern site boundary.

### 1.4.3 Existing Zoning and General Plan

The prevailing adopted planning and regulatory documents that govern development and use of the project site are the Victorville General Plan and Development Code (Title 16 of the Victorville Municipal Code). The Victorville General Plan land use designation of the project site is Low Density Residential. The project site is similarly zoned Single-Family Residential (R-1). The development and design standards and regulations contained in the Victorville Development Code, which implements the Victorville General Plan, constitute the

zoning regulations that govern development of the project site. As proposed, the charter school is permitted under the Low Density Residential land use designation and R-1 zoning district via City approval and issuance of a conditional use permit.

### 1.4.4 Environmental Resources

The project site consists of vacant desert land and is void of any buildings, structures, or improvements (see Figures 3 and 4a through 4e). Onsite biological resources consist mostly of creosote bush scrub and some scattered Joshua trees. The project site contains no historic buildings, housing, scenic resources, mineral resources, or water bodies. Additional information regarding environmental resources on the project site and its surroundings—or the lack of such resources—can be found in Section 3, *Environmental Analysis*, of this Initial Study under each respective environmental topic.

## 1.5 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Following is a detailed description of the proposed project's overall site plan and character and the various development features/elements and improvements that would be implemented as a part of the project.

### 1.5.1 Site Plan and Character

The proposed project involves the construction of a new middle school campus for the Desert Trails Preparatory Academy (Project), a public charter school currently operating in the City of Adelanto. The Project involves relocation of the charter school's existing middle school (including the students and staff), which currently operates from the combined elementary/middle school campus at 14350 Bellflower Street in Adelanto, approximately 2.9 miles to the northwest. The new middle school campus would only serve children in grades six through eight. Upon completion of the Project and relocation of the middle school to the new campus, the combined elementary/middle school campus in Adelanto would operate as an elementary school only. Project development would require City approval and issuance of a conditional use permit and site plan, which are described in detail in Section 1.5.10, *Discretionary Actions and Approvals*, below.

Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, illustrates the Project's overall site and landscape design. Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*, illustrates the portion of the project site (western parcel) that would accommodate the new campus. The Project would be designed as a contemporary middle school. The site design follows the natural contours of the vacant project site and its surroundings. The site layout provides a buffer between the proposed buildings and the abutting residences to the south; it also creates a protected area separate from the surrounding streets and parking lots for the children's sport courts and recess areas. The Project's design places emphasis on maintaining a relationship with surrounding residences while also generating a distinct school identity.

As shown in Figure 6, the eastern parcel would remain vacant desert land. As shown in Figure 5, the new campus would feature a main building and two modular buildings. Combined, the buildings would total 38,070 square feet. The main building would occupy the central and a part of the southern portions of the project site — it would have frontage onto Mesa View Drive. Architecturally and functionally, the L-shaped building would be designed and constructed as two single-story buildings (with heights ranging from 18 to 29 feet) that would be connected by a covered pedestrian breezeway and gated entry. The main building would house the proposed

classrooms, a multipurpose room, and administration offices. Primary entrance to the main building would be from the western end of the building, which fronts onto Mesa View Drive. The portion of the building that would be occupied by the multipurpose room would be the tallest portion of the building (at 29 feet), as it would feature a high ceiling for the proposed indoor basketball court. Aside from basketball games, the multipurpose room would host other sporting and special events, such as volleyball games, assemblies, and graduation ceremonies.

The campus would also feature two single-story modular buildings (height of just under 12 feet), which would be placed just east of the main building (see Figure 5). The modular buildings would be used for the library, music room, staff, and storage. Further, an enclosure that would accommodate individual trash bins for solid waste, recyclable materials and food waste would be provided along the northeastern site boundary.

Other project features and improvements — such as architectural and landscape design and improvements; recreational amenities and facilities; parking areas; vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation improvements; infrastructure improvements; and school operations — are discussed in detail below.

### 1.5.2 Architectural Design and Character

Project development would include the construction of a few buildings and structures, as well as various site improvements. As shown in Figure 5, the new middle school campus would feature a main building and two modular buildings, as well as a solid waste enclosure. Architecturally and functionally, the L-shaped main building would be designed and constructed as two single-story buildings that would be connected by a covered pedestrian breezeway and gated entry. The modular buildings would be single-story in height and be placed just east of the main building. The solid waste enclosure would be a stand-alone, semi-enclosed structure.

Figures 7a and 7b, *Conceptual Building Elevations*, illustrate the conceptual elevations and architectural design and features of the proposed buildings. As shown in these figures, the buildings would incorporate a contemporary architectural style and aesthetic design, which express the buildings educational use. The final architectural style and aesthetic design of the buildings is subject to review and approval by the City.

As illustrated in Figures 7a and 7b, building features and materials include natural and painted concrete walls and panels in four color schemes; high-performance tinted glazing (windows and doors); exposed steel channels or beams; composite wood feature walls; and aluminum window awnings for shading. The massing of the buildings is broken up and varied to allow for a human-scaled design. The buildings have also been designed to have multiple-feature elements on all façades. Building pop-outs, offsets, overhangs, recesses, and variations in building materials and colors would be added to offset the building's massing and provide relief to and variation in the building form and style. For example, the parapet heights would be varied for visual interest and breaking up the massing, and tilt-up panel joints would be exaggerated by reveals and a change in color. Building entries would be articulated through strong architectural L-shaped features, which solidify the contemporary character of the Project as a whole. The building's shapes and stylistic character mimic the rest of the Project design.

Also, the proposed solid waste enclosure would be designed and constructed to be architecturally compatible with the proposed building design. It would include cement walls on three sides, swinging metal doors on one side for access, and an overhead canopy.

## 1.5.3 Landscaping, Walls and Fences, and Lighting

### 1.5.3.1 LANDSCAPING

As shown in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, the Project's landscape plan would feature new landscaping along the site perimeter. Landscaping would also be provided in the parking areas, along the internal drive aisles and building edges, and within the campus courtyard. A large turf area would also be provided in the south-central portion of the campus. The proposed landscape scheme would include a variety of ornamental trees (including sycamore, oak, palm), shrubs, and groundcover. A total of approximately 91 trees would be planted onsite, and approximately 27 percent of the site would be landscaped.

Additionally, Project implementation would affect five existing Joshua trees onsite. In order to implement the Project, all five trees would have to be removed. Of the five trees, four are healthy and would be relocated to the eastern parcel of the project site — the parcel to remain vacant desert land (see Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*). The fifth tree would be permanently removed due to health reasons (diseased).

Furthermore, decomposed granite, desert sand boulders, and dry cobble swales would be provided along the extent of the landscaped parkway fronting Mesa View Drive, as well as in key areas internal to the project site. Hedge screens would also be provided along the southern, eastern, and western site boundaries.

### 1.5.3.2 WALLS AND FENCES

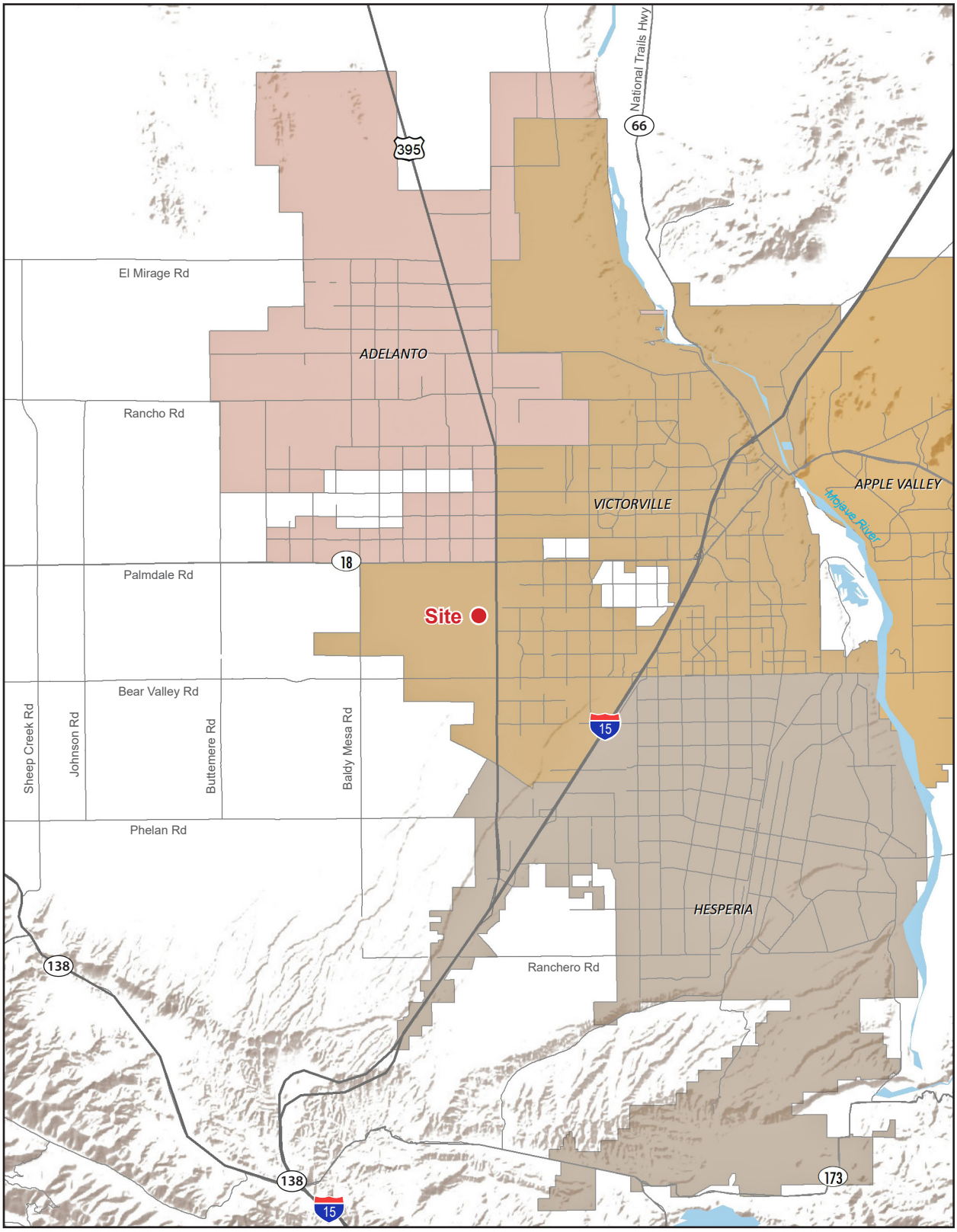
Various fences, walls and gates would be provided along the site perimeter and internal to the site. These would include six-foot high CMU (concrete masonry unit) block walls along the northern and southern site boundaries; six-foot high security fence along the eastern site boundary; internal, six-foot high security fences with sliding gates to secure the campus; internal, swinging gates to allow access to emergency vehicles onto the campus; and swinging gates in the northeastern corner of the campus to allow emergency vehicle access onto the adjacent property. The main pedestrian entry into the campus, which connects to the covered pedestrian breezeway, would be controlled by swinging gates.

### 1.5.3.3 LIGHTING

Site lighting would consist of exterior building-mounted light fixtures; interior lighting for the buildings; lighting for pedestrian walkways and common gathering areas; ground-mounted decorative lighting for landscape and architectural features; lighting for the parking areas and drive aisles; and security lighting. No lighting is proposed for the proposed playfields or hardcourts.

# Figure 1 - Regional Location

## 1. Introduction




Note: Unincorporated county areas are shown in white.

*Source: ESRI, 2019*

0 3
Scale (Miles)

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 2 - Local Vicinity

## 1. Introduction

0 2,000
Scale (Feet)

Source: ESRI, 2019

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 3 - Aerial Photograph

## 1. Introduction

Project Boundary

0 500
Scale (Feet)

Source: Nearmap, 2019

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 4a - Site Photographs

## 1. Introduction

View from Fern Haven looking North.

View from Fern Haven looking East.

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 4b - Site Photographs

## 1. Introduction

View from Fern Haven looking Southeast.

View from Fern Haven looking South.

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 4c - Site Photographs

## 1. Introduction

View from Mountain View looking Northeast (Southwest corner of site).

View from Mountain View looking North (Southwest corner of site).

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 4d - Site Photographs

## 1. Introduction

View from center of site looking North.

View from center of site looking East.

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 4e - Site Photographs
## 1. Introduction

View from center of site looking South.

View from center of site looking West.

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 5 - Conceptual Site Plan

## 1. Introduction

0 80
Scale (Feet)

Source: KNA, 2019

# 1. Introduction

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## Figure 6 - Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan

**1. Introduction**

Project Boundary

0 330
Scale (Feet)

*Source: Nearmap, 2019; KNA, 2019*

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# Figure 7a - Conceptual Building Elevations

## 1. Introduction

North Elevation

South Elevation

*Source: KNA, 2019*

# 1. Introduction

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# Figure 7b - Conceptual Building Elevations

## 1. Introduction

West Elevation

Esat Elevation

*Source: KNA, 2019*

# 1. Introduction

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## 1.5.4 Access, Circulation, and Parking

### 1.5.4.1 VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, illustrates the path of travel for all modes of travel – vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle. As shown in Figure 5, vehicular access for the project site would be provided via two full-access (all turning movements allowed) driveways off Mesa View Drive. Both driveways would be designed as one-way, stop controlled access drives, and would feature decorative paving.

The northern driveway would connect to an internal east-west drive aisle, which would also serve as the internal student pick-up/drop-off circulation feature. During the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up hours, parents would enter the northern driveway and proceed easterly to the western end of the campus, at which point they would make a U-turn and proceed westerly to the designated drop-off/pick-up zone. From this point, vehicles would continue southwesterly through the western parking area and exit onto Mesa View Drive via the southern driveway. The southern driveway would also serve as the main vehicular entry point into the onsite parking area, which would serve school staff, personnel, and visitors.

Additionally, Olivera Road, a dirt road that forms the northern site boundary (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*), would not be improved as a public road or dedicated to the City as public right-of-way. The charter school would abandon the 30-foot right-of-way dedication for Olivera Road. In lieu, this dirt road would be improved with the aforementioned internal east-west drive aisle that connects to the northern driveway. The drive aisle would function as a private drive aisle that serves the charter school — a utility and access easement would be provided along the entire stretch of the drive aisle.

Furthermore, under existing conditions, the eastern portion of Mesa View Drive that abuts the entire stretch of the western project site boundary is only partially improved (see Figure 4c, *Site Photographs*). As a part of the Project, Mesa View Drive would be widened and improved to its ultimate width in accordance with City standards. In addition to the provision of new asphalt, the roadway widening would include the installation of drainage gutters and a public sidewalk.

Emergency access to the project site would be via the northern and southern driveways, which connect to internal drive aisles. The drive aisles would serve as fire access lanes and become part of the onsite fire access loop (see Figure 5). Once onsite, access to the portion of the fire access lane that connects to the southern and eastern portion of the fire access loop would be via swinging gates. Knox Boxes would be provided for the swinging gates to provide access for fire personnel.

### 1.5.4.2 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

As shown in Figure 5, pedestrian access to the project site would be provided via a new public sidewalk along the eastern side of Mesa View Drive, which abuts the project site. As shown in Figure 4c, *Site Photographs,* there is currently no public sidewalk along this portion of Mesa View Drive. The new public sidewalk would connect to the existing public sidewalk that currently terminates at the southwestern corner of the project site. An internal walkway would connect to the new public sidewalk near the northwestern site boundary. The walkway would run east-west along the northern drive aisle provide pedestrian access to the main campus area.

#### 1.5.4.3 PARKING

As shown in Figure 4, the main parking area for school staff, personnel and visitors would be placed in the western end of the project site. This parking area would provide parking spaces for up to 67 vehicles and would include all required standard, handicap, electric vehicle, and clean air vehicle parking spaces. Additional parking spaces (total of 17 parallel spaces) would be provided along the southern side of the proposed east-west drive along the northern portion of the project site. In total, approximately 84 parking spaces would be provided. No parking would be provided or permitted along Mesa View Drive.

### 1.5.5 Infrastructure Improvements and Utility and Service Systems

Following is a discussion of the infrastructure improvements and utility and service systems needed to accommodate the Project. All proposed improvements would require City approval and where necessary, the utility/service provider also.

#### 1.5.5.1 WATER SYSTEM

The Victorville Water District (VWD) would provide water delivery service to the project site. VWD issued a "Will Serve Letter" for the Project on June 3, 2019, which is valid for one year. As a part of the Project, new onsite water lines would connect to the existing water main beneath Mesa View Drive. No offsite water line construction or upsizing would be required to accommodate the Project. However, some construction would occur within the public right-of-way of Mesa View Drive in order to make the necessary infrastructure connections to the existing water main. The proposed water system improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with City and VWD requirements and would require City and VWD approval.

Furthermore, fire hydrants would be installed at key locations onsite, as required by the Victorville Fire Department to meet hose-pull requirements and provide adequate fire access. The fire hydrants would connect to the new onsite water lines.

#### 1.5.5.2 WASTEWATER SYSTEM

The City would provide wastewater collection and conveyance service to the project site. Wastewater generated onsite would be collected and conveyed to the Victor Valley Water Reclamation Authority's (VVWRA) Wastewater Treatment Plant via the City's existing local sewer system beneath its roadways. As a part of the Project, new onsite sewer lines would connect to the existing sewer main beneath Mesa View Drive. No offsite sewer line construction or upsizing would be required to accommodate the Project. However, some construction would occur within the public right-of-way of Mesa View Drive in order to make the necessary infrastructure connections to the existing sewer main. The proposed wastewater system improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with all City requirements and would require City approval.

#### 1.5.5.3 DRAINAGE SYSTEM

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the project site consists of vacant desert land. Under existing conditions, the project site has zero percent impervious surface area. The site is relatively flat with gentle slopes northerly and easterly. Surface runoff onsite sheet flows from the

southwest corner to the northeast corner of the site. There are no drainage improvements onsite under existing conditions; there are also no water quality devices/features onsite to provide any treatment for "first flush" generated onsite.[2] Further, there are no curb-and-gutter improvements along the eastern portion of Mesa View Drive that abuts the western project site boundary.

Under proposed conditions and upon Project completion, the approximately nine-acre (8.9 acres) project site would have 3.46 acres of impervious surface area (e.g., buildings, paving), which is approximately 39 percent of the overall site. As shown in Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*, only the western parcel of the project site would be developed with the proposed school campus — the eastern parcel would remain vacant desert land. Site runoff from the western parcel would be conveyed similar to existing conditions, continuing to flow northeasterly via new onsite drainage collection, conveyance, and treatment systems. Site development would include four bioretention basins — all site drainage would be routed to these basins either through surface flow or through the proposed drainage improvements. The basins would provide bio-filtration treatment and retain and infiltrate the required volumes and any flows that exceed the basin capacity would overflow through spillways to the northeast corner of the site where flow from the site is discharged in the existing condition. The proposed drainage system improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with City requirements and would require City approval.

#### 1.5.5.4 SOLID WASTE SYSTEM

Solid waste generated by the Project would be collected and hauled away by Victorville Disposal and transported to the Victorville Sanitary Landfill, which is operated by the County of San Bernardino Public Works Department. Burrtec Waste Industries, a private contractor, operates the landfill under contract to the County of San Bernardino. Enclosures with solid roof tops and swinging gates that would accommodate trash bins for solid waste and recyclable materials would be provided in the along the northern and southern site boundaries.

#### 1.5.5.5 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Plans for utilities and service systems that would serve the Project would include provision of electricity (Southern California Edison), natural gas (Southwest Gas Corporation), and telecommunications (various private services, including AT&T, Time Warner Communications, and Frontier Communications). All new utility infrastructure would be installed underground or placed in enclosed spaces (e.g., utility closets).

### 1.5.6 Green Building Standards

Green building is the practice of designing, constructing and operating buildings to maximize occupant health and productivity, use fewer resources, reduce waste and negative environmental impacts, and decrease life cycle costs (USGBC 2019). The Project would be designed using green building practices, including those of the most current California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Part 6) and California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen [Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Part 11]; incorporate by referene in Article 11 (Green Building Code) of the Victorville Developmetn Code (Title

[2] First flush is the initial surface runoff of a rainstorm. During this phase, water pollution entering storm drains in areas with high proportions of impervious surfaces is typically more concentrated compared to the remainder of the storm.

16 of the Victorville Municipal Code). The Building Energy Efficiency Standards contain energy and water efficiency requirements (and indoor air quality requirements) for newly constructed buildings, additions to existing buildings, and alterations to existing buildings. CALGreen is California's statewide "green" building code. Its purpose is to improve public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: planning and design; energy efficiency; water efficiency and conservation; waterial conservation and resource efficiency; and environmental quality.

As proposed, Project develoment would include mandatory standards from Divisions 5.1(Planning and Design), 5.2 (Energy Efficiency), 5.3 (Water Efficiency and Conservation), 5.4 (Material Conservation and Resource Efficiency), and 5.5 (Environmental Quality) of CAlGreen. Some of the specific green building standards include but are not limited to:

- Bicycle parking
- Designated parking for clean air vehicles
- Electric vehicle charging (facilitate future installation of electric vehicle supply equipment)
- Light pollution reduction
- Water-conserving plumbing fixtures and fittings
- Construction waste reduction, disposal, and recycling
- Recycling by occupants
- Finish material pollutant control

## 1.5.7 School Operations, Students, and Staffing

### 1.5.7.1 SCHOOL HOURS AND CALENDAR

Based on the proposed construction timeline (see Section 1.5.9, *Project Phasing and Construction*), it is anticipated that the new campus would be operational for the 2020-2021 school year, which commences in late August 2020. Campus hours of operation for Desert Trails Preparatory Academy would be from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday during normal school months, which is the first week of August through the second week of June (just over 10 months long). The school has minimum days normally once a week during which time the hours of operation would be 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. The campus would be closed on weekends and holidays, unless a special event is scheduled. During normal school months, there would be at least 13 holidays and faculty in-service days when school is not in session. On these days, the campus traffic is reduced to staff use only. During the holidays, the entire campus would be closed with no activity whatsoever. During the summer months, the school campus would be closed.

### 1.5.7.2 STUDENTS AND STAFFING

As noted earlier, the Project involves relocation of the charter school's existing middle school (including the students and staff), which currently operates from the combined elementary/middle school campus at 14350 Bellflower Street in Adelanto, approximately 2.9 miles to the northwest. Currently, the middle school student

population at the combined elementary/middle school campus is approximately 90 students. The student enrollment capacity for the new campus would be for up to 550 middle school students in grades six through eight. Therefore, the charter school would be increasing its student capacity over existing conditions by approximately 460 students. The new campus would have a staff of approximately 55 persons, which would include teachers, administration, and maintenance. It should be noted that the student and staff count may fluctuate from year to year, depending on the number of students that enroll each school year.

## 1.5.8 Campus Amenities, Facilities, and Activities

As shown in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, the proposed campus would include a large turf area for student activities, physical education, and athletic events and sports; a few sports courts for basketball and other hardcourt sports; and a multipurpose room, which would feature a high ceiling for the proposed indoor basketball court. The indoor basketball court would also be used for volleyball games. The campus would also include a courtyard with landscaped seat walls, as well as an outdoor plaza and sheltered dining area. The campus facilities would accommodate various athletic and special events, described below.

### 1.5.8.1 ATHLETIC EVENTS AND SPORTS

The proposed school athletic events and sports that would take place on the campus would include basketball, volleyball, track and field, soccer, volleyball, and cheerleading. They would take place after school on the campus during the late afternoon/early evening hours, with some occurring on the weekends throughout various times of the day. The athletic events and sports would occur between the months of August to June.

### 1.5.8.2 SPECIAL EVENTS

Following is a list of the special events that are anticipated each school year on the new campus and the months and time of day that they would occur. It should be noted that none of these events are ever held concurrently when classes are in session.

- **Back to School Night.** Occurs in August during the weekday and in the late afternoon/early evening.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences.** Occur in September and April during the weekday in the late afternoon/early evening.
- **Harvest Festival.** Occurs in October during the weekday in the late afternoon/early evening.
- **Christmas Program.** Occurs in December during the weekday in the evening.
- **Reading and Math Family Nights.** Occurs once a month while school is in session during the weekday in the late afternoon/early evening.
- **Career Week.** Usually held in April during the weekday in the late afternoon/early evening.
- **Coffee with the Principal.** Occurs twice a month while school is in session during the weekday in the late afternoon/early evening.

- **Middle School Graduation.** Occurs in early June during the weekday in the late afternoon/evening.

A total of approximately 18 special events would occur on the new campus throughout the school year under the Project. In addition to the eight current special events that take place or have taken place on the existing combined elementary/middle school campus in Adelanto, an additional 10 special events per year would be added, for a total of 18.

## 1.5.9 Project Phasing and Construction

Upon City approval, Project development is anticipated to be completed in three development phases: site clearing, grading, and construction. Overall construction is estimated to take approximately seven months, extending from January to July 2020. No soil import or export would be required as the site would balance. The types and numbers of construction equipment expected to be used during construction activities are summarized in Section 3.3, *Air Quality*. Based on the proposed construction timeline, it is anticipated that the new campus would be operational for the 2020-2021 school year, which commences in late August 2020.

## 1.5.10 Discretionary Actions and Approvals

A discretionary action is an action taken by a government agency (for the Project, the government agency is the Victorville) that calls for an exercise of judgment in deciding whether to approve a project. Victorville is the lead agency under CEQA and has the principal approval authority over the Project. Following is a list of the discretionary actions and approvals required for Project implementation and a discussion of each of these actions.

- Adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration
- Approval of a Conditional Use Permit (PLAN19-00030)
- Approval of a Site Plan Review (PLAN19-00030)

Further, City review of the Project will result in the production of a comprehensive set of draft Conditions of Approval that will be available for public review prior to consideration of the Project for approval by the City. If approved, the Project would be required to comply with all imposed Conditions of Approval.

### 1.5.10.1 MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

As stated in Section 1.2, *Purpose of CEQA and the Initial Study*, the City determined that this Initial Study has been prepared to support the adoption of an MND. The MND and accompanying Initial Study would be appropriate for providing the necessary environmental documentation and clearance for the Project and all related subsequent activities.

Section 4 comprises the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), which includes all mitigation measures imposed on the Project to ensure that effects to the environment are reduced to less-than-significant levels. The MMRP also indicates the required timing for the implementation of each mitigation measure and identifies the parties responsible for implementing and monitoring each mitigation measure.

#### 1.5.10.2 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

The zoning district of the project site is Single-Family Residential (R-1). As proposed, the Project is permitted under the R-1 zoning district via City approval and issuance of a conditional use permit (PLAN19-00030). Pursuant to Article 2 (Conditional Use Permits) of the Victorville Development Code, certain uses, referred to in Article 2 as conditional uses, are declared to possess characteristics that require special review by the Victorville Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator to determine whether or not the use is necessary or desirable and will be properly related to other uses and to transportation and service facilities in the vicinity, and whether or not the use would, under all circumstances of the particular case, affect adversely the health or safety of persons living or working in the vicinity or be materially detrimental to the public welfare.

#### 1.5.10.3 SITE PLAN APPROVAL

Project development is subject to City approval of a site plan review (PLAN19-00030). Pursuant to Article 1 (Site Plan Review) of the Victorville Development Code, the purpose of a site plan review is to:

- Ensure that new development or expansions of existing uses or structures occurs in a manner consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Victorville General Plan, the objectives of the Victorville Development Code, and the neighborhood or area in which the development is proposed to be located.
- Ensure that all new development is consistent with the development standards contained in the Victorville Development Code.
- Ensure that the proposed architectural treatment of new buildings and structures, including landscaping, open space and signs, is consistent with the design guidelines contained in the Victorville Development Code.
- Allow City departments the opportunity to review new development proposals and place reasonable conditions to ensure that the public health, safety, and welfare is maintained.

### 1.5.11 Non-Discretionary/Ministerial Actions and Approvals

Following is a list of the non-discretionary/ministerial actions and approvals required for Project implementation.

- Approval and issuance of grading and building permits.
- Approvals for water, sewer, and storm drain infrastructure improvements in the public right-of-way.
- Approval of any roadway improvements and closures needed to implement the improvements.
- Approval and issuance of certificates of occupancy.

## 1.6 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

The information in this Initial Study is based, in part, on the following documents that include the project site or provide information addressing the general project area or use:

# 1. Introduction

- **Victorville General Plan.** The City of Victorville General Plan is a policy document designed to give long-range guidance and direction for decisions affecting the future character of Victorville. It represents the blueprint and official statement of the community's physical development as well as its economic, social, and environmental goals. The Victorville General Plan was used throughout this Initial Study as the fundamental planning document governing development on the project site.

- **Victorville Development Code.** The Victorville Development Code (Title 16 of the Victorville Municipal Code), which is the regulating tool that the City uses to implement the Victorville General Plan, establishes the basic regulations under which land in the City is developed and utilized. This includes but is not limited to regulations and controls for the design and improvement of development sites, allowable uses, building setback and height requirements, and other development standards. The basic intent of the code is to promote and protect the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare of present and future citizens of Victorville. The Victorville Development Code was used throughout this Initial Study as the fundamental regulatory document governing development on the project site.

# 2. Environmental Checklist

## 2.1 PROJECT INFORMATION

1. **Project Title:** Desert Trails Preparatory Academy

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**
   City of Victorville
   Development Services Department
   14343 Civic Drive
   Victorville, California 92392

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**
   Travis Clark, Associate Planner
   760.955.5135

4. **Project Location:** The project site is generally east of Mesa View Drive, north of Forest Park Lane, south of Pepperwood Street, and west of Bella Pine Street.

5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**
   Desert Trails Preparatory Academy
   14350 Bellflower Street
   Adelanto, CA 92301

6. **General Plan Designation:** Low Density Residential

7. **Zoning:** Single-Family Residential (R-1)

8. **Description of Project:** The project involves construction of a new middle school campus for the Desert Trails Preparatory Academy on the project site. The new campus would feature a main building and two modular buildings. Combined, the buildings would total 38,070 square feet. Other project features and improvements include recreational amenities and facilities; parking areas; vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation improvements; infrastructure improvements; and various hardscape and landscape improvements. Refer to Section 1.5, *Project Description*, for a more detailed description of the project.

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:** The project site is surrounded by a mix of residential development and vacant land.

10. **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participating agreement):** Not applicable.

## 2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

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

- ☐ Aesthetics
- ☐ Biological Resources
- ☐ Geology/Soils
- ☐ Hydrology/Water Quality
- ☐ Noise
- ☐ Recreation
- ☐ Utilities / Service Systems
- ☐ Agriculture / Forestry Resources
- ☐ Cultural Resources
- ☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- ☐ Land Use / Planning
- ☐ Population / Housing
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Wildfire
- ☐ Air Quality
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- ☐ Mineral Resources
- ☐ Public Services
- ☐ Tribal Cultural Resources
- ☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

## 2.3 DETERMINATION (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LEAD AGENCY)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Jim Clark — 10/15/19

*Signature* — *Date*

## 2.4 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 would 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, 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. "Negative Declaration: 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 Analyses Used.** Identify and state where they are available for review.

   b) I**mpacts 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 Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

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. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

# 2. Environmental Checklist

8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9. 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.

| Issues | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **I. AESTHETICS. Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? | | | X | |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? | | | | X |
| c) In nonurbanized 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? | | | X | |
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | | | X | |
| **II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? | | | | X |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | | | | X |
| c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))? | | | | X |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | | | | X |

| | Issues | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| e) | Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | | | | X |
| **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 applicable air quality plan? | | | X | |
| 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? | | | X | |
| c) | Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | | | X | |
| d) | Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? | | | X | |
| **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 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | | X | | |
| b) | Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | | | | X |
| 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? | | | | X |
| 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? | | X | | |
| e) | Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | | | X | |
| f) | Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? | | | | X |
| **V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:** | | | | | |
| a) | Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5? | | | | X |
| b) | Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5? | | X | | |
| c) | Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries? | | | X | |

# 2. Environmental Checklist

| Issues | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **VI. ENERGY. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? | | | X | |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? | | | X | |
| **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: | | | | X |
| 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. | | | X | |
| ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? | | | X | |
| iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | | | | X |
| iv) Landslides? | | | X | |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | | | X | |
| c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? | | | X | |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property? | | | X | |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? | | | | X |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | | X | | |
| **VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | | | X | |
| b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | | | X | |
| **IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? | | | X | |
| b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? | | | X | |

| Issues | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | | | | X |
| d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? | | | | X |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area? | | | | X |
| f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | | | | X |
| g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? | | | | X |
| **X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? | | | X | |
| b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? | | | X | |
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: | | | | |
| i) result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; | | | X | |
| ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite; | | | X | |
| iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or | | | X | |
| iv) impede or redirect flood flows? | | | | X |
| d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? | | | | X |
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? | | | X | |
| **XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Physically divide an established community? | | | | X |
| b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | | | | X |

# 2. Environmental Checklist

| Issues | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **XII. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state? | | | | X |
| b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? | | | | X |
| **XIII. NOISE. Would the project result in:** | | | | |
| a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | | | X | |
| b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | | | X | |
| c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | | | | X |
| **XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | | | | X |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | | | | X |
| **XV. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services: | | | | |
| Fire protection? | | | X | |
| Police protection? | | | X | |
| Schools? | | | | X |
| Parks? | | | | X |
| Other public facilities? | | | | X |
| **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? | | | | X |

| Issues | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | | | X | |
| **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? | | X | | |
| b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)? | | | | X |
| c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | | | | X |
| d) Result in inadequate emergency access? | | | | X |
| **XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.** | | | | |
| a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: | | | | |
| i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or | | | | X |
| 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 Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. | | | X | |
| **XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:** | | | | |
| a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? | | | X | |
| b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? | | | X | |
| c) Result in a determination by the waste water 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? | | | X | |

# 2. Environmental Checklist

| | Issues | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| d) | Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals? | | | X | |
| e) | Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | | | | X |
| **XX. WILDFIRE.** **If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:** | | | | | |
| a) | Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | | | | X |
| b) | Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire? | | | | X |
| c) | 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? | | | | X |
| d) | Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes? | | | | X |
| **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? | | X | | |
| 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.) | | | X | |
| c) | Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | | | X | |

# 3. Environmental Analysis

Section 2.4 provided a checklist of environmental impacts. This section provides an evaluation of the impact categories and questions contained in the checklist and identifies mitigation measures, if applicable.

## 3.1 AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** For purposes of determining significance under CEQA, a scenic vista is generally considered a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly-valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. Some scenic vistas are officially designated by public agencies, or informally designated by tourist guides. Vistas provide visual access or panoramic views to a large geographic area and are generally located at a point where surrounding views are greater than one mile away. Panoramic views are usually associated with vantage points over a section of urban or natural areas that provide a geographic orientation not commonly available. Examples of panoramic views might include an urban skyline, valley, mountain range, a large open space area, the ocean, or other water bodies. A substantial adverse effect to a scenic vista is one that degrades the view from such a designated view spot.

The City's physical setting in the Mojave Desert and relatively flat topography afford distant scenic views of the San Bernardino Mountains and San Gabriel Mountain ranges (located southwest of Victorville) from certain vantage points throughout the City. These mountain ranges are approximately 11 miles southwest of the project site. Quartzite Mountain, approximately 11 miles northeast of the project site, also provide scenic vistas from certain vantage points in the City. Other areas of high visual sensitivity within and adjacent to the City include the Mojave River, rocky bluffs of the lower Mojave River narrows, and Mojave Narrows Regional Park. Joshua trees are another notable aesthetic feature of the Victorville area. Joshua trees, which can grow up to 12 meters (40 feet) tall, are distributed on gentle slopes and on valley floors of upper bajadas and sandy areas.

Partial views of the San Bernardino Mountains and San Gabriel Mountain ranges are afforded to motorists traveling on the north-south-oriented Mesa View Drive, which forms the western project site boundary. However, Project development would not affect views of these mountain ranges. The Project would not introduce visual obstructions that would affect motorists or passerby traveling on this roadway, as the project site is on the east side of Mesa View Drive and views of the mountains from this roadway are to the south.

Distant public views of limited portions of the Quartzite Mountain are also afforded to motorists and passerby traveling along Mesa View Drive. The limited views of this distant mountain would be obstructed by the Project's buildings and trees. However, the obstructed view window would only occur along the portion of

# 3. Environmental Analysis

Mesa View Drive (approximately 310 feet) that abuts the project site. Distant views of the mountain would continue to be provided along the remainder of Mesa View Drive, north of the project site. Additionally, views of this mountain from Mesa View Drive only occurs for a very short distance (approximately 650 feet) along this roadway. Therefore, the view window afforded is very small. Furthermore, the Victorville General Plan does not designate any scenic vistas or protected viewsheds along Mesa View Drive. Therefore, project development would not result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista of this mountain.

Additionally, Project development would not result in an adverse effect on a scenic vista of the Mojave River scenic resources noted above, as there are no such vistas afforded of these resources from the project site or its surroundings.

Furthermore, Project implementation would affect five existing Joshua trees onsite, which are considered notable aesthetic features in Victorville. In order to implement the Project, all five trees would have to be removed. Of the five trees, four are healthy and would be relocated to the eastern parcel of the project site — the parcel to remain vacant desert land (see Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*). The fifth tree would be permanently removed due to health reasons (diseased). Therefore, the healthy Joshua trees to be relocated would continue to provide a notable aesthetic feature to the project site and its surroundings.

Finally, according to Figure LU-1 (Land Use Map) of the Victorville General Plan Land Use Element, there are no designated open space resources onsite or in the vicinity of the project site, a designation typically used to determine the value of certain public vistas in order to gauge adverse effects.

Based on the preceding, impacts to scenic vistas would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** A scenic highway is generally considered a stretch of public roadway that is designated as a scenic corridor by a federal, state, or local agency. Caltrans defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way, that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality.

The project site is in a developing rural area of the City and is not on or near a state-designated scenic highway, as designated on the California Scenic Highway Mapping System of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans 2019). Additionally, the project site is not visible from the nearest state-designated scenic highway (State Route 38), which is over 44 miles to the southeast in the San Bernardino Mountains.

Furthermore, there are no rock outcroppings or historic buildings onsite—the project site is vacant and void of any buildings and structures. Therefore, no impact to scenic resources within a state scenic highway would occur due to project development and no mitigation measures are necessary

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The assessment of aesthetic impacts is subjective by nature. Aesthetics generally refers to the identification of visual resources and their quality, as well as an overall visual perception of the environment. A project is generally considered to have a significant aesthetic impact if it substantially changes the character or quality of the project site such that the site becomes visually incompatible with or visually unexpected in its surroundings.

Existing land use and conditions of the project site and surrounding area are depicted in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*. As shown in Figure 3, the project site consists of vacant desert land. There are no buildings, structures, or improvements onsite. Desert vegetation onsite consists mostly of creosote bush scrub and some scattered Joshua trees. Surrounding land uses consist of a mix of a mix of residential development and vacant land. The urban landscape character and features of the project site and surrounding area are consistent with and typical of urbanizing areas of the City.

Following is a discussion of the potential impact to the visual character or quality of the project site and its surrounding resulting from the construction and operational phases of the Project.

### Project Construction Phase

Project implementation would result in construction activities that would temporarily change the visual character of the project site and its surroundings. Construction activities would involve site clearing, grading, building, and site improvements. Construction staging areas, including earth stockpiling, storage of equipment and supplies, and related activities would contribute to a generally "disturbed site," which may be perceived by some as a visual impact.

However, these effects would be typical of any site in the City that undergoes development or redevelopment. Project development is anticipated to be completed in three phases—clearing, grading, and construction. Overall construction is estimated to take approximately seven months, extending from January to July 2020. Construction activities may be unsightly during the site preparation and construction phases, but they are not considered significant because they are temporary. Also, construction fencing would be erected to help shield the construction areas and would also be temporary.

Therefore, Project-related construction activities would not have a significant effect on the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Project Operation Phase

The project applicant (Desert Trails Preparatory Academy) is proposing to develop the vacant project site with a new middle school. Other project components include vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation improvements; surface parking and utility improvements; security walls and fencing; and various hardscape and

# 3. Environmental Analysis

landscape improvements. Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, illustrates the overall site and landscape design of the Project. Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*, illustrates the portion of the project site that would accommodate the new campus. As shown in Figure 6, the western parcel would be developed with the new campus while the eastern parcel would remain vacant desert land.

As shown in Figure 5, the new campus would feature a main building and two modular buildings. The main building would occupy the central and a part of the southern portions of the project site — it would have frontage onto Mesa View Drive. Architecturally and functionally, the L-shaped main building would be designed and constructed as two single-story buildings (with heights ranging from 18 to 29 feet) that would be connected by a covered pedestrian breezeway and gated entry. The two single-story modular buildings (height of just under 12 feet) would be placed just east of the main building.

Figures 7a and 7b, *Conceptual Building Elevations*, illustrate the conceptual elevations and architectural design, elements/features, and massing of the proposed buildings. As shown in these figures, the buildings would incorporate a contemporary architectural style and aesthetic design, which express the buildings educational use. Building elements/features and materials include natural and painted concrete walls and panels in four color schemes; high-performance tinted glazing (windows and doors); exposed steel channels or beams; composite wood feature walls; and aluminum window awnings for shading. The massing of the buildings is broken up and varied to allow for a human-scaled design. The buildings have also been designed to have multiple-feature elements on all façades. Building pop-outs, offsets, overhangs, recesses, and variations in building materials and colors would be added to offset the building's massing and provide relief to and variation in the building form and style. For example, the parapet heights would be varied for visual interest and breaking up the massing, and tilt-up panel joints would be exaggerated by reveals and a change in color. Building entries would be articulated through strong architectural L-shaped features, which solidify the contemporary character of the Project as a whole. The building's shapes and stylistic character mimic the rest of the Project design. The final architectural style and aesthetic design of the buildings is subject to review and approval by the City.

The design elements/features of the proposed buildings would be complimentary to and not detract from those of the existing residential uses surrounding the project site. While the project establishes its own character, particularly with regard to architectural style and aesthetic design, its integration into the surrounding residential neighborhood is evidenced through compatible colors and a variety of scale. The residences surrounding the project site utilize a neutral color palette, particularly one of multiple shades of beige, brown, and tan which have been integrated into the design of the proposed buildings. The school's design uses these colors within the neutral color palette in order to establish a visual connection and neighborhood identity while also relating to the school color blue and providing a bold architectural feature. The design is also unique due to its identity as an educational use and expresses its uniqueness through its contemporary style.

Additionally, Project implementation would provide compatible uses to the surrounding residential uses. As proposed, the charter school is permitted under the Low Density Residential land use designation and R-1 zoning district of the project site via City approval and issuance of a conditional use permit. Schools are not only a permitted use in residential areas, but they are considered a compatible use and fit well within residential neighborhoods. Also, the proposed buildings (including building massing and height) would be compatible with the surrounding residential uses, which include a mix of one- and two-story buildings that are similar to the

height and massing of the Project's buildings. Further, the proposed building's height transitions from a lower height adjacent to the residential neighborhood along the southern boundary to a taller component at the multipurpose room along the northern boundary, which is at the center of the project site adjacent to the proposed parking and student pick-up/drop-off area.

Furthermore, the provisions of the Victorville Development Code and the City's development review process (i.e., development projects are subject to review and approval by the Victorville Planning Commission) would help ensure that the Project is designed and implemented in a manner that would provide visual cohesiveness and compatibility not only within the project site, but along the project site frontages and with its surroundings. The Project would be designed and constructed in accordance with the applicable provisions of Victorville Development Code, including those related but not limited to building height and setbacks, wall/fence heights, and landscaping requirements. Overall, Project development would enhance and strengthen the visual character of the project site and its surroundings through new architecture, landscaping, hardscape, and other improvements onsite and along the project site's street frontages. The proposed architectural and landscape elements and design would ensure that development of the Project is not detrimental to the visual character or quality of the surrounding area or uses. The building masses, landscaping, and various hardscape and landscape improvements proposed throughout the project site would be designed to create a sense of cohesiveness on- and offsite and along the project site boundaries. Although newer than that of the surrounding area and uses, the proposed buildings, landscaping and site improvements would complement and not detract from the visual character of the site or surrounding area.

Based on the preceding, Project development would not substantially degrade the visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Lighting effects are associated with the use of artificial light during the evening hours. There are two primary sources of light: light emanating from building interiors passing through windows and openings, and light from exterior sources (i.e., street lighting, architectural building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, landscape lighting, and signage). Excessive light and/or glare can impair vision, cause a nuisance, affect sleep patterns, and generate safety hazards when experienced by drivers. Uses such as residences, elderly care facilities, schools, and hotels are considered light sensitive, since occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Light spill or trespass are considered a nuisance and are typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated. With respect to lighting, the degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light source, presence of barriers or obstructions, type of light source, and weather conditions.

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light on surfaces of buildings or objects, including highly polished surfaces such as glass windows or reflective materials and, to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Perceived glare is the unwanted and potentially

objectionable sensation experienced by a person as they look directly into the light source of a luminaire. Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with buildings with exterior façades largely or entirely composed of highly reflective glass. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Daytime glare can also be generated by light reflecting off passing or parked cars. Glare generation is typically related to either moving vehicles or sun angles, although glare resulting from reflected sunlight can occur regularly at certain times of the day and year. Excessive glare not only impedes visibility, but also increases the ambient heat reflectivity in a given area. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, hotels, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the vacant project site (which consists of vacant desert land) is in a developing rural area of the City and is surrounded by residential uses and vacant desert land. Residential uses are considered light-sensitive receptors, which are land uses that are sensitive to lighting. No sources of light or glare exist on the project site.

Following is a discussion of the potential day- and nighttime light and glare impacts in the project area as a result of Project development.

### Daytime Glare

The Project includes building materials and architectural treatments that could cause daytime glare, but not to such an extent that they would result in a significant impact. For example, the architectural treatments of the proposed building would include building materials such as cement walls, glazing (glass windows and doors), and other decorative elements (see building elevations and renderings in Figures 7a and 7b, *Conceptual Building Elevations*). With the exception of the glass windows and doors, the building materials and architectural treatments are nonreflective and would therefore not create substantial day or nighttime glare. As illustrated in Figure 7a through 7b, compared to the amount of nonreflective building materials, the use of glazing is limited (would make up less than five percent of the building façades).

The proposed glazing could increase sources of glare, because it would reflect some level of sunlight during certain times of the day. Also, vehicles parked onsite would increase the potential for reflected sunlight during certain times of the day. However, glare from these sources is typical of the surrounding area and would not increase beyond what is expected for a developing rural area of the City.

Therefore, daytime glare impacts from Project-related architectural treatments and building materials would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Nighttime Lighting and Glare

Project development would introduce new sources of artificial light to the project site and surrounding area. Nighttime site lighting would consist of exterior building-mounted light fixtures; interior lighting for the buildings; lighting for pedestrian walkways and common gathering areas; ground-mounted decorative lighting for landscape and architectural features; lighting for the parking areas and drive aisles; and security lighting. No lighting is proposed for the proposed playfields or hardcourts. These new sources artificial lighting have the

potential to increase nighttime light and glare in the project area, as well as create offsite light spill or trespass that could result in a nuisance. Nighttime lighting and glare from the project site would be visible from the surrounding roadways and light-sensitive residential land uses.

Although Project development would introduce new light sources to the project site and surrounding area, the proposed light sources would be similar to the light sources of the surrounding residential uses and roadways. Considering the existing sources of lighting in the surrounding vicinity, the amount and intensity of nighttime lighting proposed onsite would not be substantially greater than existing lighting. It is unlikely that conventional lighting and illuminated operations realized under the Project would discernibly, much less adversely, affect ambient light conditions.

Additionally, as shown in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, the proposed landscape plan calls for the planting of trees along the project perimeter. Also, six-foot high CMU (concrete masonry unit) block walls would be constructed along the northern and southern site boundaries. The proposed trees and walls would help shield some of the lighting that would emanate from the project site.

Furthermore, Project development would be required to conform with all applicable lighting standards of the City's residential districts, as contained in Article 8 (Residential Districts) of the Victorville Development Code. Provisions of the article are intended to prevent glare, light trespass, and light pollution. All proposed exterior lighting would be designed, arranged, installed, directed, shielded, operated, and maintained in such a manner as to contain direct illumination onsite and prevent light and glare impacts offsite in accordance with the provisions of the Victorville Development Code, thereby, preventing excess illumination and light spillover onto adjoining residential land uses and/or roadways. Through the City's established site plan review processes, the City would ensure that final design of the Project precludes or effectively minimizes potential light/glare overspill onto adjacent properties or roadways.

Finally, Project development would be required to comply with California's Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings, Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations, which outlines mandatory provisions for lighting control devices and luminaires. For example, the Project's exterior lighting sources would be required to be installed in accordance with the provisions of Section 110.9 (Mandatory Requirements for Lighting Control Devices and Systems, Ballasts, and Luminaires)

Compliance with the lighting provisions of the Victorville Development Code and Title 24 would ensure that the Project does not result in significant light impacts. Compliance with these provisions is ensured through the City's development review and building plan check process.

Based on the preceding, nighttime light and glare impacts related to the Project would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland.

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In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

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

**No Impact.** The project site is mapped as Grazing Land, and not as farmland, on the California Important Farmland Finder maintained by the Division of Land Resource Protection (DLRP 2016a). Grazing Land is suitable for the grazing of livestock. However, the project site is not and has never been in agricultural use, and is in a developing rural area of the City. The project site is and has always consisted of vacant desert land. There is also no evidence to indicate that the project site was ever utilized for agricultural operations based on the review of historical sources (aerial photographs and topographic maps) conducted as a part of the cultural and paleontological assessment for the project site (see Appendix D). Therefore, Project development would not convert mapped farmland to nonagricultural use. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** The project site is not zoned for agricultural use — the site is zoned Single Family Residential (R-1), which does not permit agricultural uses. The project site is also in a developing rural area of the City; the site does not contain active farmland or other agricultural uses and is not adjacent to or in proximity of such uses. Also, aerial photographs dating as far back as 1952 do not show such uses onsite (NETR 2019). Further, the project site is not subject to a Williamson Act contract[3] (DLRP 2016b). Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with zoning for agricultural uses or a Williamson Act contract. Accordingly, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** Forest land is defined as "land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits" (California Public Resources Code § 12220[g]). Timberland is defined as "land…which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of any commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees" (California Public Resources Code § 4526).

[3] Williamson Act contracts restrict the use of privately-owned land to agriculture and compatible open-space uses under contract with local governments; in exchange, the land is taxed based on actual use rather than potential market value.

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the vacant project site (which consists of vacant desert land) is in a rural area of the City and is surrounded by residential uses and vacant desert land. Additionally, the project site is located in the southern portion of the Mojave Desert, which in general, is not capable of supporting forest land or timberland. Additionally, the project site is not designated or zoned for forest or timber land or used for forestry. As stated above, the site is zoned Single Family Residential (R-1). Therefore, Project development would have no impact on forest land or resources and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

**No Impact.** See response to Section 3.2.c, above. As substantiated in this section, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** See responses to Section's 3.2.a, b, and c, above. As substantiated in these sections, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.3 AIR QUALITY

This section addresses the impacts of the Project on ambient air quality and the exposure of people, especially sensitive individuals, to unhealthful pollutant concentrations. A background discussion on the air quality regulatory setting, meteorological conditions, existing ambient air quality in the vicinity of the project site, and air quality modeling can be found in Appendix A.

The primary air pollutants of concern for which ambient air quality standards (AAQS) have been established are ozone ($O_3$), carbon monoxide (CO), coarse inhalable particulate matter ($PM_{10}$), fine inhalable particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), sulfur dioxide ($SO_2$), nitrogen dioxide ($NO_2$), and lead (Pb). Areas are classified under the federal and California Clean Air Act as either in attainment or nonattainment for each criteria pollutant based on whether the AAQS have been achieved. The Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB), which is managed by the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD), is designated as nonattainment for $O_3$ and $PM_{10}$ under the California and National AAQS and nonattainment for $PM_{2.5}$ under the California AAQS (CARB 2017a).

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 applicable air quality plan?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** A consistency determination plays an important role in local agency project review by linking local planning and individual projects to the air quality management plan (AQMP). It fulfills the CEQA goal of informing decision makers of the environmental efforts of the project under consideration at an early enough stage to ensure that air quality concerns are fully addressed. It also provides the local agency

with ongoing information as to whether they are contributing to clean air goals in the AQMP. A number of AQMPs have been prepared by MDAQMD.

Regional growth projections are used by MDAQMD to forecast future emission levels in then MDAB. For southern California, these regional growth projections are provided by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and are partially based on land use designations in city/county general plans. Pursuant to MDAQMD, a project would not conflict with the AQMP if it is consistent with the existing land use plan of a city/county general plan. Zoning changes, specific plans, general plan amendments and similar land use plan changes that do not increase dwelling unit density, vehicle trips, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) are also deemed consistent (MDAQMD 2016).

The Project involves the development of a new middle school campus. The proposed school would serve the local population and would not result in an increase in population or employment, as demonstrated in Section 3.14, *Population and Housing*. Typically, only large, regionally significant projects have the potential to affect the regional growth projections. The Project is not considered a regionally significant project that would warrant Intergovernmental Review by SCAG under CEQA Guidelines Section 15206. Therefore, the Project would not have the potential to substantially affect the regional growth projections.

Additionally, the regional emissions generated by construction and operation of the Project would be less than the MDAQMD emissions thresholds as demonstrated below in Section 3.3.b, and MDAQMD would not consider the Project a substantial source of air pollutant emissions that would have the potential to affect the attainment designations in the MDAB. Therefore, the Project would not affect the regional emissions inventory or conflict with strategies in the AQMP. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The following describes the air quality impacts from short-term construction and long-term operation activities of the Project.

### Regional Short-Term Construction Phase Impacts

Construction activities generate air pollutant emissions from exhaust from off-road diesel-powered construction equipment; dust generated by grading, earthmoving, and other construction activities; and off-gas emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from application of asphalt, paints, and coatings.

Project-related construction activities would involve site preparation, site grading, paving, construction of the proposed facilities, and architectural painting. Overall construction is estimated to take approximately seven months, extending from late 2019 to summer of 2020. Construction emissions were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2016.3.2, based on the Project's preliminary construction schedule provided by the project applicant. The construction schedule and equipment mix are also based on preliminary data provided by the project applicant and are subject to changes during final design and as dictated by field conditions.

Results of the construction emission modeling are shown in Table 1. The table shows criteria air pollutant emissions that would be generated by the Project, which were modeled using CalEEMod. The table also provides a comparison of Project emissions to MDAQMD's daily and annual significance thresholds.

**Table 1 Maximum Regional Construction Emissions**

| Construction Phase | Criteria Air Pollutants (lbs/day)[1,2] | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | VOC | $NO_X$ | CO | $SO_2$ | $PM_{10}$ | $PM_{2.5}$ |
| **Year 2019** | | | | | | |
| Site Preparation and Rough Grading (School and Olivera Road) | 8 | 86 | 56 | <1 | 12 | 7 |
| Building Construction 2019 | 2 | 16 | 13 | <1 | 2 | 1 |
| **Year 2020** | | | | | | |
| Building Construction 2020 | 2 | 15 | 12 | <1 | 1 | 1 |
| Building Construction 2020, Utility Trenching (School and Olivera Rd) | 4 | 44 | 32 | <1 | 3 | 2 |
| Building Construction 2020 and Architectural Coating | 27 | 17 | 15 | <1 | 2 | 1 |
| Building Construction 2020, Architectural Coating, Fine Grading | 29 | 46 | 35 | <1 | 4 | 2 |
| Building Construction 2020, Architectural Coating, Asphalt Paving (school), Fine Grading | 31 | 56 | 44 | <1 | 5 | 3 |
| Asphalt Paving (School), Fine Grading | 4 | 39 | 29 | <1 | 3 | 2 |
| Asphalt Paving (school), Foundation (Aggregate Base/Base) | 4 | 37 | 29 | <1 | 3 | 2 |
| Foundation (Aggregate Base/Base) | 3 | 27 | 20 | <1 | 2 | 1 |
| Asphalt Paving (Topcoat) | 4 | 10 | 9 | <1 | 1 | 1 |
| Finishing and Landscaping | <1 | 1 | 2 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| **Maximum Daily Emissions** | **31** | **86** | **56** | **<1** | **12** | **7** |
| **MDAQMD Daily Thresholds** | **137** | **137** | **548** | **137** | **82** | **82** |
| Exceeds Threshold? | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| | Criteria Air Pollutants (tons/year)[1,2] | | | | | |
| | VOC | $NO_X$ | CO | $SO_2$ | $PM_{10}$ | $PM_{2.5}$ |
| **Maximum Annual Emissions** | **<1** | **2** | **1** | **<1** | **<1** | **<1** |
| **MDAQMD Annual Thresholds** | **25** | **25** | **100** | **25** | **15** | **15** |
| Exceeds Threshold? | No | No | No | No | No | No |

Source: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2.

1. Construction phasing is based on the preliminary information provided by project applicant. Where specific information regarding Project-related construction activities was not available, construction assumptions were based on CalEEMod defaults, which are based on construction surveys conducted by the South Coast Air Quality Management District of construction equipment and phasing for comparable projects.
2. Includes implementation of fugitive dust control measures required by MDAQMD under Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), including watering disturbed areas a minimum of two times per day, replacing ground cover quickly, and street sweeping.

As shown in Table 1, the air pollutant emissions from construction-related activities would be less than their respective daily and annual MDAQMD regional significance threshold values. Therefore, air quality impacts from Project-related construction activities would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

## Regional Long-Term Operation Phase Impacts

Long-term air pollutant emissions generated by the Project would be from area sources (e.g., landscape fuel use, aerosols, and architectural coatings), energy use (e.g., electricity, natural gas), and Project-related vehicle trips generated. The Project would generate an increase of 851 average daily weekday trips (see Table 13, *Project Trip Generation*, of Section 3.17, *Transportation*).[4]

Results of the operation emission modeling are shown in Table 2. The table shows criteria air pollutant emissions that would be generated by the Project, which were modeled using CalEEMod. The table also provides a comparison of Project emissions to MDAQMD's daily and annual significance thresholds.

**Table 2 Regional Operation Emissions**

| Source | Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | VOC | $NO_x$ | CO | $SO_2$ | $PM_{10}$ | $PM_{2.5}$ |
| Area | 1 | <1 | <1 | 0 | <1 | <1 |
| Energy[1] | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| Mobile | 2 | 2 | 16 | <1 | 4 | 1 |
| **Total** | 3 | 2 | 16 | <1 | 4 | 1 |
| Maximum Daily Emissions | 3 | 2 | 16 | <1 | 4 | 1 |
| **Regional Threshold** | **137** | **137** | **548** | **137** | **82** | **65** |
| **Exceeds Threshold?** | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Source** | **Maximum Annual Emissions (tons/year)** | | | | | |
| | **VOC** | **$NO_x$** | **CO** | **$SO_2$** | **$PM_{10}$** | **$PM_{2.5}$** |
| Area | <1 | <1 | <1 | 0 | <1 | <1 |
| Energy | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 | <1 |
| Mobile | <1 | <1 | 2 | <1 | 1 | <1 |
| **Total** | <1 | <1 | 2 | <1 | 1 | <1 |
| **Regional Threshold** | **25** | **25** | **100** | **25** | **15** | **12** |
| **Exceeds Threshold?** | No | No | No | No | No | No |

Source: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2.
Notes: lbs = pounds. Highest winter or summer emissions are reported.

As shown in Table 2, the Project-related air pollutant emissions would not exceed the MDAQMD's regional emissions thresholds for operational activities. Therefore, long-term operation-related impacts to air quality would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Construction and operation of the Project could expose sensitive receptors to elevated pollutant concentrations if it would cause or contribute significantly to elevated pollutant concentration levels. Unlike the mass of construction and operational phase emissions shown in the regional

[4] Although the Project proposes to have a capacity of 550 students, credit has been applied for the approximately 90 students that would be transferred to the new school campus from the Desert Trails Preparatory Academy, Adelanto campus. Because these students are already traveling on the surrounding roadways, the vehicle miles traveled by these students would not result in an increase in emissions compared to existing conditions as a result of the Project (see also Section 3.17, *Transportation*).

emissions analysis in Tables 1 and 2 above, which is described in pounds per day, localized concentrations refer to an amount of pollutant in a volume of air (ppm or $\mu g/m^3$) and can be correlated to potential health effects.

## Construction Phase

### *Localized Impacts*

Air pollutant emissions generated by Project-related construction activities are anticipated to cause temporary increases in air pollutant concentrations. Table 1 demonstrates that the maximum daily construction emissions (pounds per day) generated during construction activities would not exceed MDAQMD's regional significance thresholds. Since regional impacts would be less than significant, Project-related construction activities are presumed to have less than significant localized impacts. Therefore, localized air quality impacts from construction activities would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Health Risk*

MDAQMD does not currently require health risk assessments to be conducted for short-term emissions from construction equipment. Emissions from construction equipment primarily consist of diesel particulate matter (DPM). The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) adopted new guidance for the preparation of health risk assessments in March 2015. OEHHA has developed a cancer risk factor and noncancer chronic reference exposure level for DPM, but these factors are based on continuous exposure over a 30-year time frame. No short-term acute exposure levels have been developed for DPM. MDAQMD currently does not require the evaluation of long-term excess cancer risk or chronic health impacts for a short-term project.

The Project would be developed in approximately 7.5 months. The relatively short duration of the construction activities when compared to a 30-year time frame would limit exposures to on- and off-site receptors. In addition, exhaust emissions from off-road vehicles associated with Project-related construction activities would not exceed MDAQMD's regional significance thresholds, as demonstrated in Table 1. For these reasons, it is anticipated that construction emissions would not pose a threat to offsite receptors abutting and surrounding the project site. Therefore, Project-related construction health impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## Operational Phase

### *Localized Impacts*

Project operation would not generate substantial quantities of emissions. Land uses that have the potential to generate substantial stationary sources of emissions that would require a permit from MDAQMD include industrial land uses, such as chemical processing, and warehousing operations where substantial truck idling could occur onsite. The Project involves the construction and operation of a new middle school.

Project operation would result in the use of standard onsite mechanical equipment such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units in addition to occasional use of landscaping equipment for project site maintenance. However, air pollutant emissions generated from these activities would be nominal. Additionally, Table 2 demonstrates that the maximum daily operation emissions (pounds per day) generated during Project operation

would not exceed MDAQMD's regional significance thresholds. Since regional impacts would be less than significant, Project-related operation activities are presumed to have less than significant localized impacts.

Therefore, localized air quality impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Carbon Monoxide Hotspots*

Areas of vehicle congestion have the potential to create pockets of CO called hotspots. These pockets have the potential to exceed the state one-hour standard of 20 parts per million (ppm) or the eight-hour standard of 9.0 ppm. Because CO is produced in greatest quantities from vehicle operation and does not readily disperse into the atmosphere, adherence to ambient air quality standards is typically demonstrated through an analysis of localized CO concentrations. Hotspots are typically produced at intersections, where traffic congestion is highest because vehicles queue for longer periods and are subject to reduced speeds.

MDAB has been designated as attainment under both the national and California AAQS for CO. Under existing and future vehicle emission rates, a project would have to increase traffic volumes at a single intersection by more than 44,000 vehicles per hour — or 24,000 vehicles per hour where vertical and/or horizontal mixing is substantially limited — in order to generate a significant CO impact (BAAQMD 2017). The Project would generate a net increase of up to 851 average daily trips (see Table 13, *Project Trip Generation*, of Section 3.17, *Transportation*), which would be significantly less than the screening volumes cited above. Furthermore, MDAB has since been designated as attainment under both the national and California AAQS for CO.

Therefore, the Project would not have the potential to substantially increase CO hotspots at intersections in the vicinity of the project site. Localized air quality impacts related to mobile-source emissions would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project would not result in objectionable odors. The threshold for an odor impact is if a project creates an odor nuisance pursuant to MDAQMD Rule 402 (Nuisance), which states:

> A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.

The type of facilities that are considered to have objectionable odors include wastewater treatments plants, compost facilities, landfills, solid waste transfer stations, fiberglass manufacturing facilities, paint/coating operations (e.g., auto body shops), dairy farms, petroleum refineries, asphalt batch plants, chemical manufacturing, and food manufacturing facilities. The uses proposed by the Project do not fall within the aforementioned land uses.

Additionally, emissions from construction equipment, such as diesel exhaust and volatile organic compounds from architectural coatings and paving activities, may generate odors. However, these odors would be low in concentration, temporary, and are not expected to affect a substantial number of people. Any odors produced during the Project's construction phase are not expected to be significant or highly objectionable and would be in compliance with MDAQMD Rule 402.

Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical studies, included as Appendices B and C to this Initial Study:

- Biological Resources Letter Report, Dudek, June 2019. (Appendix B)
- Focused Survey Results Letter Report, Dudek, July 2019. (Appendix C)

Would the project:

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

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** Candidate species are plants and animals that have been studied and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has concluded that they should be proposed for addition to the federal endangered and threatened species list.

Sensitive biological resources are habitats[5] or individual species that have special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, or rare. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), USFWS, and organizations like the California Native Plant Society maintain watch lists of such resources.

Special status species is a universal term used in the scientific community for species that are considered sufficiently rare that they require special consideration and/or protection and should be, or have been, listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by USFWS and/or CDFW.

Following is a summary of the findings and conclusions of the biological resources letter report prepared by Dudek for the project site and the subsequent focused surveys conducted by Dudek (see Appendices B and C, respectively).

[5] Per the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, habitat is where a given plant or animal species meets its requirements for food, cover, and water in both space and time.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

## Candidate and Sensitive Species

No candidate or sensitive species occur onsite, and no such species were identified on the project site as part of the Dudek's intensive filed survey. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## Special Status Species

### *Special Status Plants*

No special status plant species were identified on the project site as part of the Dudek's intensive filed survey; however, three non-listed special-status plant species have a moderate potential to occur within the boundaries of the project site: Mojave milkweed, white-bracted spineflower, and sagebrush loeflingia. Direct or indirect impacts to these species, if present, could occur as a result of Project development. Potential direct impacts could result in the permanent removal of populations of these species, if present. Indirect impacts to special-status plants include the generation of fugitive dust, the release of chemical pollutants, and the adverse effect of invasive plant species.

The study area for indirect impacts is comprised of developed areas to the north, south, and west, and US 395 and developed areas occur outside the study area to the east. Potential indirect impacts to special status plants would be less than significant as they would be limited to the undeveloped parcels immediately adjacent to the project site to the north and east.

The study area for direct impacts is the area covered by the project site, as well as a 100-foot buffer. Direct impacts to special-status plants onsite were determined to be potentially significant. Pursuant to the findings and recommendations of the biological resources letter report prepared for the project site (see Appendix B), focused special-status plant surveys were conducted for the project site (see Appendix C). As concluded in the focused survey letter report, the focused special-status surveys for Mojave milkweed, white-bracted spineflower, and sagebrush loeflingia was negative. Additionally, no federally- or state-listed or non-listed California Rare Plant Rank 1–4s were incidentally observed during the focused surveys. Therefore, impacts to special status plants as a result of Project development would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Furthermore, Joshua trees, which are protected by the City, occur onsite and would be removed as a result of Project development. Impacts to Joshua tree are discussed in Section 3.4e, below. As concluded in this section, impacts to Joshua trees would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Special Status Wildlife*

One federally listed threatened species (Mojave desert tortoise) and one state-listed threatened species (Mohave ground squirrel), have a moderate potential to occur onsite. In addition, four other non-listed species (burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike, LeConte's thrasher, and pallid San Diego pocket mouse) have a moderate potential to occur onsite and adjacent vacant desert land.

The proposed project will permanently impact approximately 3.8 acres of potential habitat for Mojave desert tortoise, Mohave ground squirrel, burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike, LeConte's thrasher, and pallid San Diego

pocket mouse. The study area is surrounded on three sides by development and State Route 395 and residential development occurs approximately 0.25 mile to the east. Loss of approximately 3.8 acres of fragmented habitat is less than significant. However, direct mortality of individuals of Mojave desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel, and breeding burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike, and LeConte's thrasher would be considered significant.

Pursuant to the findings and recommendations of the biological resources letter report prepared for the project site (see Appendix B), focused special-status surveys were conducted for the project site (see Appendix C). Specifically, Dudek conducted focused surveys for the Mojave desert tortoise and a focused habitat assessment for the Mohave ground squirrel (see Appendix C). The study area for the focused surveys is the area covered by the project site, as well as a 200-foot buffer for the Mojave desert tortoise.

As concluded in the survey, no live desert tortoises or desert tortoise signs (e.g., suitable burrows, scat, carcasses, courtship rings, drinking depressions) were observed within the survey area. Additionally, no burrows suitable for Mojave desert tortoise were observed within the survey area. No further action for desert tortoise was recommended. Therefore, impacts would be deemed to be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary. However, a worker environmental awareness training should be conducted with Project construction personnel to educate them on desert tortoise, protective status, and avoidance measures to be implemented by all personnel, including looking under vehicles and equipment prior to moving. The training should include steps to be taken if Mojave desert tortoise is observed on the construction site, including ceasing construction activities and coordination with the City and resource agencies. The worker environmental awareness training would be imposed by the City as a condition of any required planning approval, and compliance would be ensured through the City's building plan check and development review process.

As stated in the survey, the creosote bush scrub community on the project site provides suitable habitat for Mohave ground squirrel. However, the confirmed presence of Mohave ground squirrel by only a single survey (in 2005) as compared to numerous surveys with no Mohave ground squirrel records from 1998 through 2012, and the fragmented condition of the habitat in the survey area, support the conclusion that there is low potential for Mohave ground squirrel to occur on the project site. Although low, there is the potential of Mohave ground squirrel presence onsite. To mitigate impacts to Mohave ground squirrel, the project applicant would choose one of two options detailed in Mitigation Measure BIO-1. With implementation of the mitigation measure, impacts would be reduced to a level of less than significant.

Regarding impacts to burrowing owls, see response in Section 3.4.d, below. As substantiated in this section, impacts to burrowing owls would be reduced to a level of less than significant with implementation of mitigation.

### Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Prior to the issuance of grading permits and to mitigate potential impacts to the Mojave ground squirrel (MGS), the project applicant shall undertake one of the following two options:

- **Protocol Survey.** The protocol survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and consist of three separate 5-day live trapping surveys (15 days total). If the survey

demonstrates the absence of MGS, no further action or mitigation is required. The findings and conclusions of the protocol survey shall be submitted in a memo/letter report to the City of Victorville Development Department and California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

- **Assume Presence.** Assume the presence of MGS on the project site and obtain an Incidental Take Permit from the California Department of Fish Wildlife. The Incidental Take Permit will require mitigation through purchase of credits at an offsite mitigation bank, or purchase of lands to replace potential MGS habitat onsite. Based on the low habitat quality for MGS on the project site, the anticipated replacement ratio would be 1:1, and 4.31 acres of offsite MGS habitat would need to be purchased. However, the California Department of Fish Wildlife shall be consulted to determine if the assumption of presence would be an accepted approach and to determine the final offsite replacement ratio.

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

**No Impact.** Sensitive natural communities are communities that are considered rare in the region by regulatory agencies; known to provide habitat for sensitive animal or plant species; or known to be important wildlife corridors. Riparian habitats are those occurring along the banks of rivers and streams.

Regarding sensitive natural communicates, see response in Section 3.4.a, above. As substantiated in this section, no sensitive species occur onsite, and no such species were identified on the project site as part of the Dudek's intensive filed survey. Since no sensitive species occur onsite, then no sensitive natural communities exist either. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Regarding riparian habitat, see response in Section 3.4.b, below. As substantiated in this section, no impact to riparian habitats would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**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?**

**No Impact.** Wetlands are defined under the federal Clean Water Act as land that is flooded or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that normally does support, a prevalence of vegetation adapted to life in saturated soils. Wetlands include areas such as streams, swamps, marshes, and bogs.

No wetlands regulated by the US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS), California Department of Fish and Wildlife, or Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board exist on or in proximity of the project site. The closest wetland feature to the project site is approximately 0.35 mile west of the site; it

is mapped on the USFWS National Wetlands Mapper as Riverine[6] (USFWS 2019) and appears to exist as a dry streambed or channel. However, project development would not impact the wetland directly or indirectly due to the distance between the project site and the riverine. Additionally, site runoff does and would not drain to the wetland, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the project site consists of vacant desert land. Desert vegetation onsite consists mostly of creosote bush scrub and some scattered Joshua trees. The project site is in an urbanizing area of the City. Surrounding uses consists of a mix of residential uses and vacant desert land. Following is a discussion of the potential impacts to nesting birds and wildlife corridors and nursery site as a result of Project development.

### Nesting Birds

Project construction could result in direct and indirect impacts to nesting birds, including the loss of nests, eggs, and fledglings if ground-disturbing activities occur during the nesting season (generally February 15 through August 31). Construction activities during this time may result in reduced reproductive success and may violate the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code. If construction (including any ground-disturbing activities) occurs during the nesting season, a nesting bird survey must be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to grading activities. If nesting birds are observed within or adjacent to the construction activities, avoidance of active bird nests should occur as determined by the qualified biologist to ensure compliance with these regulations. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2, impacts to nesting birds would be reduced to a level of less than significant.

### Wildlife Corridors and Nursery Sites

The project site and its surroundings are do not provide habitat for the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. Although the project site may provide some habitat for limited wildlife movement and live-in habitat — particularly for reptile and avian species and small to medium mammals that are adapted to urban settings — the project site does not function as a wildlife corridor. Additionally, the site and environs have not been identified or designated as a wildlife corridor. Furthermore, the project site does not support any wildlife nursery sites (Dudek 2019a). Therefore, no impact wildlife corridors or nurseries would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Mitigation Measures

BIO-2 To maintain compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code, if ground-disturbing and/or vegetation-clearing activities are scheduled to occur during

[6] Riverine's include all wetlands and deepwater habitats contained within a channel (USFWS 2019).

the avian nesting season (typically February 15 through August 31), a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within the project site and a 500-foot buffer around the project site. Surveys shall be conducted within three days prior to initiation of any ground-disturbing and/or vegetation-clearing activities and shall be conducted between dawn and noon.

If an active nest is detected during the nesting bird survey, avoidance buffers shall be implemented as determined by a qualified biologist, in consultation with the construction contractor. The buffer shall be of a distance to ensure avoidance of adverse effects to the nesting bird by accounting for topography, ambient conditions, species, nest location, and activity type. All nests shall be monitored as determined by the qualified biologist until nestlings have fledged and dispersed or it is confirmed that the nest has been unsuccessful or abandoned.

**e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the project site consists of vacant desert land. Desert vegetation onsite consists mostly of creosote bush scrub and some scattered Joshua trees. Project implementation would affect five existing Joshua trees onsite. In order to implement the Project, all five trees would have to be removed.

Joshua trees are a protected resource throughout the entire City under Chapter 13.33 (Preservation and Removal of Joshua Trees) of the Victorville Municipal Code (City Ordinance No. 1224) and are considered a sensitive biological resource. As stated in Chapter 13.33, written consent is required from the City for the removal of Joshua trees. Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 13.33 and the Victorville Park Division (Division) requirements, the project applicant submitted a Joshua tree inspection application to the Division. Upon inspection of the Joshua trees by the Division, it was determined that of the five trees inspected, four were deemed to be healthy and available for relocation with the fifth tree being diseased and available for removal. Pursuant to the findings and recommendations of the Division, the four healthy Joshua trees would be relocated to the eastern parcel of the project site — the parcel to remain vacant desert land (see Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*). The fifth tree would be permanently removed due to health reasons (diseased).

Based on the preceding, the project would not conflict with the City's Joshua tree preservation ordinance. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** The Project site overlaps the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), which provides protection and conservation of desert ecosystems while allowing for appropriate development of renewable energy projects. However, while the DRECP plan area overlaps the project site, the DRECP focuses on renewable energy projects and is not applicable to the Project. Therefore, the Project would not conflict

with any habitat or natural community conservation plans. No impact would occur and not mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

For the purpose of this section, the term "cultural resource" refers to any physical evidence of human activities that possesses potential historical, archaeological, or traditional cultural value. The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical studies, included as Appendix D to this Initial Study:

- Cultural and Paleontological Assessment, Cogstone, September 2019.

Would the project:

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

**No Impact.** Section 15064.5 defines historic resources as resources listed or determined to be eligible for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission, a local register of historical resources, or the lead agency. Generally, a resource is considered "historically significant" if it meets one of the following criteria:

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

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

iii) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values;

iv) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site is vacant desert land and void of any buildings and structures. Also, aerial photographs dating as far back as 1952 do not show any building or structures onsite (NETR 2019). The project site is and has always consisted of vacant desert land.

Additionally, an intensive pedestrian survey of the project site was conducted by Cogstone staff in April 2019 as a part of the cultural and paleontological assessment completed for the site (see Appendix D). The survey yielded two isolated historic cans near the northern edge of the project site: P-36-033188, which is a solder dot evaporated/condensed milk can from the early to mid-20th century, and P-36-033189, which is a 1960's aluminum top beer can. Both isolates were highly rusted and the milk can had been flattened. Isolated artifacts are ineligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and do not require further consideration.

Furthermore, the project site is not identified on any federal, state, or local historic registers — National Register of Historic Places; California State Historical Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest; or the City of Victorville General Plan Resources Element.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

Therefore, no impact to historical resources would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** Archaeological resources are prehistoric or historic evidence of past human activities, including structural ruins and buried resources. As shown in Figure 3, the project site consists of vacant desert land surrounded by a mix of residential use and vacant desert land. With the exception of Olivera Road, a dirt road that forms the northern site boundary, the remainder of the site is undisturbed desert land. Given the undisturbed condition of the project site, the potential exists for development of the Project to impact unidentified archeological resources that may underly the site.

A cultural and paleontological assessment was conducted for the project site by Cogstone (see Appendix D). The purpose of the assessment was to determine the presence or absence of and potential impact to archaeological and paleontological resources as a result of Project development. As a part of the assessment, Cogstone conducted an archaeological and historic records search of the California Historic Resources Inventory System (CHRIS) from the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on April 11, 2019. The records search was conducted for the project site and a one-half mile radius from the site. The search indicated that no prior studies have been completed for the project site; however, 10 have been completed outside the project site within the one-half mile radius. Also, no previously recorded cultural resources have been recorded for the project site.

Further, as noted above, the intensive pedestrian survey of the project site conducted by Cogstone in April 2019 yielded two isolated historic cans. However, isolated artifacts are ineligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and do not require further consideration. Aside from the two isolated historic cans, no other subsurface resources or artifacts were encountered.

Based on the results of the cultural resources research and field survey of the project site, the cultural and paleontological assessment concluded that no additional cultural resources work or monitoring is necessary. However, although the assessment has not indicated sensitivity for cultural resources within the project site boundaries, ground-disturbing activities have the potential to reveal buried deposits not observed on the surface during previous surveys. Therefore, while unlikely, the presence of subsurface archaeological resources on the project site remains possible, and these could be affected by ground-disturbing activities associated with grading and construction at the site.

However, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would avoid or minimize potential Project impacts to archaeological resources. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, impacts to archeological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level.

## Mitigation Measures

CUL-1 Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the project applicant shall provide a letter to the City of Victorville Development Department from a qualified archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications for Archeology as defined at 36 CFR

Part 61, Appendix A (Professional Archeologist). The letter shall state that the project applicant has retained such an individual, and that the consultant will be on call during all grading and other significant ground-disturbing activities.

In the event that potential archeological resources are discovered during ground-disturbing activities, all such activity shall cease in the immediate area of the find (within a 60-foot buffer), and the professional archeological monitor shall have the authority to halt any activities adversely impacting potentially significant cultural resources until they can be formally evaluated. Suspension of ground disturbances in the vicinity of the discovery shall not be lifted until the archaeological monitor has evaluated the discovery to assess whether it is classified as a significant cultural resource pursuant to the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) definition of historical (State CEQA Guidelines 15064.5[a]) and/or unique archeological resource (Public Resources Code 21083.2[g]). Work may continue in other areas of the project site and for other project elements while the encountered find is evaluated.

If upon completion of the assessment the archeological monitor determines that the find qualifies as a significant cultural resource, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Cultural Resources Department (SMBMI) shall be contacted and be provided with information regarding the nature of the find. This will allow SMBMI to provide professional tribal input with regard to the significance and treatment of the find. Additionally, if the resource is classified as a significant cultural resource, the qualified archeologist (in coordination with SMBMI, if determined to be required) shall make recommendations on the treatment and disposition of the deposits, which shall be developed in accordance with all applicable provisions of California Public Resource Code Section 21083.2 and State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.5 and 15126.4. For example, if significant cultural resources are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, which shall allow for an SMBMI monitor to be present for the remainder of the ground-disturbing activities should SMBMI elect to place a monitor onsite. However, the placement of an SMBMI monitor shall be at the full expense of the tribe. The archaeologist shall prepare a final report describing all identified and curated resources (if any are found) and submit the report to the City. Upon receipt of the final report, the City shall distribute a copy to SMBMI. If disturbed resources are required to be collected and preserved, the project applicant shall be required to participate financially up to the limits imposed by Public Resources Code Section 21083.2.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** There are no known human remains or cemeteries on or near the project site. As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site is vacant desert land. The immediate surrounding vicinity has also experienced ground disturbance associated with the development of existing buildings, roadways, and other urbanized land uses. Therefore, the likelihood that human remains may be discovered during site clearing and grading activities is considered extremely low. However, development of the Project would have the

potential to disturb previously undiscovered subsurface human remains, if any exist. For example, the Project would involve excavation activities over the entire project site.

In the unlikely event that human remains are uncovered during ground-disturbing activities, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that disturbance of the site shall remain halted until the San Bernardino County Coroner has conducted an investigation into the circumstances, manner, and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation or to his or her authorized representative, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code. The coroner is required to make a determination within two working days of notification of the discovery of the human remains. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority or has reason to believe the human remains to be those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) so that NAHC can contact the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD shall be provided access to the discovery and will provide recommendations or preferences for treatment of the remains within 48 hours of accessing the discovery site. Disposition of human remains and any associated grave goods, if encountered, shall be treated in accordance with procedures and requirements set forth in Sections 5097.94 and 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code; Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code; and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

Compliance with existing law regarding the discovery of human remains would reduce potential impacts to human remains to less than significant levels. No mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.6 ENERGY

Would the project:

**a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Following is a discussion of the potential impacts related to the consumption of energy sources resulting from the construction and operational phases of the Project.

### Construction

Project-related construction activities would consume energy, in the short-term, through electricity use, construction vehicles and equipment fuel consumption, and bound energy in construction materials (e.g., such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass).

#### *Electricity*

Project construction would require the use of construction equipment for grading, hauling, and building activities. Electricity use during construction would vary during different phases of construction—most of the construction equipment during grading would be gas powered or diesel powered, and the later construction phases would require electricity-powered equipment, such as interior construction and architectural coatings. The use of electricity would be temporary and would fluctuate according to the phase of construction. The

Project would not result in wasteful or unnecessary electricity demands. Therefore, the Project would not result in a significant impact related to electricity use during the construction phase.

### *Transportation*

Transportation energy use depends on the type and number of trips, vehicle miles traveled, fuel efficiency of vehicles, and travel mode. Transportation energy use during construction would come from the transport and use of construction equipment (off-road), delivery and haul trucks (on-road), and construction employee passenger vehicles (on-road). The majority of construction equipment during grading would be diesel-powered.

The Project's construction contractors are anticipated to minimize idling of construction equipment during construction pursuant to California Code of Regulations Section 2485. This code requires that non-essential idling for all diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles must not exceed five consecutive minutes at any location. Such required practices would limit wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption. Furthermore, the use of fuel by on- and off-road vehicles would be temporary and would fluctuate according to the phase of construction. Construction fuel use for the Project would cease upon completion of construction activities. No unusual project characteristics would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in the region or state. Therefore, it is expected that construction fuel consumption associated with the Project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than similar development projects.

### *Building Materials*

Project construction building materials may include recycled materials and products originating from nearby sources in order to reduce the costs of transportation. With increasing transportation costs and fuel prices, contractors and owners have a strong financial incentive to avoid wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction. The type of construction associated with the Project is conventional and would be similar to other similar developments in the City. Substantial reductions in energy inputs for construction materials can be achieved by building with recycled materials, which require substantially less energy to produce than nonrecycled materials. The Victorville Municipal Code, Article 11 (Green Building Code) outlines the requirements for diverting construction waste from landfills. As currently codified, this section requires diversion of at least 50 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition waste through recycling, reuse, and diversion programs. As a result, the City requires submittal of construction and demolition waste management plans and payment of applicable fess and deposits to ensure proper documentation of construction material that will be reused, recycled, or landfilled. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that development projects are meeting the 50 percent minimum requirement. The project applicant would be required to submit a construction and demolition waste management plan to the City for review and approval.

The incremental increase in the use of energy bound in construction materials such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials (e.g., lumber and gas) would not substantially increase demand for energy compared to overall local and regional demand for construction materials. It is reasonable to assume that production of building materials such as concrete, steel, etc., would employ reasonable energy conservation practices in the interest of minimizing the cost of doing business.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

## Operation

Operation of the Project would create additional demands for building electricity compared to existing conditions and would result in increased transportation energy use.

### *Transportation*

During the operational phase, it is anticipated that the Project would result in an annual increase in project related Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) of 1,340,075 miles (refer to Appendix A). Project-related VMT would come from students, staff, and visitor vehicle trips; delivery and supply trucks; and trips by maintenance and repair crews. Table 3 shows the Project's use of energy based on VMT. As shown in the table, the Project's transportation sector would consume 48,035 gallons of fuel (gasoline, diesel, and compressed natural gas) and 4,036 kWh of electricity annually.

**Table 3 Project Operation-Related Vehicle Fuel/Energy Usage**

| Gas | | Diesel | | CNG | | Electricity[1] | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VMT | Gallons | VMT | Gallons | VMT | Gallons | VMT | kWh |
| 1,312,401 | 47,330 | 15,435 | 705 | 0 | 0 | 12,274 | 4,036 |

Source: CalEEMod 2016.3.2; CARB 2019.
Notes CNG = compressed natural gas; VMT = vehicle miles traveled; kWh = kilowatt-hour
1. Electricity use from electric vehicles is based on the average electricity consumption available from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT 2017).

Fuel consumption in passenger vehicles and trucks is regulated by Federal and State laws regarding average corporate fuel economy of vehicles. As vehicles turn over, the overall fuel economy of California's vehicle fleets is improved. Additionally, one of the primary goals of CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan is to provide clean transportation options for California residents. California is home to nearly half of the country's zero-emission vehicles. Alternative fuel producers and oil companies are bringing more low carbon fuels to market than required by the Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Also, the State has invested in zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure, land use planning, and active transportation options such as walking and biking (CARB 2017). In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars program for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and global warming gases with requirements for greater numbers of zero electric vehicles into a single package of standards. Under California's Advanced Clean Car program, by 2025 new automobiles will emit 34 percent less global warming gases and 75 percent less smog-forming emissions (CARB 2011).

The Project would be consistent with the requirements of these energy-related regulations and would not result in wasteful or unnecessary fuel demands.

### *Building Energy Use*

The proposed building would result in an increase in electricity and natural gas consumption during the operational phase. Energy is used for heating, cooling, and ventilation of the building; water heating; equipment; appliances; indoor, outdoor, perimeter, and parking lot lighting; and security systems. As shown in Appendix A

of this Initial Study, the Project would use a total of 283,564 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity and 333,493 kilo British Thermal Units (kBTU) of natural gas per year.

Green building is the practice of designing, constructing and operating buildings to maximize occupant health and productivity, use fewer resources, reduce waste and negative environmental impacts, and decrease life cycle costs (USGBC 2019). The Project would be designed using green building practices, including those of the most current Californai Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. The Building Energy Efficiency Standards contain energy efficiency requirements for newly constructed buildings, additions to existing buildings, and alterations to existing buildings. CALGreen is California's statewide "green" building code. As proposed, Project develoment would include mandatory standards from Divisions 5.1(Planning and Design), 5.2 (Energy Efficiency), 5.3 (Water Efficiency and Conservation), 5.4 (Material Conservation and Resource Efficiency), and 5.5 (Environmental Quality) of CAlGreen. A description of some of the Project's green building standards is provided in Section 1.5.6, above.

Additionally, all appliances would comply with the 2012 Appliance Efficiency Regulations. Further, solid waste from the Project's operational phase would be managed in accordance with the County of San Bernardino's Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) in order for the City to reach the diversion and other goals mandated by the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989. The County adopted the IWMP in response to Assembly Bill (AB) 939. AB 939 requires all California cities to divert 50 percent of their waste stream from landfills by the year 2000.

The Project would be consistent with the requirements of these energy-related regulations and would not result in wasteful or unnecessary electricity demands.

### Conclusion

As substantiated above, the Project would not result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during Project construction or operation. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The California Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) was established in 2002 under SB 1078 and was amended in 2006 and 2011. The RPS program requires investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase the use of eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total procurement by 2020. Renewable energy sources include wind, small hydropower, solar, geothermal, biomass, and biogas. Electricity production from renewable sources is generally considered carbon neutral. Executive Order S-14-08, signed in November 2008, expanded the state's RPS to 33 percent renewable power by 2020. This standard was adopted by the legislature in 2011 (SB X1-2). Senate Bill 350 (SB 350, de Leon) was signed into law September 2015 and establishes tiered increases to the RPS. SB 350 requires renewable energy resources of 40 percent by 2024, 45 percent by 2027, and 50 percent by 2030. SB 350 also set a new goal to double the energy-efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas through energy efficiency and conservation measures. On September 10, 2018, Governor Brown signed Senate Bill 100 (SB 100), which raises California's RPS requirements to 60 percent by 2030, with interim targets, and 100 percent by 2045. The

bill also establishes a state policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of all retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2045. Under SB 100 the state cannot increase carbon emissions elsewhere in the western grid or allow resource shuffling to achieve the 100 percent carbon-free electricity target.

Electrical needs to the project site would be provided by Southern California Edison (SCE). SCE obtains electricity from conventional and renewable sources. In 2017, 20 percent of SCE's electricity was generated from natural gas; 6 percent from nuclear power; 32 percent from renewable energy sources; 8 percent from large hydroelectric generators; and 34 percent from unspecified sources (SCE 2018). The net increase in power demand associated with the Project is anticipated to be within the service capabilities of SCE and would not impede SCE's ability to implement California's renewable energy goals. Therefore, the Project would not obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy. Additionally, and as demonstrated in Section 3.6.a, above, the Project would not obstruct a state or local plan for energy efficiency.

Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical studies, included as Appendices D and E to this Initial Study:

- Cultural and Paleontological Assessment, Cogstone, September 2019. (Appendix D)
- Preliminary Soils Investigation, John R. Byerly Incorporated, May 2019. (Appendix E)

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.**

**No Impact.** The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. Surface rupture is the most easily avoided seismic hazard. Fault rupture generally occurs within 50 feet of an active fault line and is limited to the immediate area of the fault zone where the fault breaks along the surface. The main purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act is to prevent construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface of active faults, in order to minimize the hazard of surface rupture of a fault to people and habitable buildings. Before cities and counties can permit development within Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault

Zones, geologic investigations are required to show that the proposed development site is not threatened by surface rupture from future earthquakes.

The project site is not within or near an established Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone and is not in a "Zone of Required Investigation" (CGS 2015). The nearest mapped active fault — that is, a fault that has ruptured during Holocene time (the last 11,700 years) — is the Mojave section of the San Andreas Fault approximately 14.4 miles to the southwest (JBI 2019). Due to the distance to the active fault, the potential for surface rupture of a fault onsite is considered very low. Therefore, project development would not subject people or structures to hazards arising from surface rupture of a known active fault. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The most significant geologic hazard to the design life of the Project is the potential for moderate to strong ground shaking resulting from earthquakes generated on the faults in seismically active southern California. As with other areas in southern California, it is anticipated that the project site will likely be subject to strong ground shaking due to earthquakes on nearby faults. As noted above, the Mojave section of the San Andreas Fault approximately 14.4 miles to the southwest. This fault, as well as others in the region, are considered capable of producing strong shaking at the project site, thereby exposing people or structures on the site to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death. The intensity of ground shaking on the project site would depend on the magnitude of the earthquake, distance to the epicenter, and the geology of the area between the epicenter and the project site.

However, the project site is not at a greater risk of seismic activity or impacts than other sites in southern California. Seismic shaking is a risk throughout southern California. Additionally, the state regulates development in California through a variety of tools that reduce hazards from earthquakes and other geologic hazards. The California Building Code (CBC; California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2) — adopted by reference in Article 3 (Building Code), Chapter 5 (Building and Fire Regulations), Title 16 (Development Code) of the Victorville Municipal Code — contains provisions to safeguard against major structural failures or loss of life caused by earthquakes or other geologic hazards. The CBC contains provisions for earthquake safety based on factors including occupancy type, the types of soil and rock onsite, and the strength of ground motion with specified probability of occurring at the site. Project development would be required to adhere to the provisions of the CBC, which are enforced by the City's Building Division during the building plan check and development review process. Compliance with the requirements of the CBC for structural safety during a seismic event would reduce hazards from strong seismic ground shaking.

Furthermore, incorporation of the recommended design parameters from the preliminary soils investigation prepared for the Project site (see Appendix E) would also reduce hazards from strong seismic ground shaking. The City would impose the recommended design parameters as a condition of any required planning approval, and compliance would be ensured through the City's building plan check and development review process.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

In summary, compliance with the provisions of the CBC and implementation of the recommended design parameters outlined in the preliminary soils investigation would reduce impacts resulting from strong seismic ground shaking. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Liquefaction is a phenomenon that occurs when soil undergoes a transformation from a solid state to a liquified condition. It refers to loose, saturated sand or silt deposits that behave as a liquid and lose their load-supporting capability when strongly shaken. Loose granular soils and silts that are saturated by relatively shallow groundwater are susceptible to liquefaction. When subjected to seismic ground shaking, affected soils los strength during liquefaction and foundation failure can occur.

As stated in the preliminary soils investigation prepared for the Project (see Appendix E), groundwater was not encountered in any of the boring locations onsite. The historic ground surface elevation of the project site ranges from approximately 450 to 455 feet above the water surface elevation of the region. Therefore, it was concluded that the potential for seismically-induced liquefaction is low.

Furthermore, project site grading, design, and construction would conform with the recommended design parameters of the preliminary soils investigation. For example, the upper three feet of soil would be overexcavated and replaced as engineered fill. The City would impose the recommended design parameters as a condition of any required planning approval, and compliance would be ensured through the City's building plan check and development review process.

**iv) Landslides?**

**No Impact.** Landslides are the downslope movement of geologic materials. Slope failures in the form of landslides are common during strong seismic shaking in areas of steep hills. Landslides are not expected to occur at the project site, since the site and its surroundings are relatively flat and not within a landslide hazard area as identified by the California Geologic Survey (CGS 2015), which are areas having potential for seismic slope instability. Additionally, per Figure S-3 (Slope Hazards) of the Victorville General Plan Safety Element, the project site is not in an area susceptible to slope hazards. Therefore, geologic hazards associated with landslides are not anticipated at the site. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Erosion is the movement of rock and soil from place to place and is a natural process. Common agents of erosion in the project region include wind and flowing water. Significant erosion typically occurs on steep slopes where stormwater and high winds can carry topsoil down hillsides. Erosion can be increased greatly by earthmoving activities if erosion-control measures are not used. Following is a discussion of the potential erosion impacts resulting from the Project's construction and operational phases.

### Construction Phase

Project development would involve excavation, grading, and construction activities that would disturb soil and leave exposed soil on the ground surface. Common means of soil erosion from construction sites include water, wind, and being tracked offsite by vehicles. These activities could result in soil erosion.

However, development of the project site is subject to local, regional, and state codes and requirements for erosion control and grading during construction. For example, pursuant to Section 10.30.210 (Erosion and Sediment Control Plan ["ESCP"]) of the Victorville Municipal Code, in order to receive a grading or building permit from the City, all applicants for projects involving construction activities (regardless of size) are required to submit an erosion and sediment control plan to the City for review and approval. Additionally, Project development is required to comply with standards of MDAQMD's Rule 403.2 (Fugitive Dust Control for the Mojave Desert Planning Area).

Furthermore, the Construction General Permit (CGP) issued by the State Water Resources Control Board, effective July 17, 2012, regulates construction activities to minimize water pollution, including sediment risk from construction activities to receiving waters. Project development would be subject to the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting regulations, including the development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which is further discussed in Section 3.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*. The Project's construction contractor would be required to prepare and implement a SWPPP and associated best management practices (BMPs) in compliance with the CGP during grading and construction. Types of BMPs that are incorporated in SWPPPs and would help minimize impacts from soil erosion include:

- **Erosion controls:** Cover and/or bind soil surface, to prevent soil particles from being detached and transported by water or wind. Erosion control BMPs include mulch, soil binders, and mats.
- **Sediment controls:** Filter out soil particles that have been detached and transported in water. Sediment control BMPs include barriers, and cleaning measures such as street sweeping.
- **Tracking controls:** Tracking control BMPs minimize the tracking of soil offsite by vehicles; for instance, stabilizing construction roadways and entrances/exits.

Adherence to the BMPs in the SWPPP and adherence with local, regional, and state codes and requirements for erosion control and grading during construction would reduce, prevent, or minimize soil erosion from Project-related grading and construction activities. Therefore, soil erosion impacts from Project-related grading and construction activities would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Operation Phase

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site is vacant desert land and mostly consists of bare or exposed soil. The project site is in a developing rural area of the City and is relatively flat with a mild slope across the site, downward to the northeast at an average gradient of less than 1.5 percent. Onsite elevations range from approximately 3,220 to 3,260 feet above mean sea level. No major slopes or bluffs are on or adjacent

to the site. After Project completion, the project site would be developed with institutional uses, parking areas and drive aisles, playfields and hardcourts, and landscape improvements and would not contain exposed soil. The proposed landscaping would be water conserving and have deep root systems that enable soil stabilization and minimize erosion. Upon project completion, the potential for soil erosion or the loss of topsoil would be expected to be extremely low.

Additionally, in accordance with the City's initial requirements for development projects, a preliminary Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) was prepared for the Project (see Appendix F). BMPs specified for the Project in the WQMP, which would minimize sediment pollution of stormwater, include a bioretention facility; common area landscape management; sweeping of streets; and use of efficient irrigation systems and landscape design, water conservation, and smart controllers. BMPs are discussed further in Section 3.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*. Implementation of the BMPs would help ensure that soil erosion would not occur under the Project's operation phase. BMP implementation would be ensured through the City's building plan check and development review process.

Therefore, soil erosion impacts from Project-related operation activities would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Hazards from liquefaction and lateral spreading are addressed above in Section 3.7.a.iii, and landslide hazards are addressed above in Section 3.7.a.iv. As concluded in these sections, no impacts would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Following is a discussion of the potential impacts resulting from other site geologic and soil conditions of the project site.

### Lateral Spreading

Lateral spreading is a phenomenon that occurs in association with liquefaction and includes the movement of non-liquefied soil materials. Due to the low risk of liquefaction on the project site, lateral spreading is not considered to be a hazard to the site. Therefore, impacts associated with lateral spreading would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Subsidence

The major cause of ground subsidence is the excessive withdrawal of groundwater. Soils with high silt or clay content are particularly susceptible to subsidence. As stated in the preliminary soils investigation prepared for the Project (see Appendix E), groundwater was not encountered in any of the boring locations onsite. The historic ground surface elevation of the project site ranges from approximately 450 to 455 feet above the water surface elevation of the region. Additionally, the project site is not mapped in an area of subsidence by the US Geological Survey (USGS 2019). Therefore, impacts associated with subsidence would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Expansive soils shrink or swell as the moisture content decreases or increases; the shrinking or swelling can shift, crack, or break structures built on such soils. The soils underlying the site exhibit very low expansion potential (JBI 2019). Additionally, project site grading, design, and construction would conform with the recommended design parameters of the preliminary soils investigation prepared for the Project site (see Appendix E). The City would impose the recommended design parameters as a condition of any required planning approval, and compliance would be ensured through the City's building plan check and development review process. Therefore, impacts related to expansive soils would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** The Project would require connection to existing sewers main lines and service lines, which are currently available in the surrounding roadways. The Project would not involve the use of septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** Paleontological resources are commonly known as fossils, that is, the recognizable physical remains or evidence of past life forms found on earth in past geological periods — including bones, shells, leaves, tracks, burrows, and impressions. As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site consists of vacant desert land surrounded by a mix of residential use and vacant desert land. With the exception of Olivera Road, a dirt road that forms the northern site boundary, the remainder of the site is undisturbed desert land. Given the undisturbed condition of the project site, the potential exists for development of the Project to impact unidentified paleontological resources that may underly the site.

A cultural and paleontological assessment was conducted for the project site by Cogstone (see Appendix D). The purpose of the assessment was to determine the presence or absence of and potential impact to archaeological and paleontological resources as a result of Project development. As a part of the assessment, Cogstone staff conducted intensive pedestrian survey of the project site — no other subsurface resources or artifacts were encountered onsite.

Additionally, the project site is mapped as young alluvial fan deposits, which are less than 10,000 years old and date to the middle Holocene Epoch portion of the Victorville Fan. The sediments of the Project are assigned a low potential for paleontological resources (Cogstone 2019). Furthermore, based on a records search requested from the Western Science Center, published records, previous Cogstone literature searches, and prior knowledge of monitoring projects in the Victorville-Hesperia area, the nearest confirmed Pleistocene fossils are recorded more than six miles to the east of the project site, along the Mojave River. Pleistocene fossil localities near to the project site have only been recovered from sediments of the ancestral Mojave River.

However, per the Victorville General Plan Environmental Impact Report (General Plan EIR), the entire City is considered to be sensitive regarding paleontological resources due to the existence of recovery sites throughout (General Plan EIR, p. 4-11). Areas of paleontological sensitivity are mapped in General Plan EIR Figure 5.5-5 (Sensitivity Assessment for Paleontological Resources). Per Figure 5.5-5, the project site is in an area considered to be of "low sensitivity" for encountering paleontological resources. The General Plan EIR nonetheless recognizes that most if not all areas of the City may be underlain by geologic formations that may contain significant paleontological resources. Accordingly, the presence of subsurface archaeological resources on the project site remains possible, and these could be affected by Project-related ground-disturbing activities associated with grading and construction at the site.

However, implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would avoid or minimize potential Project impacts to paleontological resources. With implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1, impacts to paleontological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level.

### Mitigation Measures

GEO-1 Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the project applicant shall provide a letter to the City of Victorville Development Department from a qualified paleontologist. The letter shall state that the project applicant has retained such an individual, which shall be selected in consultation with the City, and that the consultant will be on call during all grading and other significant ground-disturbing activities.

In the event that potential paleontological resources are discovered during ground-disturbing activities, all such activity shall cease in the immediate area of the find, and the professional archeological monitor shall have the authority to halt any activities adversely impacting potentially significant paleontological resources until they can be formally evaluated. Suspension of ground disturbances in the vicinity of the discovery shall not be lifted until the paleontological monitor has evaluated the discovery. Work may continue in other areas of the project site and for other project elements while the encountered find is evaluated.

If the resource is classified as a significant paleontological resource, the qualified paleontologist shall make recommendations on the treatment and disposition of the deposits. The paleontologist shall prepare a final report describing all identified and curated resources (if any are found) and submit the report to the City.

## 3.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Scientists have concluded that human activities are contributing to global climate change by adding large amounts of heat-trapping gases, known as greenhouse gases (GHGs), into the atmosphere. The primary source of these GHG is fossil fuel use. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified four major GHGs—water vapor, carbon dioxide ($CO_2$), methane ($CH_4$), and ozone ($O_3$)—that are the likely cause of an increase in global average temperatures observed within the 20th and 21st centuries. Other GHG identified

by the IPCC that contribute to global warming to a lesser extent include nitrous oxide ($N_2O$), sulfur hexafluoride ($SF_6$), hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and chlorofluorocarbons.[7, 8]

This section analyzes the Project's contribution to global climate change impacts in California through an analysis of project-related GHG emissions. Information on manufacture of cement, steel, and other "life cycle" emissions that would occur as a result of Project development are not applicable and are not included in the analysis.[9] Black carbon emissions are also not included in the GHG analysis because CARB does not include this pollutant in the state's AB 32 (Assembly Bill 32; California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006) inventory and treats this short-lived climate pollutant separately (CARB 2017b).[10] A background discussion on the GHG regulatory setting and modeling can be found in Appendix A to this Initial Study.

Would the project:

**a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Global climate change is not confined to a particular project area and is generally accepted as the consequence of global industrialization over the last 200 years. A typical project, even a very large one, does not generate enough greenhouse gas emissions on its own to influence global climate change significantly; hence, the issue of global climate change is, by definition, a cumulative environmental impact.

The Project involves development of a new middle school on the vacant project site. The Project would generate GHG emissions from the vehicle trips (e.g., students, staff, and visitor vehicle trips; delivery and supply trucks; and trips by maintenance and repair crews); energy use, indirectly from purchased electricity use and directly through fuel consumed for building heating; area sources (e.g., equipment used onsite, consumer products, coatings); water/wastewater generation; and solid waste disposal. GHG emissions were calculated for

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7 Water vapor ($H_2O$) is the strongest GHG and the most variable in its phases (vapor, cloud droplets, ice crystals). However, water vapor is not considered a pollutant, but part of the feedback loop rather than a primary cause of change.

8 Black carbon contributes to climate change both directly, by absorbing sunlight, and indirectly, by depositing on snow (making it melt faster) and by interacting with clouds and affecting cloud formation. Black carbon is the most strongly light-absorbing component of PM emitted from burning fuels. Reducing black carbon emissions globally can have immediate economic, climate, and public health benefits. California has been an international leader in reducing emissions of black carbon, with close to 95 percent control expected by 2020 due to existing programs that target reducing PM from diesel engines and burning activities (CARB 2017b). However, state and national GHG inventories do not yet include black carbon due to ongoing work resolving the precise global warming potential of black carbon. Guidance for CEQA documents does not yet include black carbon.

9 Life cycle emissions include indirect emissions associated with materials manufacture. However, these indirect emissions involve numerous parties, each of which is responsible for GHG emissions of their particular activity. The California Resources Agency, in adopting the CEQA Guidelines Amendments on GHG emissions found that lifecycle analyses was not warranted for project-specific CEQA analysis in most situations, for a variety of reasons, including lack of control over some sources, and the possibility of double-counting emissions (see Final Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action, December 2009). Because the amount of materials consumed during the operation or construction of the Pot known, the origin of the raw materials purchased is not known, and manufacturing information for those raw materials are also not known, calculation of life cycle emissions would be speculative. A life-cycle analysis is not warranted (OPR 2008).

10 Particulate matter emissions, which include black carbon, are analyzed in Section 3.3, *Air Quality*. Black carbon emissions have sharply declined due to efforts to reduce on-road and off-road vehicle emissions, especially diesel particulate matter. The State's existing air quality policies will virtually eliminate black carbon emissions from on-road diesel engines within 10 years (CARB 2017b).

construction and operation of the Project. Annual average construction emissions were amortized over 30 years and included in the emissions inventory to account for one-time GHG emissions from the Project's construction phase. Project-related GHG emissions are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4 Project-Related GHG Emissions**

| Source | lbs/day[1] | tons/year |
|---|---|---|
| **Construction Phase** | | |
| **Total** | 9,262 | 333 |
| **MDAQMD's Threshold** | 548,000 | 100,000 |
| **Exceeds Threshold?** | No | No |
| **Operational Phase** | | |
| Area | <1 | <1 |
| Energy | 82 | 72 |
| Mobile | 3,923 | 425 |
| Waste | N/A | 24 |
| Water | N/A | 8 |
| Amortized Construction Emissions[2] | N/A | 11 |
| **Total Emissions** | 4,006 | 540 |
| **MDAQMD's Threshold** | 548,000 | 100,000 |
| **Exceeds Threshold?** | No | No |

Source: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2.
Note: N/A = Not Applicable.
1. Highest winter or summer emissions are reported.
2. Construction emissions are amortized over a 30-year project lifetime per recommended South Coast Air Quality Management District methodology (SCAQMD 2009).

As demonstrated in Table 4, the total Project-related GHG emissions would not exceed MDAQMD's daily and annual GHG thresholds and the Project's cumulative contribution to GHG emissions would be less than significant. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Applicable plans adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions include the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Scoping Plan, the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), and the Victorville Climate Action Plan (CAP). A consistency analysis with these plans is presented below.

## CARB Scoping Plan

CARB's Scoping Plan is California's GHG reduction strategy to achieve the state's GHG emissions reduction target established by Assembly Bill (AB) 32, which is to return to 1990 emission levels by year 2020 (CARB 2008). The CARB Scoping Plan is applicable to state agencies and is not directly applicable to cities/counties and individual projects. Nonetheless, the Scoping Plan has been the primary tool that is used to develop performance-based and efficiency-based CEQA criteria and GHG reduction targets for climate action planning efforts.

Since adoption of the 2008 Scoping Plan, state agencies have adopted programs identified in the plan, and the legislature has passed additional legislation to achieve the GHG reduction targets. Statewide strategies to reduce GHG emissions include the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, California Appliance Energy Efficiency regulations, California Renewable Energy Portfolio standard, changes in the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards, and other early action measures as necessary to ensure the state is on target to achieve the GHG emissions reduction goals of AB 32. Also, new buildings are required to comply with the most current California Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. Projects that apply for permits on or after January 1, 2020 would be subject to the 2019 standards. CARB adopted Final 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update on December 24, 2017 to address the new 2030 interim target to achieve a 40 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2030, established by SB 32 (CARB 2017c).

While measures in the Scoping Plan apply to state agencies and not the Project, the Project's GHG emissions would be reduced from compliance with statewide measures that have been adopted since AB 32 and SB 32 were adopted. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the CARB Scoping Plan and no impact would occur. No mitigation measures are necessary.

### SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

In addition to AB 32, the California legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 375 to connect regional transportation planning to land use decisions made at a local level. SB 375 requires the metropolitan planning organizations to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) in their regional transportation plans to achieve the per capita GHG reduction targets. For the SCAG region, the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) was adopted in April 2016 (SCAG 2016). The RTP/SCS does not require that local general plans, specific plans, or zoning be consistent with it, but provides incentives for consistency for governments and developers.

The Project would provide new facilities for the students of the new middle school campus and implementation of the Project would serve the local population. Serving the local community could contribute in reducing the vehicle miles traveled by providing the community with closer schooling options. Therefore, the Project would not interfere with SCAG's ability to implement the regional strategies outlined in the RTP/SCS. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Victorville Climate Action Plan

Adopted by the City in 2015, the Victorville Climate Action Plan (CAP) provides direction for the reduction of GHG emissions and resource management to best prepare for a changing climate. Additionally, the CAP provides measures to meet the goal of reducing community GHG emissions to a level 29 percent below projected emissions for 2020. To determine consistency with the CAP, the City has developed screening tables as a guide to measuring the reduction of GHG emissions produced by a residential, commercial, or industrial development project. These screening tables provide developers with an option to demonstrate consistency with the CAP without the need for a complete GHG analysis. While most of the policies apply specifically to existing structures or residential, commercial, or industrial development projects, the Project is consistent with a number of goals outlined in the CAP.

- **Energy-3. Green Building Ordinance. Implementation Measure 7.2.1.5.** The Project would be developed to comply with the most current (2016) Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Part 6) and would therefore, be more efficient than 2008 Title 24 standards defined in the CAP.

- **On-Road-1.1: Improve Transit Travel Time and Connectivity.** The Project would be consistent with the On-Road Measure listed under the CAP. While implementation of the Project would result in a greater student capacity overall, this increase in capacity would serve the local population. Serving the local community could contribute in reducing the vehicle miles traveled by providing the local community with closer schooling options.

- **PS-1 GHG Performance Standard for New Development.** The City adopted a GHG performance standard for new development, which requires projects to quantify projected-generated GHG emissions and implement appropriate reduction measures to reduce emissions from 20 to 29 percent below business-as-usual emissions. San Bernardino County adopted a performance standard of 31 percent for projects within the unincorporated county with emissions greater than 3,000 $MTCO_2e$/year. Projects below 3,000 $MTCO_2e$/year would also be required to meet certain performance standards that would reduce GHG emissions. GHG emissions from the Project would not exceed 3,000 $MTCO_2e$/year. As mentioned in Section 1.7.8, *Green Building Standards*, the Project would be designed using green building practices, including the most current statewide Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen. Other green project features include bicycle parking, designating parking for clean air vehicles, and facilitating electric vehicle charging infrastructure to promote the reduction of fossil fuel consumption; thereby, reducing GHG emissions. Further GHG emissions reduction may be observed through light pollution reduction measures, water conserving plumbing fixtures and fittings, construction waste reduction, disposal, and recycling, and pollution control from finishing material. The Project would meet the required performance standards for new development projects in the CAP.

Based on the preceding, the Project would not interfere with City's ability to implement the measures and goals of the CAP. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The term "hazardous material" can be defined in different ways. For purposes of this environmental document, the definition of "hazardous material" is the one outlined in the California Health and Safety Code, Section 25501:

> Hazardous materials that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, pose a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. Hazardous materials

> include, but are not limited to, hazardous substances, hazardous waste, and any material that a handler or the unified program agency has a reasonable basis for believing that it would be injurious to the health and safety of persons or harmful to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment.

"Hazardous waste" is a subset of hazardous materials, and the definition is essentially the same as in the California Health and Safety Code, Section 25117, and in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 66261.2:

> Hazardous wastes are those that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may either cause, or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed.

Hazardous materials can be categorized as hazardous nonradioactive chemical materials, radioactive materials, and biohazardous materials (infectious agents such as microorganisms, bacteria, molds, parasites, viruses, and medical waste).

Exposure of the public or the environment to hazardous materials could occur through but not limited to the following means: improper handling or use of hazardous materials or waste, particularly by untrained personnel; transportation accident; environmentally unsound disposal methods; and/or fire, explosion, or other emergencies. The severity of potential effects varies with the activity conducted, the concentration and type of hazardous material or wastes present, and the proximity of sensitive receptors.

Following is a discussion of the Project's potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine use, storage, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials during the operational and construction phases.

### Project Operation

Project activities would not involve the use of unusually hazardous materials that could impact surrounding land uses. Project operation would involve the use of small amounts of hazardous materials, such as cleansers, paints, degreasers, adhesive, sealers, fertilizers, and pesticides for cleaning and maintenance purposes. There would be no storage of hazardous waste on the campus. The type and quantity of hazardous waste that would be generated by the Project would also not require California Code of Regulations, Title 22 compliance, which is related to childcare center regulations. Additionally, school facilities are not associated with uses that use, generate, store, or transport large quantities of hazardous materials—such uses generally include manufacturing, industrial, medical (e.g., hospital), and other similar uses.

Furthermore, the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials would be governed by existing regulations of several agencies, including the US Environmental Protection Agency, US Department of Transportation, California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, San Bernardino County Division of

Environmental Health Services (DEHS), and San Bernardino County Fire Department (SBCFD).[11] Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts. The Project would also be operated with strict adherence to all emergency response plan requirements set forth by DEHS and SBCFD.

Therefore, substantial hazards to the public or the environment arising from the routine use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials during long-term operation of the Project would not occur. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Project Construction

Project-related construction activities would involve the use of larger amounts of hazardous materials than would Project operation. Construction activities would involve use of hazardous materials including cleansers and degreasers; fluids used in routine maintenance and operation of construction equipment, such as oil and lubricants; fertilizers; pesticides; and architectural coatings including paints. However, the materials used would not be in such quantities or stored in such a manner as to pose a significant safety hazard. These activities would also be short term or one time in nature and would cease upon completion of the Project's construction phase. Project construction workers would also be trained in safe handling and hazardous materials use.

Additionally, as with Project operation, the use, storage, transport, and disposal of construction-related hazardous materials would be required to conform to existing laws and regulations. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts. For example, all spills or leakage of petroleum products during construction activities are required to be immediately contained, the hazardous material identified, and the material remediated in compliance with applicable state and local regulations for the cleanup and disposal of that contaminant. All contaminated waste would be required to be collected and disposed of at an appropriately licensed disposal or treatment facility.

Project construction would also involve the excavation and transport of onsite soils. However, no records were found in reference to historical usage or handling of any hazardous substances on the project site (Cogstone 2019). Furthermore, strict adherence to all emergency response plan requirements set forth by DEHS and SBCFD would be required through the duration of the Project construction phase.

Based on the preceding, hazards to the public or the environment arising from the routine use of hazardous materials during Project construction would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

[11] The Hazardous Materials Division of the San Bernardino County Fire Department is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for most of San Bernardino County including the City of Victorville. The CUPA administers and makes consistent enforcement of several state and federal regulations governing hazardous materials and hazardous waste.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Following is a discussion of the potential hazards impacts that could arise through the accidental release of hazardous materials from the Project's construction and operational phases.

### Hazardous Materials Associated with Project Construction and Operation

See response to Section 3.9.a, above. As concluded in this section, hazards to the public or the environment arising from the routine use of hazardous materials during Project operation and construction phases would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary. Additionally, the Project consists of the development of a school facility, which would not generate air toxics requiring an SCAMQD permit.

### Hazardous Materials Associated with Project Site Conditions

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site is vacant desert land and void of any buildings, structures, or improvements. As noted above, no records were found in reference to historical usage or handling of any hazardous substances on the project site (Cogstone 2019). None of the site materials to be removed (e.g., dirt, landscaping) during the construction phase are associated with or contain hazardous materials.

Additionally, it is unlikely that Project operation would cause the release of hazardous materials into the environment. However, while highly unlikely due to the proposed use, in the event of a hazardous materials spill of greater amount or toxicity than onsite personnel could safely contain and clean up, assistance would be requested from the Victorville Fire Department fire and emergency personnel at Fire Station 313.

Therefore, it is unlikely that construction or operation of the Project would cause the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** There are no schools within one-quarter mile of the project site. The closest school to the site is Vista Verde Elementary School, approximately one-half mile to the northeast (see Figure 3). Additionally, as demonstrated above in Sections 3.9.a and 3.9.b, the Project does not include elements or aspects that would create or otherwise result in hazardous emissions. Furthermore, the transport of any hazardous materials during the Project's construction phase would generally occur along Mesa View Drive, Palmdale Road, Bear Valley Road, and U.S. Route 395. The transport of such materials would not occur along or around the streets that surround the school site. Therefore, no impact would occur and no migration measures are necessary.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

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

**No Impact.** California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the compiling of lists of the following types of hazardous materials sites: hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action; hazardous waste discharges for which the State Water Quality Control Board has issued certain types of orders; public drinking water wells containing detectable levels of organic contaminants; underground storage tanks with reported unauthorized releases; and solid waste disposal facilities from which hazardous waste has migrated. The following databases were reviewed for hazardous material site listings onsite or within 0.25 mile of the project site:

- GeoTracker, State Water Resources Control Board
- EnviroStor, Department of Toxic Substances Control
- EnviroMapper, US Environmental Protection Agency
- EJScreen, US Environmental Protection Agency
- Solid Waste Information System, California Department of Resource Recovery and Recycling

No hazardous materials sites were listed on the project site or within 0.25 mile of the project site. Therefore, no impact to the public or to the environment would occur as a result of the Project and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** The nearest public-use airport to the project site is Palmdale Regional Airport approximately 39 miles to the northwest. The Palmdale Airport Influence Area, adopted by the County of Los Angeles in May 2003, sets forth safety zones where land uses are regulated to minimize air crash hazards to people on the ground. The project site is well outside of the airport's safety zones (LACALUC 2003). Therefore, Project development would not result in an airport-related hazard for residents or workers on or near the project site. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** The Emergency Planning Section (Section) of the Victorville General Plan Safety Element covers emergency planning within the City for natural or man-made disasters. The Section consist of three main components: 1) hazard identification and risk assessment; (2) hazard prevention and abatement; and (3) emergency response and action. The City of Victorville Fire Department (VFD) responds to and manages hazardous material incidents in the City. Further, The San Bernardino County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) provides additional emergency planning and preparedness for the City. All of these components are built into the City's emergency response and evacuation plan.

The Project involves the construction of a school and would have no impact on emergency response or evacuation plans. During the construction and operation phases, the Project would not interfere with any of the daily operations of the VFD or Victorville Police Department (VPD), which support emergency planning and response efforts of Victorville. All construction activities would be required to be performed per the City's, VFD' and VPD's standards and regulations.

The Project would also be required to provide the necessary on- and offsite access and circulation for emergency vehicles and services during the construction and operation phases. Additionally, the Project does not propose or require permanent alteration of adjacent or surrounding vehicle circulation routes. Nor does the Project propose or require facilities or operations that would interfere with the City's emergency response or evacuation plan.

Furthermore, the Project would be required to go through the City's development review and permitting process and would be required to incorporate all applicable design and safety standards and regulations in the CBC and City's Fire Code (Chapter 8.08 of the Victorville Municipal Code) to ensure that Project development does not interfere with the provision of local emergency services (i.e., provision of adequate access roads to accommodate emergency response vehicles, adequate numbers/locations of fire hydrants, etc.).

Based on the preceding, implementation of the Project (both the construction and operational phases) would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with emergency response or evacuation plans. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** A wildland fire hazard area is typically characterized by areas with limited access, rugged terrain, limited water supply, and combustible vegetation. As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site is in an urbanizing area of the City and is surrounded by of residential uses and vacant desert land. The project site has good access and is served by adequate water infrastructure. There is no combustible wildland vegetation on or near the site. The site is also not in or next to a Fire Hazard Severity Zone mapped by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (CALFIRE 2008). Therefore, Project development would not introduce people or structures to substantial hazards from wildland fires. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical studies, included as Appendices F and G to this Initial Study:

- Water Quality Management Plan, Kolibrien, October 2019. (Appendix F)
- Preliminary Drainage Report, Kolibrien, September 2019. (Appendix G)

# 3. Environmental Analysis

Would the project:

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The City, including the project site, is located in the Mojave River Watershed. The Mojave River, which is east of the project site, is approximately 110 miles long and flows throughout the Mojave Desert and eastern San Bernardino Mountains of San Bernardino County. The Mojave River is the primary geographic and hydrologic feature of the Mojave River Watershed, which covers approximately 4,500 square miles (MRWG 2019).

Water quality in Victorville is regulated by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and its Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan), which contains water quality standards and identifies beneficial uses (wildlife habitat, agricultural supply, fishing, etc.) for receiving waters along with water quality criteria and standards necessary to support these uses consistent with federal and state water quality laws. The downstream receiving waters of the project site include one a City MS4 (small municipal separate storm sewer systems), Governor Edmund G. Brown California Aqueduct, Mojave River, and Silverwood Lake. As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the approximately nine-acre (8.9 acres) project site consists of vacant desert land. Under existing conditions, the project site has zero percent impervious surface area. The site is relatively flat with gentle slopes northerly and easterly. Surface runoff onsite sheet flows from the southwest corner to the northeast corner of the site. There are no drainage improvements onsite under existing conditions; there are also no water quality devices/features onsite to provide any treatment for "first flush" generated onsite.[12] Further, there are no curb-and-gutter improvements along the eastern portion of Mesa View Drive that abuts the western project site boundary.

Impacts to water quality from receiving waters generally range over three different phases of a development project:

- During the earthwork and construction phase, when the potential for erosion, siltation, and sedimentation would be the greatest.
- Following construction and before the establishment of ground cover, when the erosion potential may remain relatively high.
- Following project completion, when impacts related to sedimentation would decrease markedly, but those associated with urban runoff would increase.

Following is a discussion of the potential water quality impacts resulting from urban runoff that would be generated during the construction and operational phases of the Project.

[12] First flush is the initial surface runoff of a rainstorm. During this phase, water pollution entering storm drains in areas with high proportions of impervious surfaces is typically more concentrated compared to the remainder of the storm.

## Project Construction

Construction-related runoff pollutants are typically generated from waste and hazardous materials handling or storage areas, outdoor work areas, material storage areas, and general maintenance areas (e.g., vehicle or equipment fueling and maintenance, including washing). The Project's construction phase may cause deterioration in the quality of downstream receiving waters if construction-related sediments or pollutants wash into the existing storm drain system and facilities in the area.

Construction-related activities that are primarily responsible for sediment releases are related to exposing previously stabilized soils to potential mobilization by rainfall/runoff and wind. Such activities include removing vegetation from the site, grading, and trenching for infrastructure improvements. Environmental factors that affect erosion include topographic, soil, wind, and rainfall characteristics. Non-sediment-related pollutants that are also of concern during construction relate to non-stormwater flows and generally include construction materials (e.g., paint and stucco); chemicals, liquid products, and petroleum products used in building construction or the maintenance of heavy equipment; and concrete and related cutting or curing residues. Construction-related activities of the Project would generate pollutants that could adversely affect the water quality of downstream receiving waters if appropriate and effective stormwater and non-stormwater management measures are not used to keep pollutants out of and remove pollutants from urban runoff.

Construction projects of one acre or more are regulated under the statewide Construction General Permit (CGP), Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ, issued by the State Water Resources Control Board in 2012. Projects obtain coverage by developing and implementing a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) estimating sediment risk from construction activities to receiving waters and specifying best management practices (BMPs) that would be implemented as a part of the project to minimize pollution of stormwater. Categories of BMPs used in SWPPPs are described in Table 5.

**Table 5 Construction Best Management Practices**

| Category | Purpose | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Erosion Controls and Wind Erosion Controls | Cover and/or bind soil surface, to prevent soil particles from being detached and transported by water or wind | Mulch, geotextiles, mats, hydroseeding, earth dikes, swales |
| Sediment Controls | Filter out soil particles that have been detached and transported in water. | Barriers such as straw bales, sandbags, fiber rolls, and gravel bag berms; desilting basin; cleaning measures such as street sweeping |
| Tracking Controls | Minimize the tracking of soil offsite by vehicles | Stabilized construction roadways and construction entrances/exits; entrance/outlet tire wash. |
| Non-Storm Water Management Controls | Prohibit discharge of materials other than stormwater, such as discharges from the cleaning, maintenance, and fueling of vehicles and equipment. Conduct various construction operations, including paving, grinding, and concrete curing and finishing, in ways that minimize non-stormwater discharges and contamination of any such discharges. | BMPs specifying methods for: paving and grinding operations; cleaning, fueling, and maintenance of vehicles and equipment; concrete curing; concrete finishing. |
| Waste Management and Controls (i.e., good housekeeping practices) | Management of materials and wastes to avoid contamination of stormwater. | Spill prevention and control, stockpile management, and management of solid wastes and hazardous wastes. |

Source: CASQA 2015.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

The Project's construction contractor would be required to prepare and implement an SWPPP and associated BMPs in compliance with the CGP during grading and construction. The SWPPP would specify BMPs, such as those outlined in Table 5, that the construction contractor would implement to protect water quality by eliminating and/or minimizing stormwater pollution prior to and during grading and construction and show the placement of those BMPs. Additional construction BMPs that would be incorporated into the Project's SWPPP and implemented during the construction phase include but are not limited to:

- Perimeter control with silt fences and perimeter sandbags and/or gravel bags.
- Stabilized construction exit with rumble strip(s)/plate(s).
- Installation of storm drain inlet protection on affected onsite drains and within roadways.
- Installation of silt fences around stockpile and covering of stockpiles.
- Use of secondary containment around barrels, containers and storage materials that may impact water quality.
- Stabilization of disturbed areas where construction ceases for a determined period of time (e.g., one week) with erosion controls.
- Installation of temporary sanitary facilities and dumpsters.

Furthermore, pursuant to Section 10.30.210 (Erosion and Sediment Control Plan ["ESCP"]) of the Victorville Municipal Code, in order to receive a grading or building permit from the City, all applicants for projects involving construction activities (regardless of size) are required to submit an erosion and sediment control plan (ESCP) to the City for review and approval. The ESCP applies to construction activity projects covered by the CGP; however, an applicant may submit an SWPPP required under the CGP to the City in lieu of the ESCP, provided the SWPPP meets the City's ESCP requirements.

Adherence to the BMPs in the SWPPP or ESCP would reduce, prevent, minimize, and/or treat pollutants and prevent degradation of downstream receiving waters. BMPs identified in the SWPPP would reduce or avoid contamination of stormwater with sediment and other pollutants such as trash and debris; oil, grease, fuels, and other toxic chemicals; paint, concrete, asphalt, bituminous[13] materials, etc.; and nutrients.

Based on the preceding, water quality and waste-discharge impacts from Project's grading and construction activities would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Project Operation

Operational-related activities of the Project (e.g., runoff from parking areas, solid waste storage areas, and landscaped areas) would generate pollutants that could adversely affect the water quality of downstream

[13] Bituminous = resembling or containing bitumen; bitumen = any of various viscous or solid impure mixtures of hydrocarbons that occur naturally in asphalt, tar, mineral waxes, etc.; used as a road surfacing and roofing material.

receiving waters if effective measures are not used to keep pollutants out of and remove pollutants from urban runoff.

The County of San Bernardino, Town of Apple Valley, and cities of Victorville and Hesperia have been issued an MS4[14] Phase II Stormwater Permit by the State Water Resources Control Board, covering the urbanized portion of the Mojave River Watershed (Permit No. CAS000004, Order No. 2013-0001-DWQ). These agencies have collectively prepared the Mojave River Watershed Group Stormwater Management Plan, which describes control measures for protecting area water quality.

Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater management and land development strategy that combines a hydrologically functional site design with pollution prevention measures to compensate for land development impacts on hydrology and water quality. LID techniques mimic the site predevelopment hydrology by using site design techniques that store, infiltrate, evapotranspire, biofilter, or detain runoff close to its source. Source control Best Management Practices (BMPs) reduce the potential for pollutants to enter runoff and are classified in two categories—structural and nonstructural. Structural source control BMPs have a physical or structural component, such as inlet trash racks, trash bin covers, and an efficient irrigation system, to prevent pollutants from contacting stormwater runoff. Nonstructural source control BMPs are procedures or practices used in project operation, such as stormwater training or trash management and litter control practices.

The project applicant would be required to comply with the requirements set forth in the MS4 Phase II Stormwater Permit and Mojave River Watershed Group Stormwater Management Plan. As a part of the Project and per the City's initial requirements for development projects, the project applicant prepared a preliminary Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) for City review (see Appendix F). The preliminary WQMP specifies BMPs that would be implemented for the Project to minimize water pollution from the project site during the operation phase. BMPs identified in the preliminary WQMP include source control measures, site design measures, and stormwater quality control measures. A detailed list of the BMPs and discussion of how they were selected based on their effectiveness to address and mitigate the Project's pollutants of concern are provided in the preliminary WQMP.

Under proposed conditions and upon Project completion, the project site would have 3.46 acres of impervious surface area (e.g., buildings, paving), which is approximately 39 percent of the overall site. As shown in Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*, only the western parcel of the project site would be developed with the proposed school campus — the eastern parcel would remain vacant desert land. Site runoff from the western parcel would be conveyed similar to existing conditions, continuing to flow northeasterly via new onsite drainage collection, conveyance, and treatment systems. Site development would include BMPs in the form of four bioretention basins — all site drainage would be routed to these basins either through surface flow or through the proposed drainage improvements. The basins would provide bio-filtration treatment and retain and infiltrate the required volumes, and any flows that exceed the basin capacity would overflow through spillways to the northeast corner of the site where flow from the site is discharged in the existing condition. The proposed drainage system improvements would be designed and constructed in accordance with City requirements and would require City approval.

[14] MS4 = small municipal separate storm sewer systems

# 3. Environmental Analysis

Additionally, drought tolerant landscaping, per the landscape plans, and minimization of non-stormwater site runoff through efficient irrigation would be implemented. Furthermore, in accordance with the MS4 Phase II Stormwater Permit, all trash enclosures would also be provided with solid roofs/covers that serve to project the refuse area from inclement weather.

The information provided in the preliminary WQMP provides sufficient detail to identify the major LID BMPs and other anticipated water quality BMPs and features that would be implemented as a part of the Project and would prevent impacts to the quality of receiving waters. The combination of BMPs identified in the preliminary WQMP addresses all identified pollutants of the Project. Implementation of the BMPs would be ensured through the City's development review and building plan check process.

Additionally, pursuant to the provisions of Victorville Municipal Code Section 10.30.220 (Post-Construction Requirements for Specified Projects; WQMP), the project applicant would be required to develop, submit to the City for approval, and implement a final WQMP. Submittal of the final WQMP would be required prior to issuance of, or as a condition of, a subdivision map, site plan, grading or building permit, development or improvement plan or other similar City-issued permit (Victorville Municipal Code Section 10.30.220 [b]). The final WQMP is required to demonstrate to the City's satisfaction that proposed BMPs and LID features, numeric design criteria, or design elements meet the requirements of the municipal NPDES permit and the Victorville Municipal Code. Demonstrated compliance with the final City-approved WQMP would be a condition of any required planning approval.

Furthermore, project development would be required to comply with the standards of Victorville Municipal Code Chapter 10.30 (Stormwater and Urban Runoff Management and Discharge Control), which prohibits the discharge of specific pollutants into the storm water; regulates connections to the storm drain system; and requires development projects to implement permanent BMPs on individual sites to reduce pollutants in the stormwater.

Based on the preceding, no significant water quality and waste-discharge impacts from project operation activities would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site lies in the Mojave River Groundwater Basin. The Victorville Water District (VWD) would provide potable water to the project site. VWD has 36 active groundwater wells within its distribution system that are actively used to pump groundwater from the Mojave River Groundwater Basin, which encompasses 1,400 square miles and has an estimated total water storage capacity of nearly five million acre-feet (WSC 2016).

VWD estimates that water demands in its service area for normal years would increase from approximately 27,156 acre-feet per year (afy) in 2020 to approximately 37,858 afy in 2040. VWD forecasts that it will have sufficient water supplies to meet water demands in its service area for normal, single-dry, and multiple dry years. Projected populations in VWD's service area were based on projections obtained from the California Department of Finance (DOF). DOF data incorporates demographic trends, existing land use, and general

plan land use policies. Therefore, Project development would have been accounted for in the City's estimates of future water demands. Project water demands would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies.

Additionally, as stated in the preliminary soils investigation prepared for the Project (see Appendix E), groundwater was not encountered in any of the boring locations onsite. The historic ground surface elevation of the project site ranges from approximately 450 to 455 feet above the water surface elevation of the region. No excavation onsite would intersect the groundwater at these levels. Furthermore, the project site is not in or near a groundwater recharge area/facility, nor does it represent a source of groundwater recharge.

Therefore, the Project would not substantially interfere with groundwater supplies or recharge. Impacts to groundwater supplies would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Erosion and siltation impacts potentially resulting from alteration of the drainage pattern due to the Project would, for the most part, occur during the project's construction phase, which would include site preparation and grading activities. Environmental factors that affect erosion include topographic, soil, wind, and rainfall characteristics. Siltation is most often caused by soil erosion or sediment spill. Following is a discussion of the potential erosion and siltation impacts that could occur during the construction and operational phases of the Project.

### Project Construction

As discussed above in Section 3.10.a, the project construction contractor would be required to prepare and implement an SWPPP pursuant to the CGP during grading and construction. The SWPPP would specify erosion- and sediment-control BMPs that the project construction contractor would implement prior to and during grading and construction to minimize erosion and siltation impacts on- and offsite. Erosion-control BMPs are designed to prevent erosion, whereas sediment controls are designed to trap or filter sediment once it has been mobilized. BMPs that would be implemented during the Project's construction phase are discussed in detail in Section 3.10.a, above. For example, BMPs would include but are not limited to installation of perimeter silt fences; installation of silt fences around stockpile and covering of stockpiles; and stabilization of disturbed areas where construction ceases for a determined period of time (e.g., one week) with erosion controls.

Adherence to the BMPs in the SWPPP would reduce, prevent, or minimize soil erosion from project-related grading and construction activities. The construction-phase BMPs would also ensure effective control of not only sediment discharge, but also of pollutants associated with sediments (e.g., nutrients, heavy metals, and certain pesticides).

Therefore, project-related construction activities would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite. Construction-related impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Project Operation

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the project site consists of vacant desert land — there are no impervious areas onsite. Desert vegetation onsite consists mostly of creosote bush scrub and some scattered Joshua trees.

Project development would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site area and would not alter the course of a stream or a river. Under proposed conditions and upon Project completion, the project site would have 3.46 acres of impervious surface area (e.g., buildings, paving), which is approximately 39 percent of the overall site. As shown in Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*, only the western parcel of the project site would be developed with the proposed school campus — the eastern parcel would remain vacant desert land. Site runoff from the western parcel would be conveyed similar to existing conditions, continuing to flow northeasterly via new onsite drainage collection, conveyance, and treatment systems. Upon Project development, there would be no bare or disturbed soil onsite in the western parcel at project completion that would be vulnerable to erosion or siltation. All areas would either include buildings or be paved or landscaped.

Additionally, Project development would abide by the requirements of the Phase II MS4 Stormwater Permit. For example, project design and operation would include implementation of BMPs specified in the WQMP, which would minimize runoff and soil erosion and siltation into stormwater and thus minimize sedimentation downstream.

Furthermore, project development would be required to comply with the standards of Victorville Municipal Code Chapter 10.30 (Stormwater and Urban Runoff Management and Discharge Control), which prohibits the discharge of specific pollutants into the storm water; regulates connections to the storm drain system; and requires development projects to implement permanent BMPs on individual sites to reduce pollutants in the stormwater.

Therefore, development of the Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite. Operation-related impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the project site consists of vacant desert land. Under existing conditions, the project site has zero percent impervious surface area. The site is relatively flat with gentle slopes northerly and easterly. Surface runoff onsite sheet flows from the southwest corner to the northeast corner of the site. There are

no drainage improvements onsite under existing conditions. Additionally, there are no curb-and-gutter improvements along the eastern portion of Mesa View Drive that abuts the western project site boundary.

Under proposed conditions and upon Project completion, the project site would have 3.46 acres of impervious surface area (e.g., buildings, paving), which is approximately 39 percent of the overall site. As shown in Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*, only the western parcel of the project site would be developed with the proposed school campus — the eastern parcel would remain vacant desert land. Site runoff from the western parcel would be conveyed similar to existing conditions, continuing to flow northeasterly via new onsite drainage collection, conveyance, and treatment systems. Site development would include four bioretention basins — all site drainage would be routed to these basins either through surface flow or through the proposed drainage improvements.

The existing and proposed peak flows from the project site for a 10- and 100-year storm event are shown in Table 6. As shown in the table, peak flows under the proposed condition would not exceed the peak flows under existing conditions. In fact, flows would be greatly reduced over existing conditions. Peak flows would be mitigated by the volume being infiltrated by the bioretention basins and also by the retention time in the basins before runoff overflows. Any flows that exceed the basin capacity would overflow through spillways to the northeast corner of the site where flow from the site is discharged under existing condition.

**Table 6 Existing and Proposed Peak Flows**

| Existing Conditions | | Proposed Conditions | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 Year Flow (CFS) | 100 Year Flow (CFS) | 10 Year Flow (CFS) | 100 Year Flow (CFS) |
| 2.69 | 7.01 | 0 | 0.79 |

Source: Kolibrien 2019.
CFS = Cubic Feet per Second

Additionally, pursuant to the provisions of Victorville Municipal Code Section 10.30.220 (Post-Construction Requirements for Specified Projects; WQMP), the project applicant would be required to develop, submit to the City for approval, and implement a final WQMP. Submittal of the final WQMP would be required prior to issuance of, or as a condition of, a subdivision map, site plan, grading or building permit, development or improvement plan or other similar City-issued permit (Victorville Municipal Code Section 10.30.220 [b]). The final WQMP is required to demonstrate to the City's satisfaction that proposed BMPs and LID features, numeric design criteria, or design elements meet the requirements of the municipal NPDES permit and the Victorville Municipal Code. Demonstrated compliance with the final City-approved WQMP would be a condition of any required planning approval.

Based on the preceding, post development runoff would be adequately handled by the Project's drainage system and would not exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the project site or area in a manner that would result in flooding on- or offsite. Therefore, project impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The following describes the Project's potential impacts related to storm drainage systems and runoff.

### Capacity of Stormwater Drainage Systems

Project impacts on the capacity of storm drainage systems would be less than significant, as substantiated in Section 3.10.c.ii, above. No mitigation measures are necessary.

### Polluted Runoff

Project stormwater pollution impacts would be less than significant, as substantiated in Section 3.10.a, above. No mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** The project site is not in a 100-year flood hazard zone (FEMA 2008) or a dam inundation area. Therefore, no impact to flood flows would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** As noted above, the project is outside of 100-year flood zones mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA 2008). It is also not in a dam inundation area.

A seiche is an oscillating surface wave in a restricted or enclosed body of water, generated by ground motion, usually during an earthquake. Seiches are of concern for water storage facilities, because inundation from a seiche can occur if the wave overflows a containment wall, such as the wall of a reservoir, water storage tank, dam, or other artificial body of water. There are no adjacent or nearby bodies of water that would pose a flood hazard to the site due to a seiche. The Project is not at risk of inundation by seiche.

Tsunamis are a type of earthquake-induced flooding produced by large-scale sudden disturbances of the sea floor. Tsunami waves interact with the shallow sea floor when approaching a landmass, resulting in an increase in wave height and a destructive wave surge into low-lying coastal areas. The Project site is approximately 67 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, the site is outside the tsunami hazard zone and would not be affected by a tsunami.

Based on the preceding, the Project would not release pollutants as the result of floods, tsunami, or seiche. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Water quality in Victorville is regulated by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and its Basin Plan. The basin plan contains water quality standards and identifies

beneficial uses (wildlife habitat, agricultural supply, fishing, etc.) for receiving waters along with water quality criteria and standards necessary to support these uses consistent with federal and state water quality laws. As discussed in Section 3.10.a, above, the Project would not violate any water quality standards and will therefore not obstruct the implementation of the Basin Plan. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Additionally, the project site is in the Mojave Basin. The basin has a Groundwater Management Plan. As discussed in Section 3.10.a and b, above, the Project would not violate any water quality standards and will not decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

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

**No Impact.** The Project involves the development of a new middle school campus on a vacant project site (see Figure 6, *Aerial View with Conceptual Site Plan*). The Project would not introduce a physical barrier that would separate land uses that are not already separated. Connections between residential uses via Mesa View Drive and Peña Road (e.g., between homes north and south of the project site) would remain. Except for new driveways accessing the western portion of the project site, the Project would not physically change or disrupt the neighborhood's street pattern or otherwise impede movement through the neighborhood.

In fact, Project development would improve access and circulation for the surrounding communities. Under existing conditions, the eastern portion of Mesa View Drive that abuts the entire stretch of the western project site boundary is only partially improved (see Figure 4c, *Site Photographs*). As a part of the Project, Mesa View Drive would be widened and improved to its ultimate width in accordance with City standards.

Additionally, while there is established residential surrounding the project site, Project development would not physically divide these communities in any way because the Project would be developed within the confines of the project site and would not introduce roadways or other infrastructure improvements that would bisect or transect the residential communities. Furthermore, the Project would not introduce a new land use that would disrupt existing land use patterns.

Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** The prevailing adopted planning and regulatory documents that govern development and use of the project site are the Victorville General Plan and Development Code. The development and design standards contained in the Victorville Development Code, which implements the Victorville General Plan, constitute the zoning regulations that govern development of the project site. Following is an analysis of the Project's consistency with these adopted land use regulations.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

## General Plan Consistency

The Victorville General Plan land use designation of the project site is Low Density Residential. Development and operation of the new middle school on the project site would not conflict with this designation. As stated in the Victorville General Plan Land Use Element (page LU-14), as the local population continues to grow, new schools will be necessary to accommodate additional students. Therefore, parochial, private, public or charter schools are allowed in areas designated as Low Density Residential via City approval and issuance of a conditional use permit (CUP).

The City also enforces numerous goals, policies, and regulations of the Victorville General Plan related to the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The Project would not affect any existing environmental resources, including but not limited to natural habitat or riparian areas.

Additionally, as shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site is in an urbanizing area of the City and is surrounded by residential uses and vacant desert land. The Project would not represent a change in land use patterns or an inconsistency with adopted land use plans. Furthermore, Project development does not include or require any amendments to the Victorville General Plan.

Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with the Victorville General Plan. No land use impact related to general plan consistency would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## Development Code Consistency

The zoning designation of the project site is Single-Family Residential (R-1). Schools are permitted in this zoning designation through City approval and issuance of a CUP. Pursuant to Article 2 (Conditional Use Permits) of the Victorville Development Code, certain uses, referred to in Article 2 as conditional uses, are declared to possess characteristics that require special review by the Victorville Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator to determine whether or not the use is necessary or desirable and will be properly related to other uses and to transportation and service facilities in the vicinity, and whether or not the use would, under all circumstances of the particular case, affect adversely the health or safety of persons living or working in the vicinity or be materially detrimental to the public welfare.

Through the City's development review process — which includes Victorville Planning Commission review and consideration of the CUP — the City would ensure that approval of the CUP would not conflict with any of the City's applicable land use plan, policies, or regulations that have been adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. In determining the appropriateness of the Project's CUP and pursuant to the provisions of Article 2, the Victorville Planning Commission would review the CUP's conformance with the objectives and requirements of the Victorville Development Code; consistency with the Victorville General Plan and any potential effect to the public health, safety and welfare, and traffic effects; and general compliance with the Victorville Development Code standards.

Additionally, Project development would not require the approval of a development code amendment or zone change; nor would it require a variance or any adjustments from the City's zoning standards, which help ensure that development projects in the City are designed and implemented in a manner that is not detrimental to the

project site or its surroundings. The Project has been designed and would be developed in accordance with all applicable development and design standards of the Victorville Development Code, including those related to building height and setbacks, walls and screening, building and site plan design, landscaping, and parking. Compliance with the applicable development and design standards would be ensured through the City's development review process.

Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with the Victorville Development Code. No land use impact related to development code consistency would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

**a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?**

**No Impact.** Naturally-occurring mineral resources in the City include sand, gravel or stone deposits that are suitable as sources of concrete aggregate, located primarily along the Mojave River. The Victorville General Plan recognizes the potential for occurrence of mineral resources along the Mojave River corridor and designates these areas MRZ-2b (Mineral Resource Zone 2b) — see Figure RE-1 (Victorville Planning Area Mineral Land Classification Map) of the Victorville General Plan Resource Element. The MRZ-2b zone designation represents areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic information indicates that significant resources are present or are inferred. Within Victorville, the only areas designated MRZ-2b occur along the Mojave River corridor. The project site is over seven miles westerly of the Mojave River corridor. The Project does not propose uses or facilities that would be located in or near, or otherwise substantively affect, the Mojave River corridor.

As shown in Figure RE-1 of the Resource Element, the project site is mapped MRZ-3a, indicating that it is in an area that has moderate potential for discovery of mineral deposits of indeterminable significance. As further shown in Figure RE-1, the predominance of Victorville is designated as MRZ-3a. However, the project site consists of vacant desert land (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*) and is not used for mining; no locally important mineral resource recovery sites are on or near the project site.

Additionally, mining on the project site would be incompatible with the surrounding uses, which consists mostly of residential uses and vacant desert land. Mining is also not a permitted use under the site's General Plan Land Use designation of Low Density Residential or zoning designation of Single Family Residential (R-1). Furthermore, the project site does not support and has never supported mineral extraction operations.

Finally, no oil or energy extraction and/or generation activities exist on the project site. A review of California Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources well finder indicates that there are no oil or energy wells located onsite (DOGGR 2019).

Based on the preceding, no impact to mineral resources or mineral resource recovery sites would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** See response to Section 3.11.a, above. As substantiated in this section, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

# 3.13 NOISE

## Environmental Setting

Noise is defined as unwanted sound and is known to have several adverse effects on people, including hearing loss, speech and sleep interference, physiological responses, and annoyance. Based on these known adverse effects of noise, the federal, state, and city governments have established criteria to protect public health and safety and to prevent the disruption of certain human activities, such as classroom instruction, communication, or sleep. Additional information on noise and vibration fundamentals and applicable regulations are contained in Appendix H.

### *Existing Noise Environment*

As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the project site consists of vacant desert land and is surrounded by a mix of residential development and vacant land. To the north and abutting the project is vacant land with single-family residences beyond; to the south and abutting the project site are single-family residences, with vacant land beyond; to the east, across Mesa View Drive are single-family residences and vacant land beyond; and to the west is vacant land. Olivera Road, a dirt road, forms the northern site boundary.

Ambient noise levels in the project area are typical of suburban residential neighborhoods dominated primarily by roadway traffic. Traffic noise modeling using the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) traffic noise prediction model indicates that existing ambient noise levels are up to 56 dBA CNEL within 50 feet of Mesa View Drive (nearest travel lane centerline) and up to 64 dBA CNEL within 50 feet of Luna Road (nearest travel lane centerline) in the project area. Table 9, *Project-Related Traffic Noise Increase,* below, shows existing traffic noise levels along roadway segments in the project study area.

### *Sensitive Receptors*

Certain land uses are particularly sensitive to noise and vibration. These uses include residences, schools, hospital facilities, houses of worship, and open space/recreation areas where quiet environments are necessary for the enjoyment, public health, and safety of the community. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site are single-family homes adjacent to the south. Other single-family homes are across Mesa View Drive to the west, with additional single-family homes further to the north (see Figure 3).

## Applicable Standards

### *State Noise Regulations*

The State of California regulates freeway noise, sets standards for sound transmission, provides occupational noise control criteria, identifies noise standards, and provides guidance for local land use compatibility. State law requires that each county and city adopt a general plan that includes a noise element which is to be prepared according to guidelines adopted by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. The purpose of the noise element is to "limit the exposure of the community to excessive noise levels."

### *City of Victorville Noise Regulations*

The Victorville General Plan Noise Element indicates that new school uses are "Normally Acceptable" in noise environments below 65 dBA CNEL exterior. Residential uses are "Normally Acceptable" in noise environments below 65 dBA CNEL exterior.

Additionally, the City has incorporated stationary noise limits under Chapter 13.01 (Noise Control) of the Victorville Development Code. These limits are summarized by land use type and time of day in Table 7.

**Table 7 City of Victorville Exterior Noise Limits**

| Designated Land Use or Zoning Classification | Time of Day | Exterior Noise Level, dBA |
|---|---|---|
| Residential | 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM | 65 |
| | 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM | 55 |
| Commercial | Anytime | 70 |
| Industrial | Anytime | 75 |

Source: City of Victorville Development Code
Notes: Exterior noise levels may not be exceeded the standards by:

- 5 dBA or more for a cumulative period of more than 30 minutes in any hour ($L_{50}$)
- 10 dBA for a cumulative period of more than 15 minutes in any hour ($L_{25}$)
- 15 dBA for a cumulative period of more than 5 minutes in any hour ($L_8$)
- 20 dBA for a cumulative period of more than 1 minutes in any hour ($L_2$)
- 20 dBA for any period of time ($L_{max}$)

If the ambient noise levels exceed the applicable limit as noted above, the ambient noise levels shall be the standard.

Per Section 13.01.060 of the Victorville Development Code, the following activities are exempt from the noise standards of the code:

- Activities conducted on the grounds of any elementary, intermediate, or secondary school or college.
- Construction activity on private properties that are determined by the director of building and safety to be essential to the completion of a project.

The Victorville Development Code does not establish construction noise level thresholds. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, the Federal Transit Administration threshold of 80 dBA $L_{eq(8hr)}$ is used to assess construction noise impacts (FTA 2018).

# 3. Environmental Analysis

Would the project result in:

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Following is a discussion of the Project's temporary and permanent noise impacts as a result of the Project's construction and operational phases.

## Construction Noise

The total duration for Project construction is anticipated to be approximately seven months. Construction equipment for the Project would include equipment such as scrapers, dozers, loaders, graders, cranes, pavers, rollers, reach lifts and trucks.

Two types of short-term noise impacts could occur during construction: (1) mobile-source noise from transport of workers, material deliveries, and debris and soil haul and (2) stationary-source noise from use of construction equipment.

### *Construction Vehicles*

The transport of workers and materials to and from the construction site would incrementally increase noise levels along site access roadways. Individual construction vehicle pass-bys may create momentary noise levels of up to approximately 85 dBA Lmax at 50 feet from the worker and vendor vehicles. However, these occurrences would generally be infrequent and short-lived. No soil import or export would be required as the site would balance; thereby, minimizing off-site construction vehicle noise. Therefore, noise impacts from construction haul trips would be considered less than significant.

Worker and vendor trips would total a maximum of approximately 157 daily trips during overlapping construction phases. Site access would be through Mesa View Drive. Existing average daily traffic (ADT) on Mesa View Drive is 1,834.[15] This would result in a temporary noise increase of 0.4 dBA CNEL or less, which would not be perceptible. Therefore, construction-vehicle noise impacts would be considered less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Construction Equipment*

Noise generated by onsite construction equipment is based on the type of equipment used, its location relative to sensitive receptors, and the timing and duration of noise-generating activities. Each stage of construction involves different kinds of equipment and has distinct noise characteristics. Noise levels from construction activities are typically dominated by the loudest equipment. The dominant equipment noise source is typically the engine, although work-piece noise (such as dropping of materials) can also be noticeable.

The noise produced at each construction stage is determined by combining the Leq contributions from each piece of equipment used at a given time, while accounting for the ongoing time-variations of noise emissions.

[15] EPD Solutions, 2019. *Desert Trails Preparatory Academy Traffic Impact Analysis*. August.

Heavy equipment, such as a dozer or a loader, can have maximum, short-duration noise levels of up to 85 dBA at 50 feet. However, overall noise emissions vary considerably, depending on the specific activity performed at any given moment. Noise attenuation due to distance, the number and type of equipment, and the load and power requirements to accomplish tasks at each construction phase would result in different noise levels from construction activities at a given receptor. Since noise from construction equipment is intermittent and diminishes at a rate of at least 6 dBA per doubling of distance (conservatively ignoring other attenuation effects from air absorption, ground effects, and shielding effects), the average noise levels at noise-sensitive receptors could vary considerably, because mobile construction equipment would move around the site with different loads and power requirements.

Noise levels from Project-related construction activities were calculated from the simultaneous use of all applicable construction equipment at spatially averaged distances (i.e., from the acoustical center of the general construction site) to the property line of the nearest receptors. Although construction may occur across the entire project area, the area around the center of construction activities best represents the potential average construction-related noise levels at the various sensitive receptors.

The expected construction equipment mix was categorized by construction activity using FHWA's Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM). The associated, aggregate sound levels — grouped by construction activity — are summarized in Table 8. RCNM modeling input and output worksheets are included in Appendix H.

**Table 8 Project-Related Construction Noise dBA $L_{eq}$**

| Construction Activity Phase | Single-family homes 175 feet |
|---|---|
| Site Preparation | 74 |
| Rough Grading | 74 |
| Building Construction | 68 |
| Utility Trenching | 73 |
| Architectural Coating | 63 |
| Fine Grading | 73 |
| Foundation | 74 |
| Asphalt Paving | 68 |
| Finish and Landscaping | 68 |

Notes: Calculations performed with the FHWA's RCNM software are included in Appendix H.

As shown in Table 8, construction-related noise levels would not exceed the 80 dBA $L_{eq}$ threshold at the nearest sensitive receptors (residences to the south). Therefore, construction-equipment noise impacts would be considered less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

## Operational Noise

### *Mobile Noise*

Noise can be divided into three categories: audible, potentially audible, inaudible. "Audible" refers to increases in noise level that are perceptible to humans. Audible increases generally refer to a change of 3 dBA or more since this level has been found to be the threshold of perceptibility in exterior environments. "Potentially audible" refers to a change in noise level between 1 and 3 dBA. Changes in noise level of less than 1 dBA are typically "inaudible" to the humans except under quiet conditions in controlled environments. For the purposes of this analysis, a traffic noise increase impact is considered significant if it would be greater than 3 dBA CNEL and would result in future ambient noise levels that exceed the City's "Normally Acceptable" land use compatibility standards. Residential uses are "Normally Acceptable" in noise environments below 65 dBA CNEL exterior. For cumulative impacts, a traffic noise increase impact is considered significant if it would be greater than 3 dBA CNEL, the project would contribute more than 1 dBA to the cumulative increase, and would result in future ambient noise levels that exceed the City's "Normally Acceptable" land use compatibility standards.

The daily traffic volumes along roadways along with the FHWA traffic noise prediction model were used to determine the noise increase. A site visit by PlaceWorks staff found very low medium- and heavy-duty truck volumes along Mesa View Drive and Luna Road. This analysis compares the existing plus project traffic volumes to the existing traffic volumes to estimate the increase due to the Project. The same method is used in determining the cumulative traffic noise level increase (project traffic plus future increase in overall traffic). Table 9 shows the project-related and cumulative traffic noise increases estimated for roadway segments in the project study area.

**Table 9 Project-Related Traffic Noise Increase**

| Roadway Segment | Existing | Existing Plus Project | Cumulative No Project | Cumulative Plus Project | Project Noise Increase | Cumulative Noise Increase | Cumulative Increase due to Project |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mesa View Drive s/o Project | 53.8 | 57.2 | 57.8 | 59.0 | 3.5 | 0.5 | 1.3 |
| Mesa View Drive n/o Project | 55.9 | 60.2 | 57.8 | 61.0 | 4.2 | 5.0 | 3.2 |
| Luna Road e/o Mesa View Drive | 58.6 | 62.5 | 63.0 | 64.8 | 3.9 | 6.2 | 1.8 |
| Luna Road e/o Vista Verde Street | 62.8 | 64.2 | 65.3 | 66.1 | 1.4 | 3.4 | 0.9 |
| Luna e/o Bella Pine Street | 63.6 | 64.7 | 65.9 | 66.5 | 1.1 | 2.9 | 0.7 |
| SR-395 n/o Dos Palmas Road | 81.8 | 81.9 | 83.7 | 83.7 | 0.1 | 2.0 | 0.1 |
| SR-395 n/o Luna Road | 80.3 | 80.4 | 82.5 | 82.6 | 0.1 | 2.2 | 0.1 |
| SR-395 s/o Luna Road | 79.5 | 79.5 | 81.6 | 81.6 | 0.0 | 2.1 | 0.0 |

As shown in Table 9, both project and cumulative traffic noise increase would be less than 3 dBA CNEL for the following roadway segments: Luna Road east of Bella Pine Street and all SR-395 segments. While Luna Road east of Vista Verde Street is estimated to experience a cumulative traffic noise increase of greater than 3 dBA, the project's contribution would be less than 1 dBA to this cumulative increase. For the remaining segments along Mesa View Drive and Luna Road, the future cumulative plus project traffic noise levels would

remain below the City's "Normally Acceptable" range of below 65 dBA CNEL exterior for residential. Therefore, the Project's traffic noise impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Mechanical Equipment Noise*

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems will be installed at the new proposed buildings. The nearest residential property lines to the proposed HVAC replacements and new buildings are located approximately 50 feet south. Typical HVAC equipment generates noise levels ranging up to 72 dBA at distance of 3 feet. At a distance of 50 feet, noise levels would attenuate to 48 dBA and would, therefore, not exceed the City's daytime and nighttime noise standards of 65 dBA and 55 dBA, respectively, for stationary noise sources. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Student Recreational Noise*

The new middle school would serve grades six through eight. Campus hours of operation for Desert Trails Preparatory Academy would be from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday during normal school months. During the summer months, the school campus would be closed. The proposed school athletic events and sports that would take place on the campus would include basketball, volleyball, track and field, soccer, volleyball, and cheerleading. They would take place after school on the campus during the late afternoon/early evening hours, with some occurring on the weekends throughout various times of the day. No lighting is proposed for the proposed playfields or hardcourts. A limited number of special events are proposed throughout the school years. While recreational noise from students could periodically increase ambient noise levels in the project vicinity, activities conducted on school grounds are exempt from the noise levels standards per Section 13.01.060 of the Victorville Municipal Code. There is no public announcement system proposed for recreational activities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### *Noise and Land Use Compatibility*

As discussed above, traffic noise modeling using the FHWA traffic noise prediction model indicates that existing ambient noise levels are up to 56 dBA CNEL within 50 feet of Mesa View Drive (nearest travel lane centerline) in the project area. Cumulative plus project traffic noise levels along Mesa View Drive are estimated up to 61 dBA CNEL. Since the proposed classrooms and outdoor use areas are buffered by the proposed parking lot, future ambient noise levels would be even lower at classroom and outdoor use locations. The Noise Element of the Victorville General Plan indicates that new school uses are "Normally Acceptable" in noise environments below 65 dBA CNEL exterior. During design-level review, new school classroom buildings would be required to comply with CALGreen interior standards for non-residential uses. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Following is a discussion of the Project's temporary and permanent noise vibration impacts as a result of the Project's construction and operational phases.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

### Operational Vibration

The operation of the Project would not include any substantial long-term vibration sources. No significant vibration effects from operations sources would occur. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Construction Vibration

Construction operations can generate varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the construction procedures and equipment. Operation of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish with distance from the source. The effect on buildings in the vicinity of the construction site varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and receptor-building construction. The effects from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibrations at moderate levels, to slight structural damage at the highest levels. Vibration from construction activities rarely reaches the levels that can damage structures.

For reference, a vibration level of 0.2 inches per second (in/sec) peak particle velocity (PPV) is used as the limit for non-engineered timber and masonry buildings, which would apply to the surrounding residential structures (FTA 2018). Table 10 summarizes vibration levels for typical construction equipment at the nearest sensitive receptors.

**Table 10 Vibration Levels for Typical Construction Equipment**

| Equipment | PPV (in/sec) at 25 feet |
|---|---|
| Vibratory Roller | 0.21 |
| Large Bulldozer | 0.089 |
| Loaded Trucks | 0.079 |
| Jackhammer | 0.035 |
| Small Bulldozer | 0.003 |

Source: FTA 2018.

As shown in Table 10, typical construction equipment can generate vibration levels ranging up to 0.21 in/sec at 25 feet. Vibration levels at 25 feet or greater for vibratory rollers would attenuate to less than the 0.2 in/sec PPV. The nearest structures to possible paving activities for the fire lane and the proposed Olivera Road are residential homes to the south and west at approximately 70 feet, which would result in vibration levels less than 0.2 in/sec PPV. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** The project site is not located within an airport land use plan and there are no public airports or private airstrips within two miles of the Project. The nearest airport is Southern California Logistics Airport,

approximately 6.5 miles north east (AirNav 2019). The Project would not expose people working in the project area to excessive aircraft noise levels. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

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

**No Impact.** The Project does not include the development of new homes or businesses and would not extend utilities offsite. As shown in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, the Project involves the development of a new middle school campus. Institutional uses such as schools are developed in response to population growth in an area and do not cause population growth. Therefore, no impact to population and housing would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

**No Impact.** As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site consists of vacant desert land and no housing exists onsite. Therefore, Project development would not displace housing or people. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

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 objectives for any of the public services:

**a) Fire protection?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Fire protection and emergency medical services are provided to the City (including the project site) by the Victorville Fire Department (VFD). The City is served by five fire stations and the nearest fire station to the project site is Fire Station 313 at 13086 Amethyst Road, approximately 2.5 miles to the east. VFD also had mutual aid agreements with all of the other fire departments in San Bernardino County, including the San Bernardino County Fire Department and Apple Valley Fire Protection District.

Project implementation would result in a slight increase in calls for fire protection and emergency medical service. However, considering the existing firefighting resources available in and near the City, project impacts on fire protection and emergency services (including response times) are not expected to occur. Additionally, in the event of an emergency at the project site that required more resources than Fire Station 313 could

provide, VFD would direct resources to the site from other City's stations nearby and, if needed, would request assistance from other nearby fire departments.

Implementation of the Project is also not anticipated to increase VFD's response times to either the project site or the surrounding vicinity. Additionally, the project site is an infill site already served by VFD; therefore, the Project would not result in an expansion of VFD's service area.

The City also involves VFD in the development review process in order to ensure that the necessary fire prevention and emergency response features are incorporated into development projects. For example, the new school would feature monitored fire sprinkler and alarm systems, and an intercom system. For example, fire hydrants would also be installed at key locations onsite to meet hose-pull requirements and provide adequate fire access. Also, Knox Boxes would be placed where necessary (i.e., security gates) to provide access for emergency personnel. Additionally, emergency access to the project site would be via the northern and southern driveways, which connect to internal drive aisles. The drive aisles would serve as fire access lanes and become part of the onsite fire access loop (see Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*). All site and building improvements proposed as a part of the project would be subject to review and approval by the City and VFD prior to issuance of a building permit and occupancy permit.

Additionally, during the City's building plan check and development review process, the project applicant would be required to comply with the requirements in effect at the time building permits are issued, including payment of the established development impact fee pursuant to Section 16-5.01.080 (Development Impact Fee) of the Victorville Development Code. The revenue raised by payment of this fee is placed in a separate and special account and is used solely for the costs of constructing roadways, parks, fire, and public safety facilities. As stated in Section 16-5.01.080, the development impact fee is needed to supplement the City's existing capital facilities fee in order to finance these public improvements and to pay for the development's fair share of the construction costs of these improvements.

Furthermore, development of the Project is required to comply with the most current adopted fire codes, building codes, and nationally recognized fire and life safety standards of the City and VFD, which impose design standards and requirements that seek to minimize and mitigate fire risk. Compliance with these codes and standards is ensured through the City's and VFD's development review and building permit process.

Based on the preceding, the Project would not adversely affect VFD's ability to provide adequate service and would not require new or expanded fire facilities that could result in adverse environmental impacts. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**b) Police protection?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Victorville Police Department (VPD), which is contracted with the San Bernardino County Sheriff, provides police protection to the City of Victorville (including the project site). VPD operates out of its facility at 14200 Amargosa Road, approximately 4.5 miles northeast of the project site.

Project implementation would result in a slight increase in calls for police protection service. However, considering the existing police resources available in and near the City, project impacts on police services

(including response times) are not expected to occur. VPD's staffing and equipment levels could absorb the additional calls and responses that could be generated by the Project. The project site is also an infill site already served by VPD; therefore, the Project would not result in an expansion of their service area. Also, in the event of an emergency at the project site that required more resources than the station at 14200 Amargosa Road could provide, VPD would direct resources to the site from other police stations nearby and, if needed, would request assistance from other nearby police departments.

Additionally, Project implementation would provide a positive impact on police services. For example, the campus would be enclosed with a combination of walls, security gates, fences, and buildings. Installation of these features would enhance the security and safety of the campus during and after school hours. These security features would also help prevent loitering or trespassing on the campus, and thereby help prevent the need for calls for police services.

Furthermore, the City involves VPD in the development review process in order to ensure that the necessary police protection features are incorporated into development projects. All site and building improvements proposed under the Project would be subject to review and approval by VPD.

Finally, during the City's building plan check and development review process, the project applicant would be required to comply with the requirements in effect at the time building permits are issued, including payment of the established development impact fee pursuant to Section 16-5.01.080 (Development Impact Fee) of the Victorville Development Code. The revenue raised by payment of this fee is placed in a separate and special account and is used solely for the costs of constructing roadways, parks, fire, and public safety facilities. As stated in Section 16-5.01.080, the development impact fee is needed to supplement the City's existing capital facilities fee in order to finance these public improvements and to pay for the development's fair share of the construction costs of these improvements.

Based on the preceding, the Project would not adversely affect VPD's ability to provide adequate service and would not require new or expanded police facilities that could result in adverse environmental impacts. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**c) Schools?**

**No Impact.** Demand for schools in an area is usually determined by the area's population. The Project does not include the development of new homes, which lead to an increase in student generation and thereby, the need for additional school facilities. The Project would not induce population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly. As shown in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, the Project involves the development of a new middle school campus. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary. In fact, Project development would result in an improvement to the existing school services and facilities in the area, as it would provide a new middle school campus with new building spaces, playfields, hardcourts, and other support services for the existing and future middle school students and staff of the Desert Trails Preparatory Academy.

**d) Parks?**

**No Impact.** See response to Section 3.16.a, below. As substantiated in that section, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**e) Other public facilities?**

**No Impact.** The need for new or the expansion of existing library services and facilities is tied to population growth. No residential development is proposed as a part of the Project, and Project development is not expected to generate a need for new or additional library services or facilities. As shown in Figure 5, the Project involves the development of a new middle school campus. The students of the new middle school would make use of and be served by the library proposed on campus. Therefore, no impact to library services and facilities would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.16 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?**

**No Impact.** Demand for parks and recreational facilities in an area are usually determined by the area's population. The Project does not include the development of new homes, which lead to an increase in population and thereby, the need for additional park and recreation facilities. As shown in Figure 5, the Project involves the development of a new middle school campus. Therefore, the Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, nor would it require construction of new or expanded parks or recreational facilities. No impact to park and recreational facilities would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As shown in Figure 5, the new middle school campus includes the development of new playfields and hardcourts. The Project does not involve any construction of recreational facilities beyond what is proposed to serve the school's future students. Additionally, Project development does not propose or require construction or expansion of existing recreational facilities in the City. Furthermore, construction of the Project's recreational facilities by themselves are not considered likely to result in a significant construction- or operational-related impact. The physical impacts associated with construction of the Project's recreational facilities are also analyzed in other topical sections of this Initial Study. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

# 3.17 TRANSPORTATION

The analysis in this section is based in part on the following technical studies, included as Appendix I to this Initial Study:

- Desert Trails Preparatory Academy Traffic Impact Analysis, EPD Solutions, Inc., August 23, 2019.

Would the project:

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

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** Following is a discussion of the Proposed Project's potential impacts on a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system.

## Impact to Roadway Facilities

EPD Solutions, Inc. EPD) prepared a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for the Project. The purpose of the TIA was to evaluate the potential traffic and circulation impacts associated with the Project and recommend improvements to mitigate impacts (if any) considered significant in comparison to established Victorville regulatory thresholds.

In coordination with the City's Traffic Engineer, the TIA evaluated the existing operating conditions at nine study area intersections in the project vicinity, estimated the trip generation potential of the Project, and forecast existing and future operating conditions without and with the Project. The TIA also provided an evaluation for site access and circulation. Following is a summary of the findings and conclusions of the TIA.

### *Transportation Network*

#### *Surrounding Street System*

The following roadways were determined to be the main roadways that would be affected by the Project-generated trips: US 395, Mesa View Drive, Dos Palmas Road, Luna Road, Vista Verde Street, Bella Pine Street, Fern Haven Street, and La Mesa Road. The roadway network is shown in Figure 8, *Roadway Network and Study Intersections*.

#### *Study Area Intersections*

The study area was defined based on San Bernardino County's guidelines for the preparation of traffic impact studies. The guidelines require that intersections at streets with a minimum classification of collector or higher where the project adds 50 or more peak hour trips should be studied. Based on the calculated project trip generation and distribution, the study intersections listed in Table 11 were analyzed. The study intersections are shown in Figure 8.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

**Table 11 Study Area Intersections**

| Intersection | Traffic Control | Jurisdiction |
|---|---|---|
| 1. US 395 at Dos Palmas Road | Signalized | Victorville |
| 2. Mesa View Drive at Luna Road | Two-way Stop Control | Victorville |
| 3. Vista Verde Street at Luna Road | Two-way Stop Control | Victorville |
| 4. Bella Pine Street at Luna Road | Two-way Stop Control | Victorville |
| 5. US 395 at Luna Road | Signalized | Victorville |
| 6. Mesa View Drive at Fern Haven Street | Two-way Stop Control | Victorville |
| 7. Mesa View Drive at La Mesa Road | Two-way Stop Control | Victorville |
| 8. Mesa View Drive at North Driveway | Two-way Stop Control | Victorville |
| 9. Mesa View Drive at South Driveway | Two-way Stop Control | Victorville |

Source: EPD Solutions 2019.

### *Study Area and Traffic Analysis Scenarios*

The study area intersections listed in Table 11 were evaluated during the AM and PM peak hours, which are described below. Peak hour traffic operations were evaluated for the following traffic scenarios:

- Existing (2019) Condition
- Existing (2019) Plus Project Condition
- Cumulative Baseline (2029) Condition – corresponds to 10 years from 2019 existing conditions
- Cumulative (2029) Plus Project

### *Methodology*

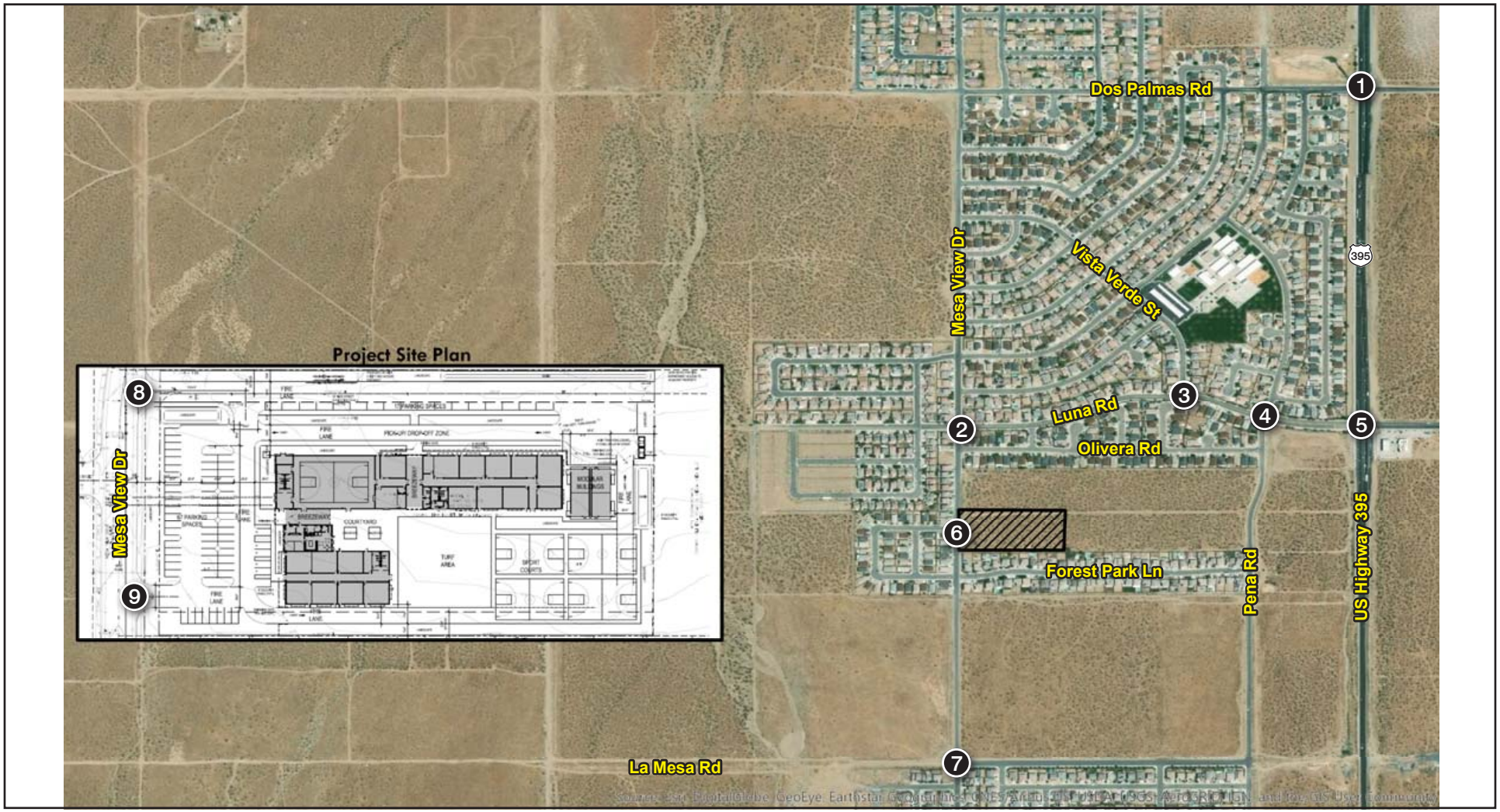
The TIA and methodology used to prepare it follow the City's requirements for analyzing traffic impacts from projects on the roadway network and thresholds of significance.

#### *Definition of Level of Service*

Roadway capacity is generally limited by the ability to move vehicles through intersections. A level of service (LOS) is a standard performance measurement to describe the operating characteristics of a street system in terms of the level of congestion or delay experienced by motorists. Service levels range from A through F, representing traffic conditions from best (uncongested, free-flowing conditions) to worst (total breakdown with stop-and-go operation).

## Figure 8 - Roadway Network and Study Intersections






Project Site

Intersection Nunber (9)

0 1,000
Scale (Feet)

*Source: Environment, Planning, and Development Solutions, Inc., 2019*

# 3. Environmental Analysis

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### *Intersection Level of Service*

The methodology used to assess the operation of a signalized intersection is based on the 2016 Highway Capacity Manual, or HCM 2016, during the AM and PM traffic peak hours. The peak hours selected for analysis are the highest volumes that occur in four consecutive 15-minute periods from 7 to 9 AM and from 4 to 6 PM on weekdays. Table 12 describes the level of service concept and the operating conditions expected under each level of service for signalized and unsignalized intersections.

**Table 12 Intersection Level of Service Descriptions**

| LOS | Description | Average Delay per Vehicle (seconds) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Signalized | Unsignalized |
| A | Level of Service A occurs when progression is extremely favorable and most vehicles arrive during the green phase. Most vehicles do not stop at all. Short cycle lengths may also contribute to low delay. | 0 to 10.00 | 0 to 10.00 |
| B | Level of Service B generally occurs with good progression and/or short cycle lengths. More vehicles stop than for Level of Service A, causing higher levels of average total delay. | 10.01 to 20.00 | 10.01 to 15.00 |
| C | Level of Service C generally results when there is fair progression and/or longer cycle lengths. Individual cycle failures may begin to appear in this level. The number of vehicles stopping is significant at this level, although many still pass through the intersection without stopping. | 20.01 to 35.00 | 15.01 to 25.00 |
| D | Level of Service D generally results in noticeable congestion. Longer delays may result from some combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, or high volume to capacity ratios. Many vehicles stop, and the proportion of vehicles not stopping declines. Individual cycle failures are noticeable. | 35.01 to 55.00 | 25.01 to 35.00 |
| E | Level of Service E is considered to be the limit of acceptable delay. These high delay values generally indicate poor progression, long cycle lengths, and high volume to capacity ratios. Individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences. | 55.01 to 80.00 | 35.01 to 50.00 |
| F | Level of Service F is considered to be unacceptable to most drivers. This condition often occurs with oversaturation, i.e., when arrival flow rates exceed the capacity of the intersection. It may also occur at high volume to capacity ratios below 1.00 with many individual cycle failures. Poor progression and long cycle lengths may also be major contributing causes to such delay levels. | 80.01 and up | 50.01 and up |

Source: HCM 2016.
Notes: If volume to capacity (V/C) ratio is greater than 1.0 for the operation of a signalized or unsignalized intersection, the LOS is F regardless of the delay value.

### *Acceptable LOS and Thresholds of Significance*

*City of Victorville*

The City has policies for level of service (LOS) and deficient intersections are those with an HCM delay LOS worse than D. Intersections under this category would require mitigations to improve the LOS to satisfactory levels, that is to an HCM delay LOS of D or better. According to Victorville General Plan Circulation Element Policy 1.1.2, if a development project would worsen an intersection peak hour LOS to worse than D, it is

considered a significant impact that must be mitigated. If a development project would worsen an already deficient intersection by two percent or more, it is considered a significant impact that must be mitigated.

*Impacts*

A project would have a significant impact at a study area intersection or roadway segment if it causes the LOS to deteriorate from satisfactory to unsatisfactory LOS. If a facility is already operating at unsatisfactory LOS and the project causes an increase in delay, it is considered a significant cumulative impact.

## Project Traffic

### *Trip Generation*

The Project would have a capacity of 550 students from grades 6-8 and approximately 90 of those students would come from the existing combined elementary/middle school campus at 14350 Bellflower Street in the City of Adelanto, approximately 2.9 miles to the northwest, which would be relocated by project development. Since these 90 students are already on the roadway network in the project region, the trip generation evaluated 460 students, instead of 550. The trip generation was calculated based on rates in the ITE Trip Generation Manual (10th edition). Table 13 shows the trip generation rates and Project trip generation for the AM peak hour and PM peak hour. As shown in the table, the Project is expected to generate 851 average daily trips; 511 trips during the AM peak hour; and 64 trips during the PM peak hour.

**Table 13 Project Trip Generation**

| | | Trip Generation | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | AM Peak Hour[1] | | | PM Peak Hour[2] | | |
| Land Use | Unit | Daily | In | Out | Total | In | Out | Total |
| Charter Elementary School[1] | Per Students | 1.85 | 0.59 | 0.52 | 1.11 | 0.05 | 0.09 | 0.14 |
| Desert Trails Preparatory | 460 Students[2] | 851 | 271 | 240 | 511 | 23 | 42 | 64 |

Source: ITE 2017
1 ITE Code 537, Charter Elementary School.
2 Approximately 90 students currently enrolled at Desert Trails Preparatory Academy in Adelanto would be transferred to the proposed charter school. These trips are already on the roadway network and therefore are not included in the project trip generation.

### *Trip Distribution and Assignment*

The traffic that would be generated by the Project was geographically distributed onto the nine study area intersections by evaluating the location of the project site in relation to surrounding residential areas and expected student distribution. The trip distribution percentages are applied to the project trip generation to forecast the traffic volumes that would be added at each intersection (i.e., trip assignment).

## Existing Traffic Conditions

### *Existing Traffic Volumes*

Weekday AM and PM peak hour turn movement volumes were collected at the study area intersections. Traffic count worksheets and the existing AM and PM peak hour turn-movement volumes are in Appendix I.

### *Existing (2019) No Project Condition*

The intersection operations analysis results for the Existing (2019) No Project traffic condition are summarized in Table 14. As shown in the table, all study area intersections currently operate at an acceptable LOS (D or better) during the AM and PM peak hours.

**Table 14 Existing (2019) No Project Intersection Delay and Level of Service**

| Intersection | Traffic Control | Jurisdiction | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS |
| 1. US 395 at Dos Palmas Road | Signalized | Victorville | 37.5 | D | 25 | C |
| 2. Mesa View Drive at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 11.9 | B | 10.4 | B |
| 3. Vista Verde Street at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 15.3 | C | 9.8 | A |
| 4. Bella Pine Street at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 26.1 | D | 14.1 | B |
| 5. US 395 at Luna Road | Signalized | Victorville | 21.6 | C | 18.3 | B |
| 6. Mesa View Drive at Fern Haven Street | TWSC | Victorville | 9.4 | A | 9.6 | A |
| 7. Mesa View Drive at La Mesa Road | TWSC | Victorville | 7.3 | A | 7.2 | A |

Notes: LOS calculation worksheets in Appendix I.
TWSC=Two-Way Stop Controlled

### *Existing (2019) Plus Project Condition*

To assess the Existing (2019) Plus Project traffic condition, existing traffic was combined with traffic that would be generated by the Project. The intersection operations analysis results for the Existing (2019) Plus Project condition are summarized in Table 15. As shown in the table, all study area intersections would operate at an acceptable LOS (D or better) during the AM and PM peak hours, with the exception of intersection of Bella Pine Street at Luna Road in the AM peak hour. As shown in Table 14, this intersection currently operates at LOS D in the AM peak hour. Project traffic would increase the delay on Bella Pine Street at Luna Road by 48 seconds per vehicle, resulting in a LOS F in the AM peak hour.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

**Table 15 Existing (2019) Plus Project Intersection Delay and Level of Service**

| Intersection | Traffic Control | Jurisdiction | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS |
| 1. US 395 at Dos Palmas Road | Signalized | Victorville | 43.8 | D | 28.5 | C |
| 2. Mesa View Drive at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 22.8 | C | 14.8 | B |
| 3. Vista Verde Street at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 23.0 | C | 11.3 | B |
| 4. Bella Pine Street at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | **74.1** | **F** | 15.3 | C |
| 5. US 395 at Luna Road | Signalized | Victorville | 23.8 | C | 19.0 | B |
| 6. Mesa View Drive at Fern Haven Street | TWSC | Victorville | 11.1 | B | 10.7 | B |
| 7. Mesa View Drive at La Mesa Road | TWSC | Victorville | 7.5 | A | 7.5 | A |
| 8. Mesa View Drive at North Driveway | TWSC | Victorville | 12.1 | B | 10.5 | B |
| 9. Mesa View Drive at South Driveway | TWSC | Victorville | 10.1 | B | 9.7 | A |

Notes: LOS calculation worksheets in Appendix I.
TWSC = Two-Way Stop Controlled
**Bold** = deficient operations

Table 16 summarizes the delays and LOS for the intersection of Bella Pine Street at Luna Road, which would operate at unacceptable LOS as a result of Project implementation. As shown in the table, implementation of mitigation measures would improve operations at this intersection. Under the mitigated scenarios, the affected intersection would operate at acceptable LOS (D or better) in the AM and PM peak hours.

**Table 16 Existing (2019) Condition Impact and Mitigation Summary**

| Intersection | Scenario | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS |
| 4. Bella Pine Street at Luna Road | Existing | 26.1 | D | 14.1 | B |
| | Existing Plus Project | **74.1** | **F** | 15.3 | C |
| | Existing Plus Project Mitigated | 20.1 | C | — | — |

Notes: LOS calculation worksheets in Appendix I.
**Bold** = deficient operations

## *Future Traffic Conditions*

### *Estimating Future Baseline Traffic Conditions*

To estimate the future baseline traffic conditions, ambient growth was added to the daily and peak hour traffic volumes on surrounding roadways. Traffic forecast for the Cumulative (2029) No Project and Cumulative (2029) Plus Project traffic conditions were based on two years of ambient growth at two percent per year and adding traffic from nearby cumulative development projects. The ambient growth rate was provided by City's Traffic Engineer during the traffic scoping process.

Cumulative projects are closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects that have the potential to directly add measurable traffic to the study area street system. They are projects that have been approved by the City but not yet built and/or for which development applications have been filed and are under consideration by the City. A total of 18 projects in the cities of Victorville, Hesperia, and Adelanto make up the cumulative project list included in the traffic analysis. The list of cumulative projects and associated trip generation are included in the TIA, provided as Appendix I. Figure 9, *Cumulative Developments Location Map*, shows the location of the cumulative project with respect to the project site.

### *Cumulative (2029) No Project Traffic Condition*

The intersection operations analysis results for the Cumulative (2029) No Project condition are summarized in Table 17. As shown in the table, all study area intersections would operate at an acceptable LOS (D or better) during the AM and PM peak hours, with the exception of the intersection at US 395 and Dos Palmas Road in both the AM and PM peak hour and the intersection at US 395 and Luna Road in the PM peak hour.

**Table 17 Cumulative (2029) No Project Intersection Delay and Level of Service**

| Intersection | Traffic Control | Jurisdiction | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS |
| 1. US 395 at Dos Palmas Road | Signalized | Victorville | **64.6** | **E** | **57.1** | **E** |
| 2. Mesa View Drive at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 15.9 | C | 15.0 | C |
| 3. Vista Verde Street at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 15.3 | C | 12.1 | B |
| 4. Bella Pine Street at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 28.7 | D | 22.5 | C |
| 5. US 395 at Luna Road | Signalized | Victorville | 33.5 | C | **60.0** | **E** |
| 6. Mesa View Drive at Fern Haven Street | TWSC | Victorville | 10.2 | B | 10.9 | B |
| 7. Mesa View Drive at La Mesa Road | TWSC | Victorville | 13.1 | B | 13.5 | B |

Notes: LOS calculation worksheets in Appendix I. TWSC=Two-Way Stop Controlled
**Bold** = deficient operations

### *Cumulative Year 2029 With Project Traffic Condition*

To assess future traffic conditions with the Project, Project traffic was added to the Cumulative (2029) With Project traffic condition. The intersection operations analysis results for the Cumulative (2029) With Project condition are summarized in Table 18. As shown in the table, all study area intersections would continue to operate at acceptable LOS (D or better) during the AM and PM peak hours, with the exception of the intersections at US 395 and Dos Palmas Road in both the AM and PM peak hour; Mesa View Drive at Luna Road in the AM peak hour; Bella Pine Street and Luna Road in the AM peak hour; and US 395 at Luna Road in the PM peak hour.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

**Table 18 Cumulative (2029) Plus Project Intersection Delay and Level of Service**

| Intersection | Traffic Control | Jurisdiction | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS |
| 1. US 395 at Dos Palmas Road | Signalized | Victorville | **71.1** | **E** | **64.5** | **E** |
| 2. Mesa View Drive at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | **69.1** | **F** | 26.5 | D |
| 3. Vista Verde Street at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | 18.8 | C | 13.4 | B |
| 4. Bella Pine Street at Luna Road | TWSC | Victorville | **48.5** | **E** | 25.3 | D |
| 5. US 395 at Luna Road | Signalized | Victorville | 40.4 | D | **72.7** | **E** |
| 6. Mesa View Drive at Fern Haven Street | TWSC | Victorville | 11.8 | B | 11.9 | B |
| 7. Mesa View Drive at La Mesa Road | TWSC | Victorville | 17.1 | C | 15.9 | C |
| 8. Mesa View Drive at North Driveway | TWSC | Victorville | 13.5 | B | 11.5 | B |
| 9. Mesa View Drive at South Driveway | TWSC | Victorville | 10.8 | B | 10.4 | B |

Notes: LOS calculation worksheets in Appendix I. TWSC=Two-Way Stop Controlled
**Bold** = deficient operations

Significant impacts are determined by comparing with- and without-project scenarios for each traffic condition. The Project would have a significant impact at a study area intersection if it causes the level of service to deteriorate from satisfactory LOS (D or better) to unsatisfactory LOS (E or F). If an intersection is already operating at unsatisfactory LOS and the Project causes an increase in delay, it is considered a significant cumulative impact. Table 19 summarizes the delays and LOS for the impacted intersections that would operate at unacceptable LOS as a result of Project implementation.

**Table 19 Cumulative (2029) Condition Impact and Mitigation Summary**

| Intersection | Scenario | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS |
| 1. US 395 at Dos Palmas Road | Existing No Project | 37.5 | D | 25 | C |
| | Cumulative No Project | **64.6** | **E** | **57.1** | **E** |
| | Cumulative Plus Project | **71.3** | **E** | **64.5** | **E** |
| | Cumulative Plus Project Mitigated | 59.2 | E | 51.3 | D |
| 2. Mesa View Drive at Luna Road | Existing No Project | 11.9 | B | 10.4 | B |
| | Cumulative No Project | 15.9 | C | 15.0 | C |
| | Cumulative Plus Project | **69.1** | **F** | 26.5 | D |
| | Cumulative Plus Project Mitigated | 14.7 | B | — | — |
| 4. Bella Pine Street at Luna Road | Existing No Project | 26.1 | D | 14.1 | B |
| | Cumulative No Project | 28.7 | D | 22.5 | C |
| | Cumulative Plus Project | **48.5** | **E** | 25.3 | D |
| | Cumulative Plus Project Mitigated | 20.6 | C | — | — |

**Table 19 Cumulative (2029) Condition Impact and Mitigation Summary**

| Intersection | Scenario | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS | Average Delay (sec/veh) | LOS |
| 5. US 395 at Luna Road | Existing No Project | 21.6 | C | 18.3 | B |
| | Cumulative No Project | 33.5 | C | **60.0** | **E** |
| | Cumulative Plus Project | 40.4 | D | **72.7** | **E** |
| | Cumulative Plus Project Mitigated | — | — | 38.5 | D |

Notes: LOS calculation worksheets in Appendix I.
**Bold** = deficient operations

The intersection of US 395 at Dos Palmas Road already operates at LOS E in both the AM and PM peak hour. The increase in delay related to the Project at this intersection would be up to 6.7 seconds per vehicle in the AM peak hour and 7.4 seconds per vehicle in the PM peak hour. The For Mesa View Drive at Luna Road intersection, project delay would be up to 53.2 seconds per vehicle in the AM peak hour. For the Bella Pine Street and Luna Road intersection, project delay would be up to 19.8 seconds per vehicle in the AM peak hour. The intersection of US 395 at Luna Road already operates at LOS E in the AM peak hour and the increase in delay related to the Project would be up to 12.7 seconds per vehicle in the PM peak hour.

As shown in the Table 19, implementation of mitigation measures would improve operations at the impacted intersections. Under the mitigated scenarios, the affected intersections would operate at acceptable LOS (D or better) in the AM and PM peak hours.

### *Fair Share Calculations*

As shown in Table 19, four intersections were found to result in a significant impact. Table 20 shows the recommended mitigations for each intersection, along with the estimated Fair Share Percent and total cost of the improvements. Cost estimates were based on the Traffic Impact Analysis prepared by TJW Engineering, Inc. for the proposed retail project at the southwest corner of US 395 and Palmdale Road. As shown in Table 20, the total project fair share for the mitigation measures at all affected intersections would be $33,896.

**Table 20 Mitigation Summary and Fair Share Calculations**

| Intersection | Mitigation Measure | Fair Share Percent[1] | Total Cost[2] | Project Fair Share |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. US 395 at Dos Palmas Road | Add a westbound right-turn lane | 11.73% | $150,000 | $17,595 |
| 2. Mesa View Drive at Luna Road | Add a stop sign on the north and southbound approaches | 53.77% | $3,000 | $1,613 |
| 4. Bella Pine Street at Luna Road | Add a stop sign on the east and westbound approaches | 100% | $3,000 | $3,000 |
| 5. US 395 at Luna Road | Add a westbound right-turn lane | 9.35% | $125,000 | $11,688 |
| **Total** | | | | **$33,896** |

Source: EPD 2019.
[1] The fair share percent was calculated using the Caltrans TIA guidelines 2002 Appendix B Methodology for Calculating Equitable Mitigation Measures.
[2] Cost estimates taken from the Traffic Impact Analysis prepared by TJW Engineering, Inc. for the for the proposed retail project at the southwest corner of US 395 and Palmdale Road.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

When off-site improvements are identified, the lead agency (in this case the City of Victorville) may elect to collect a fair share contribution to construct necessary improvements. The fair share is one of the factors normally used by local agencies to estimate fees and cover costs to construct improvements. Identification and timing of needed improvements are determined by the City and are based on several factors — actual traffic volumes, specific-site conditions and geometries, accident history, community and engineering preferences, etc.

### *Direct Traffic Impacts*

A direct traffic impact is where an intersection would operate at unacceptable LOS in a with-project condition but would operate at acceptable LOS in the corresponding no-project condition. As demonstrated above, Project traffic would cause significant direct impacts at the following intersections:

- Mesa View Drive at Luna Road in the AM Peak Hour under the Cumulative (2029) Plus Project traffic condition
- Bella Pine Street at Luna Road in the AM Peak Hour under the Existing (2019) Plus Project and Cumulative (2029) Plus Project traffic condition

### *Cumulative Traffic Impacts*

A cumulative traffic impact is where Project traffic would increase delays at an intersection that would already operate at unacceptable LOS in the corresponding no-project condition. As demonstrated above, Project traffic would cause significant cumulative impacts at the following intersections. The increase delays at both intersections would worsen by two percent or more; therefore, a significant cumulative impact would occur.

- US 395 at Dos Palmas Road in the AM and PM peak hour under the Cumulative (2029) Plus Project traffic condition
- US 395 at Luna Road in the PM peak hour under the Cumulative (2029) Plus Project traffic condition.

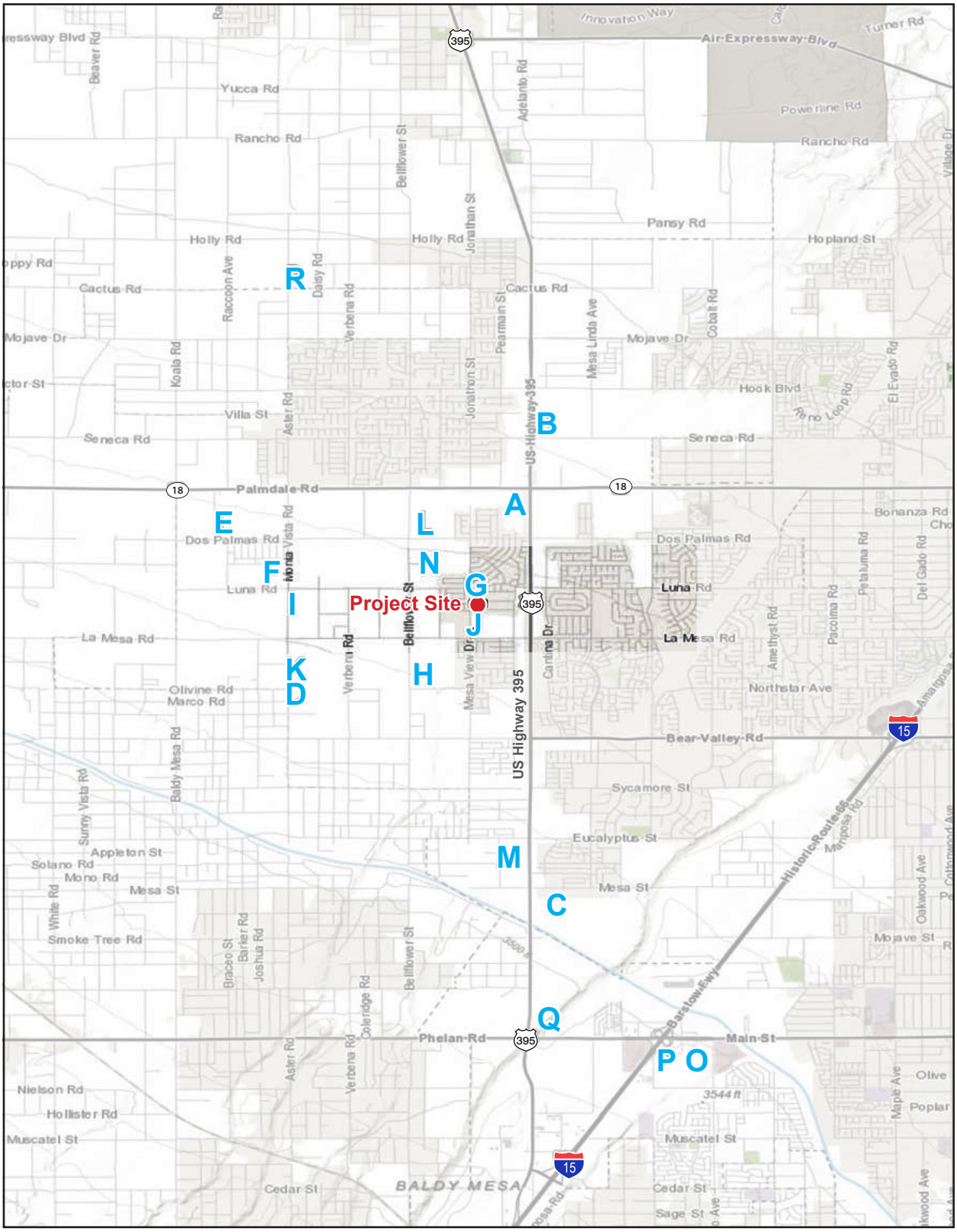
## Conclusion

As demonstrated above, the Project would result in impacts to one intersection under the Existing (2019) Plus Project traffic condition and four intersections under the Cumulative (2029) Plus Project traffic condition. However, project-related traffic impacts would be reduced to a level of less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure TRANS-1.

Additionally, during the City's building plan check and development review process, the project applicant would be required to comply with the requirements in effect at the time building permits are issued, including payment of the established development impact fee pursuant to Section 16-5.01.080 (Development Impact Fee) of the Victorville Development Code. The revenue raised by payment of this fee is placed in a separate and special account and is used solely for the costs of constructing roadways, parks, fire, and public safety facilities. As stated in Section 16-5.01.080, the development impact fee is needed to supplement the City's existing capital facilities fee in order to finance these public improvements and to pay for the development's fair share of the construction costs of these improvements.

# Figure 9 - Cumulative Developments Location Map

**3. Environmental Analysis**




**A** Cumulative Projects

0 1.5
Scale (Miles)

*Source: Environment, Planning, and Development Solutions, Inc., 2019*

# 3. Environmental Analysis

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### Mitigation Measures

TRANS-1 Prior to the issuance of a building permit, grading permit or certificate of occupancy, the project applicant shall enter into an agreement with the City of Victorville to pay its fair-share fees for improvements at the following intersections:

- **US 395 at Dos Palmas Road:** The project fair share at this location is 11.73 percent.
- **Mesa View Drive at Luna Road:** The project fair share at this location is 53.77 percent.
- **Bella Pine Street at Luna Road:** The project fair share at this location is 100 percent.
- **US 395 at Luna Road:** The project fair share ranges from 9.35 percent.

### Impact to Site Access and Vehicle Queues

As shown in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, vehicular access for the project site would be provided via two full-access (all turning movements allowed) driveways off Mesa View Drive. Both driveways would be designed as one-way, stop controlled access drives. The northern driveway would connect to an internal east-west drive aisle, which would also serve as the internal student pick-up/drop-off circulation feature. The southern driveway would serve as the main vehicular entry point into the onsite parking area, which would serve school staff, personnel, and visitors. The level of service for the proposed driveways under the Existing (2019) Plus Project, Cumulative (2029) No Project, and Cumulative (2029) Plus Project traffic conditions is shown in Tables 15, 17, and 18, respectively. As demonstrated in the tables, the Project would not result in a traffic impact at these intersections. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Vehicle queuing analysis for the school's onsite student drop-off/pick area was analyzed using the Stochastic Queuing Analysis methodology. Since there is no limit on queue length, the driveways has a "first in, first out" service type, and a random distribution of arrival and service times, the queuing analysis provided an estimate of average number of vehicles in the queue at any time, based on the number of vehicles assess the site at each hour and the time each vehicle is in queue. As shown above in Table 13, *Project Trip Generation*, the Project is expected to generate 851 average daily trips; 511 trips during the AM peak hour; and 64 trips during the PM peak hour. The calculations results conducted as a part of the TIA indicated that an average of 14 vehicles would be in the queue at any time. Using the 85th percentile queue, 23 vehicles would be in the queue. With a stacking distance of 23.5 feet per vehicle, 541 feet of stacking distance would be required. The Project would provide approximately 840 feet of queuing area onsite in the northern end of the project site within the pick-up/drop-off area (see Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*), which would equate to an onsite stacking capacity of 35 vehicles. Therefore, there is almost no probability that the onsite queue would exceed the available queuing area and there is adequate queuing distance for vehicles dropping off or picking up students. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Impact to Alternate Modes of Transportation Facilities

As shown in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, pedestrian access to the project site would be provided via a new public sidewalk along the eastern side of Mesa View Drive, which abuts the project site. As shown in Figure 4c, *Site Photographs*, there is currently no public sidewalk along this portion of Mesa View Drive. The new public

sidewalk would connect to the existing public sidewalk that currently terminates at the southwestern corner of the project site. There is also a public sidewalk along Mesa View Drive along the west side and along developed areas on the east side.

There are no bicycle lanes or facilities adjacent to or near the project site. However, the project applicant would provide bicycle racks onsite in accordance with the provisions of CALGreen; the racks would be placed in designated areas on the campus. Additionally, Section 21100(h) of the California Vehicle Code allows bicyclists to ride on sidewalks. Bicyclists are also allowed ride on roads.

Victor Valley Transportation Authority (VVTA) operates public transit bus routes in the City. Bus lines 31,33, and 54 are the closest bus routes to the project site; buses along these routs travel east-west along Palmdale Road. The closest bus stops for these routes are approximately 1.6 mile northeast of the project site at the Palmdale Road and US 395 intersection.

Therefore, the Project would not result in a conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the alternate mode of transportation facilities. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?**

**No Impact.** The legislature found that with adoption of Senate Bill 375, the state had signaled its commitment to encourage land use and transportation planning decisions and investments that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and thereby contribute to the reduction of GHG, as required by the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill [AB 32]). Additionally, AB 1358 (Complete Streets Act) requires local governments to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users.

On September 27, 2013, SB 743 was signed into law. SB 743 started a process that could fundamentally change transportation impact analysis as part of CEQA compliance. These changes include the elimination of auto delay, level of service (LOS), and other similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as a basis for determining significant impacts in many parts of California (if not statewide). As part of the updated CEQA Guidelines, the new criteria "shall promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses" (Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(1)). On January 20, 2016, OPR released revisions to its proposed CEQA guidelines for the implementation of SB743. Final review and rulemaking for the new guidelines were completed in December 28, 2018 when the California Natural Resource Agency certified and adopted the CEQA Guidelines update package, including guidelines section implementing Senate Bill 743. OPR allows agencies an opt-in period to adopt the guidelines; they become mandatory on July 1, 2020.

VMT is an indicator of the travel levels on the roadway system by motor vehicles. It corresponds to the number of vehicles multiplied by the distance traveled in a given period over a geographical area. In other words, VMT is a function of (1) number of daily trips and (2) the average trip length (VMT= daily trips x average trip length). The City has not implemented VMT metrics yet and currently uses the established LOS criteria. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** As shown in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*, vehicular access for the project site would be provided via two full-access (all turning movements allowed) driveways off Mesa View Drive. Both driveways would be designed as one-way, stop controlled access drives, and would feature decorative paving. The northern driveway would connect to an internal east-west drive aisle, which would also serve as the internal student pick-up/drop-off circulation feature. The southern driveway would serve as the main vehicular entry point into the onsite parking area, which would serve school staff, personnel, and visitors. A pedestrian crosswalk on Mesa View Drive is also proposed on the south side of the Mesa View Drive/Fern Haven Street intersection. Additionally, Olivera Road, a dirt road that forms the northern site boundary (see Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*), would be improved with the internal east-west drive aisle that connects to the northern driveway. Furthermore, under existing conditions, the eastern portion of Mesa View Drive that abuts the entire stretch of the western project site boundary is only partially improved (see Figure 4c, *Site Photographs*). As a part of the Project, Mesa View Drive would be widened and improved to its ultimate width in accordance with City standards.

The City and VFD have adopted design standards that preclude the construction of any unsafe roadway, circulation, or access design features. Design and construction of the proposed access and circulation improvements would be required to adhere to the City's Standards/Design Manuals & Guidelines and VFD's design standards, which are imposed on development projects during the City's development review and building plan check process. For example, at intersections and project driveways, a substantially clear line of sight must be maintained between the driver of a vehicle waiting at the crossroad and the driver of an approaching vehicle. Sight distance is the continuous length of roadway visible to the driver. Based on a site visit and a review of aerial photography, there are no restrictions blocking the view from proposed location of the access driveways and north- and southbound traffic on Mesa View Drive, and sufficient sight distance would be provided. Compliance with the established design standards would ensure that hazards due to design features would not occur and that the placement of the vehicular access and circulation improvements would not create a conflict for motorists, pedestrians, or bicyclists traveling within or around the project site.

Furthermore, the Project would provide a network of low-speed internal drive aisles that would be safe and walkable for pedestrians, while maintaining an efficient circulation system for vehicles. The Project would also not include incompatible uses such as farm equipment on area roadways.

Therefore, no impact resulting from hazards due to design features or incompatible uses would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** As outlined above, the Project would introduce a number of new onsite vehicular access and circulation improvements. To address emergency and fire access needs, the improvements would be required to be designed and constructed in accordance with all applicable City and VFD design standards for emergency access (e.g., minimum lane width and turning radius). For example, the drive aisles would be designed to meet the minimum width requirements of VFD to allow the passing of emergency vehicles. Additionally, as shown

in Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan,* the drive aisles would serve as a fire access road and become part of the onsite fire access loop.

Additionally, the Project would be required to incorporate all applicable design and safety requirements as set forth in the most current adopted fire codes, building codes, and nationally recognized fire and life safety standards of Victorville and VFD, such as those outlined in Chapter 8.08 (City of Victorville Fire Code) of the Victorville Municipal Code. Compliance with these standards is ensured through the City's and VFD's development review and building plan check process.

Furthermore, during the development review and building plan check process, the City would coordinate with VFD and VPD to ensure that the necessary fire prevention and emergency response features are incorporated into the Project and that adequate circulation and access (e.g., adequate turning radii for fire trucks) are provided within the traffic and circulation components of the Project. For example, Knox Boxes would be placed where necessary (i.e., security gates) to provide access for emergency personnel. Additionally, emergency access to the project site would be via the northern and southern driveways, which connect to internal drive aisles. The drive aisles would serve as fire access lanes and become part of the onsite fire access loop (see Figure 5, *Conceptual Site Plan*). All site and building improvements proposed under the project would be subject to review and approval by the City, VFD, and VPD.

Finally, implementation of the Project would not require major road closures or otherwise impact the functionality of Mesa View Drive as a public safety access route. However, some improvements would be required within the Mesa View Drive right-of-way, which may require temporary closure of a small portion of the eastern lane of this road. Under existing conditions, the eastern portion of Mesa View Drive that abuts the entire stretch of the western project site boundary is only partially improved (see Figure 4c, *Site Photographs*). As a part of the Project, Mesa View Drive would be widened and improved to its ultimate width in accordance with City standards. Any minor road closure would be temporary and would only be necessary during the construction activities associated with these improvements. All proposed road closures would also be subject to review and approval by the City, including issuance of an encroachment permit. Upon completion of the improvements along Mesa View Drive, all road conditions would be restored to normal.

Based on the preceding, no impact to emergency access would occur no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

**i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or**

**No Impact.** As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, the project site is vacant desert land and void of any buildings and structures. Also, aerial photographs dating as far back as 1952 do not show any building or

structures onsite (NETR 2019). The project site is and has always consisted of vacant desert land. Additionally, the project site is not identified on any federal, state, or local historic registers — National Register of Historic Places; California State Historical Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest; or the City of Victorville General Plan Resources Element. Therefore, no impact to historical resources would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** 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 reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. The intent of the consultations is to provide an opportunity for interested Native American contacts to work together with the lead agency (in this case, Victorville) during the project planning process to identify and protect tribal cultural resources.

### Pre–Tribal Consultation Results

A Sacred Lands File search request was submitted to NAHC on April 3, 2019, yielding negative results for known sacred lands within the project area. NAHC responded on April 15, 2019, and indicated that the project site is not identified in the agency's Sacred Lands File. NAHC did however, note that the absence of specific site information in the Sacred Lands File does not indicate the absence of Native American cultural resources in the area.

Additionally, as a part of the cultural and paleontological assessment conducted for the project site by Cogstone (see Appendix D), Cogstone conducted an archaeological and historic records search of the California Historic Resources Inventory System (CHRIS) from the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on April 11, 2019. The records search was conducted for the project site and a one-half mile radius from the site. The search indicated that no prior studies have been completed for the project site; however, 10 have been completed outside the project site within the one-half mile radius. Also, no previously recorded cultural resources have been recorded for the project site.

Furthermore, an intensive pedestrian survey of the project site was conducted by Cogstone staff in April 2019 as a part of the cultural and paleontological assessment completed for the site (see Appendix D). The survey yielded two isolated historic cans near the northern edge of the project site: P-36-033188, which is a solder dot evaporated/condensed milk can from the early to mid-20th century, and P-36-033189, which is a 1960's aluminum top beer can. Both isolates were highly rusted and the milk can had been flattened. Isolated artifacts are ineligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and do not require further consideration.

Finally, based on the results of the cultural resources research and field survey of the project site, the cultural and paleontological assessment concluded that no additional cultural resources work or monitoring is necessary. Although the assessment has not indicated sensitivity for cultural resources within the project site boundaries, ground-disturbing activities have the potential to reveal buried deposits not observed on the surface during previous surveys. Therefore, while unlikely, the presence of subsurface archaeological resources on the project site remains possible, and these could be affected by ground-disturbing activities associated with grading and construction at the site. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would avoid or minimize potential Project impacts to archaeological resources. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, impacts to archeological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level.

### Tribal Consultation Results

The provisions of CEQA, Public Resources Code Sections 21080.3.1 et seq. (also known as Assembly Bill 52 [AB 52]), requires meaningful consultation with California Native American Tribes on potential impacts to tribal cultural resources, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074. Tribal cultural resources are sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either eligible or listed in the California Register of Historical Resources or local register of historical resources (CNRA 2018).

As part of the AB 52 process, Native American tribes must submit a written request to the relevant lead agency if it wishes to be notified of projects that require CEQA public noticing and are within its traditionally and culturally affiliated geographical area. The lead agency must provide written, formal notification to the tribes that have requested it within 14 days of determining that a project application is complete or deciding to undertake a project. The tribe must respond to the lead agency within 30 days of receipt of the notification if it wishes to engage in consultation on the project, and the lead agency must begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving the request for consultation. Consultation concludes when either 1): the parties agree to mitigation measures to avoid a significant effect, if one exists, on a tribal cultural resource, or 2) a party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached. AB 52 also addresses confidentiality during tribal consultation per Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(c).

In accordance with the provisions of AB 52, the City sent formal notifications letters on August 7, 2019, to the following tribes: Twenty Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, Cabazon Band of Mission Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, and San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. The 30-day noticing requirement under AB 52 was completed around September 6, 2019, 30 days from the date the tribes received the notification letter.

One tribe responded to the City's AB 52 consultation notification letter: Morongo Band of Mission Indians. In their initial response letter, the tribe stated that the project site is within their ancestral territory and traditional use area; tribal cultural resources have been documented within one-quarter mile of the project site; and development projects in the general area are potentially sensitive for buried deposits regardless of

the presence of remaining surface artifacts and features. For these reasons, the tribe requested consultation with the City.

Upon completion of the consultation process by and between the City and San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, the tribe responded in writing to the City that they are not requesting tribal monitoring as mitigation. However, the tribe did request in writing that they be contacted if any significant cultural resources are discovered during ground-disturbing activities of the Project's construction phase. The tribe also requested that the they be provided with information regarding the nature of the find in order to provide professional tribal input with regards to significance and treatment of the find. The tribe's requests are included in the text of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, above.

Based on the preceding, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Following is a discussion of the Project's potential impacts on water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities.

### Water Supply Facilities

The project site lies in the Mojave River Groundwater Basin, which encompasses 1,400 square miles and has an estimated total water storage capacity of nearly five million acre-feet (WSC 2016). VWD would provide potable water to the project site. VWD's service area is located in the southwest region of San Bernardino County and encompasses approximately 85 square miles of the basin. VWD's service area encompasses the entire City as well as areas in the City's sphere of influence. VWD's potable water system supplies water solely from groundwater pumped from the Mojave River Groundwater Basin via VWD's 36 active groundwater wells within its distribution system. The basin is adjudicated and the Mojave Water Agency (MWA) serves as the Watermaster (VWD 2016).

Water demand estimates for the Project are included in Table 21. As shown in the table, the Project would require approximately 7,638 gallons per day (7.9 acre feet per year).

# 3. Environmental Analysis

**Table 21 Proposed Project Water Demands**

| Land Use | Square Feet | Indoor Generation Rate (gallons per 1,000 square feet per day)[1] | Outdoor Generation Rate (gallons per 1,000 square feet per day)[1] | Total (gallons per day) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Middle School[2] | 37,850 | 56.5 | 145.3 | 7,638 |

Source: CalEEMod 2016.
[1] Indoor and outdoor water use for "Junior High School" used as indicated in the CalEEMod Default Data Tables.
[2] Includes a 34,970-square-foot main building and two modular buildings, 1,440 square feet each.

VWD issued a "Will Serve Letter" for the Project on June 3, 2019, which is valid for one year from time of issuance. The letter substantiates that VWD has adequate water supplies to meet project water demands. VWD is prepared to provide water service to the project site provided that the project applicant prepares water improvement plans in line with current VWD Standards Specifications for Public Improvements. The water improvement plans would be required to be submitted to the City and VWD for approval and the project applicant would be required to pay all necessary fees prior to beginning construction. The City would impose the requirement for water improvement plans and required payment of all necessary fees as a condition of any required planning approval, and compliance would be ensured through the City's building plan check and development review process. Water service would be provided pursuant to VWD's rules, regulations, and ordinances.

Therefore, Project development would not require the construction of new or expanded water facilities. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Wastewater Treatment Facilities

Wastewater generated by land uses in the City is treated by the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority (VVWRA). The City would provide wastewater collection and conveyance service to the project site. Wastewater generated onsite would be collected and conveyed to VVWRA's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) via the City's existing local sewer system beneath its roadways. The WWTP has a capacity of 14 million gallons per day (mgd) and an average flow of 10.7 mgd (CRWQCB 2013, VVWRA 2019). The WWTP has a residual capacity of 3.3 mgd.

The amount of wastewater that would be generated by the Project is conservatively assumed to be approximately 1,925 gallons per day, which equates to 90 percent of indoor water use. The amount of wastewater that would be generated is approximately 3 percent of VVWRA's total remaining daily treatment capacity. Therefore, project development would not require the construction of new or expanded wastewater facilities. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Stormwater Drainage Facilities

See response to Section 3.10.c.iii, above. As substantiated in this section, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Electricity Facilities

Electrical needs to the project site would be provided by Southern California Edison (SCE) via existing infrastructure in the immediate area of the project site. SCE obtains electricity from conventional and renewable sources. The Project would have a total annual electricity demand of approximately 283,564 kilowatt-hours (kWh), as shown in Appendix A.

Total mid-electricity consumption in SCE's service area is forecast to increase by approximately 12,723 GWh between 2015 and 2027 (CEC 2016). SCE forecasts that it will have sufficient electricity supplies to meet demands in its service area, and the Project's electricity demand is within the forecast increase in SCE's electricity demands. Additionally, SCE's facilities and infrastructure are adequate to serve the needs of the Project.

Therefore, Project development would not require the construction of new or expanded electricity facilities. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Natural Gas Facilities

Natural gas needs to the project site would be provided by Southwest Gas Corporation (Southwest Gas) via existing infrastructure in the immediate area of the project site. Southwest Gas' southern division are wholesale customers of the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), and currently receive all of their natural gas from the SoCalGas system. Project operation is estimated to use approximately 0.3 million (333,493) kilo British Thermal Units (kBTU) per year, as shown in Appendix A. SoCalGas' residual supplies were forecast to remain constant at 3,775 MMCF/day from 2020 through 2035. Total natural gas consumption in SoCalGas' service area is forecast to decline slightly from 2,591 MMCF/day in 2019 to 2,313 MMCF/day in 2035 (CGEU 2018). SoCalGas forecasts that it will have sufficient natural gas supplies to meet Project demands. Additionally, SoCalGas' facilities and infrastructure are adequate to serve the needs of the Project.

Therefore, Project development would not require the construction of new or expanded natural gas facilities. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

### Telecommunication Facilities

Various private services, including AT&T, Time Warner, and Frontier Communications, provide telecommunication services to the City of Victorville, including the project site. The Project would include onsite connections to offsite telecommunication services and facilities in the immediate area of the project site. The construction-related impacts associated with these improvements are analyzed throughout this Initial Study as part of project development. Additionally, facilities and infrastructure for the various telecommunication providers are adequate to serve the needs of the Project. Therefore, Project development would not require the construction of new or expanded telecommunication facilities. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As substantiated above in Section 3.19.a, VWD has adequate water supplies to meet the Project's water demands.

Additionally, as noted in Section 1.5.6, *Green Building Standards*, above, the Project would be designed to include a number of green building standards that would help reduce water usage and demand, including water-conserving plumbing fixtures and fittings. Other green building standards would be considered by the City as the Project is refined during the design and construction phase.

The Project's landscaping would also be required to be installed and maintained in compliance with the water-efficient landscape requirements outlined in Section 16-3.24.030 (Landscape Standards) of the Victorville Development Code, which sets landscaping standards for various purposes, including to conserve water.

Furthermore, Project development would be required to comply with the provisions of the most current CALGreen, which contains requirements for indoor water use reduction and site irrigation conservation. Specifically, project development would be required to adhere to mandatory nonresidential measures outlined in Division 5.3 (Water Efficiency and Conservation) of CALGreen, including those of Sections 5.303 (Indoor Water Use) and 5.304 (Outdoor Water Use).

Based on the preceding, there are adequate water supplies to meet the water demands of the Project and Project development would not require VWD to obtain new or expanded water supplies. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**c) Result in a determination by the waste water 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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As substantiated above in Section 3.19.a, there is existing wastewater treatment capacity in the region for estimated project wastewater generation. Project development would not require the construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The City's Solid Waste Division, would provide solid waste collection services to the project site. In 2017, approximately 99 percent of the municipal solid waste landfilled from the City was disposed of at the Victorville Sanitary Landfill (CalRecycle 2019a). The landfill is operated by the County of San Bernardino Public Works Department. Burrtec Waste Industries, a private contractor, operates the landfill under contract to the County of San Bernardino. Capacity and disposal data for the landfill is shown in Table 22. As shown in the table, the landfill has a residual capacity of 1,991 tons per day.

**Table 22 Landfill Capacity**

| Landfill | Current Remaining Capacity (tons) [1] | Maximum Daily Disposal Capacity (tons) | Average Daily Disposal, 2017 (tons) [2] | Residual Daily Disposal Capacity (tons) | Estimated Close Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Victorville Sanitary Landfill | 81,510,000 | 3,000 | 1,009 | 1,991 | 2047 |

Sources: CalRecycle 2019b, 2019c.
[1] A Volume-to-Weight conversion rate of 2,000 lbs/cubic yard (1 ton/cubic yard) for "Compacted - MSW Large Landfill with Best Management Practices" is used as per CalRecyle's 2016 Volume-to-Weight Conversion Factors https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/201604/documents/volume_to_weight_conversion_factors_memorandum_04192016_508fnl.pdf.
[2] Average daily disposal is calculated based on 300 operating days per year. Each of the three facilities is open six days per week, Monday through Saturday, except certain holidays.

The Project is estimated to generate approximately 0.12 tons of solid waste per day, as shown in Table 23.

**Table 23 Project Solid Waste Generation**

| Land Use | Square Feet | Generation Rate (lbs/square feet/day) | Total (ppd) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Middle School[1] | 37,850 | 0.007 | 265 |

Source: CalRecycle 2019d.
Notes: ppd = pounds per day
[1] Includes a 34,670-square-foot main building and two modular buildings, 1,440 square feet each.

As demonstrated in Table 23, there is adequate landfill capacity in the region for the Project's forecast solid waste disposal, and Project development would not require additional landfill capacity at the landfill serving the City. Additionally, the total amount of solid waste expected to be generated under the Project would be minimal compared to the residual daily disposal capacity of the landfill serving the City.

Additionally, enclosures with solid roof tops and swinging gates that would accommodate trash bins for solid waste and recyclable materials would be provided in the along the northern and southern site boundaries. The provision of a recycling bin would help reduce the amount of solid waste that would need to be transported to the landfills serving the City.

Furthermore, substantial reductions in solid waste from construction materials can be achieved through recycling, reuse, and diversion programs. The City requires that the project applicant provide a construction waste management plan during the plan review process pursuant to CALGreen Sections 4.408 and 5.408 and the Victorville Development Code Section 16-5.11.060 (Construction Waste Reduction, Disposal and Recycling Plan Requirements [During Project Construction]). As currently codified, these regulatory sections require diversion of 50 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition waste through recycling, reuse, and diversion programs. The waste management plan must demonstrate compliance with the City's goal of reusing or recycling at least 50 percent of project's construction waste.

Based on the preceding, impacts on landfill capacity would be less than significant and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** See response to section 3.19.d, above.

Additionally, the following federal, state, and local laws and regulations govern solid waste disposal, including:

- USEPA administers the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 and the Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965, which govern solid waste disposal.
- Assembly Bill (AB) 341 (Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011) increases the statewide waste diversion goal to 75 percent by 2020, and mandates recycling for commercial and multi-family residential land uses.
- AB 939 (Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989; Public Resources Code 40050 et seq.) required every California city and county to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills by the year 2000 by such means as recycling, source reduction, and composting. In addition, AB 939 requires each county to prepare a countywide siting element specifying areas for transformation or disposal sites to provide capacity for solid waste generated in the county that cannot be reduced or recycled for a 15-year period.
- AB 1327 (California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991) requires local agencies to adopt ordinances mandating the use of recyclable materials in development projects.

Project-related construction and operation phases would be implemented in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations govern solid waste disposal. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.20 WILDFIRE

Wildland fire protection in California is the responsibility of either the local government, state, or the federal government. State Responsibility Areas (SRA) are the areas in the state where the State of California has the primary financial responsibility for the prevention and suppression of wildland fires. The SRA forms one large a basic level of wildland fire prevention and protection services (FRAP 2019a).

Local responsibility areas (LRA) include incorporated cities, cultivated agriculture lands, and portions of the desert. LRA fire protection is typically provided by city fire departments, fire protection districts, counties, and by CAL FIRE under contract to local government. CAL FIRE uses an extension of the SRA Fire Hazard Severity Zone model as the basis for evaluating fire hazard in LRAs. The local responsibility area hazard rating reflects flame and ember intrusion from adjacent wildlands and from flammable vegetation in the urban area. The Victorville Fire Department currently provides fire protection and emergency medical services to Victorville.

Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) are identified by Moderate, High and Very High in an SRA, and Very High in an LRA. The nearest FHSZ in the SRA is a VHFHSZ approximately 10 miles south in Summit Terrace. The nearest FHSZ in the LRA is a VHFHSZ approximately 12.3 miles south in Summit Valley, Hesperia (FRAP

2019b). Land between the edge of the nearest FHSZ and the project site is urban development and vacant desert land, along with SR-138.

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

**a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

**No Impact.** As demonstrated above, the project site is not in or near an SRA or LRA or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

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

**No Impact.** As demonstrated above, the project site is not in or near an SRA or LRA or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**c) 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?**

**No Impact.** As demonstrated above, the project site is not in or near an SRA or LRA or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

**d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?**

**No Impact.** As demonstrated above, the project site is not in or near an SRA or LRA or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation measures are necessary.

## 3.21 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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** As shown in Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*, and Figures 4a through 4e, *Site Photographs*, the project site consists of vacant desert land. There are no buildings, structures, or improvements onsite. Desert vegetation onsite consists mostly of creosote bush scrub and some scattered Joshua trees. The site is in an urbanizing area of the City and is surrounded by a mix of residential uses and vacant land.

# 3. Environmental Analysis

As demonstrated in Section 3.4, *Biological Resources*, impacts to biological resources would be reduced to a level of less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2.

Additionally, as demonstrated in Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources*, no historic resources were identified onsite, and therefore the Project does not have the potential to eliminate important examples of California history or prehistory. Impacts were deemed to be less than significant.

Furthermore, as demonstrated in Sections 3.5, *Cultural Resources*, and 3.7, *Geology and Soils*, impacts to archeological and paleontological resources would be reduced to a level of less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and GEO-1, respectively.

Finally, as demonstrated in Section 3.18, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, impacts to tribal cultural resources were deemed to be less than significant.

**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.)**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The issues relevant to Project development are confined to the immediate project site and surrounding area. Additionally, the project site is in an urbanizing area of the City where supporting utility infrastructure (e.g., water, wastewater, and drainage) and services (e.g., solid waste collection) currently exist. Project implementation would not require the construction of new or expansion of existing utility infrastructure and services. The project site is also generally too small in scope to appreciably contribute to existing cumulative impacts.

Furthermore, impacts related to other topical areas such as air quality, GHG, hydrology and water quality, and traffic would not be cumulatively considerable with development of the Project in conjunction with other cumulative projects.

In consideration of the preceding factors, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be rendered less than significant; therefore, project impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed in the respective topical sections of this Initial Study, implementation of the Project would not result in significant impacts in the areas of air quality, GHG, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, or wildfire, which may cause adverse effects on human beings. Therefore, impacts related to these environmental effects were deemed to be less than significant.

# 4. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Project-specific mitigation measures have been categorized in matrix format, as shown in Table 24. The matrix identifies the environmental factor, specific mitigation measures, schedule, and responsible monitor. The matrix also identifies all conditions of approval applicable to the Project, as identified throughout this Initial Study. The mitigation matrix serves as the basis for scheduling the implementation of, and compliance with, all mitigation measures.

**Table 24 Mitigation Monitoring Requirements**

| | Mitigation Measure | Responsibility for Implementation | Timing | Responsibility for Monitoring | Monitor (Signature Required) (Date of Compliance) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Biological Resources** | | | | | |
| BIO-1 | Prior to the issuance of grading permits and to mitigate potential impacts to the Mojave ground squirrel (MGS), the project applicant shall undertake one of the following two options:<br>• **Protocol Survey.** The protocol survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and consist of three separate 5-day live trapping surveys (15 days total). If the survey demonstrates the absence of MGS, no further action or mitigation is required. The findings and conclusions of the protocol survey shall be submitted in a memo/letter report to the City of Victorville Development Department and California Department of Fish and Wildlife.<br>• **Assume Presence.** Assume the presence of MGS on the project site and obtain an Incidental Take Permit from the California Department of Fish Wildlife. The Incidental Take Permit will require mitigation through purchase of credits at an offsite mitigation bank, or purchase of lands to replace potential MGS habitat | Project Applicant, Construction Contractor, and Biologist | Prior to the issuance of grading permits | City of Victorville Development Department | |

# 4. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

**Table 24 Mitigation Monitoring Requirements**

| | Mitigation Measure | Responsibility for Implementation | Timing | Responsibility for Monitoring | Monitor (Signature Required) (Date of Compliance) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | onsite. Based on the low habitat quality for MGS on the project site, the anticipated replacement ratio would be 1:1, and 4.31 acres of offsite MGS habitat would need to be purchased. However, the California Department of Fish Wildlife shall be consulted to determine if the assumption of presence would be an accepted approach and to determine the final offsite replacement ratio. | | | | |
| **Cultural Resources** | | | | | |
| CUL-1 | Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the project applicant shall provide a letter to the City of Victorville Development Department from a qualified archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications for Archeology as defined at 36 CFR Part 61, Appendix A (Professional Archeologist). The letter shall state that the project applicant has retained such an individual, and that the consultant will be on call during all grading and other significant ground-disturbing activities.<br><br>In the event that potential archeological resources are discovered during ground-disturbing activities, all such activity shall cease in the immediate area of the find (within a 60-foot buffer), and the professional archeological monitor shall have the authority to halt any activities adversely impacting potentially significant cultural resources until they can be formally evaluated. Suspension of ground disturbances in the vicinity of the discovery shall not be lifted until the archaeological monitor has evaluated the discovery to assess whether it is classified as a significant cultural resource pursuant to the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) definition of historical (State CEQA Guidelines 15064.5[a]) and/or unique archeological resource (Public Resources Code 21083.2[g]). Work may continue in other areas of the project site and for other project elements while the encountered find is evaluated. | Project Applicant, Construction Contractor, and Archeologist | Prior to the issuance of grading permits | City of Victorville Development Department | |

**Table 24 Mitigation Monitoring Requirements**

| Mitigation Measure | Responsibility for Implementation | Timing | Responsibility for Monitoring | Monitor (Signature Required) (Date of Compliance) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| If upon completion of the assessment the archeological monitor determines that the find qualifies as a significant cultural resource, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Cultural Resources Department (SMBMI) shall be contacted and be provided with information regarding the nature of the find. This will allow SMBMI to provide professional tribal input with regard to the significance and treatment of the find. Additionally, if the resource is classified as a significant cultural resource, the qualified archeologist (in coordination with SMBMI, if determined to be required) shall make recommendations on the treatment and disposition of the deposits, which shall be developed in accordance with all applicable provisions of California Public Resource Code Section 21083.2 and State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.5 and 15126.4. For example, if significant cultural resources are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, which shall allow for an SMBMI monitor to be present for the remainder of the ground-disturbing activities should SMBMI elect to place a monitor onsite. However, the placement of an SMBMI monitor shall be at the full expense of the tribe. The archaeologist shall prepare a final report describing all identified and curated resources (if any are found) and submit the report to the City. Upon receipt of the final report, the City shall distribute a copy to SMBMI. If disturbed resources are required to be collected and preserved, the project applicant shall be required to participate financially up to the limits imposed by Public Resources Code Section 21083.2. | | | | |

# 4. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

**Table 24 Mitigation Monitoring Requirements**

| | Mitigation Measure | Responsibility for Implementation | Timing | Responsibility for Monitoring | Monitor (Signature Required) (Date of Compliance) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Transportation** | | | | | |
| TRANS-1 | Prior to the issuance of a building permit, grading permit or certificate of occupancy, the project applicant shall enter into an agreement with the City of Victorville to pay its fair-share fees for improvements at the following intersections:<br>• **US 395 at Dos Palmas Road:** The project fair share at this location is 11.73 percent.<br>• **Mesa View Drive at Luna Road:** The project fair share at this location is 53.77 percent.<br>• **Bella Pine Street at Luna Road:** The project fair share at this location is 100 percent.<br>• **US 395 at Luna Road:** The project fair share ranges from 9.35 percent. | Project Applicant, Construction Contractor, and Civil Engineer | Prior to the issuance of a building permit, grading permit or certificate of occupancy | City of Victorville Development Department | |

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