DRAFT
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

The County of Santa Clara Roads and Airports Department has reviewed the proposed project described below and determined it would not have a significant effect on the environment. “Significant effect on the environment” means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, flora, fauna, traffic, and ambient noise.

NAME OF PROJECT: San Tomas Expressway Spur Trail from El Camino Real to Homestead Road

PROJECT LOCATION: The proposed Spur Trail project is located along the west side of San Tomas Expressway from El Camino Real to Homestead Road.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project is the extension of the existing Class I 1 San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail (Spur Trail) that runs along the west side of San Tomas Aquino Creek (north of Monroe Street) and the west side of San Tomas Expressway (south of Monroe Street). Construction of the trail is currently being completed north of the project site between Cabrillo Avenue and El Camino Real, which is expected to open in Spring 2014. The proposed project would extend the Spur Trail approximately 5,140 feet (0.97 miles) southward toward Homestead Road. The proposed Spur Trail would be located between the existing curb and gutter of the expressway and the existing privacy/soundwalls on the west side of the expressway. The proposed project also includes improvements to the intersection of Benton Street.

APPLICANT/LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:

Craig Petersen, Project Engineer
County of Santa Clara Roads and Airports Department
101 Skyport Drive, San José, CA 95110
Fax: 408-441-0276, Email:Craig.Petersen@rda.sccgov.org

FINDING: The County of Santa Clara Roads and Airports Department finds the project described above will not have a significant effect on the environment. The attached Initial Study identifies one or more potentially significant effects on the environment for which mitigation measures are proposed to be implemented to reduce those effects to a less than significant level.

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1 A Class I Bikeway is a bike path completely separated from motorists for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This Initial Study of environmental impacts has been prepared by the County of Santa Clara (the Lead Agency) to conform to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations §15000 et. seq.), and the regulations and policies of the County of Santa Clara. This Initial Study evaluates the potential environmental impacts which might reasonably be anticipated to result from the proposed San Tomas Spur Trail along the west side of San Tomas Expressway, from El Camino Real to Homestead Road.
2.0 PROJECT INFORMATION

2.1 PROJECT TITLE

San Tomas Expressway Spur Trail from El Camino Real to Homestead Road

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed San Tomas Expressway Spur Trail project is located along the west side of the expressway from El Camino Real to Homestead Road, as shown on Figures 1, 2, and 3.

2.3 LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS

County of Santa Clara Roads and Airports Department
101 Skyport Drive
San José, CA  95110

2.4 LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Craig Petersen
Project Engineer
(408) 573-2490
3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project is the extension of the existing Class I² San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail (Spur Trail) that runs along the west side of San Tomas Aquino Creek (north of Monroe Street) and the west side of San Tomas Expressway (south of Monroe Street). Construction of the trail is currently being completed north of the project site between Cabrillo Avenue and El Camino Real, which is expected to open in Spring 2014 (refer to Figure 2). The proposed project would extend the Spur Trail approximately 5,140 feet (0.97 miles) southward toward Homestead Road (see Figure 4A). The proposed Spur Trail would be located between the existing curb and gutter of the expressway and the existing properties on the west side of the expressway.

3.2 PROJECT COMPONENTS

The proposed project also includes improvements to the intersection of Benton Street, as shown on Figure 4B. The primary components of the project are described below:

3.2.1 Spur Trail

A 10- to 12-foot wide roadway-separated pedestrian/bicycle Class I trail would be constructed on the west side of the expressway (San Tomas Aquino Spur Trail – City of Santa Clara) from El Camino Real to Homestead Road. The Class I Spur Trail would be separated from the roadway by a concrete barrier as shown on Figure 4A and Figure 4B. Figure 4C shows a cross section of the proposed Spur Trail. The barrier would include ground-level lighting and signage along the trail. The Spur Trail would conform to the trail under construction by the City of Santa Clara between Cabrillo Avenue and El Camino Real, north of the proposed project. The San Tomas Aquino Creek concrete channel, within the centerline of the expressway, would not be affected by construction of the Spur Trail and no changes are needed to the channel to support the proposed Spur Trail.

3.2.2 Improvements to San Tomas Expressway at Benton Street Intersection

At the intersection of Benton Street, the project would provide bulb-outs with right-turn deceleration/storage lanes and the existing pork chop islands would be eliminated in order to improve pedestrian access to the trail (Figure 4B). With the proposed improvements at this intersection, all utility poles within the four existing traffic islands would be relocated and signal modifications would occur.

3.2.3 Privacy Wall

The existing five- to six-foot soundwalls that are currently located along the west side of the project route would be removed and replaced with a new 10 foot privacy wall from El Camino Real to Homestead Road to allow for privacy as well as noise attenuation. The primary purpose of the wall is to separate and screen adjoining backyards from the sidewalk and trail. The privacy wall height is relative to ground elevation at the existing wall locations, which are generally located at the top of grade between the roadway and right-of-way, at the edge of roadway shoulder where the current walls are located. To be effective, the privacy walls would be constructed with a solid material without

---

² A Class I Bikeway is a bike path completely separated from motorists for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians.
gaps in the face of the wall or at the base. Suitable materials for wall construction would have a minimum surface weight of three pounds per square foot (such as one-inch-thick wood, masonry block, concrete, or metal).

The length of existing walls to be removed would be limited to the length that can be replaced in a reasonable amount of time in order to limit exposure for each property owner from El Camino Real to Homestead Road. Temporary fencing would be put in place the same day as existing walls are removed. A temporary noise barrier would also be installed after the removal of the existing walls, consisting of acoustical fabric panels (i.e. sound blankets) draped over the temporary fencing. Once the temporary fencing and noise barrier are in place, the drilling for the wall pile foundations would be completed followed by the setting of the precast concrete panels for the replacement walls. Installation of the new wall will be done entirely from the expressway side. The amount of space required to construct the new wall and complete the finishing work should not extend more than five feet on either side of the existing wall.

### 3.2.4 Stormwater Outfalls and Storm Drainage

The proposed project would utilize the existing drainage system for the area, including the stormwater drains at the intersections along the project route. The existing drainage inlets would be relocated and the storm drain laterals extended to the new drainage inlet, as needed.

### 3.2.5 Grading Depths

Installing new storm drain inlets and laterals would require excavation depths up to approximately five feet. Holes approximately two feet in diameter, up to six feet deep, spaced 13 feet apart would be drilled for the privacy wall foundations. For the signal foundations at the Benton Street intersection, holes approximately five to 13 feet deep and approximately two to four feet in diameter would be drilled. No pile driving will be required.

### 3.2.6 Landscaping

The need for landscaping with this project is assumed to be minimal and limited to areas where existing landscaping is removed. Replacement landscaping or ground cover may be installed where there is room between the Class 1 Spur Trail and privacy wall along the west side of the expressway, consistent with County standards, and the existing trail to the north.

### 3.2.7 Construction Schedule

Depending on the acquisition of funding for the project, it is anticipated that the Spur Trail project could begin in late-2014. It is anticipated that the total construction period, including approvals and permitting, would be between six to nine months. The existing wall removal and placement of temporary fencing will occur on the same day. The wall replacement at any one location would be completed in a period of approximately two to four weeks.
3.3 PERMITS REQUIRED

It is anticipated that the project would require standard encroachment and construction permits, including grading and tree removal permits. Other permits may be required for the relocation of utilities including electrical and water lines.

3.4 USES OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study will be used to obtain a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project, which determines that with the mitigation and standard measures identified, the project would not have a significant effect on the environment. The MND will be used to obtain the necessary permits for the proposed project, as described in Section 3.3, above.
PROPOSED SPUR TRAIL ALONG WEST SIDE OF SAN TOMAS EXPRESSWAY

FIGURE 4A
Figure 4C: Proposed Spur Trail

- Right-of-way
- New 10' soundwall
- Remove existing soundwall
- Existing grade
- Chain link fence

Locations:
- Residential Yard
- Trail
- Barrier
- Shoulder
- San Tomas Expressway
4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, CHECKLIST, AND DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS

This section describes the existing environmental conditions on and near the subject site, as well as environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. The environmental checklist, as recommended in the CEQA Guidelines, was used to identify environmental impacts that could occur if the proposed project is implemented. The right-hand column in the checklist lists the source(s) for the answer to each question. The sources cited are identified at the end of the checklist. This section identifies environmental impacts from the project and an explanation for those impacts determined to be less than significant. Mitigation measures are identified and described for all significant impacts and evaluated briefly for the expected effectiveness/feasibility of these measures, where necessary.
4.1 AESTHETICS

4.1.1 Setting

As shown on Figure 3, the project route is located in a highly urban area of the City of Santa Clara, in an area of primarily residential development. Commercial areas are located at the corner of El Camino Real and the expressway, and there are two public/quasi-public facilities (i.e., churches) on the northeast and southwest corners of Homestead Road and the expressway, as shown on Figure 3. A multi-family residential development is located near the northwest corner of Homestead Road.

In general, the public use and commercial buildings in the area are large and without detailed architectural features. The buildings are typically surrounded by landscaping (trees, bushes, and groundcover) and parking areas. The visual character of the proposed project route is mainly urbanized, with man-made features and streetscapes.

Viewer groups in the project area consist of residents adjacent to the expressway, workers at commercial sites, and pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers using roadways in the vicinity of the proposed project route. The project route is not located within a scenic viewshed or along a scenic highway. The project route area is only visible to the immediately surrounding residential, public, and commercial land uses.

4.1.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

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<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.2.1  Change in Visual Character

The project location is only visible from the immediately surrounding area. The primary visual change as a result of the project would be at locations where landscaping would be removed and the proposed Spur Trail and privacy walls installed.

Trees to be removed would be replaced along the project route where there is room along the expressway. Replacement landscaping or ground cover may also be installed. Neither the removal of vegetation, nor the conversion of narrow pieces of developed and vacant property would significantly impact the aesthetic character of the project route, given the urban nature of the immediate area. Photo 1 shows the completed Spur Trail and privacy walls north of the project site. The proposed project will look similar to this once completed.

The existing views from the backyards of the residential uses along the project route would change with the replacement of the existing five- to six-foot tall soundwalls with 10-foot privacy walls and the loss of trees on the roadway side of the walls. Given that walls currently exist and there is a lack of important viewsheds, the replacement privacy walls would not significantly degrade the existing aesthetic quality of the backyard views or the project area.

Shade and shadow impacts can occur when a building or other structure substantially reduces natural sunlight on public or private open spaces. Throughout the cycle of each day, shadows move from a westerly to an easterly direction, and as such, shading of the existing residential properties is limited to temporary shading during the mornings and evenings. The replacement privacy walls would not affect available sunlight for the residences because the residences are already shaded by the existing walls and large trees along the project route. The shadows from the higher privacy walls would represent an incremental amount of additional shading in the mornings and evenings and would not preclude the use of yards during the remainder of the day. Therefore, the replacement privacy walls would not result in significant shade or shadow impacts.

While the determination of aesthetic impacts is somewhat subjective, it is concluded that the Spur Trail would not result in a significant aesthetic impact to the surrounding land uses. While the project route is visible to the surrounding land uses, a portion of the Spur Trail currently exists. The continuation of the Spur Trail would not significantly change the visual character of the land uses along the route or the visual character of the project area. The proposed modifications to the Benton Street/San Tomas Expressway intersection would also not alter the visual character of the project area.

4.1.2.2  Light and Glare Impacts

There is no lighting plan available for the project route at this time; however, it is anticipated that any lighting proposed would be on the interior wall of the barrier and only visible to trail users. It is anticipated that the new lighting would be consistent with County standards and the City’s Design Guidelines to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses.
4.1.2.3 **Impacts to Scenic Vistas**

The proposed trail route is located adjacent to San Tomas Expressway, a major thoroughfare within an urban area of mixed uses (commercial and residential) that has no designated scenic resources. The project does not include the construction of structures that would block any scenic views. The route for the proposed project does not include any officially-designated State of California scenic highways or County-designated scenic roads.

4.1.3 **Conclusion**

The proposed project would not substantially change the existing visual character or quality of the project area or its surroundings. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant aesthetic impact and mitigation measures are not required or proposed. *(Less Than Significant Impact)*
4.2 AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

4.2.1 Setting

The proposed project is located within an area of the City of Santa Clara that consists primarily of residential and commercial development. Neither the project route nor any adjacent properties are currently used for agricultural or forestry purposes. No properties along the project route are designated by the California Resources Agency as Farmland of any type and are not the subject of a Williamson Act contract.

According to the 2010 Santa Clara County Important Farmland map, the properties along the project route are designated as Urban and Built-Up Land. Urban and Built-Up Land is land that is occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit per 1.5 acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel. Common examples include residential, industrial, commercial, institutional facilities, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, and water control structures. No adjacent properties along the project route are currently zoned forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned for timberland production.

4.2.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

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<th>Information Source(s)</th>
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<td>Would the project:</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) 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?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☒</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☒</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) 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 Codes section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☒</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2.1 **Impacts to Agricultural Lands**

As described above, none of the properties near the proposed project route are used for forestry or agricultural production. The proposed project is surrounded by commercial and residential development. In addition, the proposed project would be constructed within existing roadways and/or existing utility corridors. Therefore, the project would not impact agricultural or forestry resources.

4.2.3 **Conclusion**

The project would not have a significant impact on agricultural or forest land or agricultural activities either along the project route or in the project area. (No Impact)
4.3 AIR QUALITY

4.3.1 Setting

The project is located in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin in the City of Santa Clara, in Santa Clara County. The climate is affected by its proximity to both the Pacific Ocean and the San Francisco Bay (Bay), which has a moderating influence. The Bay cools the air during warm weather and warms the air during cold weather. During the afternoon and early evening, a north-northwesterly sea breeze often flows from the Bay through the Santa Clara Valley, and a light south-southeasterly breeze often occurs during the late evening and early morning hours.

The Bay Area is considered to be one of the cleanest metropolitan areas in the country with respect to air quality. However, the Bay Area as a whole does not meet state or federal ambient air quality standards for ground level ozone (O3) or state standards for fine particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5). For all other pollutants, the area complies with federal and state air quality standards. High ozone levels are caused by the cumulative emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NOx). These precursor pollutants react under certain meteorological conditions to form high ozone levels. Controlling the emissions of these precursor pollutants is the focus of the Bay Area’s attempts to reduce ozone levels.

The air pollution potential of the Santa Clara Valley is high. The valley has a large population and the largest complex of mobile sources in the Bay Area making it a major source of particulate and photochemical air pollution. In addition, photochemical precursors from San Francisco, San Mateo, and Alameda counties can be carried along by the prevailing winds to the Santa Clara Valley making it also a major ozone receptor. Geographically, the Valley tends to channel pollutants to the southeast with its northwest/southeast orientation, and concentrate pollutants by its narrowing to the southeast. Meteorologically, on high-ozone low-inversion summer days, the pollutants can remain within the Valley as a result of the prevailing northwesterly winds in the afternoon and the light southwesterly breeze in the late evening and early morning, which recirculate the air instead of blowing it out of the Valley, therefore, increasing the impact of emissions significantly.

Particulate matter is another problematic air pollutant in the Bay Area. Particulate matter is assessed and measured in terms of respirable particulate matter or particles that have a diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM10) and fine particulate matter where particles have a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less (PM2.5). Elevated concentrations of PM10 and PM2.5 are the result of both region-wide (or cumulative) emissions and localized emissions. High particulate matter levels aggravate respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, reduce lung function, increase mortality (e.g., lung cancer), and result in reduced lung function growth in children.

The ambient air quality in a given area depends on the quantities of pollutants emitted within the area, transport of pollutants to and from surrounding areas, local and regional meteorological conditions, as well as the surrounding topography of the air basin. Air quality is described by the concentration of various pollutants in the atmosphere. Units of concentration are generally expressed in parts per million (ppm) or micrograms per cubic meter (μg/m3).
4.3.1.1 Regulatory Overview

As required by the Federal Clean Air Act, National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have been established for six major air pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), O3, particulate matter including respirable particulate matter (PM10) and fine particulate matter (PM2.5), and sulfur oxides. Pursuant to the California Clean Air Act, the State of California has established the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). The standards establish the concentration at which a pollutant is known to cause adverse health effects to sensitive groups within the population, such as children and the elderly. The “primary” standards have been established to protect the public health. The “secondary” standards are intended to protect the nation’s welfare and account for air pollutant effects on soil, water, visibility, materials, vegetation and other aspects of the general welfare. For some pollutants, the CAAQS and NAAQS are similar. For other pollutants, the CAAQS are more stringent. In addition, the CAAQS incorporate a margin of safety to protect sensitive individuals. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency promulgated national PM2.5 standards in 1997.

In addition to the criteria pollutants discussed above, Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) are another group of pollutants of concern. TACs are found in ambient air, especially in urban areas, and are caused by industry, agriculture, fuel combustion, and commercial operations (e.g., dry cleaners). TACs are typically found in low concentrations, even near their source (e.g., diesel particulate matter near a freeway). Because chronic exposure can result in adverse health effects, TACs are regulated at the regional, state, and federal level. Diesel exhaust is the predominant TAC in urban air and is estimated to represent about three-quarters of the cancer risk from TACs (based on the Bay Area average).

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) coordinates and oversees both state and federal air quality control programs in California. The CARB establishes state air quality standards, monitors existing air quality, limits allowable emissions from mobile and stationary sources, and is responsible for developing the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The CARB has divided the state into many single and multi-county air basins. The City of Santa Clara is located in Santa Clara County, which is under the jurisdiction of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) in the San Francisco Air Basin.

On September 15, 2010, the BAAQMD adopted the Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan, which serves to update the Bay Area ozone plan (2005 Ozone Strategy) to comply with state air quality planning requirements to include all feasible measures to reduce emissions of ozone precursors. The Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan also provides an integrated, multi-pollutant strategy to improve air quality, and protect public health and the climate. The Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan includes 55 measures for reducing pollution, including stationary source measures, mobile source measures, transportation control measures, land use and local impact measures, and energy and climate measures.
BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines

The analysis in this Initial Study is based upon the methodologies and thresholds in the BAAQMD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines.

4.3.1.2 Existing Air Quality

BAAQMD monitors air quality conditions at 31 locations throughout the Bay Area. The nearest air monitoring station to the project site is the San Jose Central Monitoring Station. The latest published four year period of monitoring and highest air pollutant concentrations measured for this station is from 2009 through 2012. Ozone concentrations exceeded the 8-hour NAAQS three times in 2010. Ozone concentrations exceeded the state 1-hour standard five times in 2010 and once in 2011 and 2012. The state 8-hour ozone standard was exceeded three times in 2010. The state PM\(_{10}\) standard was exceeded once in 2012. The federal PM\(_{2.5}\) standard was exceeded three times each in 2010 and 2011, and twice in 2012.

The project site is located in an area which experiences violations of federal and state air quality standards on various occasions each year. Specifically, the San Francisco Bay Area experiences violations of standards for ozone and particulates. The number of violations per year varies due to meteorological conditions. The region is, however, in attainment with regard to carbon monoxide.

4.3.1.3 Sensitive Receptors

There are groups of people more affected by air pollution than others. CARB has identified the following persons who are most likely to be affected by air pollution: children under 14, the elderly over 65, athletes, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Locations that may contain a high concentration of these sensitive population groups include residential areas, hospitals, daycare facilities, elder care facilities, elementary schools, and parks. Sensitive receptors near the project site include the residential uses along the expressway, and the Carden Academy grade school located at the northeast corner of Homestead Road and the expressway, as shown on Figure 3.

4.3.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AIR QUALITY</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1, 2, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Conflict with or obstruct</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implementation of the applicable air quality plan?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

| AIR QUALITY |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Would the project: | | | | Source(s) |
| 2) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? | | | | 6 |
| 3) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is classified as non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors? | | | | 6 |
| 4) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | | | | 1,2,6 |
| 5) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? | | | | 1,2,6 |

4.3.2.1 Regional and Local Impacts

Criteria Pollutants

The Bay Area is considered a non-attainment area for O₃ and PM₂.₅ under both the Federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act. The area is also considered non-attainment for respirable particulates or PM₁₀ under the California Clean Air Act, but not the Federal act. The Bay Area has attained both state and federal ambient air quality standards for CO. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a net increase in criteria pollutants.

Operational Emissions

Use of the proposed trail by pedestrian and bicyclists would not generate any air pollutants and, as a result, would have no impact on local or regional air quality. Expansion of the trail system and enhancement of existing pedestrian facilities could result in increased trail usage which would incrementally reduce traffic trips in the project area. Any decrease in automobile trips associated with the proposed project would be a beneficial impact.

4.3.2.2 Construction-Related Impacts

Construction Emissions

Construction of the proposed trail and pedestrian improvements would involve demolition of the existing walls and pork chop islands, site grading, trenching, paving, boring, privacy wall
construction, and landscape planting. Construction would occur over the course of approximately six to nine months beginning in late-2014.

Construction activities such as excavation and grading operations, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth would generate exhaust emissions and fugitive particulate matter. Construction activities are also a source of organic gas emissions. Solvents in adhesives, non-water-based paints, thinners, and some caulking materials would evaporate into the atmosphere and would participate in the photochemical reaction that creates urban ozone. Construction activities would temporarily affect local air quality, causing a temporary increase in particulate dust and other emissions, which may result in temporary nuisances to the adjacent land uses.

Implementation of the measures recommended by BAAQMD and listed below would reduce the air quality impacts associated with grading and new construction to a less than significant.

**Standard Measures:** The project includes the following measures during all phases of construction to minimize emissions and fugitive dust:

- All exposed surfaces (e.g., parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered two times per day.
- All haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site shall be covered.
- All visible mud or dirt track-out onto adjacent public roads shall be removed using wet power vacuum street sweepers at least once per day. The use of dry power sweeping is prohibited.
- All vehicle speeds on unpaved roads/areas shall be limited to 15 mph.
- All roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as possible.
- Idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to five minutes (as required by the California airborne toxics control measure Title 13, Section 2485 of California Code of Regulations [CCR]). Clear signage shall be provided for construction workers at all access points.
- All construction equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer’s specifications. All equipment shall be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition prior to operation.
- Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact at the Lead Agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The Air District’s phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

**Odors**

Objectionable odors are typically associated with wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfills, feedlots and dairies, and industrial facilities. No such facilities or any other sources of offensive odors have been identified in proximity to the project site. Construction activities may cause localized odors that would be temporary and are not anticipated to result in frequent odor complaints. Project operation would not create odors that would be objectionable to a substantial number of people.
4.3.3 **Conclusion**

The proposed project would not result in long-term local or regional air quality impacts. Short-term, construction-related air quality impacts would not be significant with implementation of dust and emission control measures included in the project. **(Less Than Significant Impact)**
4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The majority of the project route is highly disturbed and includes streets, driveways, sidewalks, and landscaped areas.

4.4.1 Setting

4.4.1.1 Biotic Resources on the Project Site

The project site is urban in nature and consists primarily of pavement, landscaping, and small patches of bare ground. Vegetation located along the sides of the road and in the medians separating the roadway provides marginal habitat for animal species adapted to human encroachment and activity. These animal species include mourning dove, house finch, blue jays, robins, and ground squirrels.

The project route lacks any suitable habitat for special status plant species and is not located within an area protected by an approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

4.4.1.2 Special-Status Animals

The hardscape within the project footprint has negligible habitat value for most wildlife species due to frequent human disturbance and lack of forage or cover. The expressway consistently experiences moderate volumes of traffic, precluding most wildlife use of these areas. Utility poles and lines located within the project boundaries provide perching opportunities for birds. The project route lacks any suitable habitat for special status animals.

4.4.1.3 Trees

A tree survey was completed by David J. Powers & Associates for the project route in April 2012. Approximately 182 trees are located within the project right-of-way of the west side of the expressway. The trees on-site include a mix of redwood, oak, walnut, pine, fruit, palm, and eucalyptus.

4.4.2 Regulatory Setting

As it relates to land use decisions, “biological resources” generally include plant and animal species and the habitats that support such species. Due to the importance of California’s native ecological systems from a biological, heritage, and economic standpoint, impacts on such resources - especially those that are rare or those with high ecological values - are considered an adverse environmental impact under CEQA.

Individual plant and animal species listed as rare, threatened, or endangered under state and federal Endangered Species Acts, and the natural communities or habitats that support them, are of particular concern. Other sensitive, natural communities (such as wetlands, riparian woodlands, and oak woodland) that are critical to wildlife or ecosystem function are also key biological resources.
In urban areas, planted and native trees that comprise the "urban forest" also provide a range of values. From a biological perspective, urban trees provide habitat for urban-adapted wildlife.

The avoidance and mitigation of significant impacts to biological resources under CEQA is consistent with - and complementary to - various federal, state, and local laws/regulations that are designed to protect such resources. These regulations often mandate that project sponsors obtain permits prior to the commencement of development activities, with measures to avoid and/or mitigate impacts required as permit conditions.

### 4.4.2.1 County of Santa Clara Tree Policies

The County of Santa Clara Tree Preservation and Removal Ordinance (County Code, §C16-1 to §C16-17) serves to protect all trees having a main trunk or stem measuring 37.7 inches or greater in circumference (12 inches or more in diameter) at a height of 4.5 feet above ground level, or in the case of multi-trunk trees, a total of 75.4 inches in circumference (24 inches or more of the diameter).

In addition, any tree that because of its history, girth, height, species, or other unique quality, is considered significant to the community or recommended by the historic commission can be designated as a heritage tree and, therefore, deemed protected and preserved. Santa Clara County requires that a replanting or revegetation plan be submitted for all trees to be removed (County Code, §C16.7 (e)). If the trees to be removed are native species, then replacement by the same species is requested if feasible. Replacement trees should be like for like, and oak trees shall be replaced with oak trees, no exceptions taken. For non-native species, the County Planning Department may determine the species for planting.

Section C16-3(g) of the Santa Clara County Code states that trees protected by the Santa Clara County Tree Preservation and Removal policy include any tree, regardless of size, within road rights-of-way and easements of the County, whether within or outside the unincorporated territory of the County. Depending on the location of each tree affected by the project, replacement of the removed tree may be required.

The Santa Clara County Tree Protection and Preservation Guidelines include general tree replacement ratios, stated below. All healthy native trees 12 inches in diameter or more (at 4.5 feet above the ground) proposed for removal shall be replaced. The Guidelines note that tree replacement ratios may vary for each project.

- For the removal of one small tree (5–18 inch diameter): (3) 15 gallon trees, or (2) 24-inch box trees.
- For the removal of one medium tree (18–24 inches): (4) 15 gallon trees or (3) 24-inch box trees.
- For the removal of a tree larger than 24 inches: (5) 15 gallon trees or (4) 24-inch box trees.
### 4.4.3 Environmental Checklist and Discussion

#### BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would the project:</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) 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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>1,2,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4.3.1 Impacts to Trees

The proposed project would require the removal of approximately 128 trees from the west side of the expressway. Ten of these trees are not large enough to be considered “protected” trees by the County. The following measures, consistent with Santa Clara County Code, are included in the project to address the loss of trees:

Standard Measures:

- Under the Santa Clara County tree protection ordinance (Division C16, Tree Preservation and Removal), a protected tree is any tree on any property owned or leased by the County, which measures over 37.7 inches in circumference (12 inches or more in diameter) measured at 4.5 feet above the ground, or which exceeds 20 feet in height. It is unlawful for any person to remove any protected tree on any private or public property without first obtaining an administrative permit. In accordance with Section C16.7 of the Ordinance Code, a replanting and/or re-vegetation plan for all trees to be removed is required.

- Protected trees would be replaced as defined by the County. The ratio of trees removed to trees planted shall be determined by Santa Clara County. The species and size of trees to be planted will be consistent with County policies. An option is to plant County/City supplied replacement trees on adjacent private properties.

4.4.3.2 Impacts to Special Status Animals

The proposed project site is in a highly urbanized area with only minimal landscape vegetation on-site. The site does not contain any habitat that would support endangered or special status species. There are no wetlands on-site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not impact special status or endangered species or any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community.

The project would not conflict with any adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan.

Raptor species (birds of prey) and their nests are protected under both federal and state laws and regulations. Most of the project area is developed with residential uses with high traffic volumes on the expressway; however there is a chance that raptors may occur in the project area as uncommon to rare visitors, migrants, or transients, or may forage along the project route while breeding in adjacent areas. The project site represents only a very small proportion of the suitable habitat available for these species regionally, and thus the project will have no measurable effect on regional populations of any of these species. Tree removal may reduce the likelihood that raptors may nest in the project area. Project construction has the potential to take nests, eggs, young, or individuals of protected bird species.

Impact BIO-1: Construction disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile bird eggs or nestlings. (Significant Impact)
Project-Specific Mitigation Measures:

The following mitigation measures are included in the project to reduce impacts to raptors associated with project implementation and construction activities to a less than significant level:

**MM BIO-1.1:** If possible, construction shall be scheduled between October and December (inclusive) to avoid the raptor nesting season. If this is not possible, pre-construction surveys for nesting raptors shall be completed as described below, by a qualified ornithologist to identify active raptor nests that may be disturbed during tree removal and project implementation.

- Between January and April pre-construction surveys for raptors shall be completed no more than 14 days prior to the initiation of construction activities or tree relocation or removal. Between May and August (inclusive), pre-construction surveys no more than thirty (30) days prior to the initiation of these activities.

- If an active raptor nest is found in any large tree along the project route, the ornithologist, shall, in consultation with the State of California, Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW), designate a construction-free buffer zone (typically 250 feet) around the nest.

- A report indicating the results of the survey and any designated buffer zones shall be prepared and submitted prior to grading and construction.

**4.4.4 Conclusion**

The proposed project includes mitigation measures to reduce or avoid impacts to protected species. Therefore, the project would not result in significant impacts to biological resources within the project area. (Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation)
4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.5.1 Setting

Although there are no existing conditions or immediate evidence that would suggest the presence of historic resources, the project site is located in a culturally sensitive area due to known prehistoric and historic occupation of Santa Clara and proximity to the nearby San Tomas Aquino Creek. Native American settlements are commonly associated with the abundant food supply in the Santa Clara Valley. San Tomas Aquino Creek transverses the project area, which increases the likelihood that historic artifacts may be located along the project route. Aside from the sites already identified within the City of Santa Clara, there may be other undiscovered archaeological sites. In addition, historic occupation of Santa Clara has been well documented, and the City has a strong record reflecting early settlement by Spanish missionaries.

There are no known historic buildings or structures along the project route.5

Geology under the project route consists of natural levee deposits (Qhl) and alluvial fan deposits (Qhf2) of the Holocene age.6 Geologic units of the Holocene age are generally not considered sensitive for paleontological resources, because biological remains younger than 10,000 years are not usually considered fossils.7 Therefore, it is highly unlikely that the site contains any paleontological resources.

4.5.1.1 Regulatory Setting

County of Santa Clara General Plan

The Santa Clara County General Plan (1995-2010) includes Resource Conservation chapters in its General Plan (Book A) and Rural Unincorporated Areas & Issues Policies (Book B) components. These chapters outline strategies, policies, and implementation mechanisms for identifying, protecting, and preserving cultural resources. Protecting cultural resources under the County General Plan consists of three general strategies:

- Inventory and evaluation of cultural resources
- Prevention or minimization of adverse impacts to cultural resources
- Restoration, enhancement, and commemoration of cultural resources

Policies protecting archaeological resources include:

R-RC 85 No heritage resource shall knowingly be allowed to be destroyed or lost through a discretionary action (zoning, subdivision site approval, grading permit, building permit, etc.) of the County of Santa Clara unless: (a) the site or resource has been

6 Ibid.
reviewed by experts and the County Historic Heritage Commission and has been found to be of insignificant value; or (b) there is an overriding public benefit from the project and compensating mitigation to offset the loss is made part of the project.

R-RC 86 Projects in areas found to have heritage resources shall be conditioned and designed to avoid loss or degradation of the resources. Where conflict with the resource is unavoidable, mitigation measures that offset the impact may be imposed.

County of Santa Clara Resource Protection Ordinance

The Santa Clara County ordinance regarding archaeological resource protection (Division B14 Parks and Recreation, Chapter II Resource Protection, Article 5 Geological; Archaeological) states that no person shall dig or remove any dirt, stone, rock, archeological artifacts or other substance, or make any excavation or quarry any stone, or cause or assist in or set off any explosive or expansive materials within any park area without a written permit issued by the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department or designated representative.

4.5.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CULTURAL RESOURCES</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in §15064.5?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,2,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource as defined in §15064.5?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site, or unique geologic feature?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.2.1 Impacts to Cultural Resources

The site has a moderate potential for containing both historic and prehistoric buried archaeological resources and human remains due to known prehistoric and historic occupation of Santa Clara, and the proximity of the project site to San Tomas Aquino Creek. County policies and codes are in place for the protection of archaeological resources. Since the project site is in an archaeologically sensitive area, the proposed project will be subject to the requirements of these policies and codes.

Impact CUL-1: Construction activities could disturb unknown buried archaeological resources. (Significant Impact)
Project-Specific Mitigation Measures:

The County proposes to implement the following mitigation measures to reduce impacts to archaeological resources to a less than significant level. These measures are consistent with City of Santa Clara regulations concerning impacts to archaeological resources.

**MM CUL – 1.1:** Should previously unidentified historic or prehistoric archaeological resources be discovered during construction, the contractor shall cease work in the immediate area and a qualified archaeologist shall be contacted. The qualified archaeologist shall assess the significance of the find and make mitigation recommendations (e.g., manual excavation of the immediate area), if warranted.

Construction monitoring shall be conducted at any time ground-disturbing activities (greater than 12-inches in depth) are taking place in the immediate vicinity of archaeological resources discovered as described above. This includes tree or tree-root removal, landscape irrigation installation, privacy wall foundations, and utility line excavation.

If data recovery does not produce evidence of significant archaeological resources within the project area, further mitigation shall be limited to construction monitoring, unless additional testing or other specific mitigation measures are determined by a qualified archaeologist to be necessary to ensure avoidance of damage to significant archaeological resources. A technical report of findings describing the results of all monitoring shall be prepared in accordance with professional standards. The archaeological monitoring program shall be implemented by an individual meeting the Secretary of Interior Professional Qualifications Standards in Archaeology (36 CFR 61); individual field monitors shall be qualified in the recognition of archaeological resources of both the historic and/or prehistoric periods and possess sufficient academic and field training as required to conduct the work effectively and without undue delay.

**MM CUL – 1.2:** In the event that human skeletal remains are encountered, the County Coroner shall be notified per County Ordinance No. B6-18. Upon determination by the County Coroner that the remains are Native American, the coroner shall contact the California Native American Heritage Commission, pursuant to subdivision (c) of section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code and the County Coordinator of Indian affairs. No further disturbance of the site can be made except as authorized by the County coroner. If artifacts are found on the site, a qualified archaeologist shall be contacted.

**4.5.3 Conclusion**

With implementation of the above described project mitigation measures, the project will have a less than significant impact on cultural resources. *(Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation)*
4.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

4.6.1 Setting

4.6.1.1 Geological Features

The project site is located in the Santa Clara Valley between the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west and Diablo/Mount Hamilton Range to the east. The valley trends north to south, and is typified by flat, mostly urbanized terrain cut by northward-draining rivers and creeks. The project route generally slopes in the northwest direction, having an elevation ranging from approximately 75 feet in the north to 100 feet in the south.

The Santa Clara Valley is located within the Coast Ranges geomorphic province of California; an area characterized by northwest-trending ridges and valleys, underlain by strongly deformed sedimentary and metamorphic rocks of the Franciscan Complex. Overlying these rocks are sediments deposited during recent geologic times. The Santa Clara Valley consists of a large structural basin containing alluvial deposits derived from the Diablo Range to the east and the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west. Alluvial deposits are interbedded with bay and lacustrine (lake) deposits in the north-central region. The area is situated on alluvial fan deposits of the Santa Clara Valley, consisting of gravel, sand, and finer sediments. Along the major streams are natural levee deposits consisting of silt and clay over which man-made engineered levees have been constructed for flood control. Geology under the project site consists of natural levee deposits (Qhl) and alluvial fan deposits (Qhf2) of the Holocene age.8

4.6.1.2 Geologic Conditions

Soils

Soils along the project route consist of moderately well to somewhat exclusively drained, medium to fine textured soils of the alluvial plains and fans. This well-drained soil has a moderate expansion potential. Expansive soils shrink and swell as a result of moisture changes, which can cause heaving and cracking of slabs-on-grade, pavements, and structures found on shallow foundations.

There is no erosion hazard associated with the soils on the site. The project route is located outside of the Santa Clara County Geologic Hazard Zones for compressible soil, landslides, and dike failure.9

Seismicity and Seismic Hazards

The project site is located in the seismically active Santa Clara County, which is designated as Seismic Activity Zone 4 (most seismically active zone in the United States) by the Uniform Building Code. The faults in the region are capable of generating earthquakes of magnitude 7.0 or higher.

Therefore, it is expected that earthquakes in the region could produce very strong ground shaking in the project area during the life of the proposed project.

The project site is not located within a State of California Earthquake Fault Zone.\textsuperscript{10} The major faults in the area are the Hayward Fault, Calaveras Fault, Monte Vista Shannon Fault, and the San Andreas Fault. There are no active faults within the area; therefore, it is reasonable to assume that ground rupture will not occur on or adjacent to the proposed project site.

**Liquefaction**

Soil liquefaction is a phenomenon in which generally saturated, cohesionless soils undergo a temporary decrease in strength during earthquake ground shaking and acquire a degree of mobility sufficient to permit ground deformation. In extreme cases, the soil particles can become suspended in groundwater, resulting in the deposit becoming mobile and fluid-like. Soils most susceptible to liquefaction are loose, uniformly graded, saturated, fine-grained sands that lie close to the ground surface. The project route is within the zone of moderate liquefaction hazard identified by the County of Santa Clara pursuant to the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act.\textsuperscript{11}

**Lateral Spreading**

Lateral spreading is a type of ground failure related to liquefaction. It consists of the horizontal displacement of flat-lying alluvial material toward an open area, such as a steep bank of a stream channel. Lateral-spreading usually occurs on mild slopes with underlying loose sands and a shallow groundwater table. The potential of lateral spreading generally mirrors the liquefaction potential of the area.


### Environmental Checklist and Discussion

#### GEOLOGY AND SOILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would the project:</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as described 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.)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Strong seismic ground shaking?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Landslides?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) 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?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>7,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6.2.1 **Geologic and Soil Conditions**

As described above, the project route has moderately expansive soils, which may expand and contract with changes in soil moisture conditions. Damage resulting from expansive soil conditions can be avoided by incorporating appropriate standard engineering practices into the project design.

The proposed project would involve typical excavation and grading practices necessary to construct the trail. There are no other geologic features on the site that would pose special or unique hazards to users of the trail. The project will implement standard engineering practices to ensure that geotechnical and soil hazards do not result from its construction.

4.6.2.2 **Seismicity and Seismic Hazards**

Given its location within a seismically active region, it is expected that the project route would be subject to significant seismic events over the life of the project. During an earthquake on one of the region’s active faults, strong ground shaking and liquefaction could occur at the site. The ground shaking hazard is not unique to the project site because it applies throughout the greater Bay Area.

Because the project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone and no major faults have been mapped in the immediate vicinity of the route, the likelihood of ground rupture from faulting across the project route is low.

To avoid or minimize potential damage from seismic shaking and seismic-related hazards, including liquefaction, the proposed project will be designed and constructed in conformance with the County guidelines for Seismic Zone 4, the Caltrans Standard Specifications, and the most recent California Building Code. Therefore, the proposed project would have less than significant seismic-related impacts.

The potential for liquefaction occurring at the project site during seismic shaking is moderate. If liquefiable soils are present and potentially capable of significant seismic reconsolidation, construction methods will be used to help mitigate the potential for disruption due to liquefaction-induced settlement, including the choice of materials and installation techniques modified to reduce the potential impacts of liquefaction-induced settlement. With the adjustment of materials and techniques, as necessary, liquefaction is expected to have a less than significant impact.

4.6.2.3 **Other Geologic and Soil Considerations**

Since the project site is relatively flat and the existing slopes have established landscaping to help control erosion, there is no erosion hazard associated with the soils on the site. The project route is located outside of the Santa Clara County Geologic Hazard Zones for compressible soil, landslides, and dike failure.12

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Since the proposed project would not generate any wastewater in operation, impacts associated with the ability of the soils to support septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would not occur.

4.6.3 Conclusion

The project will incorporate standard engineering practices into the design and construction of the proposed trail. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in significant geologic or seismic-related impacts. (Less Than Significant Impact)
4.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

4.7.1 Setting and Regulatory Overview

This section provides a general discussion of global climate change and focuses on emissions from human activities that alter the chemical composition of the atmosphere. The discussion on global climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is based upon the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill [AB] 32), the 2006 and 2009 Climate Action Team (CAT) reports to Governor Schwarzenegger and the Legislature, and research, information and analysis completed by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United States Environmental Protection Agency, CARB, CAT, and BAAQMD.

Global climate change refers to changes in weather including temperatures, precipitation, and wind patterns. Global temperatures are modulated by naturally occurring and anthropogenic (generated by mankind) atmospheric gases such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane, and NOₓ. These gases allow sunlight into the Earth’s atmosphere but prevent heat from radiating back out into outer space and escaping from the earth’s atmosphere, thus altering the Earth’s energy balance. This phenomenon is known as the “greenhouse” effect.

Naturally occurring GHGs include water vapor, CO₂, methane, NOₓ, and O₃. Several classes of halogenated substances that contain fluorine, chlorine, or bromine are also GHGs, but are for the most part solely a product of industrial activities.

Agencies at the international, national, state, and local levels are considering strategies to control emissions of gases that contribute to global warming. There is no comprehensive strategy that is being implemented on a global scale that addresses climate change; however, in California the multi-agency CAT, has identified a range of strategies and the Air Resources Board (ARB), under AB 32, has approved the Climate Change Scoping Plan. AB 32 requires achievement by 2020 of a statewide GHG emissions limit equivalent to 1990 emissions, and the adoption of rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions. The ARB and other state agencies are currently working on regulations and other initiatives to implement the Scoping Plan. In late-January 2014, CARB plans to release the draft proposed Scoping Plan Update and Environmental Assessment. CARB will provide a status update to the Board in February 2014, which will include additional opportunities for stakeholder feedback and public comment. In Spring 2014, CARB will hold a board hearing to consider the Final Scoping Plan Update and

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14 Concentrations of water are highly variable in the atmosphere over time, with water occurring as vapor, cloud droplets and ice crystals. Changes in its concentration are also considered to be a result of climate feedbacks rather than a direct result of industrialization or other human activities. For this reason, water vapor is not discussed further as a greenhouse gas.

15 A San Francisco Superior Court order under Association of Irritated Residents et al. v. CARB (March 2010) requires the California Air Resources Board to complete additional environmental review before implementing the Cap and Trade Program outlined in the Climate Change Scoping Plan.
Environmental Assessment. By 2050, the state plans to reduce emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

The California Natural Resources Agency, as required under state law (Public Resources Code section 21083.05), has amended the State CEQA Guidelines to address the analysis and mitigation of GHG emissions. In the recently adopted changes to the CEQA Guidelines, Lead Agencies retain discretion to determine the significance of impacts from GHG emissions based upon individual circumstances. Neither CEQA nor the CEQA Guidelines provide a specific methodology for analysis of GHGs and under the 2010 amendments to the CEQA Guidelines, a Lead Agency may describe, calculate, or estimate GHG emissions resulting from a project and use a model and/or qualitative analysis or performance based standards to assess impacts.

Given the global scope of global climate change, the challenge under CEQA is for a Lead Agency to translate the issue down to the level of a CEQA document for a specific project in a way that is meaningful to the decision making process. Under CEQA, the essential questions are whether a project creates or contributes to an environmental impact or is subject to impacts from the environment in which it would occur, and what mitigation measures are available to avoid or reduce impacts.

4.7.1.1  **BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines**

BAAQMD adopted an updated version of its CEQA air quality thresholds (June 2010) and developed guidelines for assessing and mitigating impacts under CEQA, including thresholds for GHG emissions. Under the June 2010 threshold, if a project would result in operational-related GHG emissions of 1,100 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents a year or more (MT of CO2e/yr), or 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per service population (residents and employees) per a year, it would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to GHG emissions and result in a cumulatively significant impact to global climate change. A threshold for stationary sources\(^\text{16}\) of 10,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents a year also was adopted. BAAQMD does not have an adopted threshold of significance for construction-related GHG emissions.

As discussed above in Section 4.3 Air Quality the analysis in this IS is based upon the general methodologies in the most recent BAAQMD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (dated May 2012) and numeric thresholds for the San Francisco Bay Basin.

4.7.1.3  **Existing GHG Emissions**

San Tomas Expressway has three through lanes in each direction between El Camino Real and Homestead Road and is surrounded by residential and commercial land uses. The project site is adjacent to this existing roadway and does not itself “generate” GHG emissions.

\(^{16}\) Stationary sources, such as boilers and emergency backup generators, burn fuels and directly emit greenhouse gases from combustion.
### 4.7.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,2,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,2,6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.7.2.1 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impacts

GHG emissions from the proposed project would include emissions from construction of the project. Given the overwhelming scope of global climate change, it is not anticipated that a single development project would have an individually discernable effect on global climate change. It is more appropriate to conclude that the GHG emissions generated by the proposed project would combine with emissions across the state, nation, and globe to cumulatively contribute to global climate change.

**Construction Emissions**

The proposed project would result in minor increases in GHGs associated with construction activities. Construction GHG emissions include emissions produced as a result of material processing, emissions produced by on-site construction equipment, and emissions arising from traffic delays due to construction. These emissions would be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases. Construction of the proposed trail would not significantly contribute to regional GHG levels and would not impact the state’s ability to meet the GHG emissions reduction goals established by AB 32.

**Operational Emissions**

Use of the proposed trail by pedestrians and bicyclists would not generate any pollutant emissions and, as a result, would not increase GHG emissions. Expansion of the trail system and enhancement of existing pedestrian facilities could result in increased trail usage which would incrementally reduce traffic trips in the project area. Any decrease in automobile trips associated with the proposed project would be a beneficial impact.
The proposed project would not conflict with any existing GHG laws, plans, policies, or regulations adopted by the California legislature, the CARB, or BAAQMD. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

4.7.3 Conclusion

The project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHGs. The proposed project would not result in a significant impact from GHG emissions. (Less Than Significant Impact)
4.8 **HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

The following section is in part based on a Phase I Initial Site Assessment prepared by *Parikh Consultants, Inc.* (May 2012). The report is available for review at the County of Santa Clara Roads and Airports Department office.

4.8.1 **Setting**

Hazardous materials are commonly used by agriculture, large institutions, commercial, and industrial businesses, and to a lesser extent, residences. Hazardous materials include a broad range of common substances such as motor oil and fuel, pesticides, detergents, paint, and solvents. A substance may be considered hazardous if, due to its chemical and/or physical properties, it poses a substantial hazard when it is improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or released into the environment in the event of an accident.

4.8.1.1 **Historic Uses**

Based on historical aerial photographs reviewed, it appears that the land uses in the project vicinity included agricultural and residential development since the early 1950’s. Review of a 1953 USGS map shows the area along the expressway predominantly covered by orchards. Post 1961, the USGS maps show the project area generally includes roadways and residential development.

4.8.1.2 **Regulatory Database Review**

A search of environmental regulatory databases was conducted for the project area and surrounding properties. The database search was conducted by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) to determine whether documentation exists related to environmental incidents along the project route or surrounding properties. One site near the project route was identified on the Envirostar database as the Classic Dry Cleaners at the Pruneridge Shopping Center, approximately one mile south of Homestead Road. Although the groundwater has a northerly gradient in the project area, the contamination in the groundwater at this site is contained and the site is also too far up gradient to have an effect on the project area.

4.8.1.3 **Hazardous Materials on Site**

The project trail route is located in a highly urbanized, predominantly residential and commercial area of south Santa Clara. The project area has supported vehicular activity since the 1950s. It is highly likely that the surface soils along corridor are affected by deposition of aerial lead (ADL). Review of historical information indicates that the project site is built on previous farmlands. Historically, agricultural lands in Santa Clara County used large quantities of herbicides and pesticides including DDT and arsenic. These types of contaminants do not break down and accumulate in the soil over time. It is likely that the soils are impacted with pesticides and herbicides as a result of historical farming operations.
### 4.8.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 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?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,2,11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) 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?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) 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 for people residing or working in the project area?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1,12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would the project:</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8.2.1 Hazardous Materials Impacts

The proposed project would not result in the routine use or transport of hazardous materials within the project area or the release of hazardous materials into the environment. The proposed project would not increase the potential for wildland fires. The project site is located approximately two miles from the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport; however, the project site does not fall within the Comprehensive Land Use Plan safety zones or noise contours. Therefore, the project would not result in a safety hazard for people working in the project area.

Carden Academy grade school is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Homestead Road and the expressway. The proposed project includes constructing a trail adjacent to the western side of the expressway. Operations of the trail would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste, and therefore, would not impact the existing school.

Due to the vehicular activity on the expressway since the 1950s, the soils along the corridor are likely contaminated with lead from exhaust of cars burning leaded gasoline. Historically, the site was used for agricultural production and, as a result, residual contamination may be present in the native soil. Because of the amount of time that has elapsed since the farmlands were located on-site, the likelihood of fill material on-site, and the continual redevelopment of the area, if there are still lead or agricultural chemicals present in the native soil, they would not be in high enough concentrations to cause a significant impact to persons exposed to the soil. (Less Than Significant Impact)

4.8.3 Conclusion

There is no known hazardous materials contamination directly adjacent to the project site. Examination of the soil on the project site and proper treatment of any contaminated soils will ensure that implementation of the proposed project will not create any hazardous conditions on the project site and will not result in a significant hazardous materials impact. (Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation)

4.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

4.9.1 Setting

The San Tomas Aquino Creek concrete channel is located in the median of the expressway within the project area. A small segment of the project route near the El Camino Real intersection is located within the 100-year floodplain of San Tomas Aquino Creek.

Existing stormwater drains at most of the intersections along the project route eventually discharge into San Tomas Aquino Creek.

Groundwater depths in the project area are approximately 10 to 25 feet below ground surface. Fluctuations in groundwater levels may occur due to variations in ground surface topography, sub-surface geologic conditions and structure, rainfall, irrigation, and other factors. Groundwater flow in the project area is to the northwest, following the topography.

4.9.1.1 Regulatory Framework

The federal Clean Water Act and California’s Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act are the primary laws related to water quality. Regulations set forth by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) have been developed to fulfill the requirements of this legislation. EPA’s regulations include the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program which controls sources that discharge pollutants into Waters of the United States (e.g., streams, lakes, bays, etc.). These regulations are implemented at the regional level by water quality control boards, which for the Santa Clara area is the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Under Section 303(d) of the 1972 Clean Water Act, states are required to identify impaired surface water bodies and develop total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for contaminants of concern. The TMDL is the quantity of pollutant that can be safely assimilated by a water body without violating water quality standards. Listing of a water body as impaired does not necessarily suggest that the water body cannot support the beneficial uses; rather, the intent is to identify the water body as requiring future development of a TMDL to maintain water quality and reduce the potential for future water quality degradation. San Tomas Aquino Creek is not listed on the list of impaired water bodies.

NPDES Permit Programs

General Construction Permit

The SWRCB has implemented a NPDES General Construction Permit for the State of California. For projects disturbing one acre or more of soil, a Notice of Intent (NOI) and Storm Water Pollution

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18 California State Water Resources Control Board. Total Maximum Daily Load Program. 

19 Ibid.
Prevention Plan (SWPPP) must be prepared prior to commencement of construction. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground such as stockpiling or excavation.

Once grading begins, the SWPPP must be kept on-site and updated as needed while construction progresses. The SWPPP details the site-specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control erosion and sedimentation and maintain water quality during the construction phase. The SWPPP also contains a summary of the structural and non-structural BMPs to be implemented during the post-construction period, pursuant to the nonpoint source control practices and procedures encouraged by Santa Clara County and the RWQCB.

**Municipal Stormwater Permit**

The EPA has delegated management of NPDES requirements for municipal urban runoff discharges in California to the SWRCB and the nine RWQCB’s. Locally, each incorporated city and town in Santa Clara County joined with the County of Santa Clara and the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWd) to form the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP) and apply for a regional NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit. The SCVURPPP’s Municipal NPDES stormwater permit includes provisions requiring regulation of stormwater discharges associated with new development and development of an area-wide watershed management strategy. The permit also identifies recommended actions for the preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary.

Under the NPDES Municipal Storm Water Permit, projects that create, add, or replace 10,000 square feet or more of impervious surface area are required to control post-development stormwater through source control and treatment control BMPs. Additional requirements must be met by some large projects that create one acre or more of impervious surfaces (see Hydromodification discussion below).

**Low Impact Development**

Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater management strategy designed to manage runoff as close to its source as possible. LID incorporates a variety of natural and built features to reduce the rate of surface water runoff, filter pollutants out of runoff, facilitate infiltration of water into the ground surface, and reuse the water on-site. As of December 1, 2011, LID Treatment Control Measures (TCMs) replaced the previously-required post-construction/operation treatment control measures. TCMs are comprised of bio-treatment, harvesting and re-use of runoff on-site, infiltration, and evapotranspiration.

**Hydromodification**

Hydromodification is a change in stormwater runoff characteristics from a watershed caused by changes in land use conditions (i.e., urbanization) that alter the natural cycling of water. Changes in

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20 Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program. *Stormwater Pollution Control Requirements.* Updated December 5, 2005.
land use conditions can cause runoff volumes and velocity to increase which can result in a decrease in natural vegetation, changing of river/creek bank grades, soil compaction, and the creation of new drainages.

In addition to water quality controls, the SCVURPPP NPDES permit has hydromodification controls as defined in the Hydromodification Management Plan (HMP). The NPDES permit requires all new and redevelopment projects that create or replace one acre or more of impervious surface to manage development-related increases in peak runoff flow, volume, and duration, where such hydromodification is likely to cause increased erosion, silt pollutant generation, or other impacts to beneficial uses of local rivers, streams, and creeks. Projects may be deemed exempt from the permit requirements if they do not meet the size threshold, drain into tidally influenced areas or directly into the Bay, drain into hardened channels, or are infill projects in subwatersheds that are 65 percent or more impervious based on the SCVUPPP watershed map. According to the HMP Applicability Map for the City of Santa Clara, the proposed project route is located in a catchment draining to hardened channel and/or tidal areas. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from hydromodification requirements.

4.9.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>![X]</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>![X]</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>1,11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or off-site?</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>![Circle]</td>
<td>![X]</td>
<td>1,2,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would the project:</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or off-site?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☒ ☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☒ ☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☒ ☐</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☒</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☒</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☒</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Be subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☒</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.9.2.1 Flooding and Drainage

A small portion of the project would be constructed within the 100-year floodplain of San Tomas Aquino Creek. The proposed project will conform to the applicable County ordinance (i.e., Title C-Construction, Development, and Land Use; Division C12 Subdivision and Land Development; Chapter VII Floodplain Management; Article 3 General Provisions) regarding development within flood zones. The proposed privacy walls would replace the existing walls in their general location and, as a result, would not alter flood flow patterns in the project area. The concrete barrier between the trail and the roadway could temporarily slow flood water moving toward the trail, but would not preclude flood waters from moving west and would not significantly impede or redirect flood flows causing an increase in flooding in other areas. The proposed intersection improvements (i.e., removal of pork chop islands and relocation/installation of new traffic light poles) would have no measurable effect on flood flows in the area.
Therefore, implementation of the proposed project will not result in people or structures being exposed to any significant flood risk. The project route is not subject to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

The proposed project would utilize the existing drainage system for the area, including the stormwater drains at most of the intersections along the project route. The existing drainage inlets may need to be relocated and the storm drain lines extended to the new drainage inlets.

4.9.2.2 Groundwater

The project site is currently landscaped and does not contribute to the recharging of the groundwater aquifers. The project will not interfere with groundwater flow.

4.9.2.3 Water Quality

The installation of the spur trail would result in a small increase in existing pavement and urban stormwater runoff. Construction of the proposed project would result in temporary impacts to surface water quality by generating dust, litter, oil, grease, and other pollutants that could contaminate runoff from the site to San Tomas Aquino Creek. Construction activities would also result in the disturbance of underlying soils, thereby increasing the potential for sedimentation and erosion. The potential for water quality to be degraded is associated with debris and pollutants that could wind up in the existing storm drains, because the storm drainage systems discharge into San Tomas Aquino Creek.

Given the size of the project site and the amount of additional pavement, it is not anticipated that the proposed trail would provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff or result in significant long-term impacts to water quality. Furthermore, both construction-related and long-term BMPs to improve stormwater runoff quality would be included in the project per County standards. The project would require design and implementation of source control and treatment measures to reduce the discharge of stormwater pollutants into water bodies.

**Standard Measures:** The project proposes to implement the following standard measures to reduce or avoid water quality impacts:

**Construction Measures**

Prior to the commencement of construction activities, the project shall comply with the NPDES General Construction Activities Permit. A NOI will be filed with the SWRCB and a SWPPP will be prepared. The certified SWPPP shall be posted along the project route and will be updated as necessary to reflect current site conditions.

BMPs as specified in the California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbook shall be implemented (such as silt fences/straw waddles around the perimeter of the site, regular street cleaning, temporary cover of disturbed surfaces, and inlet protection) to reduce water quality impacts from construction activities.
Each phase of development shall include erosion- and dust-control during site preparation and all adjacent streets shall be kept free of dirt and mud during construction. All vegetation in disturbed areas will be replanted as quickly as possible, and all trucks hauling soil or other loose materials will be covered and/or at least two feet of freeboard shall be maintained.

**Post-Construction Measures**

- Prior to the issuance of permits, the project will provide details of specific BMPs, including, but not limited to, bioswales and landscaping to provide filtering and reduce impervious surface area.

- The project will comply with Provision C.3 of the NPDES permit, which provides enhanced performance standards for the management of stormwater of new development.

- All post-construction TCMs will be hydraulically sized to treat all runoff in accordance with County of Santa Clara numeric sizing criteria for pollutant removal treatment systems.

- All TCMs will be installed, operated, and maintained by qualified personnel. On-site inlets will be stenciled in conformance with County requirements and cleaned out a minimum of once per year, prior to the wet season.

**4.9.3 Conclusion**

The project would not result in significant hydrological impacts. The proposed project includes standard measures to reduce or avoid construction-related and post-construction impacts to water quality. *(Less Than Significant Impact)*
4.10 LAND USE

4.10.1 Setting

The proposed trail site is located in a highly urbanized, mainly residential area of south Santa Clara. Along the project site, the expressway is a highly utilized six-lane facility, owned and maintained by the County of Santa Clara. Land uses in the project area are primarily residential with some commercial, public/quasi-public, and multi-family residential, as shown Figure 3.

The project site is not located in an area protected by a habitat conservation plan.

4.10.1.1 Land Use Plan Designations

County of Santa Clara General Plan

The land uses adjacent to the project site are designated Urban Service Area in the Santa Clara County General Plan. Strategy #1 of the Santa Clara County General Plan Parks and Recreation section involves planning for trails in both urban and rural areas. Both the recreational and circulation functions of trails will become even more important as the urban and rural populations continue to grow, as recreational demand increases, and as air quality and traffic congestion create a greater need to reduce unnecessary automobile usage.

City of Santa Clara General Plan and Zoning Ordinance

The land uses adjacent to the project site are designated Very Low Density Residential and Medium Density Residential in the City of Santa Clara General Plan. The properties adjacent to the proposed trail route are zoned CT (Thoroughfare Commercial), R1-6L (Single Family), PD (Planned Development), and R3-25D (Moderate-Density Multiple Dwelling).

4.10.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

| LAND USE | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Information Source(s) |
|----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Would the project: | | | | |
| 1) Physically divide an established community? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | 1,2,4 |
| 2) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | 1,2,3,4 |
LAND USE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would the project:</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.10.2.1 **Land Use Compatibility**

The proposed project would result in a bicycle/pedestrian trail being constructed in a landscape area along a major roadway. The project would also make some minor modifications to the Benton Street/San Tomas Expressway intersection. The modifications to the intersection would not impact the operation of the roadway or the functionality of any adjacent land use. The project activities would not alter the existing land uses or physically divide an established community.

The Spur Trail would only be visible from the expressway. Project construction would be temporary and all disturbed/graded areas would be returned to pre-construction conditions, including landscaping. Replacement privacy walls are included in the project. The new privacy walls would be approximately four to five feet higher than the existing walls; however, the new height will allow for privacy as well as noise attenuation (refer to Section 4.12 Noise). The proposed project does not include any permanent features that would be inconsistent with existing land uses.

As described in the noise and air quality sections of this Initial Study, the trail project may also result in short-term construction-related noise and air quality impacts. Implementation of mitigation and avoidance measures, as described in those sections, would further reduce or avoid these impacts. For the reasons described above, the project would not result in significant land use compatibility impacts.

4.10.2.2 **Conformance with Land Use Plans**

**County of Santa Clara General Plan**

The proposed project includes the extension of the existing Spur Trail that runs along the west side of San Tomas Aquino Creek and San Tomas Expressway. The proposed project would close a gap in a current non-motorized transportation route and provide outdoor recreation opportunities to residents in the area. Therefore, it would be consistent with the County’s General Plan.

**City of Santa Clara General Plan and Zoning Designations**

Construction of the Spur Trail would foster the movement of people in the community via alternative transportation modes. For this reason, it is determined that the proposed project is not inconsistent with the City of Santa Clara’s General Plan.

The proposed project would not be inconsistent with the zoning designations for the properties along the project route. The Spur Trail site is presently used as landscaping and the location of the existing
soundwalls along San Tomas Expressway. The Spur Trail would not change the adjacent land uses or the zoning designations. For these reasons, the project is not inconsistent with the City of Santa Clara’s Zoning Ordinance. It does not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or habitat conservation plan.

4.10.3 Conclusion

The proposed project would not result in significant impacts associated with land use compatibility. (Less Than Significant Impact)
4.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

4.11.1 Setting

The State Office of Mine Reclamation’s list of mines (the AB 3098 List) regulated under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) does not include any mines within the City of Santa Clara.\(^{22}\) The Santa Clara Valley was formed when sediments derived from the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Mt. Hamilton-Diablo Range were exposed by continued tectonic uplift and regression of the inland sea that had previously inundated this area. As a result of this process, the topography of the City is relatively flat and there are no known mineral resources. The project site is within a highly developed urban area. No record exists of gravel or other mineral resource extraction in the project route area.

4.11.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MINERAL RESOURCES</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☒️</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 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?</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☒️</td>
<td>1,2,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.11.2.1 Impacts to Mineral Resources

The project site is not located within a designated area containing mineral deposits of regional significance and therefore, would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in impacts to mineral resources.

4.11.3 Conclusion

The proposed project would not result in a significant impact from the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. (No Impact)

4.12 NOISE

4.12.1 Setting

4.12.1.1 Background Information

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. Airborne sound is a rapid fluctuation of air pressure above and below atmospheric pressure. Sound levels are usually measured and expressed in decibels (dB) with 0 dB corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing. Intense sounds of 140 dB are so loud that they are painful and can cause damage with only a brief exposure. These extremes are not commonplace in our normal working and living environments.

The method commonly used to quantify environmental sounds consists of evaluating all of the frequencies of a sound in accordance with a weighting that reflects the fact that human hearing is less sensitive at low frequencies and extreme high frequencies than in the frequency mid-range. This is called "A" weighting, and the decibel level so measured is called the A-weighted sound level (dBA). To describe the time-varying character of environmental noise, a single number descriptor called the Leq is also widely used. The Leq is the average A-weighted noise level during a stated period of time.

To account for human sensitivity to nighttime noise levels, a descriptor, day/night average sound level (DNL) was developed. The DNL divides the 24-hour day into the daytime of 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM and the nighttime of 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM. The nighttime noise level is weighted 10 dB higher than the daytime noise level. Noise levels occurring at night are treated as though they were 10 dB higher than they actually are because most household noise decreases at night and exterior noise becomes very noticeable. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is another 24-hour average which includes both an evening and nighttime weighting.

Groundborne Vibration

Ground vibration consists of rapidly fluctuating motions or waves with an average motion of zero. The Peak Particle Velocity (PPV) is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration wave. The PPV vibration velocity amplitudes are used to evaluate human response to vibration. A PPV descriptor with units of millimeters per second (mm/sec.) or inches per second (in/sec.) is used to evaluate construction generated vibration for building damage and human complaints. Low-level vibrations frequently cause irritating secondary vibration, such as a slight rattling of windows, doors, or stacked dishes.

4.12.1.2 Applicable Noise Standards and Policies

County of Santa Clara General Plan

The County of Santa Clara’s General Plan sets forth noise and land use compatibility standards for proposed land uses in the Health and Safety section. The County establishes 55 dBA Ldn as the noise level limit that is compatible with residential and 60 dBA Ldn for educational land uses. The County also establishes 65 dBA Ldn as the noise level limit that is compatible with recreational and 70 dBA...
Ldn for commercial land uses. The C-HS(i) 25 policy in the General Plan states that construction shall be prohibited in areas which exceed applicable interior and exterior standards, unless suitable mitigation measures can be implemented. Policy C-HS(i) 24 of the General Plan is directly applicable to the proposed project as it states, “Where necessary, construct sound walls or other noise mitigations.”

City of Santa Clara General Plan

The City of Santa Clara’s General Plan sets forth noise and land use compatibility standards for proposed land uses in Table 5.10-2. The City establishes 55 dBA Ldn as the noise level limit that is compatible with residential and educational land uses, and 65 dBA Ldn as the noise level limit that is compatible with recreational and commercial land uses. Policies in the General Plan state that where the noise level exceeds the “normally acceptable” levels, the design of the project should include measures to reduce noise levels to acceptable levels. Noise levels exceeding 70 dBA Ldn are considered incompatible with residential land uses. Residential land uses proposed in noise environments exceeding 70 dBA Ldn should generally be avoided except when the residential use is entirely indoors and interior noise levels can be maintained at 45 dBA Ldn or less. Policy 5.10-6-P11 of the General Plan is directly applicable to the proposed project as it requires improvements to and extensions of City streets to develop and include noise reduction measures.

City of Santa Clara Municipal Code

The City’s Municipal Code regulates the noise levels of any fixed sources of disturbing, excessive or offensive sounds or noises on adjacent noise sensitive land uses. Section 9.10.040 of the Municipal code limits noise levels at single and multi-family residences to 55 dBA during the daytime (7:00 AM to 10:00 PM) and 50 dBA during the nighttime (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM). The noise limits are not applicable to emergency work, licensed outdoor events, City-owned electric, water, and sewer utility system facilities, construction activities occurring within allowable hours, permitted fireworks displays, or permitted heliports. Construction activities are not permitted within 300 feet of residentially zoned property except within the hours of 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM on weekdays and 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Saturdays. No construction is permitted on Sundays or holidays.

The City Code does not define the acoustical time descriptor such as Leq (the average noise level) or Lmax (the maximum instantaneous noise level) that is associated with the above limits. A reasonable interpretation of the City Code would identify the ambient base noise level criteria as an average or median noise level (Leq/L50).

4.12.1.3 Existing Noise Conditions

The most widespread and continual source of noise in the City of Santa Clara is transportation and transportation-related facilities. Freeways, local arterials, the Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport, railroads, and Light Rail Transit are all major contributors to noise in Santa Clara. The project route is outside the 65 CNEL noise contours identified in the General Plan for the Norman Y. Mineta San José International Airport. The project alignment is within the 70-75 CNEL noise contour for roadway noise.
4.12.1.4  **Sensitive Receptors**

Sensitive noise receptors in the project vicinity include single-family residential uses located on the east and west side of the expressway. Multi-family uses are also located on the west side of the expressway, at the corner of Homestead Road. Carden Academy, a school, is located at the northeast corner of Homestead Road and the expressway.

4.12.2  **Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOISE</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Would the project result in:  
1) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | 1,2 |
| 2) Exposure of persons to, or generation of, excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | 1 |
| 3) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | 1,2,4 |
| 4) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | 1,2,4 |
| 5) 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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | 1,2 |
| 6) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | 1,2 |

4.12.1.1  **Long-Term Noise Impacts**

Implementation of the proposed project would not increase traffic noise levels along any roadway in Santa Clara because no new traffic trips would be generated by the project. Use of the trail by
pedestrians and bicyclists would not increase ambient noise levels in the project area. Therefore, the project would not have a long-term noise impact.

**4.12.2.2  Short-Term Construction, Vibration and Noise Impacts**

**Vibration**

The anticipated construction equipment to be used for the project includes backhoes, scrapers, motor graders, steel-wheel rollers, pneumatic tire rollers, manually operated compactors, asphalt pavers, concrete trucks, cranes, drill rigs, truck mounted traffic paint stripers, and pick-up trucks. Pile driving is not anticipated as part of the construction of the project. Construction activities with the greatest potential of generating perceptible vibration levels would include the removal of existing walls, pavement, and soil, the movement of heavy tracked equipment, and vibratory compacting of base materials by use of a roller.

Vibration levels generated by construction activities would be perceptible indoors and may be considered annoying at times, causing irritating secondary vibration, such as a slight rattling of windows or doors. However, architectural damage to normal residential structures would not be anticipated and vibration levels would be well below those anticipated to cause structural damage. There are no known sensitive historic structures located within 25 feet of construction activities.

The duration of vibration generating construction activities at individual locations along the project route would be limited because construction would move from place to place as progress occurs. Furthermore, proposed construction hours are during the daytime only, thus reducing the potential for residential annoyance during typical periods of rest or sleep.

**Noise**

Removing and replacing walls along the project route, installing the trail, and implementing proposed intersection improvements would require the temporary use of heavy equipment that could generate high noise levels in the immediate project area. A significant noise impact would occur if construction of the proposed project results in a prolonged interference with normal activities at noise-sensitive receptors. This would occur if the construction period lasted more than one year and construction noise levels regularly exceed 60 dBA Leq and increase ambient noise levels by five dBA or more.

Noise impacts resulting from construction depend on the noise generated by various pieces of construction equipment, the timing and duration of noise generating activities, and the distance between construction noise sources and noise sensitive receptors. Based on the types of construction activities and equipment required for the proposed project, unshielded noise levels at 50 feet from the center of construction activities would generally range from 80 to 85 dBA Leq during peak periods, with the highest maximum instantaneous noise levels typically ranging from 80 to 89 dBA Lmax. Hourly average noise levels during active construction periods would typically range from 79 to 88 dBA Leq at a distance of 50 feet. However, because not all of the equipment would be operating at the same time or for the entire day, the hourly average Leq from project construction would be lower. Some
construction would occur closer than 50 feet to sensitive receptors and noise could exceed those levels. Noise produced by construction equipment typically attenuates over distance at a rate of approximately six dB per doubling of distance; construction noise levels would be highest at receptors closest to the area under construction.

The walls located along the project route would be removed and replaced as part of the project. These include the southbound walls on the west side of the expressway from El Camino Real to Homestead Road. The existing walls would be removed all at one time along the entire length from El Camino Real to south of Homestead Road. Temporary fencing would be put in place prior to removal of the existing walls. The removal of the existing walls and placement of temporary fencing would be done on the same day. Since the demolition and construction of the walls would be located closest to noise sensitive receivers, this portion of construction is likely to generate the highest noise levels at these receivers.

Most of the residences located along this segment of San Tomas Expressway are currently shielded by existing walls and/or buildings that attenuate expressway noise, typically by five to ten dBA depending on the location and height of the noise source and the intervening wall or structure. However, since many of the walls would be removed and replaced, some unshielded construction could occur at these locations depending on the construction scheduling. Hourly average construction noise levels could reach more than ten dBA above ambient noise levels at some locations where wall construction would be unshielded as temporary fencing is being installed and occur within 10 feet of residences. Noise levels would be as high as 60 dBA Leq inside unshielded homes (assuming the windows are shut), with maximum interior noise levels of up to 68 dBA inside the closest unshielded residences.

Construction is anticipated to occur over a total period of six to nine months with noise generating activities occurring over the entire construction period. However, the duration of noise generating activities at individual locations along the project route would be limited to less than a month period because construction activities would move from place to place as progress occurs. The project would include temporary barriers near noise sensitive areas as necessary to reduce the noise from construction. The temporary noise barrier would be installed on the same day after the removal of the existing walls. The temporary noise barrier would consist of acoustical fabric panels (i.e. sound blankets) draped over the temporary fencing.

Construction-related noise impacts would be temporary in nature and standard construction noise avoidance measures would be implemented, as listed below. For these reasons, construction of the proposed project would not result in significant noise impacts to surrounding residential uses during construction.

**Standard Measures:** The project proposes to implement the following standard noise suppression devices and techniques:

- equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with mufflers, air-inlet silencers, and any other shrouds, shields, or other noise-reducing features that are in good operating condition and appropriate for the equipment;
• use “quiet” models of air compressors and other stationary noise sources where such technology exists;

• use electrically powered equipment instead of pneumatic or internal combustion powered equipment, where feasible;

• limit noise-producing signals, including horns, whistles, alarms, and bells, to safety warning purposes only;

• locate stationary noise-generating equipment, construction parking, and maintenance areas as far as reasonable from sensitive receptors when sensitive receptors adjoin or are near the construction project area;

• avoid unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines (i.e., in excess of 5 minutes);

• place temporary walls or enclosure around noise-generating equipment when located near noise sensitive areas;

• ensure that project-related public address or music systems are not audible at any adjacent receptor; and

• notify adjacent residents in advance of construction work.

4.12.2.3 **Conflict with Local Noise Standards**

The Santa Clara Municipal Code specifically exempts construction noise occurring between the hours of 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM on weekdays and 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Saturdays, with no construction occurring on Sundays or holidays. Construction of the project would be limited to within the allowable hours as specified in the Municipal Code. As such, the project would not conflict with the standards presented in the Municipal Code and the impact is less than significant.

4.12.3 **Conclusion**

The long-term noise levels at the sensitive residential uses along the project route would not increase. The project includes standard measures to reduce short-term, construction-related noise impacts to the surrounding area to a less than significant level. **(Less Than Significant Impact)**
4.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

4.13.1 Setting

The City of Santa Clara has a total population of approximately 122,690 residents in 47,123 households. Of the 122,690 residents, approximately 57,318 are employed residents and the City has approximately 108,905 jobs. It is estimated that the City will have approximately 154,825 residents, 60,435 households, 154,280 total jobs and 86,800 employed residents by 2035.23

The project site is located in a developed, urban area of Santa Clara County, within the City limits of Santa Clara, and is primarily developed with residential and commercial uses. The project site is mostly located within existing roadways and/or utility corridors within these residential and commercial areas.

4.13.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION AND HOUSING</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Induce substantial 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)?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.13.2.1 Discussion of Impacts

The project does not include the construction of new housing or businesses that might induce nearby population growth. Because the proposed trail is occurring along an existing roadway, the project is not considered an extension of a roadway and thus would not indirectly induce population growth. Existing infrastructure and utilities would not be extended for the project.

Since there is no housing along the project route that could be displaced by the Spur Trail, the project will not necessitate construction elsewhere or displace people.

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4.13.3 Conclusion

The proposed project would not result in impacts on population and housing within the project area or regionally. No mitigation measures are required or proposed. (No Impact)
4.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

4.14.1 Setting

4.14.1.1 Police

Police protection services are provided by the City of Santa Clara Police Department (SCPD). The SCPD has approximately 148 sworn officers and approximately 48 support personnel. In 2010, the SCPD received approximately 70,700 calls for service. Police headquarters is located at 601 El Camino Real, approximately two miles east of the project site.

4.14.1.2 Fire

Fire protection services for the project area are provided by the City of Santa Clara Fire Department (SCFD). The SCFD is comprised of approximately 200 fire service personnel and more than 60 volunteers. The department consists of 10 stations distributed throughout the City. The closest station to the project site is Station 5, located at 1912 Bowers Avenue, which is approximately 1.2 miles northwest of the project site.

4.14.1.3 Schools and Parks

There is a school, Carden Academy, located at the northeast corner of Homestead Road and the expressway.

The City of Santa Clara General Plan states that neighborhood parks and recreational centers are of great importance to the City. The centerpiece of the City’s park system is Central Park, which is comprised of 52 acres and includes open space, picnic acres, a playground, and recreational facilities. The City currently maintains 38 municipal parks and playgrounds, including a wildlife and natural vegetation park, a dog park, and a skate park. Neighborhood parks typically range in size from one acre to 15 acres. The City’s recreational system is augmented by local school facilities, which are available to the general public.

The nearest City parks to the project site include Bowers Park and Warburton Park & Swim Center to the north, and Steve Carli Park and Central Park to the south.
4.14.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUBLIC SERVICES</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the 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:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Protection?</td>
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<td>Police Protection?</td>
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<td>Schools?</td>
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<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks?</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Public Facilities?</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.14.2.1 Impacts to Public Services

The proposed Spur Trail project would not generate population growth. The proposed project would not increase the demand for the kinds of public services that would support new residents, such as schools, parks, fire, police, or other public facilities. As a result, no impacts are anticipated and mitigation is not required.

4.14.3 Conclusion

The proposed project would not increase the need for public services or result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with a need for new facilities in order to maintain acceptable levels of service or performance objectives for public services. (No Impact)
4.15  RECREATION

4.15.1  Setting

The project site is located in a developed, urban area within the City of Santa Clara and is primarily developed with commercial and residential uses. The proposed route is located within existing roadways and/or utility corridors within these commercial and residential areas. The proposed project includes extension of a trail in southern Santa Clara.

In the vicinity of the project route, there is an existing Class I trail (San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail [Spur Trail]) that runs along the west side of San Tomas Aquino Creek (north of Monroe Street) and the west side of San Tomas Expressway (south of Monroe Street). This trail is currently being extended at the intersection of El Camino Real/San Tomas Expressway, immediately north of the project site. Public parks located in the project area include Bowers Park and Warburton Park & Swim Center to the north, and Steve Carli Park and Central Park to the south.

4.15.2  Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECREATION</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the facility would occur or be accelerated?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adverse physical effect on the environment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.15.2.1  Impacts to Recreation Facilities

Implementation of the proposed project would extend an existing bicycle/pedestrian trail in the City of Santa Clara. The extension could make the use of the entire trail more convenient for some pedestrian and bicyclists which could increase overall usage of the entire trail; however, not to the extent that substantial physical deterioration of the existing trail would occur.

The proposed project would not generate new development or new residents; therefore, it would not increase the use of or demand for neighborhood or recreational facilities. As a result, the proposed
project would have no impact on recreation in the project area. Additionally, there would be no need to construct new or expand existing recreational facilities as a result of the proposed project.

4.15.3 Conclusion

The project proposed is an improvement to the local trail system and would not result in physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities. No mitigation measures are required or proposed. (No Impact)
4.16 TRANSPORTATION

4.16.1 Setting

4.16.1.1 Street Network

The proposed project would occur adjacent to San Tomas Expressway roadway right-of-way (ROW) and includes the following cross streets:

- El Camino Real
- Benton Street
- Homestead Road

San Tomas Expressway is a north/south roadway providing regional access from US 101 in the north to State Route 17 in the south. San Tomas Expressway consists of three mixed-flow lanes and one High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction north of El Camino Real, and two mixed-flow lanes and one HOV lane in each direction south of El Camino Real.

El Camino Real is a major arterial that extends locally, from The Alameda in San José northwesterly to San Francisco. El Camino Real is a designated State Route (SR 82). In the vicinity of the project site, El Camino Real is a six-lane (three lanes in each direction) roadway and provides direct access to San Tomas Expressway.

Benton Street is an arterial that extends from El Camino Real northwesterly to Lawrence Expressway. In the vicinity of the project site, Benton Street is a four-lane (two lanes in each direction) roadway and provides direct access to San Tomas Expressway.

Homestead Road is an arterial that extends from Lincoln Street northwesterly to the City limits. In the vicinity of the project site, Homestead Road is a four-lane (two lanes in each direction) roadway and provides direct access to San Tomas Expressway.

4.16.1.2 Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Facilities

Pedestrian facilities include sidewalks, crosswalks, and off-street paths. Sidewalks are located along both sides of El Camino Real, Benton Street, and Homestead Road. Crosswalks (signalized and unsignalized) are located throughout the project area. San Tomas Expressway accommodates bicycles within the shoulders of the expressway.24 Within the proposed trail route, there is currently a VTA bus stop that provides southbound access to VTA Route 330 which runs from the Milpitas Light Rail Train (LRT) station near Tasman Drive to Almaden Expressway/Camden Avenue in south San José.

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24 The expressway shoulders width and striping are consistent with Class II bicycle lane standards but the shoulders are not designated as bike lanes.
4.16.2 Environmental Checklist and Discussion of Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio of roads, or congestion at intersections)?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[x]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[x]</td>
<td>1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[x]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible land uses (e.g., farm equipment)?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[x]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Result in inadequate emergency access?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[x]</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[x]</td>
<td>1,2,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.16.2.1 Trip Generation and Transportation Impacts

The proposed project would remove the pork chop islands from the Benton Street/San Tomas Expressway intersection and provide bulb-outs. No other traffic lanes would be altered as a result of the project. The proposed modifications to the intersection would not conflict with any applicable plan, ordinance, or policy regarding performance of the roadway system or level of service of any intersection. These modifications would, however, enhance the safety of the existing and future pedestrian/bicycle facilities in the area.

The proposed trail would be located within the existing right-of-way and would not interfere with or alter existing traffic patterns, circulation, level of service standards, or emergency access. The
The proposed project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns, an increase in traffic levels, or any physical changes to the transportation network that would result in substantial safety risks.

4.16.2.2 Parking

The proposed project would not result in the loss of on-street parking along any of the affected roadways, including San Tomas Expressway.

4.16.2.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The 10- to 12-foot wide roadway-separated pedestrian/bicycle Class 1 trail would be constructed on the west side of the expressway (San Tomas Aquino Spur Trail – City of Santa Clara) from El Camino Real to Homestead Road. The Spur Trail would conform to the trail currently under construction by the City of Santa Clara between Cabrillo Avenue and El Camino Real, north of the project site. The Spur Trail would improve the bicycle and pedestrian facilities along the project route by separating vehicular traffic lanes and the pedestrian/bicycle trail by a concrete barrier.

4.16.2.4 Short-term Construction-related Impacts

Construction of the proposed project would temporarily affect traffic conditions in the project area. The proposed improvements would require truck trips to and from the site, particularly during grading. During final design, the number of truck trips will be established and a route for these trucks will be determined, as necessary. All construction work is anticipated to take place within the right-of-way and shoulder of the expressway so road and lane closures are not anticipated.

4.16.3 Conclusion

The proposed project would improve the bicycle and pedestrian facilities along the project route. The proposed project would not generate additional vehicle trips or otherwise impact the transportation system. It is expected that as construction moves along the project route, short-term impacts to traffic operations and circulation within the project area would be minimized and would not result in significant impacts. **(Less Than Significant Impact)**
4.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

4.17.1 Setting

The project area is currently served by existing above- and below-ground utilities. Overhead lines and utility poles primarily run north/south along the expressway near the existing walls and within the traffic islands at the Benton Street and Homestead Road intersections. Street lighting is currently located along most of project route. The utility infrastructure present along the project route also includes existing service boxes, storm drainage facilities, sanitary sewer laterals, water pipes, and gas lines.

4.17.2 Environmental Checklist and Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would the project:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?</td>
<td>☑️ ☑️ ☒ ☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?</td>
<td>☑️ ☑️ ☒ ☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?</td>
<td>☑️ ☑️ ☒ ☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?</td>
<td>☑️ ☑️ ☒ ☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments?</td>
<td>☑️ ☑️ ☒ ☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project’s solid waste disposal needs?</td>
<td>☑️ ☑️ ☒ ☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?</td>
<td>☑️ ☑️ ☒ ☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.17.2.1 Discussion of Impacts

The proposed project may include the relocation/modifications of inlets associated with the existing drainage systems. The existing drainage inlets would need to be relocated and the storm drain lines extended to the new drainage inlets, as needed. The new drainage pipes would connect to the existing drainage system for the project area and continue to utilize the existing stormwater drains at the project intersections. No additional outfalls would be constructed.

The proposed project requires the relocation of utility poles, overhead lines, and service boxes. All utility poles within the four traffic islands of the Benton Street intersection would need to be relocated. Street lighting may be relocated as part of the project, but the overall number of street lights along the route would not change, consistent with County standards. Other utilities, including gas, electric, and water present along the route would be maintained or relocated.

All proposed utility improvements would occur within the roadway rights-of-way. None of the utility relocations or installations would affect utility service to the surrounding area. The Spur Trail project does not propose the development of land uses that would generate additional demand for utilities and services. The proposed project would not exceed the capacity of existing utility systems.

The proposed project will generate solid waste as a result of demolition of the existing walls and pavement removal. Removal and disposal of such waste would comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.

4.17.3 Conclusion

The proposed project would not result in significant impacts to utilities and service systems. Therefore, mitigation measures are not required or proposed. (Less Than Significant Impact)
### 4.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Information Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Does the project have the potential to 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, 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?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 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)?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.18.1 Project Impacts

The project would result in temporary air quality, water quality, and noise impacts during construction. With implementation of the standard measures identified in the applicable sections of this Initial Study, construction impacts will be less than significant. Because the nature of the identified impacts are temporary, the proposed project would not have a cumulatively considerable impact on air quality or noise in the project area.

Project construction, including tree removal, has the potential to impact nests, eggs, young, or individuals of protected bird species. The proposed project includes mitigation measures to avoid impacts to raptors as described in Section 4.4 *Biological Resources*. Implementation of the mitigation measures will reduce impacts to raptors to a less than significant level.

The project site is located in a culturally sensitive area. As a result, the project site has a potential for unknown buried resources to be present as identified in Section 4.5 *Cultural Resources*. The proposed project includes mitigation measures to reduce impacts to undiscovered cultural resources. Implementation of these mitigation measures will reduce impacts to archaeological resources to a less than significant level.
Due to the project site’s historic use for agriculture and vehicles, residual contaminants may be present within the construction area, which could expose workers to hazardous materials. Implementation of the mitigation measures included in this Initial Study in Section 4.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials, will reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

As discussed in the respective sections, the proposed project would have no impact or a less than significant impact on aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, and utility and service facilities.

There are no recently approved or reasonably foreseeable projects that, when combined with the proposed project, would result in a cumulatively considerable impact, including the trail currently under construction north of the site.

4.18.5 Conclusion

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant unavoidable impacts, impacts that are cumulatively considerable, or directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects on human beings. (Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation)
CHECKLIST INFORMATION SOURCES

1. Professional judgment and expertise of the environmental specialist preparing this assessment, based upon a review of the site and surrounding conditions, as well as a review of the project plans.

2. City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan, November 2010.


5.0 REFERENCES


Bay Area Air Quality Management District, CEQA Guidelines, June 2010.


City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan, November 2010.

City of Santa Clara Zoning Ordinance, November 2011.


Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program. Stormwater Pollution Control Requirements. Updated December 5, 2005.

6.0 LEAD AGENCY AND CONSULTANTS

LEAD AGENCY

County of Santa Clara Roads & Airports Department

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Dawn Cameron, Transportation Planner
Ivana Yeung, Junior Transportation Planner

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Gary Parikh, P.E., G.E., President